

The Clean Air and Water Acts

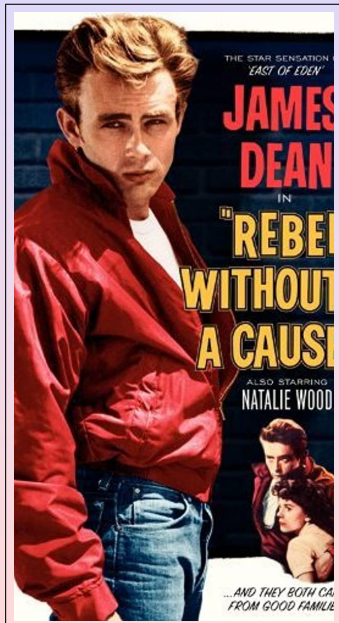
Dale H. Easley

University of Dubuque

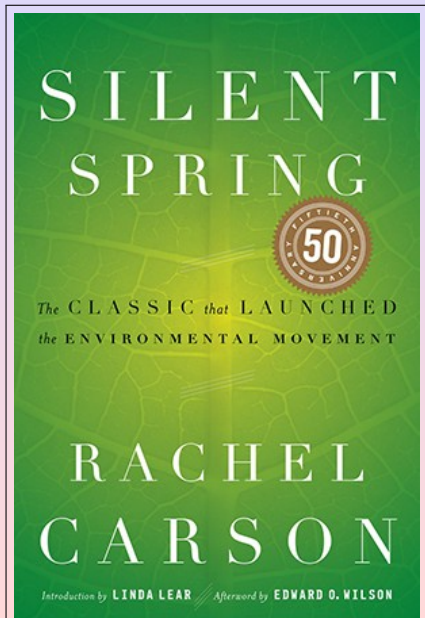


Post-WWII through Cuban Missile Crisis

- The Cold War
- Segregation
- McCarthy Era
- 50s' culture



The 60s



- Vietnam War
- Civil Rights
- Women's Rights
- Rachel Carson

April, 1970: Earth Day

- Wisconsin's Senator Gaylord Nelson
- Supported by UAW
- First celebrations included two thousand colleges and universities
- Momentum from Santa Barbara oils spills, Cuyahoga River fire, and mercury scares.



Note the change in public opinion

Table 2-1
Public Opinion on Air and Water Pollution, 1965–1970

Q: Compared with other parts of the country, do you think the problem of air/water pollution in your area is very serious or somewhat serious?

<i>Year</i>	<i>Sample Size</i>	<i>Air (%)</i>	<i>Water (%)</i>
1965	2,128	28	35
1966	2,033	48	49
1967	2,000	53	52
1968	2,079	55	58
1969	NA	NA	NA
1970	2,168	69	74

Source: John C. Whitaker, Striking a Balance: Environment and Natural Resources Policy in the Nixon-Ford Years (Washington, D.C.: AEI, 1976), 8. Reprinted with the permission of The American Enterprise Institute.

Pause: How do you change opinions?



President Richard Nixon

1970 State of the Union Address

Restoring nature to its natural state is a cause beyond party and beyond factions. It has become a common cause of all the people of this country. It is the cause of particular concern to young Americans because they more than we will reap the grim consequences of our failure to act on the programs which are needed now if we are to prevent disaster later—clean air, clear water, open spaces. These should once again be the birthright of every American. If we act now they can.

The Environmental Protection Agency

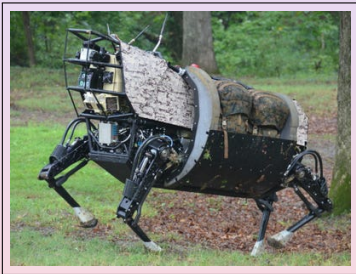
Its purpose is to

- establish and enforce pollution control standards,
- gather and analyze data, and
- recommend policy changes.



Pause: Federal government careers

- Environmental Protection Agency
- Army Corps of Engineers
- Geologic Survey
- Fish and Wildlife
- Bureau of Ocean Energy Management
- Occupational Safety and Health Administration
- Department of Energy



Reflection Paper #2

Today Joe Biden is sworn in as President.

President Biden plans to make climate-change mitigation a central organizing principle of his administration's policy. A similar time was 1970, maybe, with the creation of the EPA and the passage of the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts.

- How do the political turmoil of 1970 and of 2021 compare? Be specific.
- What events led to people coming together in 1970 to pass once-in-a-generation legislation? Is there anything similar occurring now?
- What seems quite different about the two times?