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GREEN WEENIE OF THE WEEK: POSTHUMOUS RACHEL CARSON EDITION

Unexpected travel last weekend postponed the weekly Power Line Green Weenie Award, but that allowed me time to catch up with an important new book bearing on someone who deserves a shelf of posthumous Green Weenies: Rachel Carson, the author of *Silent Spring*. Published 50 years ago, *Silent Spring* remains an iconic book for the modern environmental movement, and Rachel Carson one of the movement's heroes. (The EPA still hosts an annual "Rachel Carson Sense of Wonder Contest.") The book contributed significantly to the rise of chemophobia, and specifically to the ban of DDT at the end of the 1960s.

To be sure, DDT was overused, but a complete ban was unnecessary, and has contributed to the needless deaths of millions of people from malaria in the developing world. It was never a proven human carcinogen, and its damage to wildlife can be mitigated through more careful use. Indeed, the World Health Organization and even the *New York Times* editorial page have called for the reintroduction of DDT in the developing world. Environmentalists won't hear of it. We once had malaria in the U.S. and the use of DDT was instrumental in wiping it out here. Typical of rich western liberals to deny to the developing world the same tools we used to better our own lives.

As The *Times*' Tina Rosenberg noted in a famous 2004 *Times Magazine* article entitled "What the World Needs Now Is DDT," "in her 297 pages, Rachel Carson never mentioned the fact that by the time she was writing, DDT was responsible for saving tens of millions of lives, perhaps hundreds of millions." Rosenberg goes on to deliver this devastating judgment: "DDT killed bald eagles because of its persistence in the environment. *Silent Spring* is now killing African children because of its persistence in the public mind."

The Cato Institute has just published *The False Crises of Rachel Carson: Silent Spring at 50*, edited by Roger Meiners, Pierre Desrochers, and Andrew Morriss. It includes essays from 10 authors in various fields, all to the conclusion that “some of her major arguments rested on what can only be described as deliberate ignorance. . . . Much of what was presented as certainty then was slanted; today we know much of it is simply wrong.”

Of course, much of the environmental movement would go out of business overnight if you deprived it of “deliberate ignorance.” Still, good of Meiners, Desrochers, and Morriss to assemble this revisionist volume