

Rachel Carson and Her Fight for Environmental Change

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Group Website

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<http://15743117.nhd.weebly.com/>

Rachel Carson's exposure of the harmful pesticide Dichloro Diphenyl Trichloroethane (DDT) paved the way for future women scientists and ultimately led to the creation of the most important chemical ban in the history of the United States. When deciding upon a topic, we knew that we wanted to research a science-related subject because of our shared passion. We consulted our biology teacher for a compilation of topics within the science realm. She gave us a few books, which happened to include Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*. It interested us the most and related to the theme. We were drawn to Rachel Carson and her perseverance, and so we aspired to use her story to bring attention to women in science. Carson is a role model to us because of the way she constantly presented herself, despite hardships, with grace and dignity. She was meticulous in her research and was adamant in the claims she made.

The Internet was an effective tool in establishing a basis for our project. We delved deeper into our research by collecting newspaper articles from online databases and visiting the Watson Library at the University of Kansas. Then we contacted experts who had personal experiences with Rachel Carson or DDT. These interviews helped tremendously in providing details about Carson's life and her impact. We interviewed Jenny Price, a keynote speaker for the American Society for Environmental History. We also interviewed Katie's grandfather who was affected by the use of dangerous pesticides and was subsequently diagnosed with cancer. He recalls the excessive spraying of DDT in his hometown growing up and his exposure to Agent Orange during his service in the Vietnam War. Finally, Carson's influential novel *Silent Spring* was eye-opening for us and provided a great deal of information for our project.

We created a website because we felt this format best showcased our research.

Overcoming formatting difficulties while creating our website was one of our more time-consuming issues. We spent countless hours researching our topic and then editing our website in order to accurately portray Rachel Carson's story. Staying organized helped us to easily sift through the large amount of information we collected.

Rachel Carson and her exploration of DDT led her to encounter its harmful effects and eventually helped her bring about the most important chemical ban to this day. Rachel spent much of her adult life researching nature and the effects of harmful pesticides such as DDT, about which she felt compelled to inform the general public. She did so by writing her influential novel *Silent Spring*. Once *Silent Spring* was published, Rachel encountered significant criticism from both the chemical industry as well as her own scientific community. However, the book was a catalyst for the environmental movement. It inspired changes in the public mindset and invoked caution for future scientific and technological advances. The publication of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* paved the way for the formation of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Even today, people continue to exchange ideas based on Carson's research.