

Weekly Reading Journal

Directions: Please answer each question below. The reading journal is worth 30 points.

1. **Schedule.** Please list this week's assigned reading(s) below, noting the author(s), title(s), and total number of pages. Then, make a schedule for how you will complete it. (4pts.)

Author(s): Rachel Carson, Edmund P. Russell III

Title(s): Silent Spring, The Strange Career of DDT

Total pp.: 35

<i>Day of the week:</i>	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
<i>Pages planned:</i>		35					
<i>Pages read:</i>		35					
<i>Total time:</i>		4 hrs					

2. **Summarize.** Write 2-3 sentences summarizing the text's main idea. If a work has either a thesis statement or statement of purpose, please type it below with the page number. And, if there is more than one text, please write a summary for each text. (4pts.)

1. Silent Spring

The text opens with imagery of ecological decay, quickly turning into a warning. Carson then talk about what is happening with chemical, warning that the public needs to take heed and decide whether it wishes to continue on the current road. The author then presents the other road which man could walk, followed by commentary on the text as a whole.

2. The Strange Career of DDT

The text explores the history of DDT, from a publicly celebrated wartime pesticide to its widespread use in America, eventually revealing its harmful environmental effects and growing insect resistance. As concerns mount, public and scientific opposition led to government regulation and its eventual ban in American agriculture.

3. **Analyze.** Select *four quotes* from the reading(s). They should not all come from the same chapter/selection! Type each quote below with its page number and explain how it relates to the text's main idea. (10pts.)

“Americans have assumed that technological war heroes would prove equally adept at solving civilian problems. In the case of DDT, wartime publicity created a popular impression of DDT as a miracle chemical.” (775)

This reflects how DDT's heroic role in WWII, that of protection for soldiers from malaria, therein pushing the public and policymakers trust it without question.

“In an influential study of environmentalism, Samuel P. Hays argued that government experts did not know about or look for ways that DDT might harm people or wildlife until well after its introduction.” (771)

The rush to adopt DDT came with almost no serious study of its ecological or human health effects. Both Carson and Hays point to a systemic problem: that institutions assumed chemicals were safe until proven harmful, rather than demanding proof of safety before widespread use.

“The public must decide whether it wishes to continue on the present road, and it can do so only when in full possession of the facts.” (200)

This quote embodies warnings that the public does not even know the facts of something so grounded in science. This contrasts the belief that the government, through wartime propaganda has left the public unable to make choices on the matter.

“in spite of the earlier rather startling toxicity reports we had asked our people to start a limited manufacturing program of DDT.” (780)

This quote illustrates the fact that warnings were ignored to deploy DDT in a rush. Even when scientists flagged toxicity, the chemical was pushed into production because it promised quick victories (against insects, disease, crop loss) and fit the larger postwar culture of technological optimism.

4. **Connect.** Write 2-3 sentences connecting this week’s reading(s) to other assigned readings and/or the lecture(s). (4pts.)

These articles strongly illustrate the ongoing theme of man’s place in nature: that of nature serving the whims of man. The readings today also illustrate a changing notion in this which the public would in time come to adopt thanks to other works such as Gaia.

5. **Apply.** Think about your own life. Where can you use/apply the knowledge gleaned from the reading? (4pts.)

The story of DDT shows how people can be misled by “miracle” products, as early warnings about risks were often ignored in favor of short-term benefits. Both articles in the reading urge ordinary citizens to demand transparency, question hype, and weigh long-term consequences of everyday choices.

6. **Reflect.** Did you hold to your intended reading schedule? How did you improve from last week, and how will you improve next week? (4pts.)

I held to my schedule, and will continue with the same schedule.