

## *Silent Spring* Assignment

**Due Tuesday, April 16 by 1pm TA mailbox #10 or in class**

Choose one of the following questions to answer in 500-750 words (min/max). Your grade will be based on a well thought out and supported argument. Please voice your own opinion on these environmental issues.

For each of these questions, use examples from *Silent Spring*, and other outside material such as web pages or newspapers. **At least 2 scientific journal articles must be cited, one of which must be recent (2000-present).**

1. If you were an instructor of an environmental chemistry or biology course, would you require your students to read *Silent Spring*? Why or why not? Be specific in your reasoning. Try to find out if some of the substances mentioned in the book are still used today. Is this book still relevant to today's environmental situation? Do you believe that Carson's prediction of a "silent spring" is too extreme, rightfully justified, or not extreme enough? Remember to support your arguments.
2. You are the scientific advisor for a prominent politician. She is being pressured from lobbyists regarding the use of a certain pesticide/ herbicide vs. massive crop loss and famine due to an invading beetle/ weed. She values your opinion so much regarding scientific and environmental issues that she is staking her entire political future (and your job) on your advice. Choose one of the insecticides/ herbicides (excluding DDT) mentioned in *Silent Spring*. Find its chemical formula and structure. Does it have any other uses besides insecticide/ herbicide? Is it currently legal for use as an insecticide/ herbicide in the US? ...in other parts of the world? What is the physiological impact on plants? ...insects? ...humans? ...other animals (pets)? If possible, try to find the MSDS for this chemical. What would you advise that your boss do about this matter considering massive (and expensive) lobbying on behalf of farmers, food processing industrialists, and environmentalists?