

Week 2 Writing Activity: *Concise Writing and Misconceptions about Science*

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1 Chapter 3 of *The Scientific Attitude*: First Long Writing Assignment

1. Consider the following stories from Chapter 3 of *The Scientific Attitude*:

- The story of Dr. Ignaz Semmelweis, the doctor working in the maternity wards of a Vienna hospital, who discovered a way to decrease maternal deaths after giving birth.
- The story of Profs. B. Stanley Pons and Martin Fleischmann, who falsely claimed to discover cold fusion, in what would have been a breakthrough for cheap and clean energy production.

And consider these additional stories

- The story of Dr. Andrew Wakefield and his colleagues, who falsely claimed to discover a link between the MMR vaccine and autism in children.
- The story of John Couch Adams and Urbain Le Verrier, who discovered the planet Neptune in 1846 (independently).

2. First, write a 1500-word essay covering the scientific history of one of the four stories above. Your work should include:

- The historical context of the discovery or false discovery
- How the *Scientific Attitude* was applied or not applied correctly
- Specific scientific details explaining the findings for the reader

2 Concise Writing I: Trimming an Essay

1. Second, reduce the length of your essay *after completing it*, by using the concise writing techniques we have been practicing. The final result should be no more than 1000 words. Turn in both copies by **Saturday, September 17th**, via the submission link on Moodle.
2. Remember to take advantage of our writing tutor, Jasmine Arada, in CAAS on Thursdays from 8:50 to 10:50 for help.