

Impact of rachel carson's silent spring on the environmental movement



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The strikingly vivid and traumatizing anecdote with which Rachel Carson begins " Silent Spring" has in recent years become less a " fable for tomorrow" and more a stark reality of present day. In a small farming town in which nature is abundant, a sustainable and prosperous harmony exists between humans and nature. However, by poisoning their environment, the townspeople reveal how tenuous such an accord is. In order to sustain this delicate balance, humans must honor their side of the contract.

Carson's book has timeless concepts of conservation, which may be nature's only salvation from human destruction. The book features a vicious cycle in which the use of the pesticide " DDT" around the household causes insects and other pests to gain immunity to the chemical. The industry responds with ever more powerful and deadly chemicals, all the while polluting the environment, killing vital parts of ecosystems and poisoning water (including human drinking water).

The immediate response to Carson's opus, even before publication, was the selfish and short-sighted backlash from the chemical industry. Conservatives in the media took opposition to the truthful depiction of impending disaster present in her narrative. However, a number of professionals took well to Carson's work, citing it as a " perspective that cut against the grain of materialism, scientism, and the technologically engineered control of nature. (Kroll, 2006) Carson's dissertation rapidly began to gain public support and the uproar that stemmed from the veracity of her findings led to an investigation by the Kennedy administration.

The findings by the Science Advisory Committee validated her claims and silenced her critics – Time Magazine asserted that " all but the most self-serving of Carson's attackers were backing rapidly toward safer ground. In their ugly campaign to reduce a brave scientist's [work]... the chemical [industry] had only increased public awareness. (Matthiessen, 1999) Through her radical and groundbreaking publication, Carson raised public awareness of environmental concerns, facilitated the eventual ban of DDT, and essentially birthed the fledgling environmental movement. Even today, " Silent Spring" continues to have a profound impact on the environmental movement and policy decisions regarding the environment.

" The Rachel Carson Homestead Association," reported Pittsburgh Lives Charlie Ban (2006), " will celebrate Carson's 100th Birthday to discuss the environmental ideas that she generated. (p. 1) These ideas, he asserts, " continue to shape public and private policy in the region and worldwide. " (p. 1) Indeed, through the social, political, and ecological ramifications of the radical concepts explored in " Silent Spring" one can clearly see that the alarming message of Carson's bestseller is still reverberating throughout the environmental movement today. The publication is highly symbolic and implicative: from the image of small farming town polluted by its own citizenry to the very title of the book.

In this masterpiece Carson has elegantly woven an image of a time in which no birds are chirping, no crickets are humming, and no dogs are barking: an ominous and culpable silence that truly embodies the frighteningly plausible message of the novel. Since its conception in 1962, " Silent Spring" has underscored the dangers humans pose to the environment. " Silent Spring's" <https://assignbuster.com/impact-of-rachel-carsons-silent-spring-on-the-environmental-movement/>

message now truly shadows society, and with it the unwavering possibility that at the rate we are harming animals and nature, next year may truly harbor a " Silent Spring".