

A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE ON (RE)SETTING STANDARDS FOR RADIATION PROTECTION IN BELARUS

Olga Kuchinskaya
Department of Communication
University of Pittsburgh
okuchins@pitt.edu

*The Politics of Invisibility:
Public Knowledge about
Radiation Health Effects after
Chernobyl (MIT, 2014)*

- How we have come to know what we know about the effects of Chernobyl radiation?
- What social mechanisms guarantee that our knowledge is adequate – that is, socially just?



The Politics of Invisibility

Public Knowledge about Radiation Health Effects
after Chernobyl

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- Different ways of representing can make radiation and its effects observable and publicly visible, or they can make them unobservable and publicly nonexistent.
- **The Production of Invisibility: representational practices that limit public visibility of Chernobyl radiation and its health effects**

WAVES OF IN/VISIBILITY

- Containment and invisibility, 1986-1989
- Explosion of visibility, 1989-1991
- Economic reframing, 1992-1996
- Normalization and rehabilitation, 1997-2005
- Near-complete disappearance, 2005-

1991 Zoning of Belarus Based on Levels of Radioactive Contamination and Dose Loads on the Population

Zone description	Average annual effective equivalent dose	Density of contamination, Curies/km ² (kbecquerels/m ²)		
		Cesium-137	Strontium-90	Pu-238, -239, -240
Evacuation (exclusion) zone	Territory around the Chernobyl NPP; the population evacuated in 1986			
Zone of primary resettlement		> 40 (> 1,480)	> 3	> 0.1
Zone of subsequent resettlement	Annual dose can exceed 5 mSv*	15–40 (555–1,480)	2–3	0.05–0.1
Zone with the right to resettle	Annual dose can exceed 1 mSv*	5–15 (185–555)	0.5–2	0.02–0.05
Residence zone with periodic radiation control	Annual dose should not exceed 1 mSv*	1–5 (37–185)	0.15–0.5	0.01–0.02

Note: * In addition to background radiation

Source: 1991 Law On the Legal Regulations of the Territories Exposed to Radioactive Contamination as a Result of the Catastrophe at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant

THANK YOU!