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Environmentalism as Religion
by Joe Escobar – Friday, May 20, 2016, 9:17 PM

This thread is for discussions on the Environmentalism as Religion topic. 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, something that describes which question(s) you are addressing . Do NOT simply leave it RE: Environmentalism as Religion

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Hilarious commercial, still not a religion
by Lauren Collett – Sunday, May 22, 2016, 9:01 PM

First of all the commercial IS hilarious and I had never seen it before.

Second of all I did not like that article at all. I agree people that are very green can be a pain in the ass. A lot of times it feels like they are telling you how to live your life. I get it.

On the other hand recycling IS important. The more we recycle the less our landfills fill up and the less plastics and trash end up in the ocean. When they do end up in the ocean it is killing our marine life like sea turtles, dolphins, whales and birds. There are Laysan Albatross birds dying everyday from eating plastic that they think is food. So yes those people are annoying but they have a point.

He talks about how recycling paper doesn't help which may or may not be true. Most articles I read say recycling does actually save trees and reduce waste and space taken up in landfills. There are other articles that say it simply takes away from the lumber industry which takes away job and also money for conservation of the forests. It says lumber is sustainable, which is partly true but nowhere do they mention that old growth forests are NOT. Clear cutting also creates a huge loss of habitat for animals in those areas which is also conveniently left out of the article.

I could go on all day and pick apart everything this man has said. Call me a hippie or whatever, hell I may be a part of this "religion" but the truth is it is NOT a religion. Earth day is not a holy day, that is a stupid thing to say. Christmas is a holy day. No where on earth are there Earth day celebrations comparative to Christmas or hell even Easter.

<http://www.twosidesna.org/US/Going-Paperless-Does-Not-Save-Trees>

<http://www.onegreenplanet.org/environment/marine-species-extinction-and-plastic-pollution/>

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Re: Hilarious commercial, still not a religion

by [Sara Baker](#) – Saturday, May 28, 2016, 3:42 PM

Your points are valid, and I enjoyed the commentary on the paper issue, which I had doubts about Rubin's statement in that area as well. What do you think would be a good way to strike a balance? Or do you agree and or believe we're heading into too dire consequences to be truthfully concerned at radicalism if it will preserve what is still remaining of the earth?

Sum of ratings: (1)

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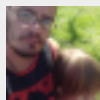
Re: Hilarious commercial, still not a religion

by [Lauren Collett](#) – Saturday, May 28, 2016, 9:05 PM

I think at this point it will be difficult to reverse the negative effects we've made on the planet but we could at the very least improve it. I think striking a balance will be difficult. Even with the strong evidence that global warming is happening we have a lot of people denying it. I would say it could be balanced by evidence that composting, recycling and driving less, for example, do help the environment. I think facts and irrefutable evidence will be necessary. Even if people can't get behind global warming they could at the very least see the effects it has on the animals right?

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Re: Environmentalism as Religion

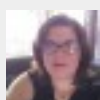
by [Shawn Jenkins](#) – Sunday, May 22, 2016, 10:46 PM

I have seen read or heard about many ideas and beliefs considered to be religion. My own Grandmother has been a Minister in a Presbyterian church for over 40 years. I have dabbled into quite a few of these myself at one time or another. My thoughts on the matter is that a belief in anything with the yearning to learn more about it could be a religion. Environmentalism as a religion?? Why not? Civilizations have worshiped many different things since the beginning of time. One of the beauties of living in America is the right to worship however and whatever we wish. Or to not worship anything. This conflict can never be solved because in order to appease one party you have to deprive another.

The environmental religion already exists and has for thousands of years. The web site Ancient-Origins can tell you all about Tengriism. <http://www.ancient-origins.net/myths-legends-asia/ancient-practice-tengriism-shamanism-and-ancient-worship-sky-gods-002387>

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Environmentalism is not Religion

by [Sara Kosydar](#) – Monday, May 23, 2016, 4:27 PM

Can these types of conflicts EVER be resolved, either through education, legislation, or prosecution? Can it be done peacefully/voluntarily, or will it end up being done coercively/punitively, as was done to the plastic, incandescent bulb, and styrofoam users depicted in the commercial?

I'm not sure if it can be resolved especially as science keeps proving and disproving theories and what is the best for us. Like we have discussed in class as well, if we make a law about recycling, composting or wasting less will it become a law that is enforced or not? and obviously these laws will make some people mad because to some people it could be a waste of time, money because of the new trash cans designating what can go in them and it may go against someone's beliefs. Some people don't believe in global warming and they won't appreciate these laws that are put into action. Remember when Eugene stopped using plastic bags? lots of people complained and got mad that Eugene was charging 5 cents per paper bag or having to buy reusable bags.

How does the strength of your own religious belief, or lack thereof, impact on your interpretation (acceptance or dismissal) of these materials?

I'm agnostic but am familiar to many religions and while looking at and reading the materials provided I do not believe it can classify itself as a religion unless the person recycling thinks of earth as a god. So I immediately dismissed recycling and environmentalism as a religion.



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Re: Environmentalism is not Religion
by [Aleethia Collins](#) – Thursday, May 26, 2016, 9:26 PM

I agree with you on the thought that conflicts around environmentalism will never fully disappear. With so much uncertainty about what is fact or not, it is difficult to know what is accurate and therefore conflict will remain present. Legislation for things like limiting waste and recycling will help make people who support environmentalism happy, though there will still be conflict present in how the law is enforced and the unwillingness to support it by people who are not in favor of new legislation. Even when people are educated with the facts on how to better the environment, there will always be some who will cause conflict over issues they don't agree with.

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Environmentalism Similarities and Differences to Religion
by [Aleethia Collins](#) – Monday, May 23, 2016, 8:46 PM

Environmentalism has continued to grow, with some taking a step further and treating it as a religion. There are many aspects of environmentalism that do draw strong similarities to religion. For instance, environmentalism has belief systems, self-sacrificing rituals, and holy days just as religion does. Another similarity is that in both cases people advocate for their belief and try to persuade others to join them. Such as, a person who is passionate about environmentalism is likely to tell others about what they're doing and how much a difference it can make, just like a religious person tells another the impact that religion plays in their life and the benefits that come with it. Even with these similarities I would not fully call environmentalism a religion, due to the fact that majority of environmentalists do not worship earth the way religious people worship their God.

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Re: Environmentalism Similarities and Differences to Religion

by [Nicolle Tapia](#) – Wednesday, May 25, 2016, 3:19 PM

I completely agree with people who are environmentalists they do try their hardest to persuade people who aren't die hard environmentalists. I remember I told my friend I couldn't be a vegetarian because I just grew up eating meat and my family's full of meat eaters and he began sending me videos of why I have to "convert" he actually used the word convert. And that stuck with me for this environmentalism because it's as if loving nature and mother earth hasn't become something that is full of love and peace but rather something that is basically kind of hateful which I know can relate to christianity and the thought of same sex marriage or transgender bathrooms and how people are not accepting of that at all.

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Washington to Oregon

by [Jonathan Axtell](#) – Monday, May 23, 2016, 10:42 PM

Growing up in Washington, we never really focused on the environment as a community. My family recycled, but most people didn't. When I moved to Eugene, I noticed how many people take recycling really seriously. When I saw the compost, recycling, and glass bins I was confused as to why there were so many in Eugene and none in Washington. After living in Eugene for a year, I understood how important recycling was to the community. Why do you think recycling is so confined to certain areas while others are completely uneducated on the subject? Do you think that political views influence the amount of environmental sympathy in certain areas (Eastern Washington republican vs. Western Oregon democratic)?

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Re: Washington to Oregon

by [Luis Montoya](#) – Saturday, May 28, 2016, 3:29 PM

That's really interesting to think about. I've also thought that recycling was at the same level nationwide. But I think recycling is confined to certain areas for many reasons. Many people don't want the financial expense of paying for a recycling service, or want to pay for the gas to commute to a recycling center. But due to so many compost, recycling, and glass bins around the Eugene area it certainly makes it easier. Additionally, people also reject the idea of paying extra for reusable items such as shopping bags. Recycling can also become an inconvenience, especially if you're having a busy day or are on the run. Some people don't even have recycling bins at home, and some cities or communities don't even offer a recycling service. So this forces some of them to take the time to research recycling centers in their area. Another reason could be the lack of knowledge or the confusion about recycling. Many people are misinformed about the urgency of the growing waste problem in the U.S. I also think that if your friends, coworkers, or classmates don't recycle then why should you?? I believe that creates an "out of sight, out of mind" philosophy.

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Environmentalism exists externally

by [Christopher Cockman](#) – Monday, May 23, 2016, 10:58 PM

I do not believe that environmentalism will ever be resolved until the day this earth actually dies. In that case, the environmentalists will finally say "I told you so" and then we as a society will fly off to Mars to recuperate. I believe that religion in it's essence is made to be controversial. There is no true accepted religion because the innumerous variations of creationism and belief systems are so diverse, much like that of human personality, that every human could find their own religion to follow. Intense concern for Earth is not a new concept. It is true that scientists now have found various ways that the immense amount of humans on this earth has negatively affected it, but even indigenous cultures participated in conservationism of the Earth. In this sense, environmentalism has been a religion for as long as Christianity and those big name religions of the sort. No matter the amount of human intervention, the Earth will die off naturally. So environmentalism will remain as long as there is an Earth to live on.

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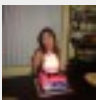
Re: Environmentalism exists externally

by [Nicole Tapia](#) – Wednesday, May 25, 2016, 3:35 PM

I am a Christian and it is hard to believe everything I have been taught since I was young so I do agree on the aspect that it is meant to be controversial. I completely agree with environmentalism staying around until the earth is alive because that is all environmentalism is. It is a bunch of people who praise the earth in an unhealthy way.

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Re: Environmentalism as Religion

by [Nicole Tapia](#) – Wednesday, May 25, 2016, 11:35 AM

I truly believe that this conflict will never get resolved just because there are so many studies coming out that truly believe that by recycling, by going to locally grown food to purchase your goods you are helping the environment. The problem with environmentalism is that it is not something that is “practiced” peacefully but rather it is pushed upon us that we need to save the planet. We are the sole responsibility for the earth’s drastic weather changes. It seems just like christianity where if you are not saving yourself for marriage or you are into the opposite sex, god hates you and will never forgive you yet christianity is about following a God who is loving and forgiving.

Going back on the comment that there is more than one trash bin for recycling on college campuses, I have noticed that in the dining halls both at UO and LCC. Living in Oregon I have realized that “being green” is something that is heavily preached here compared to my hometown of LA in California. And I do feel extremely pressured to make sure I recycle and if I don’t then all of a sudden I’m a bad person which is again similar to christianity. If I don’t go to church or youth night I’m looked at differently because I do not make my religion a priority.

What really caught my attention about the accuracy is that there is a “holy day” which is in April. It is a day dedicated to the earth itself and thanking it for the greatness that it is. Even people who aren’t into environmentalism, they are sucked into praising Earth Day. I remember in elementary school and middle school we had to wear “green or something with nature on it for Earth Day and if you didn’t you were questioned which is something that I never fully understood.

I think we are stuck in a society when no matter what you believe in, if you don’t believe in it heavily or preach it to the extreme you are seen as you are against it.

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Re: Environmentalism as Religion

by [Jonathan Axtell](#) – Saturday, May 28, 2016, 9:49 PM

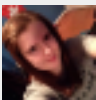
I agree that this conflict will never be resolved. Getting everyone to agree on ONE thing is almost impossible. I also understand where you are coming from with growing up in LA. When I moved here, I would almost never throw anything into recycling. When I hung out with my cousins for the first time since moving down, I

was helping them clean up their house and started tossing everything into the garbage. For a second I thought they were going to try to crucify me. I had to dumpster dive everything out of the garbage and put them into the proper bins. My roommates were the same way. Ever since moving I've felt pressured into being a better "environmentalist".

Growing up in a Christian household, I can definitely see where people compare it to Environmentalism. The only difference really is the weekly duty of attending an organized meeting. I've felt more pressure to become a better Environmentalist than Christian at times. If people start going door to door to preach being better about recycling, I might lose it.

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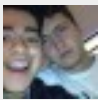


Education and Legislation
by [Aleethia Collins](#) – Wednesday, May 25, 2016, 4:39 PM

I feel that conflict will always be present with regards to environmentalism, though things such as education and legislation can help resolve some of the issues. Things like Earth Day help to educate the public to be more aware of hazards of environmental degradation. By people being more aware, it is more likely for them to make changes. Though even when people are informed that does not necessarily mean that the right actions will be made. This is why legislation is beneficial in making a change. President Nixon signed pieces of congressional legislation to help protect the environment and supported the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency. These brought forth significant change and improvement. Another example would be in Eugene where you now have to pay a five cents fee for purchasing a paper bag and can no longer buy plastic bags. By forcing people to no longer purchase plastic bags, waste is significantly decreased and in turn benefits the environment.

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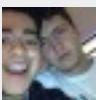


Re: Education and Legislation
by [Luis Montoya](#) – Saturday, May 28, 2016, 4:08 PM

When I first made my original post I wasn't leaning too much towards the legislation side but after reading your post I'm more for it. I agree that it can bring significant change. I believe the Clean Air Act of 1970 was also very important. This legislation authorized the development of comprehensive federal and state regulations to limit emissions from both stationary (industrial) sources and mobile sources. Although the Clean Air Act will always be a work in progress, there is no doubt that it has saved countless lives throughout the years. Especially with reducing carbon monoxide related deaths.

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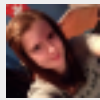


Going "Green" for Religion
by [Luis Montoya](#) – Thursday, May 26, 2016, 9:21 PM

I don't think these conflicts will ever be resolved completely but with the proper education and awareness I think it might be manageable. Also being able to spread it to other people who might not have the particular education would help as well. I don't see legislation or prosecution being a possible resolution. If anything I think it would bring even more conflicts. Having it be done peacefully or voluntarily is definitely doable as long as people are willing to accept it but coercively/punitively?? Not a chance. I honestly can't see anyone putting batteries in the trash by accident and being fined or arrested for it. I've looked at two other articles other than this one describing environmentalism as a religion and they all seem to align with the same points. Such as science not being able to prove or disprove the existence of God and people who would rather be considered "Green" rather than Christian, Jewish or Catholic. Putting religious beliefs aside I believe the world has genuine problems and I believe it can and should be improved but deciding what constitutes responsible action is very difficult.

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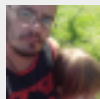
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Conflict will remain
by [Aleethia Collins](#) – Friday, May 27, 2016, 8:52 PM

It is pretty hard to imagine the conflicts surrounding environmentalism to ever fully vanish. Just as there are people who passionately support it, there are also those who feel quite the opposite. These people feel that humans are not causing as much damage as environmentalist think and that the world will be fine without major changes occurring. People who support environmentalism want to see changes in bettering the environment. Though with some against it and others uneducated and not wanting change, it becomes difficult to enact major changes to improve the environment. Laws can always be passed, but unless they are strictly enforced the right change will not occur.

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Re: Environmentalism as Religion
by [Shawn Jenkins](#) – Saturday, May 28, 2016, 12:18 PM

free·dom of re·li·gion
noun
noun: **freedom of religion**

1. the right to practice whatever religion one chooses.

So exactly what is the debate?? If i choose to worship a sewer cover I have that right.

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Green is the New Creed
by [Sara Baker](#) – Saturday, May 28, 2016, 2:22 PM

Anything can be a religion; or that is what author Rubin is arguing in his article “While People have Worshiped Many Things, We May be the First to Build Shrines to Garbage.” On a personal note I both agree and disagree with Rubin’s points. Let’s first talk about his summary of the Christian faith (and parts of the traditional and messianic Jewish faith.) I think it’s both sad and counterproductive when talking about religion and creation to put things in a box, and by his statement “the biblical bible story is scientifically incorrect.” (Rubin) has done so. His statement is laughable at best and purposefully misleading at worst. If we are created beings, then why should our creator play within the confines of our own limitations and understanding? In reality we know little about ourselves in comparison to what we don’t know, in addition to the fact that as the years and decades pass we have often found what we thought we knew to be truth, was in fact completely wrong or far too inadequate an explanation compared to what the “modern human” has. Is “Greenism” becoming a religion? Yes, in the form of human worship it has been so for centuries. Look at the Native American beliefs and religious sacrifices etc. They worshiped the earth, like Greenism does today. The only difference really is the holidays and content of the shrines being built. So yes, Greenism is a religion. Should this be anything new to us? No. The questions of how far it will progress and what consequences it will have (both good and bad) remain to be seen. My own beliefs shadow and give me a bias on what the article discussed, but in the same way someone who believes in nothing or who is lacking in faith of any kind would be biased, we’re just at opposite ends of the spectrum. I also think it's hilarious that he mentions the shrines of the garbage cans, though looking on campus one can see his point. However, it could also be argued that extreme circumstances call for extreme actions. Scientists may not have the whole story, but we can see and be concerned about the rapid, and mostly bad, changes we’ve seen in the last fifty to a hundred years. While we may not have all the answers, it is common sense to use the resources already present rather than pull them out of thin air or stripping them from the earth. So while I agree that it is turning into a religion of sorts, I also think that some of their points are valid, and ones in which we are already beginning to see the consequences of our lack of action today. Again, will the consequences be ultimately good or bad is still yet to be seen.

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Environmentalism as Religion???
by [Connor Miller](#) – Saturday, May 28, 2016, 2:59 PM

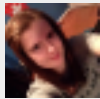
I'll be totally honest, the article made me chuckle. I get that we should protect the environment, that we should recycle and compost and stuff, especially in Eugene.

I also respect the right to worship what you want or who you want. That's one of the main foundations of our country, freedom of religion.

But environmentalism just seems...like it's pushing it too far. Skeptics are treated as evil sinners? Recycling bins are sacred structures? There is no logical basis to the system of belief? It's laughable to me. The environment is something we should protect, but not worship. The environment doesn't care if you build a sacred structure or not, the wheel keeps on turning regardless of what we humans do. So i don't understand the point of going too far when it comes to protecting the environment.

But, if I've learned anything after living in Eugene, it's that when someone presents you with a crazy belief or idea of theirs, the best thing to do is to say, "Hey man, whatever works for you," and keep going about your day. Because of that, the environmentalists can call their beliefs a religion or not, it doesn't affect me.

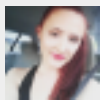
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Re: Environmentalism as Religion???
by [Aleethia Collins](#) – Saturday, May 28, 2016, 8:51 PM

I agree with you that Environmentalism should not be called a religion. It may have some similar features to religion, but I feel as though it is more people’s passion and interest rather than their religious belief system. I also agree with you on the fact that people are taking it too far. It is good for people to want to help better the environment, and be educated on the proper way to do that. Though it seem like overkill to treat those who wish not to participate as “evil sinners”. This is not even the case in many religions, where they are told to respect and tolerate those with different beliefs. I believe environmentalism is a good thing, though it can also be taken too seriously and cause conflicts.

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Re: Environmentalism as Religion???
by [Lauren Collett](#) – Saturday, May 28, 2016, 9:28 PM

I agree with you the article also made me chuckle but we do indeed have freedom of religion. If someone in Eugene started practicing environmentalism as a religion I would not be shocked after growing up here. It also hasn't been mentioned yet but I'm pretty positive there are already religions that worship mother earth or nature in general. Not the same as being green as a religion but up the same alley at least.

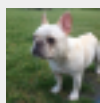
The environment is definitely something we should protect though, like you said.

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Environmentalism As A Religion
by [Meghan Jacinto](#) – Saturday, May 28, 2016, 4:49 PM

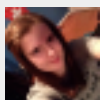
Some accurate parts of this article were the points Paul Rubin made when he described which environmental behaviors echoed religious behaviors. Rubin proves valid points, but you can also argue that anything can be considered a religion (veganism, for example). You can call environmentalism whatever you want, since we do have the right to free speech. If one wants to think environmentalism is a religion, rather than an ideology or philosophy, then it’s their personal preference. Furthermore, realizing the earth's resources are not infinite and that we have a duty to conserve and protect the planet for future generations just seems to be common sense. Overall, the strength of my own religious belief doesn’t influence my interpretation of this article, but I do see environmentalism as being a “secular” religion with no religious or spiritual basis attached to it.



I didn't consider myself as a fellow of the environmentlist

by Ankstina Qi - Saturday, May 28, 2016, 5:43 PM

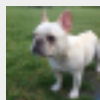
Based on the article, " some students will agree with Professor Rubin's claim that environmentalism is becoming a new, secular religion. Others students will not" (Rubin, 2010) I think these problems cannot be solved. It can not be done peacefully because there are too much controversial voices that come from different directions and people all have their own opinion. Some environmental issues probably gonna be done punitively such as Oregon banned the use of free plastic bags (Hunt, 2015) The article is accurate about comparing the religions and tribes and how it connected to the environmentalism. However, it is inaccurate about the rituals of the Greens. For example, not every environmentalists celebrate the Earth Day, and even some of them do, it is a voluntary process. As for me, I'm a vegetaria. However, I don't count myself as a fellow of environmental religion. I don't eat meat is not because I'm afraid of being punished by the invisible environmental God. It's purely because I don't like meat. Therefore, I don't think environmentalism is a religion.



Re: I didn't consider myself as a fellow of the environmentlist

by Aleethia Collins - Saturday, May 28, 2016, 9:12 PM

One point that you make that I agree with is that the conflict surrounding environmentalism can not be resolved peacefully. There are skeptics and people who simply do not support environmentalism and they will certainly not peacefully go along with major changes that environmentalists are seeking. Though it may seem far fetched, as depicted in the Green Police Audi Ad Super Bowl 2010 commercial. Punitive action maybe the solution to many of the environmental problems. People are more likely to do the right thing when they know there are serious consequences to them, rather than do the right thing simply because it benefits the environment. Though even with changes being made to better the environment, those changes still need to be strictly enforce to make a significant difference.



A picture of overthrowing environmentalism

by Ankstina Qi - Saturday, May 28, 2016, 5:53 PM

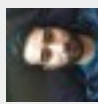


This picture shows that the Green Gas killed an innocent person, and this picture is showing that environmentalists are over reacted to the global warming. The purpose is for overthrowing what the

environmentalists believe. However, in my point of view, this cartoon is drawn by someone who hates environmentalists and trying to uglify them.

Sum of ratings:1 (1) 1

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Re: Environmentalism as Religion

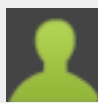
by Jesse Dunlap – Saturday, May 28, 2016, 9:51 PM

In order for us to take climate change serious there should be education involved if it is indeed as serious as its made out to be. We can inform ourselves all we want but some may find information that is not factual and cling to it. Knowledge brought in more formal and regulated ways based on science would definitely help people understand how they can be responsible environmentally. Legislation and persecution may come into play eventually, but many times it only creates resentment for rules and a rebellious spirit that will lead to a refusal to want to be educated. If legislation becomes necessary it would be hard to enforce and require many resources, resources that could be other wise used for building renewable energies.

In terms of us resolving this conflict it may come down to somewhere in the middle of voluntarily and forcefully. There are plenty of ways to educate people on recycling, or using renewable energy. The more appealing it sounds along with bring costs down can appeal to saving money parts of our brains. Showing how dirty other more destructive types of energy can be could be another way. However, some may not care and if the planet is indeed in peril of becoming a more hostile environment, force could be required to steer the boat back on to course. Which ever way it happens I feel it will need to be between the two poles.

Sum of ratings:2 (1) 2

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Religion or common sense?

by Zoe Latham – Saturday, May 28, 2016, 11:36 PM

I'm not sure if the person that wrote this article hated the idea of saving our planet or simply chose to demonize these practices. First of all, when you compare religion to something, one naturally puts a guard up, because they are systems of belief that one cannot find any proof to their existence. I do not think that it is fair to talk about something so important in this light. Religion always has room for someone to disagree based on THEIR beliefs. Recycling however is a practice and not a belief; in making it a belief than we create more room for skeptics.

Sum of ratings:1 (1) 1

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