
Industrial Environmental Protection

Topic 1: Environmental Movement

The title of the book “The Silent Spring” by Rachel Carson refers to the danger of a future without birds - and without their chirping in spring. In 1962, the date of the first publication, there was an inexplicable mass mortality of different bird species, which Carson attributed to the use of pesticides (e.g. DDT). She combines numerous eyewitness reports for example of hunting and fishing associations, political statements and scientific analysis. In addition to environmental issues, the focus of the book is on health issues caused by the usage of pesticides.

This book was one of the major works in the development of the environmental movement, has been translated in numerous different languages and is still sold today.

For this course, it is particularly important because it has provoked a great political response as well as it has released completely new scientific perspectives (e.g. the systematical analysis of food chain, accumulation of toxins, coactions of different kinds of toxin) – although it is a popular scientific work. Thus the book is not only the initial point of environmental movement but also of environmental sciences and technologies.

Please read the first sites of the book (“A Fable for Tomorrow (FABLE POUR DEMAIN)”) and a part of the chapter (“And No Birds Sing (ET NUL OISEAU NE CHANTE)”). In addition do some research on the internet about the beginnings of the environmental movement?

Instructions to the speaker:

Please do some research on the reception of the text during the following years; which were the political and scientific consequences?

Text:

Carson, Rachel: *Der stumme Frühling*, München: dtv 1968 [Original: Silent Spring, 1962]