

HST 203: U.S. History Sp19 (Escobar)

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Environmentalism as Religion
by [Joe Escobar](#) - Friday, May 24, 2019, 5:31 PM

This thread is for discussions on the Environmentalism as Religion topic.

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BE SURE to use an informative subject line for your post, which clearly describes the parts, pictures, and questions you are addressing. Do NOT simply leave it RE: Environmentalism as Religion

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Re: is Environmentalism a Religion
by [DAVID Welshman](#) - Sunday, May 26, 2019, 8:10 AM

I lost everything so I hopefully can explain this again.

Environment is not a religion, it is something to be protected, yes but not a religion. I was raised catholic by my mom and when I needed to do community service I taught religion classes. Looking at the photos it is clearer that its a lot of propaganda to make statements for the cause. The Wall Street journal article was interesting and does show have you could really view it as a religion. As does the air turbines as crosses. Lets really break it down though tribes worshiped gods they felt either ruled the earth in some way, or were responsible for things that did or didn't happen on earth. In the early centuries we had the battles against religion. People worshiped in hiding or were killed for their beliefs. So the photo stating save the planet kill yourself is outlandish, No one should make a statement where they suggest others kill themselves, its not appropriate.

After being in many others places, and seeing what it looks like to be in biblical times, I do believe in god. I also believe in science too. I know that there are things science states happened and there is no god, however when you have been to countries and seen what I have then you would understand. See science can help us with saving lives, it can also hurt us as a whole. Hopefully though we use science for good and not evil. If you look at most religions we see that they all have basic principles, that people believe in. I cannot say I believe the earth just happened by some accident.

Wars happened even back in the early centuries over religion, and there were killings too. I do believe that Darwin discovery of the plants and animals was amazing. Animals and plants that had not existed anywhere else lived on this island. But I do not think its a religion to accept that we need to save the planet by going back to cave man

days. Political agendas have made environmentalism the good or bad depending on what they are trying to let the citizens perceive them. See big companies pay millions of dollars to political parties, and because of that expect in return favors. Its been that way for years. If we want to save the planet, everyone on the planet would have to agree, this is not possible.

The article by Samuelson shows the complex issue of treating the environment as a religion. He talks about how politics plays a role in what is accepted and whats not because politicians want measurable things to show the public. They need to overall please the big companies that support political campaigns and on the other hand look to the public as being helpful. I think Trump not getting into that ring is smart. He does not need to please anyone in his view. Lots of the photos in this lesson were very propaganda like, the green with the red communist under it trying to make a point that if your not for the environment your a communist. An the image of the green flag with the nazi symbol also indicates this view.

What I feel should be looked at is how do we take our enivorment and make it a healthy place to live, some things we do are harmful I agree. Its a slippery slope though, because there are extremist who believe that their view is the only view, just as in religions. For instance the way many radical religions act in the world today. We need to have everyone come together but just like mentioned the light bulbs, plastic and styrofoam so they are now coming out with paper or metal straws or all together trying to get rid of straws. Ok metal straws gives you the option to clean and reuse them, neat idea. Paper straws just plane dumb, they if you have ever used on it not very usable. Eventually there will be no more plastic straws Im sure. See the National Geographic article on why straws are being banned. Every battle though draws a line that causes fights not peace between groups of people.

Our advancements industrially from WWII have helped push the world into new places, advances that yes have impacted the planet in some ways but we could use those advancements to create new ideas for new advancement to keep the planet healthy and us all grow. Only though if big companies and politicians work together and want what is best for the world we live in. But enviromentalism is not a religion its science. Religion is based on a god or gods.

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accurate and inaccurate parts of Rubins article
by [Kaylee Calvert](#) - Monday, May 27, 2019, 10:25 AM

One thing I found inaccurate about Rubin’s article was when he said, “There is no prayer, but there are self-sacrificing rituals that are not particularly useful, such as recycling. Recycling paper to save trees, for example, makes no sense since the effect will be to reduce the number of trees planted in the long run” (bullet point 3). I don’t agree with this statement because I do not find recycling to be self-sacrificing. I think he could have probably found something better to use for that comparison. Maybe like people deciding to not drive cars or something of the sort.

Another statement I disagree with in Rubins article is, “Belief systems are embraced with no logical basis. For example, environmentalists almost universally believe in the dangers of global warming but also reject the best solution to the problem, which is nuclear power. These two beliefs co-exist based on faith, not reason” (bullet point 4). I disagree with this statement because it is not knowledgeable. Although nuclear power may be a solution for global warming, it will cause even more economic challenges and environmental risks. I believe this is reasonable not just faith like Ruben states.

The two statements that I can somewhat see where he is coming from are, “There is a holy day—Earth Day” (bullet point 1) and, “There are food taboos. Instead of eating fish on Friday, or avoiding pork, Greens now eat organic foods and many are moving towards eating only locally grown foods” (bullet point 2). I agree with the first statement for obvious reasons, Earth Day is real and we celebrate it. I agree mostly with the second one because a lot of people are switching to organic foods, vegetarianism, veganism, etc., for the sake of the planet, although, there is a lot of people out there that do preach environmentalism and yet do not do anything themselves to help the cause.

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Re: accurate and inaccurate parts of Rubins article
by [Kaylee Calvert](#) - Thursday, May 30, 2019, 1:55 PM

I felt like adding a bit more onto why I disagree with the statement, "Belief systems are embraced with no logical basis. For example, environmentalists almost universally believe in the dangers of global warming but also reject the best solution to the problem, which is nuclear power. These two beliefs co-exist based on faith, not reason" (bullet point 4). I wanted to add more onto this because this statement is just so bizarre to me. Although nuclear power MAY be the best solution to global warming (it is not), why would anyone want to go right to that solution before trying every other possible solution that is out there? I believe people think environmentalists are so strange because not enough people partake in the solutions for them to make a huge impact that strikes the whole world and because of this people tend to undermine environmentalists and become someone like Rubin who writes non-sense articles.

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Re: accurate and inaccurate parts of Rubins article

by [Brayden Lane](#) - Thursday, May 30, 2019, 9:56 PM

In your first paragraph you wrote something very similar to mine using the same quote and I agree and believe its a bad quote. However what I thought was interesting was different comparisons such as driving or not driving cars. However as I stated in my response similar to his recycling opinion I think the comparison of cars to prayers or self sacrificing rituals isn't the same.

With the second quote you used id have to agree as well, it isn't knowledgeable. He states that they are both based on faith not reason but he said before that nuclear power is the best solution and of that's true according to Rubin that's not faith that's a fact. I also don't think environmentalist are rushing or even like the ides of nuclear power to be a answer. Nuclear power has its own problems such as Chernobyl and the effects of radiation seen after the two and only atom bombs dropped. Also what does the fact that environmentalists reject the solution of nuclear power have anything to do with belief systems of religion. To me it seems as if environmentalists reject the solution of nuclear power because it isn't a good solution and may be even worse for the planet as a whole.

Something I can agree with him is the comparison of a holy day to earth day, those can both be seen as similar. However with the second statement I believe to be false, he states "There are food taboos. Instead of eating fish on Friday, or avoiding pork, Greens now eat organic foods and many are moving towards eating only locally grown foods". Religious people avoid those foods such as pork for religious reasons but many people that avoid meat and eat organic foods for veganism aren't doing it to better the earth but better themselves. Another problem is see is religion only avoids those foods certain days or holy days while an environmentalist will often always avoid them, now maybe it can compare to a certain apart of religions such as avoiding alcohols other than wine but he didn't use that comparison.

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Re: accurate and inaccurate parts of Rubins article

by [Sebastian Garcin](#) - Friday, May 31, 2019, 12:39 AM

While I do agree that environmentalism isn't a religion, it is does share many strong traits with it. In your post you talked about how you disagree with the comparison of self sacrifice to environmentalism and how people (whether eating green or obeying their religion) aren't most likely doing it not to better the world but to better themselves. I do agree with this statement of yours to a certain extent. However in the part of how religious people only avoid certain foods on certain holy days isn't completely correct. Muslims for example are required by their religion to avoid anything with pork in it for their entire lives, so much so that any interaction with it is deemed as unclean. I am unsure if the U.S. military is still doing this, but in the past to take advantage of this pork fat was put into the gun oil, to make it "unclean" in an effort to stop muslim radicals (terrorists) from using it. Also stating that environmentalists will always avoid often always avoid a food or action that isn't green, isn't quite true either. Quite often their views on items or actions change over time due to new studies, experiments, etc., that create new "greener" effects, environmentalists effectively change with the times. You're not wrong in saying that some people are doing it to improve themselves rather than improve the world, and to some it wouldn't even be considered by themselves a self sacrifice.

You also talked about Chernobyl and how is a problem with nuclear energy. You are right about radiation problems caused from the dropping of the atomic bombs but Chernobyl is a bit of a special incident. It wasn't because of the nuclear reactor self that caused the incident would rather the actions of the humans there. Russia hasn't been known for its safety restrictions and the Chernobyl incident was caused by a test performed without preparations or thought buy some technicians. They shut down all the power including the backup to the nuclear reactor causing the Meltdown and in the end the radiation exposure. Nuclear

energy does have some problems but it also is a big step into clean energy, it's not so much nuclear energy that the problems stem from but rather humans using it inappropriately and without thought. Just going from the science standpoint nuclear energy can be extremely useful because after it's used at the case eventually the uranium 235 that's used for nuclear reactors will eventually Decay into plutonium that can then be reused. Nuclear energy has been proven to be much cleaner then fossil fuels but we do need to do is find a way to take care of the waste in a more environmentally friendly way. But if the argument is that it has such a bad effect on the environment then we need to first look at it the main current sources. Most people jump to cars and carbon emissions and while the carbon emissions part is true the cars aren't the biggest source. Cows produce many tons more of greenhouse gases then cars do.

Environmentalism is a pretty difficult issue, because every so-called solution isn't agreed-upon by everyone which is to be expected.

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Re: Environmentalism as Religion
by [David Pineda](#) - Monday, May 27, 2019, 7:41 PM

The article written by Rubin I think tries to put a label on something that doesn't necessarily need to be labeled. I think believe the way he compares the aspects of being environmentally conscious to specific parts and pieces of religion is in accurate. Especially the way he talks about belief systems. eh says environmentalist don't agree with nuclear powers based purely on faith and not reason, just like how other people believe in religion. I think that statement is both inaccurate and disrespectful to those who know about how nuclear energy works and to those who are dedicated to a religion. The Greenpeace movement clearly states on their website that nuclear power is more dangerous and expensive, and that just because its invisible in pollutions eyes, it is not the best option for the environment (<https://www.greenpeace.org/usa/global-warming/issues/nuclear/>).

Growing up my family was very catholic but I have distanced myself from religion because I felt having that aspect in my life was more disruptive than helpful. I dow however understand that others hold religion very near and dear to their hearts and I try to respect that as much as possible. Which is most likely why I am quick to dismiss the claims made in this article. Because I think he's almost mocking those who have faith by comparing their religion to something that doesn't have the same impact on people. I do think that everyone should be conscious in trying to save the earth and do what's best for the environment but I don't think it should be worshipped as a religion.

What is somewhat confusing to me is the purpose of his article, because if it is to gain support for environmental acts I think it's failed. By comparing environmentalism to religion I think all he does make those who are deeply devoted to their faith reject the ideas of being green. Perhaps he was trying to use it as propaganda.

Each of the images used have different affects on the way people might interpret them. the first image just by purely looking at the cover may help connect those who hold religious beliefs to also being environmentally conscious, including the second image I believe they have about the same impact on the way they might be interpreted.

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Religiously Environmental
by [Kaleah Holmes](#) - Monday, May 27, 2019, 9:42 PM

Right in the first sentence "Many observers have made the point that environmentalism is eerily close to a religious belief system, since it includes creation stories and ideas of original sin." So I would say Rubin's article is accurate in describing environmentalism as a religion. I thought it was interesting how Rubin compared religion and being Green. He did this by using certain religious days and rituals, and relating them to Earth days. I have never thought of it that way, I have thought of environmentalism as being nearly a religion though. The similarities between Christianity, and environmentalism is quite surprising. I think it is also a good thing though. The Earth needs to be protected, and if strong believers think the best way to save the planet is by publicizing it as a religion then so be it. Serving a god makes people feel safe, and confident. The fact that people are using Earth in place of God makes me smile because it is comforting to them, and will help the future generations.

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Environmentalism, Religion, and Identity

by [Zachary Oswald](#) - Monday, May 27, 2019, 9:52 PM

Professor Rubin's article is accurate in that environmentalism can serve as an identity. However, he assumes that environmentalists positions and efforts are irrational, and therefore evidence of dogmatic belief and that because environmentalism serves as an identity it serves as a religion. Using a recycling bin, for example, may be annoying but that doesn't make a bin into a shrine. There are reasonable arguments for recycling bins, they aren't meant to glorify the environment.

While environmentalism can serve as an identity, many things can. Heavy metal involves ritualized gatherings of listening to noise, head banging, and socially acceptable violence, this doesn't make heavy metal a religion. A quick search through Buzzfeed's quizzes will reveal hundreds of readily available and shallow identities. When I meet environmentalists, I don't see the same awe or belief in their support of the environment that I see in religious people. Instead, they seem to have well-reasoned beliefs which assume that environmental degradation is a threat to be countered. Also, they seem to be generally secular.

The only exception is "crystal people." New-age types treat the environment as a holy thing and sometimes have misinformed or dogmatic perspectives on the environment. For crystal people, support of the environment is compatible with other religious beliefs. Environmentalism, it turns out, is compatible with a variety of religions and ideologies.

I don't doubt any of the images in the forum materials and they all seem truthful to me. While I don't believe environmentalism itself has become a religion, it is highly compatible with religion and other ideologies. There are doctrines within Christianity that see Man as the steward of the earth, it's no surprise that some Christians would become invested in this perspective. These are useful examples fo the connection between environmentalism and Christianity.

The last image, which reads "Save the Planet, Kill Yourself," is different from the others, it is nihilistic. I'm familiar with this perspective primarily from Black Metal, which occasionally blends environmentalism with nihilism and misanthropy. Interestingly, this perspective seems to come from some anarchists and some fascists bands. Some anarchists and fascists seek a return to a pre-capitalist and pre-industrial society, for differing reasons. Both, however, hate modernity in general.

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Re: Environmentalism as Religion

by [Sebastian Garcin](#) - Monday, May 27, 2019, 10:08 PM

Rubin's article is in my opinion is very accurate in how environmentalism is described as a religion. I am a pretty devote Christian and so is my family, it is pretty clear environmentalism has many things in common with religion. The main difference between religion(of any kind) and environmentalism is that the latter is taught and accepted in schools.

In Rubin's article he discusses how there are different religions, specifically in ancient tribes but this is also witnessed in present day. There are not only different religions(Christianity, Muslim, Catholic, Buddhism) but each family(tribe) and each church have differences in the way they perform their religion and the extent they do so. It is the same with environmentalism, every nation/family has their own way to perform environmentalism and their own extent to preform it. Their are many different items and practices that identify as religious, it is the same for environmentalism. You can't go to any store any more with seeing the organic or green products all through the store, just look at the LCC campus. There are so many different trash/recycle bins that all take different kinds of waste. Even people identify as "Going Green" or as living the "Green" lifestyle. Many acts and people are deemed unreligious just as many acts and people are deemed as anti-environmentalist/anti-green, the ones who "don't care about the environment." There is no denying that global warming has been in effect and is real. Just as Rubin discussed environmentalist's all have their own beliefs on how to fix it, not all of which have been proven with science. Just as those who practice a religion, we have faith in something that hasn't been proven or disproven by science.

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the difference between Environmentalism and Religion

by [Levi Savage](#) - Monday, May 27, 2019, 11:37 PM

What is religion? Religion is the belief in and worship of a superhuman controlling power, especially a personal God or gods (google search definition). Based off of this accurate definition that most people could accept we can come to the conclusion that at the center of religion there is a supreme deity/deities that has complete control over the world or can heavily influence and play a role in. While Environmentalism bases its beliefs on the betterment of the planet and preserving its health. To ensure the continued survival of the planet and all of its life on including us. We aren't at the stage in development where we can set up self-sustaining colonies and abandon earth if we were there would not be as much concern for the human race since we would continue to live. The actions we take now directly influence and impact the planet and its environment to ensure its survival. In religion, it does not matter what you believe since the gods you worship may or may not be even real so there is no gurante how much you worship or believe nothing may come of while. Taking actions that have a direct impact on the planet and how healthy it is not something we should have to debate about we know we are slowing killing the planet. There may be similarities between the two in the sense of how valuable they are to people but the main difference is one may not even exist (religion) while the other has a direct impact in our lives and the continued survival of our planet...One is real and the other is not.

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Inaccurate Portrayal of Environmentalism

by [Owen McCoy](#) - Tuesday, May 28, 2019, 10:12 AM

I was surprised to see this, but Mr. Rubin brought up several similarities between environmentalism and other religions. However, I think it's an unfair generalization to label all environmentalists as this radical. It would be similar to labeling all conservatives as fascists, which of course is not the case because as with everything else, there is a spectrum.

Mr. Rubin's article seems to be coming from the far right (almost reactionary) side of the political spectrum. He makes it clear that he is skeptical about environmentalism, but I think in a few ways he goes a bit too far and almost undermines the credibility of his own argument. I will go through a few of his bullet points that he listed to compare environmentalism to other religions to show what I'm talking about.

- **There is a holy day—Earth Day.** Fair enough.
- **There is no prayer, but there are self-sacrificing rituals that are not particularly useful, such as recycling. Recycling paper to save trees, for example, makes no sense since the effect will be to reduce the number of trees planted in the long run.** Recycling is not a self-sacrificing ritual. I go to minimal effort to learn what is recyclable and what is not, sort through it, and drag two bins up to the curb instead of one once every two weeks. I disagree too that recycling is "not particularly useful." The following statistics are from the University of Southern Indiana website: "Each ton (2000 pounds) of recycled paper can save 17 trees, 380 gallons of oil, three cubic yards of landfill space, 4000 kilowatts of energy, and 7000 gallons of water. This represents a 64% energy savings, a 58% water savings, and 60 pounds less of air pollution!"
- **Belief systems are embraced with no logical basis. For example, environmentalists almost universally believe in the dangers of global warming but also reject the best solution to the problem, which is nuclear power. These two beliefs co-exist based on faith, not reason.** Nuclear power is very effective and technically "clean," but the resulting radioactive waste is hard to dispose of without harming the environment in other ways. Nuclear power is also non-renewable (unlike wind power, solar power, and hydropower), and it is also expensive. The Eugene area derives 80% of its energy from hydropower (eweb.org) which is clean, renewable, and efficient.

On to the ideological aspects, I myself am Christian and in support of environmentalism. I believe that Christianity includes being good stewards of the environment, but I don't think it should be the other way around. I see image pairs #1 and #2 as perhaps a misuse of religion, although of course, I see how it is an attempt to analyze the environmental aspect of Christianity. The windmills that are supposed to represent crosses are definitely not appropriate and even comes across as worshipping false idols, something denounced by the 2nd Commandment (Exodus 20:4-6) Still, I try to incorporate environmentalism into my lifestyle in accordance with my Christian faith. I can see how environmentalism might be more of a religion for some, but in general, it seemed like Mr. Rubin's claims constituted an unproductive attack on environmentalism more than anything else.

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Re: Environmentalism as Religion; The Paul Rubin article and AI gore picture

by [Joe Kiefer](#) - Tuesday, May 28, 2019, 1:35 PM

I think that Paul Rubin was making some good points when describing the environmental movement as a religion, which seems on the face of it an odd way to describe it. When you consider some of the observations that he laid out, it made good sense. The one line that stood out most to me was, “For example, environmentalists almost universally believe in the dangers of global warming but also reject the best solution to the problem, which is nuclear power.” (Paul Rubin article) This just stumps me, if they want to reduce carbon emissions so badly, why they wouldn’t want to use more nuclear power just baffles the mind. I guess they just don’t believe that it is one of the safest forms of energy on the planet, the data proves that it is. From what I understand, there are those that do see environmentalism as a religion because of how much they will demonize those that are disbelievers in climate change.

The one thing I would like to remind everyone is that when this all started taking place, it started as global warming, remember? The thing I can’t help wondering is why did they change it to climate change? I come back to some things that I have seen by some people that were addressing the subject, the climate has been changing on this planet since it was created. I will say that I do believe that carbon emissions have the possibility of harming the environment, I mean look at the cities that used to have big problems with smog. The place where the environmentalists lose me is when they start with “we have to do something now or the planet is going to going to end in ten or twenty years. This is just not based in reality and should be pushed back against.

Getting back to the movement as a religion, I feel that the image of Al Gore seems about right, I find it extremely hilarious. Al Gore is a politician with no background in science and to me seems like he just needed something to stay in the public spotlight after losing a run for the presidency. One thing that I find extremely funny was one of the first proposals that was tossed around was the idea of a carbon tax, which was going to net him a nice little profit which seems just a little fishy. One of the funniest things I find about the whole movement is that while many of the people that believe in this as much as some do about their religion are not willing to do what they say is necessary, as they put it, to correct the problem. Most of the people that attend the climate change meetings are showing up having used a private jet to get there and a good deal of them, while they may own a green vehicle, still own other vehicles such as SUV’s. the thing that gets me is that there seems to be no exact timeline as to how much time there is before we reach the point of no return, which would denote a belief of faith that the end is coming. The one thing that everyone seems to leave out of the discussion is the probability that the Earth will correct the problem itself. Has anyone noticed the increase in volcanic activity in recent times. All it would take would be two or three large volcanos going off at the same time and next thing you know the planet would go into a cooling phase that could last for at least a decade. Just some food for thought, let me know what you think.

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Re: Environmentalism as Religion; The Paul Rubin article and Al gore picture

by [Owen McCoy](#) - Tuesday, May 28, 2019, 5:54 PM

As to the Rubin quote you mentioned, it does seem hypocritical it first. However, his claim that nuclear power is “the best solution to the problem” is debatable because there are several other clean energy sources that are renewable, less expensive, and efficient in harnessing energy without producing radioactive waste as a byproduct. Brita Belli of The Environmental Magazine provides the following statistics:

Over the last year and a half, Greenpeace International and the European Renewable Energy Council (EREC) commissioned a study, entitled "Energy Revolution: A Blueprint for Solving Global Warming," from the German Aerospace Center, showing that 80 percent of our electricity can be produced by renewal sources, carbon dioxide emissions can be reduced 50 percent globally and 72 percent in the U.S. without resorting to nuclear power or new coal technologies.

You’re right that the over-exaggerations are not entirely helpful. I don’t think the world will end because of climate change in the next 10-20 years, it would have to be at least 50 for the consequences to be that extreme. And you’re right too that climate has been changing throughout world history, but there is a definite connection between human activity and unprecedented levels of CO2 in the atmosphere. Robert Monroe of the Scripps Institute of Oceanology states that “extreme speed at which carbon dioxide concentrations are increasing is unprecedented. An increase of 10 parts per million might have needed 1,000 years or more to come to pass during ancient climate change events.”

Finally, about that volcanos idea; for one, the probability of such huge eruptions happening concurrently is very low. (We are talking bigger than the eruptions in Hawaii recently, we are talking like the Yellowstone supervolcano or something.) And in any case, for volcanic activity to have that pronounced an effect on the

global temperature, there would have to be so much smoke that it would block out the sun all over the world. Climate change would then be the least of our worries because (to say nothing of air quality), plants need sunlight and without it they die. So I'm not sure we should be hoping for that.

With the discussion of the legitimacy of climate change aside, you pointed out that there is inconsistency among environmentalists is this is absolutely true. No one can no what the ramifications or time frame of climate change will be. As Joe reminded us in class, predicting the future is a horrible business to be in. (class lecture notes) However, former vice president of the Cato Institute Jerry Taylor used to argue against climate action but then changed his mind because of the risk management aspect. In an article he wrote earlier this week, he wrote that "that ambiguity is itself a motivating factor for reducing emissions. Never before have we run an experiment where greenhouse gases were loaded into the atmosphere at today's rates. We have no backup planet if things go horribly wrong." If emissions are reduced significantly and energy shifts to clean, renewable sources, the worst case scenario is that climate change isn't as bad as we thought it would be but then we still can be self-sufficient with energy and live in a cleaner world.

Belli, Brita "COMMENTARY: Greenpeace Proposes an Energy Revolution" The Environmental Magazine.
<https://emagazine.com/commentary-greenpeace-proposes-an-energy-revolution-152/>

Monroe, Robert "What Does 400 ppm Look Like?" Scripps Institution of Oceanology
<https://scripps.ucsd.edu/programs/keelingcurve/2013/12/03/what-does-400-ppm-look-like/>

Taylor, Jerry "What Changed My Mind About Climate Change" The Bulwark <https://thebulwark.com/what-changed-my-mind-about-climate-change/>

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Re: Environmentalism as Religion; The Paul Rubin article and Al gore picture

by [Joe Kiefer](#) - Thursday, May 30, 2019, 1:25 PM

Thanks for the conversation, I am always glad to have a conversation, and this seems to be a good one to have. I would like to start by stating that I believe in the "all the above" approach when it comes to energy, that is the only way that this problem is going to be solved. When it comes to fossil fuels, keep in mind that they are a finite resource, no way around that. There is only so much of it and then it will be gone, period. We need to start working toward renewable energies today so that they will be available when there is no fossil fuel left. I think you should look at this from a business's perspective, if renewables were a profitable way forward, they would be all in on them, but as it stands, they are not which is why the energy companies have not moved aggressively towards them. The on thing that a business is after is profit, they are not going to do it out of the goodness of their heart, not going to happen.

So, let's look at the point that the point you made that renewables are less expensive the nuclear, sounds good on the surface. While they may be less expensive, they cannot generate the amounts that a country the size of the U.S. requires with all the energy consuming companies will need, remember that it takes energy to produce all the cool things we like to buy. On the other hand, nuclear can produce energy on the scale that this and other countries need at a cost that ordinary people can afford. I think that this is a point that a lot of people that push hard for renewable energy tend to leave out of the equation, cost to the consumer. I think you can safely say that the majority of the people of the world are in a position that a twenty to thirty percent increase if their utility bill is not a possibility. Not to mention that when you are talking about renewable sources, they would entail incredibly large facilities to store what is made, especially when you are talking about converting everything over to using this new form of energy.

Next thing to look at is pushback from the people that are all for things like wind and solar until it comes to putting up the infrastructure necessary for their production, I am sure that you have seen the stories about those the have fought against the infrastructure being located where they live cause it would interfere with the scenery. Then you come to the next problem with renewables, for example take wind power, what do you do when the wind doesn't blow, no wind no power. How many times have you been through the Gorge only to see all the windmills on both sides of the river not turning, never made any sense to me that they are not turning in one of the windiest parts of the state. Then you take solar, the sun doesn't always shine, right? What do you do then, I mean that sometimes here you could go for weeks with no sunshine in the winter and this is the time of year when demand is highest. These are all scenarios that I don't believe have been worked out yet and need to be addressed before going to an all-in approach.

So, I will state once again that I am all for renewable sources while we still have fossil fuels available, just seems like a smart way to approach this rather large and extremely complex problem. When it comes down to it, it will end up being all about whether companies can profit from it and whether it will be affordable to consumers, I would personally like to see it end up being cheaper and maybe someday it will, but today is not that day.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

2

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Re: Environmentalism as Religion; The Paul Rubin article and Al gore picture

by [Owen McCoy](#) - Thursday, May 30, 2019, 7:18 PM

Thanks for the reply. I think I have a better idea of where both sides on this issue are coming from now. I had previously taken the business vantage point into account somewhat but I appreciate the level of detail you provided. I've seen documentaries about new developments in clean energy and it's great to think of where these new technologies could go given some time. As you mentioned though, the problem is whether businesses will actually invest in it (not likely while there is a more profitable option in fossil fuels available), and then also whether energy will still be affordable. Then too, what to do while the transition from fossil fuels to clean is happening. I suppose this is the other side of the risk management aspect that I mentioned. With that in mind, the "all of the above" approach would seem to be the safest course of action, at least until we see clean energy tech capable of adequately replacing fossil fuels in terms of cost and scale.

The only problem I see with that method is that carbon emissions are still being produced as long as fossil fuels are being burned. If we assume that greenhouse gas emissions are the primary cause of global warming, then it is a problem that is harder to solve the longer it takes to solve it. (Sort of like a loan accruing interest as you're paying it off.) That would suggest that the sooner we can shift to clean energy, the better. On the other hand, as Samuelson wrote in the [article](#), "even if we had the technologies to replace fossil fuels, it's doubtful that we have the political will to do so." That and the other factors you mentioned make it seem like rightly or wrongly, a cautious approach would be most likely to gain traction.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Environmentalism as Religion; The Paul Rubin article and Al gore picture

by [Joe Kiefer](#) - Saturday, June 1, 2019, 10:52 AM

I think we have come around full circle to the original question posed in this part of the forum, is environmentalism a form of religion? I would have to say it is, for the reason that you stated in your last post, "If we assume that greenhouse gas emissions are the primary cause of global warming, then it is a problem that is harder to solve the longer it takes to solve it." (Owen McCoy; last post, second paragraph) This is what I am talking about when I think that environmentalism is being used a religion, the more you look at both sides of the issue, believers and deniers, there is good science in both camps. Both sides of this issue use the same science fto back up their claims, which on the surface seems strange to me. I mean, can the same data mean two different things? Then I realized that it is all about how the data is interpreted, how the model is set up, and how accurate the model will eventually be.

This is where the notion of religion comes in, there is a bit of faith and trust that comes into play here. There are very many smart people that are on both sides of this issue and you basically have to take people at there word since time will be the only way to tell who is right on this issue. I have always had doubts on which side is right and really do my best to understand both sides of this issue, but I have a hard time blindly trusting people; people have agendas, as we have seen in this class, as well as the money aspect of this issue. Remember what Mr. Escobar has said in class many times, "follow the money"(Mr. Escobar, class lectures) There is big money financing both sides of the issue and where there is money to be made there is always a chance for a certain narrative to be pushed. For example, what would happen if carbon emissions had been proved to not be detrimental to the atmosphere, all the research money would disappear and there would be no need to continue down the path. Maybe data would be fudged to keep the research alive and the money coming in, there has already been instances where it was proved that data was fudged. I just have a problem with people

treating this as a religion, where they are willing to believe this so much and believe it so blindly. I have a hard time with belief and there is too much to be gained financially for pushing any narrative not to mention that human nature does not always have the best track record.

With this being said, I still believe that renewables are the path to the future, cause like I stated in the earlier post fossil fuels are a finite source that will disappear someday. I agree with you that there is not the political will to solve this problem any time soon, cause it is not a political winner to pass a law that would impact so many in the pocket book. But, the more the renewable sources progress technologically the more the cost will come down and be more palatable to the vast majority of the public, I mean when people understand that it can be affordable they will start making a move to it, but until then I like to be skeptical yet optimistic that humanity will do the right thing. I truly enjoyed the discussion and your point of view, I am not sure there is any one right answer at this time.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Environmental Theology: Dogma of the Neo-druids Re: Environmentalism as Religion

by [Jason Fitzsimmons](#) - Tuesday, May 28, 2019, 2:18 PM

The above image was chosen based on its message of disregarding human beings in favor of the environment. The banner reads "Save the Planet Kill yourself", so I would ask the proponents of this idea of altruistic suicide, does this suggestion of suicide as sacrifice include themselves? There seems to be an elitist attitude in this belief, in comparison with religion this is akin to "the chosen few". The "educated" elite of the environmentalists want to reduce the number of human beings on earth. To this group of believers, those who do not meet their standards as good environmentalists in accordance with its dictates of the high priests then these polluting heretics must sacrifice themselves for the gods of this movement. Seeing and believing that the earth is your god, then seeing some of the acolytes of this new religion acting aggressively or violently in defense of "hurting" the god by polluters

While over population and pollution created by human heavy industry, including factories and industrial feed lots is of concern. People would best be served by a calm rational discussion based on rigorous science to find causes and solutions. Civil discourse is the only rational way forward, not hysterical or misguided dogmatic "environmental theology" or any theocratic influence on policy as it is anti-constitutional.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Re: Environmental Theology: Dogma of the Neo-druids Re: Environmentalism as Religion

by [Zar Oelke](#) - Saturday, June 1, 2019, 11:57 AM

The poster of, "Save the planet or kill yourself" definitely does give an all or nothing feel to the poster and the message. As for the question you posed, I definitely believe the message of the picture is that by killing oneself, it'd help the environment. I agree with you that discussion needs to happen more on both sides and that it would help push us as a society and as people forward instead of arguing.

Sum of ratings:0 (1)

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does my lack of religion impact my view on Rubins article?

by [Kaylee Calvert](#) - Tuesday, May 28, 2019, 10:57 PM

I, myself, do not have any religious beliefs. I do not think that my lack of a religious belief impacts my interpretation of Rubins article too much because I still can understand how religions work and such. At the same time, I do see myself as an environmentalist and reading this article that compares it to a type of religion is somewhat uncomfortable for me considering I am not religious and do not necessarily want to classify myself as such. Although I do not see anything wrong with having religious beliefs, it is just not my thing, and because of this, I think I found myself steering towards finding most of Rubins statements in his article to be inaccurate.

Sum of ratings:0 (1)

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Environmentalism is a religion?

by [Zar Oelke](#) - Tuesday, May 28, 2019, 10:57 PM

Paul H. Rubin brings up some incredibly interesting points with his article, *Green Spirit: The intersection of religion & environmentalism*. Some of his points I agree with and others I think are inaccurate, such as his first example being that Earth Day is a holy day for greens. I believe if someone is environmental and that they do support environmentalism, wouldn't every day be earth day to them? Nonetheless, I decided to do a bit of research on the background of Earth Day to see if there were any corresponding evidence to support his claim. Reading, *Earth Day 2019* On the History website there is no mention of Environmentalism anywhere in the article. The article goes over where the name came from as well as why people continue to try to help clean the world.

Another claim he makes in his article, he states "There is no prayer, but there are self-sacrificing rituals that are not particularly useful, such as recycling." My question is...where is he getting his information on recycling? To be frank, the first time I read this I thought it was a joke. I didn't take it serious because he doesn't have any sources to cite. I decided to do some digging and found that recycling paper actually does help the environment, in, *How does recycling paper help the environment?* by Jenny Green she brings up the benefits of recycling paper by saying, "According to the Environmental Protection Agency, recycling one ton of paper saves 17 trees and more than 3.3 cubic yards of landfill space".

I'm Christian and reading this article and his bullet points I had a hard time connecting Environmentalism as a new religion. By Rubin bringing in that "Greens now eat organic foods and many are moving towards eating only locally grown foods" confuses me because a majority of Americans are taking steps towards eating organic foods. Doctors and nutritionists are pushing people to eat cleaner. I wonder if he'd consider them to be part of Environmentalism as well.

As for the pictures, I found #2 to be a bit sacrilegious because of the picture of the windmill's mimicking the Christian cross. I understand that the aim is to grab the audience's attention. I believe those pictures are propaganda to get others to take the environment more serious than even religion.

<https://www.history.com/topics/holidays/earth-day>

<https://www.shredit.co.uk/en-gb/blog/securing-your-information/july-2015/how-does-recycling-paper-help-the-environment>

Sum of ratings:[2 \(1\)](#)

2

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Use of financial incentives to promote environmental awareness

by [Owen McCoy](#) - Wednesday, May 29, 2019, 11:41 AM

The historical debate about whether to be "optimistic" and assume that people will do the right thing or "pessimistic" and assume that people must be coerced into morality has been going on all term long. In this case, it centers around whether people will choose to be more environmentally aware or whether the government will have to step in and make sure they are doing so à la the "Green Police" from the commercial. Samuelson mentions that "even if we had the technologies to replace fossil fuels, it's doubtful that we have the political will to do so." (Mission Impossible article) This seems about right to me because my impression is that for the GOP, alternative energy is not really their thing. At the same time though, Democrats don't really seem to be pressing it much as an issue.

However, one other thing that has remained fairly constant is that a sure way to get people to change is to bring the economic aspect upon them. If you make something more or less profitable, people will adjust accordingly. Bernard Baruch was head of the War Industries Board during WWI, and by making war production "too lucrative an activity to resist" (textbook p.755) for corporations, he was able to boost production. This would be an example of using a financial incentive. The other method was seen in the Montgomery Bus Boycott when the operators realized that they were going to keep losing money unless they did away with segregation. This way is more coercive, but both ways are and have been quite effective historically. With that in mind, I see the logic in Samuelson's conclusion that the way to go is to "gradually impose a stiff fossil-fuel tax (not a 10 or 15 percent tax but a doubling or maybe a tripling of prices) to discourage fossil-fuel use and encourage new energy sources." (Mission Impossible article) As it happens, Oregon Senator Ron Wyden and other members of the Senate Committee on Finance recently introduced a bill that would close tax loopholes for fossil fuel industries and replace them with three tax breaks for clean energy. "The *Clean Energy for America Act* would consolidate the current 44 energy incentives into three technology-neutral provisions that encourage clean electricity, clean transportation and energy efficiency." ([US Senate Committee on Finance](#)) Such measures would hopefully trigger a switch from fossil fuels to cleaner, renewable sources of energy.

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Sum of ratings: 3 (1) 3**Environmentalism, the topic of religion**by [Brayden Lane](#) - Wednesday, May 29, 2019, 8:28 PM

A part I find to be inaccurate about Rubins article is the comparison of sacrifices. In his article he states "There is no prayer, but there are self-sacrificing rituals that are not particularly useful, such as recycling. Recycling paper to save trees, for example, makes no sense since the effect will be to reduce the number of trees planted in the long run." The comparison of a prayer to a sacrifice is far from true to me, a sacrifice is not the same as a prayer and his example is recycling. I recycle everyday mainly cause im told to and its an easy choice not because its something I necesaily believe in but because I think its the right option. He does state that recycling isn't usefull but compare it to a sacrifice in which I don't see recycling as a sacrifice and neither is a prayer in my eyes. A prayer isn't something everyone does or believe in but its also something im not forced to do and neither are religious people I know of but a lot of people recycle and mainly because were told to especially in Oregon. Im not a real religious person and I don't go to church therefor my beliefs aren't blocking my interpretation of environmentalism but I found some claims he has to be false and a long stretch in comparing environmentalism to religions. For me in the picture I show above makes no sense. It doesn't support environmentalism being a religion it just states a viewpoint, its propaganda banner to support the saving of earth by killing yourself. It isn't an informative poster at all and has no facts or anything to support it other than kill yourself so the earth can survive.

Sum of ratings: 1 (1) 1
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**considering two images**by [Kaylee Calvert](#) - Thursday, May 30, 2019, 2:10 PM

Considering the first pair of images (An Introduction to Christian Environmentalism and The Green Bible books), I am not quite sure if I would consider them truth, lies, or as propaganda to be honest. I personally do not believe in any religion and I do not believe that environmentalism is a religion in itself but neither of the books seem to be saying that anyways. They seem to both be from Christianity and insinuate Christianity's view on the environment.

Personally, I do not find these books helpful for non-religious folk but I think it actually could be helpful for religious folk. They do not seem to be too harmful like the other photo pairs in the forum. Also, since I cannot see the contents of the two books I cannot completely determine whether they are harmful to the religious-environmental "connection".

I said before that I do not believe environmentalism to be a religion in its own. For example, I do not follow any religion but I am an environmentalist. Although, I am an environmentalist I still am not going to consider myself religious or tell others that I am religious. But because these books are relating to Christianity and environmentalism I think they could be good and maybe useful to get the word around about how important the environment is to different groups of people.

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Freedom to Worship Mother Nature

by [Maximillian Prentice](#) - Thursday, May 30, 2019, 11:21 PM

HST203 – Forum 4, Post 2

The idea of thinking of environmentalism as a religion is an interesting one. I also feel while Paul Rubin’s article seems mostly sarcastic, it brings up some valid points; I liked the idea that “As the world becomes less religious, people can define themselves as being Green rather than being Christian or Jewish” (Rubin). I do not have a churchgoing background so as an outsider looking in, worshiping the Earth isn’t any more outlandish than worshipping Jesus, but I do not think anyone needs to be bowing down to Al Gore. There might be positive implications of people holding the planet in higher regard and if it is thought of as a holy place then maybe it will get more respect. I think the images used are mostly propaganda, especially the second set. The third image has some truth to it, as people do more damage to the planet than anything else, but I think it is harmful to the religious-environmental connection.

I also think using a repurposed Nazi flag for the flag of your green party, like image #10, will only hurt the movement. While it is important to make a quick move against climate change, I don’t think it will be enforced by violence. I am not sure that it will be enforced at all. While changes have been made to hopefully push America to a greener economy, there have also been forces pushing back. U.S. is the biggest consumer in the world, and I do not see that changing. An image like number six is a little more powerful for me. It shows that fighting climate change is something everyone has to take part in, the government and the people; photo six also reminds me of the *Time Magazine* cover from the last forum.

Sum of ratings:

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Re: Freedom to Worship Mother Nature

by [Brayden Lane](#) - Saturday, June 1, 2019, 8:50 PM

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I can agree that the article does seem a bit sarcastic but as well with the quote you used. “As the world becomes less religious, people can define themselves as being Green rather than being Christian or Jewish” (Rubin). I think that is a very good quote describing the article as a whole. Id also have to agree with the idea of worshiping the earth isn't the craziest idea ever compared to some aspects of Christianity. The images however are clearly propaganda and have no truth to it except a little bit but is still an abstract thought. The only truth is that humans have done some damage to earth.

Id have to agree that when using a Nazi flag even if its been repurposed it will only hurt the cause that uses way more than help. Fixing the environment isn't going to come from a religious movement, as you said the U.S is the biggest consumer in the world an changes wont be easy. Im curious however what your idea of consumption is, is it natural resources, goods, food or what. Overall its a large propaganda move by environmentalists and its hard to get on board with a movement that uses propaganda and doesn't give a good enough explanation what its all about.

Sum of ratings:

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Environmentalism as it relates to the political spectrum

by [Owen McCoy](#) - Friday, May 31, 2019, 10:46 AM

I was surprised to see that communism made its way into cartoons about environmentalism of all things. The first image under #9 affirms what I said in an earlier post which is that not all environmentalists are the same. All of the shades of green are left-leaning positions, with the bright green being the least radical and the dark being the most so. In fact, the dark green on the far left eerily resembles the communism call for a socio-political overhaul.

Clearly, the dark green position gets a lot of backlash and inspires things like image #5. Since the U.S. has a long history of being against communism, the cartoon author is perhaps trying to villainize environmentalism. I'm not completely sure what this is based on other than the fact that communism and environmentalism are significantly left-leaning in nature. The same goes for the first image under #7. The other #7 image seems to be coming from the complete opposite direction and kind of looks like rather than comparing environmentalism to communism, it's comparing it to containment.

As to image #10, that is a real mess of terms there but I'll try to sort through it. Nationalist Socialist as we saw is a bit confusing but it's the long name for the Nazi party. From what I understand, this adaptation of the Nazi party symbol is identifying the Green party with the Nazi party. I don't think this is quite accurate because the two ideologies are on completely opposite sides of the political spectrum. This seems to be another attempt to villainize environmentalism, although whereas the comparison to communism has even minimal substance to it, this one does not.

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Losing Our Religion
by [Ryan Monett](#) - Friday, May 31, 2019, 11:19 AM

There is so much to unpack, discuss and dissect on this issue, it won't all be covered in one post.

Certainly, it appears as though environmentalism has become a religion. Whereas once we worshipped God, now (and especially in the West), the Earth has become the devotion of a lot of time, efforts and exclusionary realities. Is climate change an issue? Yes. However, it is multi-dimensional. One of the least discussed issues is the shifting of the magnetic poles; this is a huge point of reference in this debate, and it does show just how powerless we truly are.

Note the research below, from several different reputable sources, and ponder with me for a moment that it might not just be the traditional human attribution theory to climate change:

National Geographic:

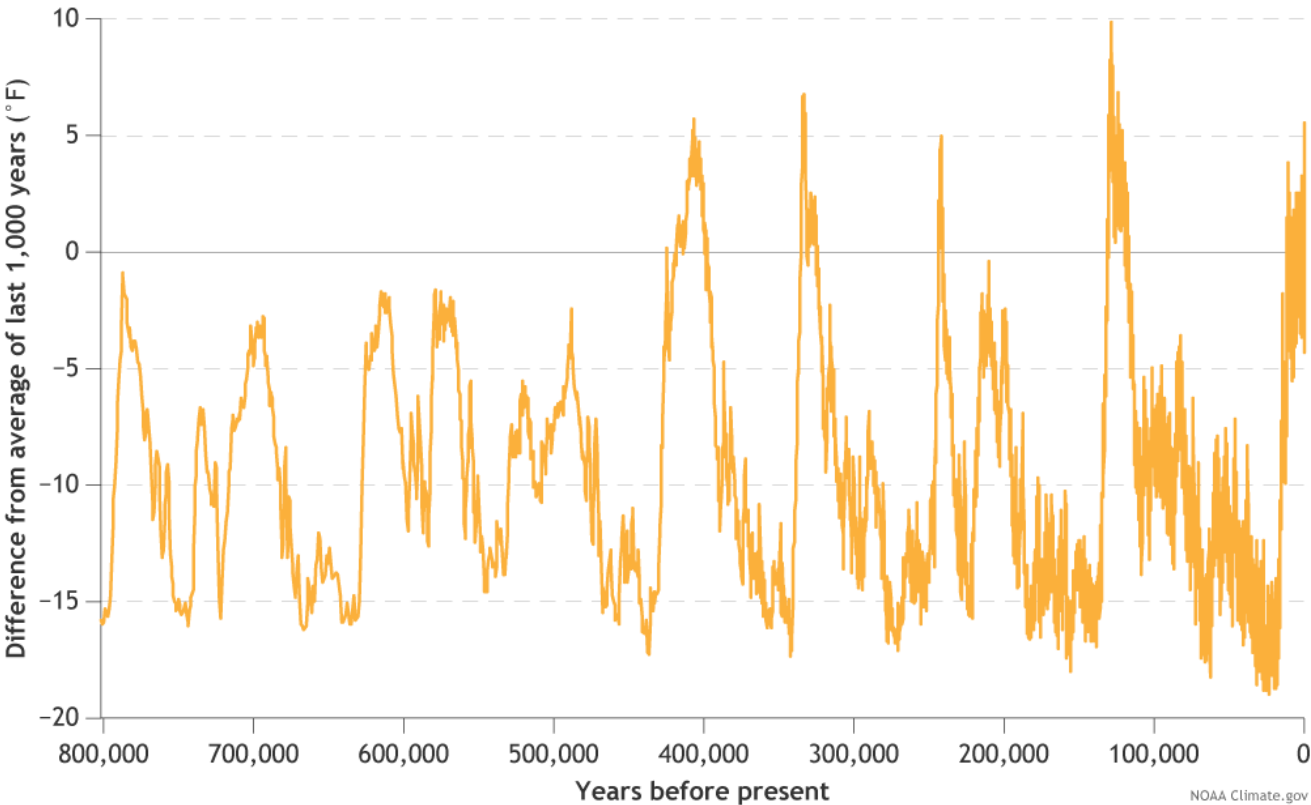
*Magnetic north has never sat still. In the last hundred years or so, the direction in which our compasses steadfastly point has lumbered ever northward, driven by Earth's churning liquid outer core some 1,800 miles beneath the surface. Yet in recent years, scientists noticed something unusual: **Magnetic north's routine plod has shifted into high gear. In the mid 1900s, the north magnetic pole was lumbering along at less than a hundred feet each day, adding up to less than seven miles of difference each year. But in the '90s, this started to change. By the early aughts, magnetic north was chugging along at some 34 miles each year.***

University of Paris:

*The most intriguing feature may be the recently proposed archeomagnetic jerks, i.e. fairly abrupt (similar to 100 yr long) geomagnetic field variations found at irregular intervals over the past few millennia, using the archeological record from Europe to the Middle East. **These seem to correlate with significant climatic events** in the eastern North Atlantic region. A proposed mechanism involves variations in the geometry of the geomagnetic field (f.i. tilt of the dipole to lower latitudes), resulting in enhanced cosmic-ray induced nucleation of clouds. **No forcing factor, be it changes in CO2 concentration in the atmosphere or changes in cosmic ray flux modulated by solar activity and geomagnetism, or possibly other factors, can at present be neglected or shown to be the overwhelming single driver of climate change in past centuries.***

We do not currently possess ALL of the information needed to blame humans. In the past several million years, there have been increases in temperature followed by ice ages. We call that, "climate change" in today's language. There was no industrialization in the previous sharp increases in temperature, according to history and the chart below from our own government. This chart is from our friends at climate.gov:

Global temperatures over the past 800,000 years



So the question we might be asking ourselves is, should we actually be preparing for another ice age instead of mass panic and hysteria? We know the magnetic poles have recently dramatically shifted. We know that SOMETHING *non-industrial* caused changes very similar long ago to affect dramatic climate change. We know that each sharp increase in temperature has been followed by a mini "ice age". Could it be more complicated than simply human factors (which I'm certain DO play a role, but it's not necessarily THE CAUSE)?

To make being Green a religion is to throw out other scientific research that has largely gone ignored.

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<http://www.ipgp.fr/fr/are-there-connections-between-the-earths-magnetic-field-and-climate>

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/science/2019/02/magnetic-north-update-navigation-maps/>

<https://www.climate.gov/news-features/climate-qa/whats-difference-between-global-warming-and-climate-change>

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Rubin article and images

by [Dylan Boleyn](#) - Friday, May 31, 2019, 11:29 PM

How are the specific parts of Rubin’s article accurate, or inaccurate, in describing environmentalism as a religion? I would say that that the examples Rubin uses to describe how environmentalism is similar to religion well they may describe a behavior that sounds similar in concept and there for in concept his examples are accurate however, I would argue that in actual truth his examples are inaccurate. For example he says there are food taboos. Instaed of eating fish on Friday people have started only eating locally grown foods. This is something people have been doing However I would argue that it is not the same as religion. Religion from the way I see it is based on faith and not eating fish on Friday is based on faith and a part of that faith is to practice not eating fish on Friday. When it comes to eating local foods you are making a choice to buy foods from local sources not because part of your religion says you should but the reason could be because you don’t support how factory farms treat their animals. So eating locally is not a choice you make because you are told to by your faith but it is a choice you make because you care about your health and the environment.

Considering the images above, why do they even exist? As truths, as lies, as propaganda? Are they useful and informative, or harmful and derogatory examples of this religious-environmental “connection”? I would say that the images shown exist as a type of propaganda. Just like Rubins article they are trying to get across the point that environmentalism is similar to religion. I think the best example of this point being articulated is in the first

image paring. With one image of the green Bible and the other an introduction to Christian envirmetalism. Obviously both the bible and Christianity are both tied with religion. By bring in heavy religious ties these images stand out most as people trying to argue there belief that religion is similar to envromentalism which I see as a type of propaganda. I would say that at least the first example the pair of images are informative however I don't believe there information is accurate.

In this post I don't mean to put anyone's religion down I am just arguing the separation between religion and enviromentalisim.

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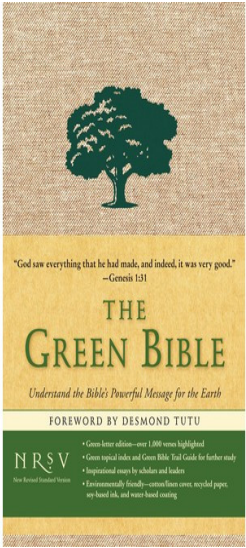
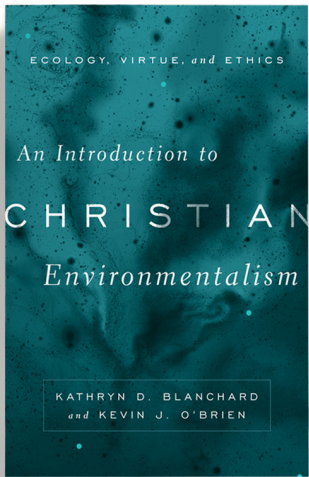
 Environmentalism as Religion
by [Sidney Axtell](#) - Saturday, June 1, 2019, 2:32 AM

Environmentalism as a religion isn't something that shocks me. Environmentalism is embedded in many religions already. For example "When they had all had enough to eat, he said to his disciples, 'Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted.'" (John 6:12) Many religions already allow us to view our role with regards to protecting the environment.My personal religious background being Catholic has many aspects of environmentalism embedded into it. For example, "Pope Francis rightly tied human activity to global warming and framed action on behalf of the environment as a moral imperative." (How World Religions View the Environment Article) I had already known that the Catholic Church has a history of supporting environmental causes. I really think that science vs. religion seems to be one of the most important issues in our time. I believe his claims in the article were pretty accurate when it comes to the agreement about what's happening in the environment and what needs to be done to protect it.

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 environmentalism photos
by [Sidney Axtell](#) - Saturday, June 1, 2019, 2:33 AM



According to wikipedia information about "The Green Bible" explains that it's meant to "equip and encourage readers to see God's vision for creation and help [them] engage in the work of healing and sustaining it". (Wikipedia)

I think the books exist because authors want citizens to understand that God and Jesus are involved in creation; and how all elements (land, water, plants, humans, animals) are interdependent. I believe the information to be truths but I would agree most environmentalism books will include propaganda to intrigue their readers. I wouldn't say these books are harmful to the readers, but it quite possibly could change someones opinions.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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 Green Accuracy
by [Baylee Crowson](#) - Saturday, June 1, 2019, 10:32 AM

I would say the accurate parts would be that their day is Earth day, they are getting more organics and buying local, and I would agree that they are overly criticized.

I would say he is a bit dramatic in saying we self-sacrificing by recycling, it really doesn't take too much effort. I don't know too much about the nuclear power supposedly helping global warming, I'd have to find real, scientific research and then have it explained to me. I also don't believe that recycling bins are holy structures. They are every where I go and I haven't ever seen a recycling bin that looked like it was glorifying trash so I would chalk that up as inaccurate.

I have 3 bins outside my house. 1. Trash 2. Recycling 3. Yard Waste. If I put items in them accurately, instead of just shoving everything in the trash bin, I can fit more in the outside bins and trash. I won't have trash bags overflowing because I decided to jam it all into one, that's probably my favorite part of recycling. My boyfriend and I save up cans from the house and turn them in together when we both have a free day, so the money back is rewarding from that type of recycling too.

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Environmentalism as a dogmatic fundamentalist religion versus science based flexible methodology :
Environmentalism as Religion

by [Jason Fitzsimmons](#) - Saturday, June 1, 2019, 3:23 PM

When author and anthropologist Michael Crichton was asked by a freshman college student why he had referred to environmentalism as a religion he responded with: "What constitutes a religion or the function a religion serves from the perspective of a trained anthropologist is, religion is a collective set of beliefs". It consists of leaders who promote the belief among the followers, in turn, the followers make some sort of contribution, for example a change in their lifestyle based on religious beliefs. The set of beliefs of the religion provide a worldview, a schema in which to perceive the world. Crichton drew parallels between core Judeo-Christian beliefs and environmentalism. Such as original sin, the existence of the garden of Eden which was defiled by human beings. Concepts like salvation, that by following the good dictates of environmentalism such as driving a small, hybrid car instead of the sinner's SUV one can find forgiveness. He argued against environmentalism existing as a religion. Because the environment is changing all the time as well as our understanding, to improve our stewardship we must be flexible. The dogmatic style of environmentalism is inflexible as it is a fundamentalist and at times a nonscientific approach. The only way to proceed is empirical based scientific methods which actually produce measurable results, not wishful thinking or useless rituals to virtue signal.

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Re: Environmentalism as Religion

by [Benjamin Kootnekoff](#) - Saturday, June 1, 2019, 6:13 PM

I agree with Rubin that enviromentalism is like religion in people blindly follow something simply because they are told to. Sacred structures, and food taboos are also two intresting comparisons. Although I think earth day being called a holy day is a bit of a stretch.

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Re: Environmentalism as Religion

by [Sidney Axtell](#) - Saturday, June 1, 2019, 9:10 PM

Very true. I believe humans are responsible for caring for the earth, but aren't in control of the earth. "There is a holy day—Earth Day." is a pretty profound statement made by Rubin. Many Americans who celebrate earth day shouldn't have to feel they are celebrating a religious holiday. If that was the case, many people wouldn't bring awareness to Earth day. It is a day to celebrate how lucky we are to have a beautiful planet.

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Green Police

by [Kaleah Holmes](#) - Saturday, June 1, 2019, 8:35 PM

I thought the Green Police commercial was very funny. I especially liked the part where the police surrounded the house and an officer said "Put the rind down." (Green Police commercial 0:18). Although it is an entertaining video, there is truth to it. I went on a trip to visit my grandma in Seattle, and I was wondering why she was being so particular about what she threw away, recycled, and composted. I asked her about it, and she said the city will fine you if you do not put garbage in the correct bin. I thought this was kind of harsh for the citizens. I feel more strongly agreeing with that though. I don't want to come off as promoting all cities being strict and requiring people to use the correct bin because that's a bit much. However, there should be steps taken by the authorities. It's so crucial that we preserve our planet. If we don't start acting now global warming will increase, ocean temperatures will rise too which will kill the marine life. Animals who have shells are unable to make those shells in places where there is pollution. The majority of birds have plastic in their bodies causing starvation. For these animals sakes we need to be more aware of what we are putting into our bins.

A solution is doing what Seattle did and give fines to people who don't use the correct bin. There could be more voluntary options. The issue with the peaceful option is that not as much good will come out of it as hoped for because not everyone will participate.

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Empowering an Authoritarian government to combat climate change concerns: Authoritarian Enviocrats: Re: Environmentalism as Religion
by [Jason Fitzsimmons](#) - Saturday, June 1, 2019, 9:24 PM

The information presented in the Samuelson article seemed at least plausible if not correct. The part where he mentions that it was known that an aging population (Baby boomers) would cause a marked increase in spending on Medicare and social security. Not to mention the increased aging population will put a further strain on energy demands. And he points out little was done. His position on combatting climate change seems to be based ultimately on using centralized authoritarian government to harshly punish polluters with high taxes designed to dissuade fossil-fuel use. He writes that adopting a "comprehensive" wartime control scheme empowering the government to "mandate changes" would be the best way forward. The author seems ready to empower the government to impede on liberties in order to reverse or slow climate change, this is a dangerous precedent as once rights are given up it is very difficult to gain them back. The evidence that many refer to in debates to support a doomsday scenario of climate disaster is not sufficient enough for these extreme measures.

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Environmentalism is okay in my eyes
by [Gerardo Morales-Martinez](#) - Saturday, June 1, 2019, 11:02 PM

In Rubin's article, he presented many interesting points. He does have a point that Environmentalism has started to become more of a religion having a lot of people treating it like religion. Which is fine, since we have the freedom to practice any religion without the government's interference. Yet, there will always be people who look at a belief or religion, and call it extreme. There are people who are Dark Green (Image #9) and are more on the radical side of the spectrum. As there is in any religion. Regarding my own religious beliefs, I don't really have one. Which is why maybe the idea of those who are environmentally radical or follow this belief doesn't really cause me to dismiss it. Instead, since having no personal religious belief, environmentalism doesn't seem like a bad idea since essentially it is to prevent the Earth from becoming uninhabitable. To my knowledge of religion, I don't know if there is one whose goal is to protect the earth and those who live on it.

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