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**Environmentalism as Religion**

by Joe Escobar - Friday, May 22, 2015, 10:59 AM

This forum thread is for Environmentalism as Religion posts and replies.

After studying the required materials, address the various questions. 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

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**Re: Environmentalism as Religion**

by Delaney Crook - Friday, May 22, 2015, 3:11 PM

After watching the Super Bowl Audi commercial and then reading the articles based on environmentalism and religion, my thoughts and views on "going green" and environmentalism were definitely challenged. At first I thought of environmentalism as just another fad that we Americans were in the middle of. I thought of it as similar to any other craze with food, clothing, or other products. However, after I was further informed on the topic my views began to change. The audi commercial had me entertained and amused, but it stopped at that. That was until I read the article about environmentalism and religion. Based on the definition of a religion, that it is

"a set of beliefs concerning the cause, nature, and purpose of the universe, especially when considered as the creation of a supernatural order" I can definitely see and agree with the idea that environmentalism is turning into a religion. When I go to a store and use a plastic bag, or drink out of a plastic water bottle, I feel as though I am breaking a law or committing a sin. This is because of the "religion" of environmentalism. Unlike other religions, I feel as though we are all forced into this belief system. With other religions and beliefs you can easily choose what to believe and what not to believe. You are not being constantly reminded of the different values and beliefs of different religions every time you go to the store, or do not recycle. Being a religious person myself, I understand what it means to have a set of beliefs and have a faith. That is why I feel that environmentalism is turning into a religion that we cannot simply avoid. I will be curious to see if this "religion" or "fad" continues as other religions such as Christianity, Hinduism and Muslim have, or if it is just another craze that we Americans get caught up in only to let it die out in a short period of time.

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**Re: Environmentalism as Religion**

by Norman Stolba - Wednesday, May 27, 2015, 9:19 PM

Being in green Eugene, I don't know if I'd say we are forced to be green. But I do believe we are socialized from the very beginning to be green. And I have noticed as we progress through time that being more of a green oriented person is

becoming more serious and more of the norm, at least in Eugene Oregon. I think one can simply avoid it, if he/she chooses to do so. Just observe, understand, and don't conform. But I do get where you're coming from. Most people are afraid to be different since the majority of the time they will be negatively judged/criticized as soon as they act differently.

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Re: Environmentalism as Religion

by [Nils Hagberg](#) - Saturday, May 30, 2015, 12:07 PM

I know and except the fact I define religion slightly different and that is by adding in religions worship something or higher power. When people talk about environmentalism I think of it as an attempt by people to make smarter decisions to protect and care for the earth we live on. Things like saving water, recycling and not creating new waste, and choosing energy sources that do not tamper with our earth's climate system. What is wrong with this? What's wrong with the fact of becoming more in tune and aware with whats around us? We all care a sense of ignorance to almost everything, and it is very apparent when it comes to our environment. It is a blessing to be living where we are. Though it is scary based on the fact that states are running out of water. Even Lane county was among 8 counties in Oregon recently to declare they are in a drought. Yes I am leaving room for debate of what is a drought, but such things are still not good.

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Re: Environmentalism as Religion

by [Norman Stolba](#) - Saturday, May 23, 2015, 1:17 PM

Before watching these videos and reading these articles I would've considered myself an environmentalist. My friends would always litter when we'd hang out outside, and I remember at times I'd have to pick up after them. But that's more because I care about our world and did it out of good faith. But now after watching and reading these videos/articles, I had no idea it was being compared to religion. In my opinion, I believe the evidence being displayed here for examples/comparisons of environmentalism and religion, such as the pictures following the articles, is more of extreme environmentalism. I believe the majority of these issues can be solved with good education. The more students that are aware of these things, the easier it is to come up with a logical and peaceful solution. Using force/punishment for these issues seem to rarely work. If you were to use force/punishment, do you really think that these religion based like environmentalists would halt their activities? If you throw a christian in jail would he/she stop believing? I do believe that on the extreme side, environmentalism is slowly becoming a religion. But this depends on the person, because one could also simply view environmentalism as someone who cares about and protects the environment, like myself. We should approach environmentalism based on education via science, logic, and reasoning. I truly don't understand somebody who praises the globe yet rejects nuclear power. One must understand first, in order to solve. So in conclusion, I do believe that these issues can be resolved peacefully, mainly through good education, but who knows, if these issues get way out of control, we may need to consider different approaches. It would be interesting to see if extreme environmentalism ended up being as big of a deal here in the U.S. such as christianity. Although some of the examples were accurate, it doesn't necessarily mean that environmentalism as a whole is becoming a religion. But I definitely understand both sides of the story.

Remember, correlation doesn't necessarily mean causation.

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Environmentalism religion in a school setting

by [James Haynes](#) - Monday, May 25, 2015, 11:39 AM

After seeing the Audi commercial it made me laugh. The commercial reminded me of just how crazy people are and the

extent they will go to make someone believe in the same things that they do. It is outrageous to think of environmentalism as a religion. I recycle when I think about it and I try to be as environmentally friendly as possible but I don't try to push my beliefs off on others. Schools all over have several different things about being earth friendly and how we should recycle. People come to our classrooms at the beginning of every term and we are forced to listen to them preach about recycling. If environmentalism is a religion then why is it allowed to be voiced in schools and other religion is not?



Environmentalism - Enviro-Religion... by Red_Square

Zazzle

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Re: Environmentalism religion in a school setting

by [Delaney Crook](#) - Monday, May 25, 2015, 11:03 PM

I find your analysis of environmentalism as a religion in schools very interesting. I definitely agree with your idea that if environmentalism is in fact a religion then it should be treated as other religions are and not allowed to be voiced in schools. This is why I am led to believe environmentalism is not a religion. I do however see how environmentalists can create this sense of religion with how they portray themselves and their beliefs. I feel as though environmentalists are much more extreme in the sense of forcing their actions and beliefs onto others compared to other religions and religious people. As you explained with the schools, we do not look around in public places and see signs of Christianity or other religions constantly. Occasionally there may be someone preaching or promoting their religion, but with environmentalism we are constantly surrounded by and forced to take part in environmentalistic actions.

Sum of ratings: 2 (1) 2

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Re: Environmentalism religion in a school setting

by [James Haynes](#) - Thursday, May 28, 2015, 6:31 PM

I agree environmentalism is not a religion but it meets all the specks of what a religion is built on. I am not a religious person but I believe everyone should be able to celebrate their religion or what they believe in no matter where they are. The video we watched in class about JFK for example he was a Catholic but his religion had nothing to do with his decisions as president of the United States. I feel that people shouldn't be condemned for celebrating their religion in a public setting as long as they are not forcing their beliefs on others.

Sum of ratings:1 (1) [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)**Re: Environmentalism religion in a school setting**by [Anna Goodrie](#) - Saturday, May 30, 2015, 10:48 PM

I totally agree with you! I think it is a huge stretch to say that environmentalism is a religion. I think it is interesting that you say that you are reminded of how crazy people can get when they are forcing their opinion on others because I come from a religious background and I think religions have held back a little more with trying to influence people. What I mean is that you don't see a lot of commercials saying come join our local church, but with environmentalists you'll see commercials saying that we need YOU to be more "environmentally friendly" so you should buy this water bottle made out of less plastic than other companies. Its absolutely crazy. Realistically you should just not buy a 24 pack of water and just refill one. So as to your question schools shouldn't be selling themselves as environmentally friendly and it definitely shouldn't be considered a religion.

Sum of ratings:1 (1) [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)**Re: Environmentalism religion in a school setting**by [Daniel Schulman](#) - Saturday, May 30, 2015, 11:03 PM

To someone is isn't able to recognize the underlying matter, I feel they perceive the matter from a science viewpoint. I feel allowing a religion such as Christianity or Catholicism is far more lethal than environmentalism due to what content the two are rejecting. I only say this because I was forced to go Catholic and Christian schools growing up, and countless times had beliefs shoved down my throat as if it were science. If I wasn't able to see around it and question it, I question to this very day how I would have turned out, and the thought actually scares me. I feel it's bad to force any students below high-school, who really can't think for themselves for the most part just because of maturity, being more susceptible to absent minded beliefs.

Sum of ratings:1 (1) [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)**Defining Environmentalism as "Religion": a danger to the cause**by [Jesse Bowman](#) - Monday, May 25, 2015, 4:10 PM

I think it was very appropriate to phrase the question with quotations around "rights". I say this because I believe that our inherent "rights" are a fluid concept that changes throughout time with shifted perceptions

I'll start off by agreeing with Michael Crichton when he stated that environmentalism "should not be a [fundamental] religion". He supports his statement by explaining that if environmentalism were to become a religion the people involved would be unable to "be flexible...try new things...say that they're wrong... do research" and most importantly change their perception when new evidence is discovered. If we look at the second definition of "religion" which states that religion is "a specific set of fundamental beliefs and practices generally agreed upon by a number of persons or sects", we can understand how the idea of an environmentalism as a religion is at odds with Crichton's idea of environmentalism as a movement that uncovers more knowledge rather than a religion that sticks to it's "unchanging" fundamental principles. In light of this, I do not think that environmentalism would be just as a religion because it relies on an ever changing acceptance of new science and discoveries which lies in opposition to the definition of fundamental religion.

In regards to the questions put forward asking how these issues can be resolved I think all 3 elements should be involved: Education, legislation, and prosecution. For example, I would say that it is not considered a religion to believe in equality yet it took more than just education to resolve the issues of inequality (to an extent, I understand the issues are still very prevalent today, I would argue just less so.) It took the 13th, 14th, and 15th, amendments, it took the overturning of plessy v. ferguson by Brown V. Board of Education (L.E.P, 968-968), it took the Civil Rights Act of 1964 & and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (985-986), it took prosecution of individuals and towns who refused to cooperate in this new set of beliefs shared by a majority of the people in America. In order to shift the perception of these issues in attempts to help resolve them - all categories will be needed as tools of change.

Sources:

Definition of Religion - <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/religion>Sum of ratings: 2 (1) [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)**Environmentalism as "Religion"**by [Yanchun Deng](#) - Monday, May 25, 2015, 9:47 PM

I'm agree with Michael Crichton, as he said" that's not a good way to manage the environment. we need a scientific approach, we needed non-religious approach, we need a way to loo at this and do better than we've done." People should not to do too much interference environment. "Once you from science and technology and with religious passion for environmental protection, people will suffer," the university of California, Berkeley (UC Berkeley), the director of the environmental health science center at the brookings Robert n. Ames (Bruce n. Ames) said. He also points out that in the analysis of pesticides and toxic chemicals properly before they attacked the them, will improve those such as fruits and vegetables is beneficial to promote a healthy price of the product, so as to endanger the life of the poor. Liam is is "global Summit conference in Rio DE janeiro in 1992" (1992 Earth Summit in Ri) signed on the initiative of one of the 46 a famous scientist. The initiative, cautioned that an opposition to scientific, industrial and emerging absurd ideology of economic progress. So environmentalism as religion is a terrible thing to do. we should according to the scientific method to protect our environment.

Sum of ratings: 2 (1) [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)**Environmentalism Considered a Religion?**by [Kylee O'Connor](#) - Wednesday, May 27, 2015, 4:53 PM

I found the articles and videos very interesting because I have never once compared environmentalism to religion. I have always considered an environmentalist a person who cares about the environment and does certain things in daily life to help conserve it. At first, I thought that it was ridiculous and crazy for the man on CSPAN and the writers of the articles to think of environmentalism as religion, but after reading the articles and listening to the video, they changed my mind a little bit. They made a lot of good points and comparisons to create a compelling argument.

Although environmentalism could be considered as a religion, I still believe that nothing should be changed regarding sustainability and the continuation of preserving the environment. George Will, from the Washington Post, stated: "hundreds of millions could be saved, with no cost to any institution's core educational mission, by eliminating every position whose title contains the word "sustainability". Even though money could be saved, we shouldn't get rid of sustainability programs. No matter what environmentalism is considered, whether it be religion, philosophy, ideology, or social movement, it is something that should continue to be prevalent throughout society to take care of the Earth. I wouldn't quite consider myself an environmentalist, but I am definitely in favor of recycling and the use of reusable resources.

After first watching the Audi commercial I didn't think much of it other than the fact that it was funny and entertaining. After listening to and reading about the consideration of it as a religion, it made me think a little more. If you think of it as a religion, the commercial makes environmentalism look very over-bearing, forcing, and strict. "Think like an environmentalist or be arrested," was one of the thoughts that went through my head. "You have no choice to what type of light bulb to use, what you can or can't throw away, and what type of container you can drink from." A simple commercial that is meant to be funny and get a point across, can underlyingly mean so much more.

Sum of ratings: 2 (1) [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)**Self Awareness**by [Nils Hagberg](#) - Wednesday, May 27, 2015, 7:21 PM

Looking at the video with Michael Crichton I agree with him in the sense we need to do things about our environment. The answer is having different entities playing a roll to fix the issue. The government should step in to ensure companies at least are doing their part, but as well it is upon us people to do ours as well. I don't see environmentalism as a religion, but a

conscious way of fixing the issues that plague our home... Earth. Think in an environmentalist way is a good thing. It's healthy for people to find some code of conduct to live their life around. It allows them to feel good about themselves because they know they are making healthy and good decisions. Now it is bad when one allows them self to be engulfed within it. At times they may be going to far with their form of belief, and or begin to block out information that is more beneficial then what they previously knew. Simply how I see it, there is only one planet I want to live on and its earth. If we don't fix our ways we will not have some where to live, and that is not the future I want to head towards

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Re: Self Awareness

by [Delaney Crook](#) - Thursday, May 28, 2015, 1:29 PM

I agree with and like your ideas that we should all take pride in taking care of the one planet we have to live on. But, I also like how you included the idea that it is bad when an individual takes this idea too far and becomes engulfed in it. I believe this is when some may think of environmentalism as a religion. When environmentalists take their beliefs too far they begin to base their entire life around these beliefs and only live based on the idea of environmentalism, as many people do with their faith and religion. Some environmentalists also take things too far when they begin forcing their beliefs and actions upon other individuals. Finally, I agree with your thought that each part of our society needs to do its part in saving our planet. Just like with any other issue in our society it takes individuals, large groups, and the government to contribute. Whether environmentalism is considered a religion or not, it takes every one to ensure the health of our planet.

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Re: Self Awareness

by [Yanchun Deng](#) - Saturday, May 30, 2015, 5:11 PM

When I arrived at Eugene, it suprised me because it is very beautiful. I have never seen a green city like eugene. In my hometown, the sky is gray, and the air pollution is a very serious problem. But eugene's sky is very blue and the air is very fresh. and all we saw is green. So that means Eugene's enviromental protection is pretty good. It is a symbol of enviroment protection. we should protect our earth because we only have one earth. but sometimes we should use the professional technology and sicientific tools to protect it. we can't just become a religion of enviromentalism. it is a crazy thing to do.

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Re: Self Awareness

by [Daniel Schulman](#) - Saturday, May 30, 2015, 10:55 PM

My exact observations as soon as I arrived being I'm from a densely populated state, in the area I lived in at least. I can completely understand after moving after why the environmental movement is much stronger in Oregon, I wouldn't want to lose the green landscape, losing it's natural beauty. Once it becomes a true religion, it will be manipulated for other purposes, but it probably already has been.

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Environmentalism as a religion

by [Connie LaMorte](#) - Thursday, May 28, 2015, 4:12 PM

Of course, environmentalism can be a religion. You can worship anything as long as it suits your needs, religious freedom was one of the reasons the founding fathers came to this country. The American Indians were some of the very first to worship the environment. They call this pantheism and it is defined by wikipedia as a doctrine that identifies God with the universe, or regards the universe as a manifestation of God.

"There was a widespread belief in a Great Spirit who created the earth, and who pervaded everything. The Indians viewed

the white man's attitude to nature as the polar opposite of the Indian. The white man seemed hell-bent on destroying not just the Indians, but the whole natural order, felling forests, clearing land, killing animals for sport. Wisdom derives from way of life, and is as fragile as nature. Many Indians shared their animism, their respect for nature and their attitude to the land with other hunter-gatherers."

<http://www.pantheism.net/paul/history/native-americans.htm>

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Re: Environmentalism as a religion

by [Anna Goodrie](#) - Saturday, May 30, 2015, 10:29 PM

I was really intrigued by your analysis. I am torn between agreeing with you and disagreeing. Here is why. I don't believe environmentalism could be a religion, but what do environmentalists "worship?" I understand that you are saying that Native Americans worshiped the environment, but they were worshiping Gods. Modern day environmentalists don't necessarily have Gods that they recycle for. Native Americans had a great respect for the earth and created their religion for their beliefs, but that isn't the case for today's modern tree huggers. I'm not saying there is anything wrong with trying to do your part to "save the planet" but I wouldn't go as far to say that it is a religion.

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Re: Environmentalism as Religion

by [Chaofan Huang](#) - Saturday, May 30, 2015, 6:44 PM

As more and more believers will protect God's creations as a sacred cause, they are given the once no religious environmental movement with a new look. Religious slogan as clear among environmentalists: "God created it, we protect it, it's that simple." "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, subdue it. Have dominion over the fish, the birds of the air and ground actions of living creatures." According to Genesis records that God commanded the Adam. Naturally dominated by the concept of human nature is still deeply rooted in the minds of some believers, including many efforts on the trees and other natural resources and people living. However, many theologians positive references to other biblical texts to evoke God's creation of human life other exhibit a greater degree of respect and responsibility.

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Is environmental a religion?

by [Katherine Potter](#) - Saturday, May 30, 2015, 6:49 PM

After watching the videos I was surprised because I never once considered it a religion. I'm not going to say it is or isn't a religion. If the government tries to enforce it then it cannot be a religion. Because government is separate from church. Being green is a choice even though we kinda do worship it. We have a day for being green we have different containers for each type of waste. In a way we are happy to say that we are green. I would personally not consider it a religion but a choice to live a happier life.

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Re: Is environmental a religion?

by [Kylee O'Connor](#) - Saturday, May 30, 2015, 9:32 PM

I had never considered environmentalism as a religion ever either. Like you said, I'm not going to deny that it is or isn't a religion; even after the video and articles, I am still a little skeptical (even though they did make some good points). If the U.S. did officially consider environmentalism a religion it would cause so many issues. All of the recycling programs throughout the nation might have to be removed from certain places because there are so many rules and regulations

regarding religious displays. As you stated, being green *is* a choice and it is a positive choice that can help the society overall.

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Re: Is environmental a religion?

by [Anna Goodrie](#) - Saturday, May 30, 2015, 11:06 PM

Even though I am against seeing it as a religion, the points made in the video were thought provoking. You make a great point. What would the government do if it was considered a religion? Just imagine all the universities that were calling themselves an environmental friendly school. They would have to turn into a religion based school, I wonder if instead of going to chapel like Jesuit schools they would have to do an environmental project once a week? Or track what they've recycled daily? Or completely give up all plastic products? Who knows, but do you think those Universities who were considered an environmental denomination would just be "environmentally friendly" or environmentally sustainable. As in would it just be lots of recycling bins or a no plastic, no car campus. How much is enough to be considered an environmentalist as a religious standpoint? I know this is a lot of questions but there would be so many if it actually was a religion. I am all for not being wasteful, but asking everyone who owns a gasoline care to not use it anymore might be a little unrealistic (no one is asking that but it is just an example).

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Re: Environmentalism as Religion

by [Daniel Schulman](#) - Saturday, May 30, 2015, 10:49 PM

I've never taken the idea of environmentalism as a religion, but having only moved to Oregon only 9 months ago the influence was heavier than I anticipated. I like the idea of doing little things that help earth and what not, but I can't say I'm green, being into cars and oil burners. I have yet to encounter an extremist, but if I did I would expect them to be extremely ignorant. Being ignorant by definition means uneducated, but I believe the crowds that are attracted to these propagandas are seeking some sort of fulfillment, or were raised religiously leaving them able to turn away to anything that may leave them offended. As far as it being solved, I do believe education would be the best way to solve the matter, as it is always when it comes to dispersing ignorance. I've never seen it as a problem as described by Rubin, but to see it's even gained a *national holiday*, and supports useless causes (only somewhat!), has a strict code and literally expels "members". And to see the photo of Earth Day next to Lenin's birthday was no accident, leaving me in awe. What I find interesting: we know or understand an unknown small percent of the cosmos. We/I understand and/or just as much about the world we live on and in today.

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Re: Environmentalism as Religion

by [Anna Goodrie](#) - Saturday, May 30, 2015, 11:24 PM

I don't think I could agree more to any other post on this forum topic. I have lived in Oregon all my life and so I thought hippies and being green was just the norm everywhere else as well. I mean even when I traveled to a bigger city like Portland or Seattle they were also pretty green as well. We don't know everything about the earth or what we do that affects it, but knowing a little bit on how certain things work like how plastic is recycled or how not driving your car a block away to the store might be good for your health and the environment. Obviously a person shouldn't feel guilty if they don't do that, but why not? People used to live off the land and now we live off of grocery stores. We might as well make ourselves feel better about saving the planet. The thing that I question the most about environmentalism is who is saying that we have to do all these things otherwise the earth will be destroyed? Where are they getting their information from? Why should people make theses decisions before learning all the facts.

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Re: Environmentalism as Religion

by [Katherine Potter](#) - Saturday, May 30, 2015, 11:37 PM



I agree we don't know who is giving us the information and who is telling us to be green but someone started it and those who choose to be green will follow. Personally I don't know if the earth is dying but just in case it is I will do everything in my power to make it healthy again even if that means recycling. Earth is my home and I want my children to live happy life's here.

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