



Rachel Luis Carson (1907-1964)

Rachel Carson was an American marine biologist, writer, and conservationist who became concerned with the effects of DDT on the environment after WW II. She wrote *Silent Spring*, which received the attention of the world.

Work against Pesticides

After World War II, Carson felt disturbed by the reckless use of synthetic chemical pesticides. She reluctantly shifted her focus in order to warn people about the severe long-term effects of misusing pesticides. In her 1962 book *Silent Spring*, she challenged the activities and practices of agricultural scientists and the government. She called for a change in the way the public viewed the natural world.

Early Life and Education

Rachel was born on May 27, 1907, on a small family farm just next to Springdale, Pennsylvania, near the Allegheny River.

At the age of eight, she began writing stories. Her first story was published at the age of eleven. Her first stories were published in St. Nicholas Magazine; she enjoyed reading this magazine and other novels. Carson attended Springdale's small school all the way until 10th grade. She then completed her high school education in Parnassus, Pennsylvania, where she graduated in 1925 at the top of her class of 45 students.

At Pennsylvania College for Women (now Chatham University), Carson studied English before she switched to biology. Though admitted to graduate standing at John Hopkins University, Rachel remained at Pennsylvania College for Women for her senior year due to financial challenges. She later graduated in 1929. After a summer course at Marine Biological Lab, she continued to study zoology and genetics at John Hopkins. She earned her Master's degree in zoology in 1932.