I'm interested in making the group project on the turbulent waters in the South China Sea. Off the coast of China, the Philippines, Vietnam, Thailand, Taiwan, Malaysia, and Indonesia, lies a few of the world's most crucial and trafficked shipping lanes. These water highways are where the majority of the world's largest exporter's goods are shipped, and if there were any problems at sea, the world economy would be hit the hardest. For a long time, the ownership of the South China Sea has been heavily disputed. China has been slowly building military islands for the strategic monitoring of trade and ensuring everything's running smoothly, although some of its neighbors claim that they're being constructed outside of China's own country boundaries. Tensions are slowly rising in the region, and it's only a matter of time before things escalate.

Besides disruption of the world economy, discourse in the South China Sea may pose many issues. If China were to gain full control of the Sea, it'd have the capability of making bordering countries subservient to its requests. This could impede or uninstall democracy in the victim countries, leading to further control being given to China. Another problem caused by the turbulent waters could be the acceleration of nuclear weapons stockpiles. Since the Cold War, the threat of nuclear weapons has been looming, and the last world war ended with the last militaristic use of nuclear weapons. Weapons of mass destruction should never be taken lightly, and an increase in the stockpile of nukes for China or its Neighboring Countries could cause disaster in the future. There are also other minor issues that are spawned from the South China Sea. The SCS is home to ⅓ of all marine life biodiversity on the planet, thus if combat were to happen, many species of plants and fish could go extinct. Also, the quality of life in all included countries could see a decline because war normally hurts the economies of those in strife.

The group of people most impacted by the issue would be the citizens of the neighboring countries. They could see their countries taken over by a foreign government, and lose rights that they had before. On top of the citizens of bordering countries, the Chinese people could also see an

economic recession, and/or conscription orders. As China is a communist state, the working class would likely be hit hardest by these effects. The final group of affected people, as already previously mentioned, is the rest of the world. All manufacturing out of China would slow, leading to product shortages, inflation, and an overall decrease in quality of life. The intended audience of this project would be otherworldly governments that could provide aid to bordering South China Sea countries, as well as the UN. The UN would have the greatest jurisdiction in limiting China's advance, thus it would be most important to highlight the global effects/downsides.

CSIS has written many articles about SCS disputes, and overall CCP coverage. In their document, 'Examining the South China Sea Disputes', they mention that China has been antagonizing countries with their blatant disregard of jurisdiction since 2009. It was also explained that the US and Japan are the current largest peacekeepers in the region, further showing the UN's inaction on the matter. A final high-level point summary quote I found, "Consequently many international relations scholars and analysts have elevated the South China Sea dispute from a simple territorial row to a high-level geopolitical concern, deciding the disputed area is 'a dangerous ground' or a 'future of conflict.", shows further that many intellectuals that are wise to the matter see the discourse as a future threat if not resolved.

One data source that could possibly be used is the Sipri military expenditure database. It shows countries' military inventory, which could be used to show how countries have started to prepare for oncoming warfare. This type of data would be the most critical to analysis, as militarization data is the center point of the project.

https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep22586.30?seq=2

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zrki4EO4KO4

https://www.csis.org/analysis/examining-south-china-sea-disputes

https://milex.sipri.org/sipri