

# Carson

## *Silent Spring*

### Ch 8

#### *“And No Birds Sing”*

### Zoom Discussion

### Questions for Analysis/Discussion

**Instructions:** In journal, record responses to the questions you are assigned alphabetically, to be shared with students in class, as part of a “teaching moment.” As before, state each question in advance of providing your response.

#### A-D

1. What was Carson’s first case study?
  - What insect was targeted for spraying?
  - What plant and bird species were involved?
  - What were the effects?
2. What insect was targeted in Alabama? What were the effects?
3. What are the pertinent facts related to the Dutch Elm case study?
  - When did the disease enter America? From where?
  - Describe the disease?
  - Can you find a metaphor Carson uses to describe the spraying?
  - What symptoms appeared in the environment?
  - How were the robins being poisoned? How was this discovered?
  - In what concentrations did DDT appear in their primary food source?
  - How was the DDT absorbed by this primary food source?
  - How many of this species of food did it take to produce a lethal dose in robins?
4. Trace the cycle of poisoning from spray to robin?
5. Besides poisoning the birds, in what other ways was the bird’s mortality effected?

#### E-H

6. What were the before and after numbers of the robins?

7. In what dose was DDT discovered in the robins?
8. How many other bird species were effected?
9. What symptoms were observed among hawks and owls? What was the direct source of their poisoning?
10. What were the before and after numbers of the warblers?

#### **I-L**

11. What dose of DDT was observed in the nuthatch?
12. What is the grim irony of this mortality among birds?
13. Was the spraying effective?
14. What facts does she present (114) to support her criticism of the spraying?
15. What might Midwestern states learn from New York State's experience with Dutch Elm disease? What methods has NY used to control the disease?
  - What facts does Carson cite in evidence of this success?

#### **M-P**

16. What other means of controlling this infestation does she cite?
17. How does the Dutch Elm infestation reinforce the case for "bio diversity?"
18. What aspect of the Eagle's life-cycle led to its rapid decline and near extinction?
19. Where was the most intensive study of Eagles conducted?
  - How large was the study?
  - Who conducted it?
  - How far did these eagles range?
  - What were the before and after numbers of the Broley and Braun studies?
20. What did DeWitt's study reveal? What species was he studying? What was causing the chicks to die in the eggs before hatching?

#### **Q-T**

21. What was the disturbing conclusion of the DeWitt and Wallace studies?
22. What did lab analysis of Broley's eagles reveal?
23. What evidence does Carson present that this is a global, and not just a national crisis?
24. What were the recommendations of the British House of Commons committee?
25. What was faulty in the common testing procedures for these chemicals?

#### **U-Z**

26. How is Aldrin used? What is disturbing about its use?
27. What other emerging practices in the application of pesticides did Carson find disturbing?
28. What were the casualty figures for red-wing blackbirds of this practice?
29. What evidence does she present underscoring the danger posed to humans by these chemicals?

#### **Rhetorical Analysis/Style**

30. Can you find an example of Carson's use of strong language, emphatic words, metaphors to heighten the effect of her argument (p114)?

#### **Instructor:**

31. How does she use figurative language in her conclusion to heighten the effect of her argument?
32. What phrase does she keep repeating to heighten the effect of her conclusion?
33. Where in her conclusion does she use strong diction (words) to heighten the effect of her argument?
34. What realities fuel her eloquent rage in these closing lines?