

HST 203: History of the United States Sp14 (Escobar Meta 41237 41238)

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Forum 4

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Environmentalism as Religion

by Joe Escobar - Thursday, May 22, 2014, 8:45 AM

This forum thread is for the Environmentalism as Religion discussion.

After studying the required materials, address the questions in your posts.

To make your POSTS, click the reply link in this, MY post.

To reply to another student's post, be sure to click the reply link within in THEIR post.

IMPORTANT - SUBJECT LINES

BE SURE to use an informative subject line for your post. Do NOT simply leave it RE: Environmentalism as Religion

Sum of ratings: -

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Just because someone disagrees with you, or a person doesn't understand what environmentalism is, doesn't mean that person is in a religion or a cult...

by Jennifer Rose - Sunday, May 25, 2014, 6:41 PM

I vigorously disagree with the concept that environmentalism is a religion. Here's the definition of environmentalism from britannica.com:

environmentalism,

political and ethical movement that seeks to improve and protect the quality of the natural environment through changes to environmentally harmful human activities; through the adoption of forms of political, economic, and social organization that are thought to be necessary for, or at least conducive to, the benign treatment of the environment by humans; and through a reassessment of humanity's relationship with

nature. In various ways, environmentalism claims that living things other than humans, and the natural environment as a whole, are deserving of consideration in reasoning about the morality of political, economic, and social policies.

I don't think that the term environmentalist is a particularly dogmatic or radical term in and of itself. Environmentalism has a very broad definition, and is on a political spectrum as well as a social and personal spectrum. Reducing the environmental movement to one-sided, tyrannical extremists is not an accurate representation.

The list of similarities between environmentalists and people who practice a strict religion are kind of funny in my opinion! Sorting bins are just a good idea, and are not worshipped as some kind of golden calf. Also organic, local foods, particularly whole, fresh, homegrown fruits and veggies are very beneficial to our healths as human beings, as well as the planet.

Just because someone disagrees with you, or a person doesn't understand what environmentalism is, doesn't mean that person is in a religion or a cult. Religion is not a bad thing in and of itself, but to practice a religion requires blind faith. Environmentalism uses science and social justice to back up its validity.

- <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/189205/environmentalism>
- <http://nutritionfacts.org/topics/plant-based-diets/>
- http://education.nationalgeographic.com/education/encyclopedia/great-pacific-garbage-patch/?ar_a=1

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Are recycling bins divine?

by Michael Brown - Sunday, May 25, 2014, 7:37 PM

I do not think that environmentalism is a religion. I think that this article is very extreme. Comparing waste receptacles to shrines is absurd. The Google definition of a shrine is: a place regarded as holy because of its associations with a divinity or a sacred person or relic, typically marked by a building or other construction. In no way have I ever heard of someone considering a recycling bin as holy or divine. I worked for Nissan assembling cars in Nashville, TN. They were very dedicated to being "green". They had us sign a form saying that we would try to use cold water for washing clothes and that we would use a specific light bulb in our house. I did sign it because I wanted the job, but I thought it was a bit extreme to push that on their employees.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Environmentalism could be a religious practice I suppose

by Michael Brown - Tuesday, May 27, 2014, 7:24 PM

According to the definition of religion that Mr. Escobar put on the board, I concluded environmentalism could be a form of religion. This is where this conversation makes a sharp turn.

In the video I am going to present, Bill Gates talks about pollution being a problem for the ecosystem or the planet. I would say that this guy is the definition of extreme. He states that vaccinations can be used for population control, resulting in a smaller carbon footprint on the planet. I think he is insane for this. In my mind people are more important than the planet, however we can try to control pollution in different ways than giving people vaccines that either harm them or shorten their lives. That is the only way I interpret his comment on how vaccines could help with population control. If I am correct, he would be sacrificing people, in order to save the planet. That could definitely be considered a religious practice. I am sure there is a different way to interpret the video.....

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LmzeYYWntxw>

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Re: Environmentalism could be a religious practice I suppose

by Michael Brown - Tuesday, May 27, 2014, 7:33 PM

Ok, so I after further research, the vaccines would likely be used to make people sterile so that they cannot have kids. This is illegitimate though none the less. We don't live in China.

Sum of ratings: (1)

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Re: Environmentalism could be a religious practice I suppose

by Amanda Daniels - Friday, May 30, 2014, 11:43 PM

Bill Gates is Mr. Population control he fully supports it, and he actively does his part to participate. He owns 500,000 shares in Monsanto he is also quoted saying In a recent interview with the London Telegraph, Bill Gates has now claimed that his Foundation's massive push for vaccination is not just an exercise in philanthropy but that it is, in fact, "God's work."

The only thing Bill Gates is interested in cleaning up and getting rid of though is humans. He plans on soft killing the population in order to clean up the environment. Nice plan. What a great guy he is. Right

Bill-Gates-monsanto-and-eugenics-

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Environmentalism could be a religious practice I suppose



by Michael Brown - Saturday, May 31, 2014, 11:11 AM

Very interesting that most other countries ban gmos. I figured we would be smarter than that. It will be nice when they actually start putting gmos on labels so we can decide what is safe to eat. So much for LBJ's work with the fair labeling act huh?

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Environmentalism could be a religious practice I suppose



by Bart Golden - Friday, May 30, 2014, 11:50 PM

Actually you are spot on with what you thought he was saying, bill gates has been a supporter of population control by means of shortening life spans with malnutrition basically making food with out nutritional value and he has a lot of others in high positions that are less public about it like Al Gore and Pres. Obama. It is a fact that our planet has surpassed the maximum capacity and population control is needed I just don't think that bill gates should be the one who says who stays and who goes and how!!

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Environmentalism could be a religious practice I suppose



by Michael Brown - Saturday, May 31, 2014, 11:14 AM

I am not sure if we have actually passed the max capacity of people yet. I mean food is still making it to the shelves at a fairly decent price, which suggests to me that it is not too big of an issue at the moment. A hundred years from now may be different though.

Sum of ratings: (1)

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When I worked at Enterprise Rent A Car

by Thomas Stevens - Friday, May 30, 2014, 4:23 PM

We were told to sign a petition against the West 11th Emx extension because our biggest client, an auto body shop, was against it. If the body shop told us to jump we would do that too. You'll notice a lot of signs along West 11th, my reaction to that is: I won't do business with anyone that displays a sign like that. Keep your politics out of your business, or you won't get my business.

Sum of ratings: (1)

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Stretch

by Jesse Flannery - Sunday, May 25, 2014, 11:52 PM

I would have to agree with Jennifer, and Michael. I absolutely do not buy into the idea that recycling could be considered a religion. The similarities that are drawn are very vague. Comparing Earth Day with a holy day would be like saying any holiday (e.g., Presidents Day, Mothers Day) is a religious day. Earth Day on wikipedia is just listed as an annual event, not a holiday. Saying that "environmentalists universally believe in the dangers of global warming but also reject the best solution to the problem, which is nuclear power." I think the fear surrounding nuclear power is a very viable one. Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster for instance. Which is probably more where that rejection comes from. Although I do not believe nuclear power is that unsafe. Comparing recycle bins to sacred structures. Really? That is the biggest stretch of all the arguments. Who stores their religious decor next to their trash can? Finally the "proselytizing." Honestly I didn't even know what this meant so I had to look it up. I am pretty sure most people try and encourage people to be on their side if they think something is right. If someone believes in eating locally and organically they are going to talk up all the benefits like supporting local business, and the health benefits. Not the higher prices. No matter what we do if we agree with it we will want to convert people to believing it also. I think the use of the word was just to try and further the absurd argument. Or maybe confuse people like me. Either way, this article is a stretch to say the least.

pros·e·lyt·ize:

"convert or attempt to convert (someone) from one religion, belief, or opinion to another."

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Re: Stretch

by Jennifer Rose - Monday, May 26, 2014, 12:30 PM

The article straight out made an audacious claim about nuclear power.

Chernobyl anyone? In 1986 100 times more radiation was released than the atom bombs dropped over Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chernobyl_disaster
- <http://www.greenpeace.org/usa/en/campaigns/nuclear/>

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

1

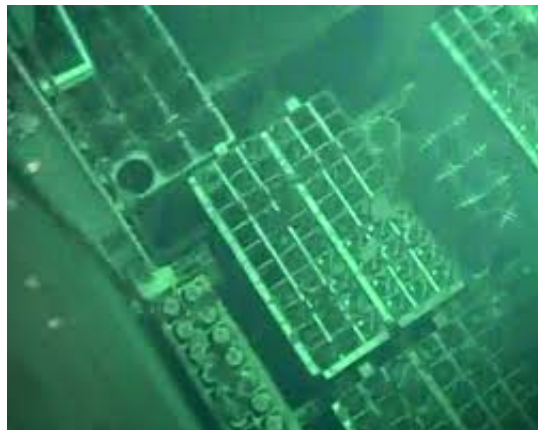
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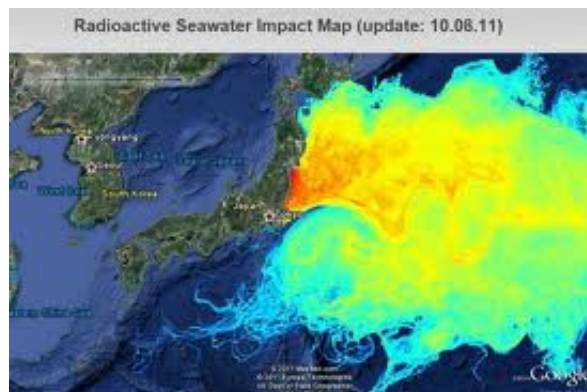
Nuclear Nightmare

by Bart Golden - Saturday, May 31, 2014, 10:31 PM

The claim that Nuclear power is the answer to our need for clean power is sickening if you just Google Fukushima and look at the massive devastation that has now ended in site it is very likely going to destroy the Pacific Ocean ecosystem and leave it uninhabitable they are dumping hundreds of thousands of gallons of contamination into the Pacific Daily and they have no idea how to stop or even contain it



these are the fuel rods that cannot be turned off or contained



this is the radiation plume in the Pacific that is already affecting the Oregon coast and cannot be cleaned up or contained. Nuclear power is a horrible choice for this planet.

I did recently hear that they have finally managed to create a fusion reaction and that fusion power would soon be possible and it is supposed

top be safe and clean as opposed to the fission reactors we have today but who really knows. at this point we will be lucky if we can ever clean up the damager we have done.

That being said I know that I have never built a nuclear plant or a off shore deep well oil rig, it seems to me if we are going to be controlling the population maybe if we start with Bill gates and BP and the other huge polluters of our planet that would be the quickest way to eliminate the threat of destroying the environment instead of soft killing of the innocent poor people that have very little impact on the environment. That's a population control plan I would definitely support

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Extremes

by Austin Lawrence - Monday, May 26, 2014, 3:40 PM

The article does show an "extreme" view from one side, but so far, all of the replies have been arguing the exact opposite. Just like everything else in this class, I think there is a spectrum. There are conservatives who recycle because they don't like to waste anything, or because they can make a little extra cash by returning their cans and bottles. But, on the other far extreme side, I can see why some could be viewed as religious when it becomes their lifestyle.

Most of us agree that it is ludicrous to "worship a recycling bin," but the way I see it is environmentalists (I mean hard-core, crazy, fanatical types) worship the Earth. The recycling bins are a way to give their tithe to the world, just like money given to support churches.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Good point

by Jesse Flannery - Tuesday, May 27, 2014, 8:49 AM

Good point, there are "extremist" in all aspects of the world. I definitely jumped straight to this is absolutely ridiculous and skipped over the fact that, "Oh yea people can be ridiculous." I guess saying that they are ridiculous may seem a little judgmental, since they do have every right to believe what they want. Although if I see a super hardcore environmentalist praying to his recycle bin, I may laugh a little!

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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**Re: Extremes**

by Michael Brown - Thursday, May 29, 2014, 11:19 PM

You made a valid point in regards to fanatics doing their part to save the earth by using recycling bins. I have no doubt that there are people who worship the earth. I think tithing to a church of Christ and recycling are both legitimate things to do, but very different. I think tithing is more important than recycling. I throw cans in the trash unless it is convenient to do otherwise.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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**Re: Extremes**

by Austin Lawrence - Friday, May 30, 2014, 11:39 PM

I also think tithing is more important, but not all would agree with us on that. What I meant is that some may see recycling as giving back to the planet, similar to others giving back to a church that they want to support and keep alive. Although I normally would not compare the two because they are very different by definition, I'm trying to connect environmentalism and religion in a way that I can understand. The analogy works for me if I think of the earth as a temple of worship like a church or other building of worship. I don't personally think of it that way, I am just trying to view it from another perspective.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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**Re: Extremes**

by Michael Brown - Saturday, May 31, 2014, 7:25 PM

You do make a valid point!

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**Re: Extremes**

by Tran Nguyen - Saturday, May 31, 2014, 12:32 PM

I agree with you that it is a totally spectrum between people believe in the goodness and badness in human. On one end are people with the belief they can change the world with their everyday action, while the other end are people who just do it because other are doing it. And considered environmentalism as a religion, everyone should have a choice to choose their belief.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Environmentalism as Religion

by Tran Nguyen - Monday, May 26, 2014, 9:27 PM

The ad and the article definitely use the "green" lifestyle at the extreme level. Especially in the article when the author sarcastically compared it as a new religion. The truth is many people started to realize global warming is no longer a question of 'what is it?' but a question of "how long do we have until it will directly affect us?" ; therefore, they choose to make a change in their lifestyle, to save the planet.

The article describes vividly how some people can easily treat environmentalism as a religion, though the ad really took greenism to another level. Green police has absolute power in the society; they can go through your garbage, your car, and even arrest federal policemen for using styrofoam cup.

To me, a religion is a standard or belief where individuals find their peace and hope, while bettering themselves and giving back to the society. Based on this definition, to say environmentalism as a religion is perfectly fine; however, putting church and state together is a total mess. Religion shouldn't be forced on anybody, even though it could positively influence the society

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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Amusing, Yes!

by Thomas Stevens - Tuesday, May 27, 2014, 1:28 AM

It's making fun of environmentalists. Audi owners are generally well-off financially with an average annual income of \$183,601 and skew younger with an average age of 49.# If we can make an assumption that high income individuals, and yes \$183,601, is high income, than we can probably say that those people are fairly independent and for the most part unconcerned about following conventions that most people do not purchase diesel automobiles or be militant about recycling.

Looking at author and economist Paul H. Rubin we see several things, namely, he's probably conservative. A review of his [CV](#) reflects membership in the [Mont Pelerin Society](#), which while primarily is composed of economists, has since its inception been against the idea of collectivism. Why does he work at a college then, but I digress?

But, let's take a look at his points:

- *His claim that Earth Day "echoes" religious behavior.* Well, earth day does occur once per year, kind of like Christmas, but nobody I know is giving wasteful and unnecessary gifts that need to be returned on Earth Day.
- *Food taboos, instead of eating pork, greens are now common.* Looking at Professor Rubin's picture, he should probably be eating less pork and more greens.



- *No prayer, but people recycle.* Besides being the law, it also reduces the amount of materials into landfills. Additionally, reusing paper slows the harvesting of trees.
- *Belief systems with no logical basis.* As it pertains to nuclear energy, I agree with him. But, in the interest of full-disclosure, my late Father worked in the nuclear power industry and was partially responsible for the design of the [Seabrook Nuclear Power](#) plant which occurred during the 1970's and 80's. We lived rather well during that time period. There was a lot of money to be made during that era. The economic model was [cost plus](#), which meant that whatever it cost to build, plus additional profit, was passed on to the consumers paying for their future electricity. My Father, and his previous second wife took trips to Caribbean, on an annual basis; I didn't get to go, but I can assure you that there was money to be made from nuclear power. While nuclear power does have issues, every power source does; it does represent zero emissions and without the side effects to the environment that hydro does.
- *There are no temples.* This is something I would think Professor Rubin, as an Economist, should appreciate, in the interest of efficiency. The university is trying to lower the cost of collection by instituting a policy of self-sorting. In the olden days, people everywhere would just throw everything, and I do mean everything in one container. It is not efficient for the school to have a person standing at every collection point sorting every item that the Professor and the rest of his esteemed colleagues discard. U of O does have those people hired during Street Fair though.
- *Environmentalism is a proselyting religion.* Well, Professor when you worked for the US Government during the Reagan Presidency, according to your CV; you obviously didn't feel that way back then. Times change I guess, and as we learned in our current history class, conservatives do not like change.

One other point that you cite in your article is that "Darwin is taught in schools", being counterproductive, while claiming that climate change has not passed scientific muster. Why are most scientists, the ones not employed by oil and gas companies, convinced of its merits than?

I don't see environmentalism as a religion, I see it as a science, and you Professor Rubin do a disservice to science.

Additionally, I do not see the Audi commercial supporting environmentalism, I see it insulting it. That if you drive a "clean diesel", that you can whip around road blocks and be a sexy young man, all alone in your car. People do not have absolute rights to pollute. Incandescent bulbs are old and inefficient and should not be used. Plastic bags are killing aquatic life in the World's oceans and should not be used. Plastic water bottles should not be used. Lane Community College has banned the

sale of these items, as they are unnecessary. I bring a stainless steel canteen to school every day which can be reused hundreds of times, if I don't lose it. I can't argue about the water temperature setting, but some women, and men, might enjoy a partially naked, hot guy getting chased. Finally, who could not enjoy a guy legally resisting authority by racing past all those eco-unfriendly vehicles? They say a good movie has three elements:

- Property destruction
- Resisting authority
- Nakedness

The "Green Police" delivers.

#http://www.businessweek.com/magazine/content/10_20/b4178023174411.htm

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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Your Perfect 10, Post

by Kenneth Green - Friday, May 30, 2014, 10:13 PM

2010 Superbowl Ad. Who da heck won the 2010 Superbowl (without googling it?) Ravens? (I just googled it Saints.) I should have known that, love the city of New Orleans.

(Dude, one week I'm out of Lane forever so gross Cheap Trick related story only between you & me.) I have a band mikeygreenwithcertainanarchy.com (check photos) lived an amazing life, one wish before I die get undergrad degree. But a few years ago in San Diego, guitar player Ed calls me to help move a keyboard purchased by a paralyzed friend from Tod Howarth who played it with Cheap Trick among other amazing Rockstars in his career. Me & Ed are carrying it out and told, "That Keyboard was like an off-stage Bed." Two options. Drop it or decide to take a million showers after we get set it up in our friend's music room. Cheap Trick huge in Japan, I've actually been sterilized by the CDC because that keyboard posed more of a health risk than the Fukushima disaster Imao. When I hear Cheap Trick? Screw environmentalism, I go wash my hands.

Back to subject, you dismantle Rubin's parody point by point. But your most brilliant analysis includes the research of annual income of Audi Owners. The Affordable Health Care Act passed into Law in March 2010, after the Superbowl. This ad took aim at modern Progressive Law. It's amazing you

caught that fact, (even while I was washing my clothes and making fun of Cheap Trick as kareoke music.)

Perfect 10.

(Thanks for link to Joan Osborne btw, 7 time Grammy Nominee, only remembered for one cheesy song. As a Music Artist, I'd take that.)

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Environmentalism makes too much sense to be called religion.

by Amanda Daniels - Tuesday, May 27, 2014, 9:48 AM

I am a little skeptical of this article. I don't agree that environmentalism is a religion. I think the one thing that is important as you analyze the information is that there is a big difference in seeing environmentalism as just another form of religion, is that there are lots of positive things that can come from all different types of recycling, which are aim at helping preserve the Earth. Is the end goal of recycling paper to save trees really about planting less trees? Because it makes me think of the how we need to consume less as a society.

I also think that not eating pork on Fridays is a religious belief or ritual that has no actual health or other benefit, as to where eating vegan or vegetarian is actually beneficial to your overall health and contributes toward your quality of life.

Religion by design is meant to cause conflict between nations, countries, and between people. Another way you might look at environmentalism is that universally it is one thing that we all have in common and we should all do our best to preserve our plant for future generations, hell we need to take better care of it for our own generation honestly because the Earth is being polluted in catastrophic proportions that we are all going to be forced to live with. Unfortunately by the time society begins to actually comprehend the truly devastating effects caused by the pollution, there will be very little that will be able to be done about it.

I think the commercial was a little far-fetched, but hell even if I woke up tomorrow in this commercial it would make more sense to me to understand the point of the environmentalism and what there point and purpose is than it for me to understand those that blindly put their faith in to their gods' hands, which

makes really no sense at all to me.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Re: Environmentalism makes too much sense to be called religion.

S

by Robert Johnson - Friday, May 30, 2014, 5:42 PM

In a debate of whether environmentalism is a religion or not, your subject line makes a strong and convincing point to me, and it just makes good sense.

Environmentalism really does make to much sense to be religion, I would have to agree. Just believing in, and taking care of the environment, and living life in a way that supports that cause, does not imply religion at all. Religion can be complicated, and some of it don't make any sense at all to me. Protecting the environment is up to us all, and if we care enough, then we do are part no matter what our religion is or isn't.

Hopefully labeling any form of environmentalism as a religion, doesn't end up turning people against religion, away from conscious awareness of the environment, and simply do the right thing, help take care of the planet, it should make perfect sense to everyone, those who choose religion of some sort, and those who don't.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Environmentalism makes too much sense to be called religion.

S

by Kenneth Green - Friday, May 30, 2014, 7:24 PM

If we woke up tomorrow in the commercial? Hmm. I'm willing to bet you and me would end up at the same riot. (Geeze Louis, a borrowed Cheap Trick kareoke song over and over and over?)

But I like where you were going with religious observances that make sense compared to those that don't. Recycling makes more logical sense than Easter egg hunts or praying 7 times a day. You're framing an amazing 21st Century religious debate. Why shouldn't religious rituals have more actual real-time consequences?

Not sure religion was designed for conflict. I have heard a few good thangs, "Love your neighbor as yourself." "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." "Love your enemies." (But I do consider the fact even that dude rose from the dead and got the *&% out lol.) So maybe your right, if considering the Leaders and not the Founders. But I'm positive even Jesus would say, "Sun! not guns." Thanks for your post.

Sum of ratings: (1)

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No Matter if It Is A Religion - It Is A Responsibility

by Linh Tran - Saturday, May 31, 2014, 4:10 PM

I agree with your argument since I personally think environmentalism is not a religion as well. I think you made a decent point that the environment is the only thing that all people have in common because after all rather less of what we believe in, we all co-exist and living with each other in this one planet Earth (unless someone considers himself or herself as some type of goddess creature that lives somewhere in a fantasy world). We live upon our own consequences and also cast those consequences on other people. I think it is important for people to realize it is no matter of our believes on whether or not environmentalism is a religion but is a responsibility. We talk about “rights” in the other topic of the forum and I find those arguments fit well here also. Everyone has the right to practice his or her religion and to believe and not to believe environmentalism is a religion. As in the first of all amendments to the Constitution of the U.S., it is freedom of religion and people have the right to live and practice their believes. But that right also comes hand-in-hand with responsibility. No matter what, there is no way of living or practicing anything without this environmentalism since you are living IN it. A green, healthy environment, then, can also be the right for many people. Therefore, it is also our responsibility to preserve it for ourselves and our future generations.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Science and Religion as Oppositions

by Linh Tran - Tuesday, May 27, 2014, 10:08 AM

Throughout history, we have had many debates and argument over loose or strict interpretation and I feel that this time is another time definitions play the key role deciding which side people would choose on whether or not environmentalism is a religion. Religion is strictly defined as: “the belief in and worship of a superhuman controlling power, especially a personal God or gods” or “a set of beliefs concerning the cause, nature, and purpose of the universe, especially when considered as the creation of a superhuman agency or agencies, usually involving devotional and ritual observances, and often containing a moral code governing the conduct of human affairs.” On the other hand, Rubin took his stand on the loose interpretation of “a specific fundamental set of beliefs and practices generally agreed upon by a number of persons or sects” or “the body of persons adhering to a particular set of beliefs and practices.”

Personally, I find the strict definition of religion more fit to my set of viewpoints. Rubin argue for environmentalism to be a religion focusing on the fact

that “it provides its adherents with an identity,” which fails to convince me. I feel that there is more to a religion than just an ID. Not limited to religions, we can find identities in all sorts of things: gender identity, racial identity, ethnic identity, occupational identity, or class identity... People seek religion for superhuman explanations that science cannot provide, such as personal providence that we live. In such ways, religion and science comfort people in a totally different way – opposite way. In all, I just find environmentalism as a religion a bad analogy.

Many people with different religious beliefs easily accept and practice environmentalism logically realizing the benefits for their own good. For instance, being green has direct and down-to-earth advantage to personal health and finance. For example, we have established a large system of non-smoking campus responding the harm of second-hand smoking. Recycling cans or paper saves big money by reducing the cost of manufacturing from scratch.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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Re: Environmentalism as Religion

by Anh Nguyen - Tuesday, May 27, 2014, 12:58 PM

The argument of whether or not environmentalism is a religion is definitely not a new one and it typically takes one of two forms. Either it demonizes environmentalism as a false religion-and a menace to the speaker’s own true religion-or it ridicules environmentalism as “just” a religion, unfounded in science or fact. As in the article, Rubin showed us an extreme point of view toward this particular issue by clearly stated “some of the ways in which environmental behaviors echo religious behaviors and thus provide meaningful rituals for Greens...”

As my personal opinion, I’m a person with a neutral point of view toward religious believing, since I’m no religion, specifically. However, consider myself if I actually do believe in it, that “religion” word should be strictly defined. Rubin has a point. Environmentalism is, after all, somewhat like religion. It is driven by values, it has a culture, it has followers, and so forth. In contrast of, we could find many profound differences between environmentalism and an actual religion. Environmentalism is occupied with nature, not the supernatural, as in the meaning of religion: the belief in and worship of a superhuman controlling power, especially a personal God or gods. It does not worship nature; it just simply recognizes and respects the fact that if the condition of nature changes too radically, earth may become inhospitable to life. Many things can be considered nature among us too, but we can’t just live believing on it. (to be continued)

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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Re: Environmentalism as Religion  



by Anh Nguyen - Friday, May 30, 2014, 11:41 AM

(Continued) As the list of why environmentalism is definitely not a religion goes on (NRDC's article about whether or not environmentalism should be considered a religion), I can probably say, still in MY point of view, that environmentalism is not a religion - neither a true religion, a false religion nor "just" a religion. It is rather a rational, science-based response to dramatic and deleterious changes to the environment observed in recent decades - from mass extinction to desertification to climate change.

Many people would totally disagree with my point of view and still think of environmentalism as a religion; however, while this is still an issued that needed to be carefully investigated, researched, and made serious debate on, as for now, whether it is a religion or not is not the most important thing that we-human should be considered. We should rather believe that a clean, safe, and healthy future is worth working for, fighting for and, if necessary, making some compromises for. We should make it our top priority matter and work to achieve that belief.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Is The Onion A "real" News Organization?



by Kenneth Green - Friday, May 30, 2014, 6:45 PM

Joe did a masterful job framing critical thinking on this topic by making us watch the commercial and then reading the article. Both are parodies and you thought about it hard enough to form a good opinion, namely, who cares if it is a religion or not we have to deal with the fact 7.2 billion (and counting) humans are impacting our environment. I'd say I share your "belief," but if we dump crap in the water we can't drink it. That moves beyond the realm of belief into reality. (But it's cool your so nice about it.)

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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What If God Were One Of Us?



by Kenneth Green - Tuesday, May 27, 2014, 10:50 PM

The Commercial is hilarious. (I had to double-take Cheap Trick actually licensed their song for that Ad.) But Rubin's article has more to do with his opinion on the "Culture Wars" than it does with religion. And cultural Conservatives who believe anything to do with global warming, environmentalism, or just good stewardship of the Earth is

"demonic secularism," are exactly why young people are abandoning traditional religion in droves. I sat behind a Prius today with a bumper sticker: "Conservative Christian Gun-Owner/Not your typical Prius Owner." I dared not rear-end that guy! (Of course, if he jumped out of his car with a gun I could face the Pearly-Gates and tell Saint Peter, "Dude this is an insurance claim!")

The Eugene Law concerning bags is the dumbest attempt to legislate environmentalism but it has nothing to do with Religion. If plastic bags are outlawed only outlaws? What? Will evolve more arms than an octopus to carry groceries? It's craaZy but it's not religion. The incandescent bulb ban was a good idea, it saves energy, yet doesn't require single moms to deal with unruly kids while trying to decide how to carry enough groceries to feed them. Point, for every environmental problem solved it creates another (except for incandescent bulbs slam dunk better mouse-trap) and that's hardly religion. Environmentalists are just modern Earthlings trying to figure this shit out.

Yet there are a FEW religious people on the Conservative side of culture war, Rubin, who want to help. Just trust God, He made the Earth so obviously nothing he said about being good stewards of it, ever apply. Besides, the Lord is so much more concerned that you buy a gun.

And to the topic, why don't the truly religious people who claim to know God just give us the answers? A cure for cancer, how to harness fresh new sunlight for energy instead of burning dead plants? Or how to make a quick stop at a grocery store in Eugene.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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I don't think so  

by Thomas Stevens - Friday, May 30, 2014, 4:17 PM

You mean like this:

[Joan Osborne](#)

But, I don't really know. I think that people want a second chance at life, but while not certain of the lack of existence of "God", I can't disprove it. I guess that makes me an agnostic, and not an atheist. But, I do try to lead a good life. Unfortunately, some people prefer other people who have an edge on them, perhaps one needs to discount those people and look for the positive people to help fill the voids in their own life. I guess that people also want what they can't have.

Plastic bags are bad, but could it be that we are not disposing of them properly instead of just making and using them? Perhaps I am lazy in not wanting to clean out my kitchen and bathroom garbage cans from stuff such as used Qtips and dental floss, not sure how that can be reused.

I believe that many conservative/religious whackos think that "God" will take care of everything, that they have no responsibility to the environment. Not all religious people believe that, but many do. Professor Rubin does not like change. He likes the old days when the single garbage can was a cognitive shortcut for recycling, so he can think about all the other crappy things that he likes to think about.

Kenneth, I have enjoyed reading your posting this year, please keep doing it.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Religiously Environmental

by Bart Golden - Thursday, May 29, 2014, 4:59 AM

I think that its not so much what i know about rights but what I have observed with regards to religion and human behavior than tends to make me think that it will never be settled period. This is exactly where I believe the comparison between environmentalism and religion gets its strongest argument and that is the passion of those practicing. It's in the history of religion that I make my conclusion that it will never be settled not even by force or even death as religion with its bloody and violent past has never been settled. There are as many sects of religion as there are people to preach them. Many if not most willing to wage war in defense of Their beliefs. Not only willing to die but willing to kill for those beliefs. This may be the very reason that religion is dealt with in the first amendment one word comes to mind when dealing with any type of consensus with regard to either religion or environmentalism and the word is FUTILITY! So though I must conclude in agreement with professor Rubin it's with his conclusion not his evidence that I agree.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Practicing Religion as Environmentalism

by Robert Johnson - Thursday, May 29, 2014, 11:46 AM

I suppose anything that can be believed in, followed, and practiced could be thought of as a religion.

In the case of Environmentalism, I think it can be, and is practiced religiously by people and organization's around the world, who structure their lives, meaning, and existence around it.

In a democracy, to each their own belief. I personally do not consider environmentalism to be a religion, but more like a movement. Many people practice some form of environmentalism with out regard to religion at all, but because its the smart thing to do, and everything is becoming so recycle friendly, they go ahead and recycle because its an available and free option. In any case people have the right to call it religion if they want to.

In Paul Rubin's list, I think the comparison of prayer, to what Rubin calls Self-sacrificing rituals of recycling paper to save tree's, is really stretching it.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Re: Practicing Religion as Environmentalism



by Michael Brown - Thursday, May 29, 2014, 11:00 PM

I think you hit the nail on the head in your post. He really stretches it in a multitude of ways, but I suppose anyone could argue it is a religion. To the vast majority of people I know, recycling is just a way to do there part to keep the landfill down. I think recycling is a good idea, but I only do it if it is convenient.

Sum of ratings: (1)

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Don't drink the CoolAid!



by Kevin Wright - Saturday, May 31, 2014, 10:25 PM

The Green Police video is a good way to show how extreme environmentalists can be. The idea of a "Green Police" is something of truth today with the different tax breaks we get for going green. The different tax breaks the Government gives you for buying an environmentally friendly car, the trash discounts when you sign up for recycling, or installing solar panels to the roof of your house, these are all ways for the government to get you to take care of the environment and believe in the "Green Police".

I don't think religion would be the best way to define the green movement. I think that the green movement is better defined as a cult. So, there are many different types of cults and many different ways to define a cult. I found a few different definitions from Thefreedictionary.com:

a. Obsessive, especially faddish, devotion to or veneration for a person, principle, or thing.

b. The object of such devotion.

6. An exclusive group of persons sharing an esoteric, usually artistic or intellectual interest.

I think these two definitions are suiting for what environmentalism is about. You have the obsessed environmentalists, the cool environmentalists, and the people who are right in the middle of it all.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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Re: Don't drink the CoolAid!

by Kenneth Green - Saturday, May 31, 2014, 11:52 PM

Kevin, a cult? Why I love reading these forum posts, noone ever learns anything if only surrounded by people who agree with them. (Sounds like a cult.)

I tend to be in the middle of it all, I'd say I'm so old I'll be dead by the time it really matters but we all are, really. The scientific projections concerning the current destruction of our environment put catastrophe off at least 50-70 years. But isn't this a History class? Not ready to join a cult, but wow I sure wanna be listed in history as someone who cared.

Sum of ratings: (1)

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