Shreya Sapkal

Mrs. DaFoe

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On Demand 3

During the 1960s, the Green Revolution was well underway. This was an agricultural revolution unlike any other before. Scientists were developing countless pesticides, insecticides, GMO crops, and other innovative technologies to produce higher yields and supposedly feed the world. However, the heavy use of the new insecticides, which were rightly advertised as a “one kills all,” had unforseen detrimental effects on our environment. In her book *Silent Spring*, American biologist Rachel Carson expounds upon such environmental issues, in order to open the eyes of the American people and draw urgent attention to such issues. Carson makes the American public aware that the use of insecticidal poisons jeapordizes the natural environment and American society, in order to persuade the American public to take a greater part in lobbying for the reduced use of such poisons.

Carson expounds on the drawbacks of using insecticidal poisons frequently on nature as well as the future of American society. She employs an anecdote to explain how even wildlife which is not being targeted directly by the poisons is suffering: “But such rabbits or raccoons or oppossums as may have roamed those bottomlands and perhaps never visited the farmers’ cornfields were doomed by a judge and jury who neigher knew of their existence nor cared” (28-32). In this anecdote, the innocent woodland creatures, or “rabbits,” “raccoons,” or “oppossums,” are on trial in front of a jury which has no regards for their lives or bringing them justice. They are sentenced to succumb to the “universal killer,” or the poison, despite causing no threat to American farmers or communtiies. Carson appeals to her American audience’s shared values of upholding justice and protecting the innocent. She creates a syllogism in that the animals in question likely never traversed on the fields and are innocent. According to American principles of justice and individual rights, the innocent should not be marked guilty. If the animals are innocent, they should not be considered guilty and condemned to death. The judges and juries are supposed to uphold justice and protect the innocent, but in this case, they did not. This goes against American values of liberty and justice under the law, as innocent animals are being killed for no reason due to the heavy use of these poisions, which in turn is harming our environment. The American people value defending the innocent, and hence will realize the negative effects and take a more active role in opposing the use of these pesticides. Carson suggests that if more Americans are aware of these injustices, “care,” and join this “jury,” we will be able to avoid further environmental damage and cruelty to wildlife. Another anecdote is used to invoke a sense of duty within the audience to advocate for reducing the use of pesticidal poisons: “Does Indiana still raise any boys who roam through woods or fields and might even explore margins of a river? If so, who guarded the poisoned area to keep out any who might wander in, in a misguided search for unspoiled nature?” (37-41). Carson appeal to pathos by using a annecdote of children exploring nature and being subject to health risks due to the poison. Children are generally viewed as innocents, and the American people want to protect their children. However, with all of this poision being sprayed everywhere, their children are in danger of “shock” and “death,” which can only be escaped through “skilled medical attention” (36-37). Additionally, such a dangerous poison is being used casually and widely, such as in “woods,” “fields,” or any region of “unspoiled nature.” The American public is further angered that they are not being protected or “guarded” against it, and that their children are in danger. Children also represent the future of America, and it is in jeopardy because of these pesticides. Hence, the American public is pushed to take a greater stand against the use of these pesticides.

Carson highlights the innatention the American people have been giving this issue, in order to persuade them to take a stand against the use of poisonous insecticides so they can protect what is important to them. She first employs a metaphor in the form of a rhetorical question to implore the audience to ponder about why the use of these poisons is so widespread, despite their negative consequences: “Who has made the decision that sets in motion these chains of poisonings, this ever-widening wave of death that spreads out, like ripples, when a pebble is dropped into a still pond?” This metaphor likens the increasing use of poisonous pesticides in America to a ripple in a pond. This metaphor is powerful because it demonstrates how a single instance of this pesticide use has created a vast chain of events. By likening pesticide use to an “ever-widening wave of death,” Carson frightens the American public by suggesting that they have invited death and suffering into their communities. Desiring to protect themselves and those around them, the American public will feel moved to take action to combat the destruction, which can be done by reducing the use of the poisons. Carson draws attention to the idea that many have thusfar been blind to the issue at hand by appealing to the audience’s shared values of reverence for nature and a desire for democracy. “The decision is that of the authoritarian... he has made it during a moment of inattention by millions to whom beauty and the ordered world of nature still have a meaning that is deep and imperative.” Here, Carson specifically uses the term “authoritarian” to refer to those who have approved the casual use of these pesticides. America is founded on the values of democracy, and the American people aim to fight authoritarianism and tyranny. Carson suggests that the American public can oppose this tyranny by opening their eyes and removing their “innattention.” This is an Appeal to shared values: speaker and audience, the “millions,” still care about nature and admire its beautyThis “deep and imperative” connection with nature is being threatened by the decision to use these poisons frequently

American public’s eyes are opened-- these pesticides are threatening nature as we know it, and we must lobby for their reduced use to protect what we care about.