11-1-2015

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Recommended Citation

Chika Okafor, *Returning to Eden: Toward a Faith-Based Framing of the Environmental Movement*, 26 Vill. Envtl. L.J. 215 (2015).
Available at: https://digitalcommons.law.villanova.edu/elj/vol26/iss2/1

RETURNING TO EDEN: TOWARD A FAITH-BASED FRAMING OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT

Chika Okafor*

Abstract

This article proposes a major shift in the messaging of the *mainstream* environmental movement. Instead of relying on logic, the mainstream movement must also cultivate passion. Instead of only appealing to the mind, it must also tap into the heart. Instead of "convincing" people, it must also learn to *inspire* them. By synthesizing concepts from various academic disciplines, including sociology, economics, history, and theology, this article argues that what inspires people is a moral imperative. The best way for the environmental movement to create the essential moral imperative is through religious justifications.

I. Introduction

> [Y]ou never enjoy the World aright; till you so love the beauty of enjoying it, that you are covetous and earnest to persuade others to enjoy it. And so perfectly hate the abominable corruption of men in despising it, that you had rather suffer the flames of Hell than willingly be guilty of their error. There is so much blindness, and ingratitude, and damned folly in it. The World is a mirror of infinite beauty, yet no man sees it. It is a Temple of Majesty, yet no man regards it. It is a region of Light and Peace, did not men disquiet it. It is the Paradise of God.
> - Thomas Traherne, *Centuries of Meditation*[1]

Unfortunately, it appears this paradise is continually eroding. Few believe the environmental movement has been effective in achieving its goals. Global temperatures continue to increase which, in turn, warms ocean waters and melts artic ice caps. The

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1. Thomas Traherne, Centuries of Meditations 10 (1908); *see also* Norman Wirzba, The Paradise of God: Renewing Religion in an Ecological Age 1 (2007).

atmospheric concentration of carbon dioxide (CO_2) in early 2011 was about 390 parts per million by volume (ppmv), and if current fossil consumption rates continue, this value is expected to rise to 900-1100 ppmv by the end of the century.[2] This CO_2 concentration was last seen on Earth over 30 million years ago, during a period when subtropical sea surface temperatures were five to ten degrees Celsius warmer, and polar sea surface temperatures were twenty-five to thirty degrees warmer.[3] Between 1850 (when global temperatures began to be measured) and 2006, eleven of the twelve warmest years occurred between 1994 and 2006.[4] Unfortunately, many of the changes to the Earth's climate may be irreversible, making it impossible to return to pre-industrial conditions. Modeling studies suggest that if atmospheric CO_2 reaches 1000 ppmv, it could take tens of thousands of years for the atmosphere to return to present-day levels.[5] Thus, on its existing trajectory, "human civilization will face another world, one that the human species has never experienced in its history (~2 million years)."[6]

Granted, the environmental movement can point to impressive victories: Congress has enacted the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, and other major environmental laws; more cities and towns are participating in recycling programs; and public service campaigns have increased awareness of the changes to global weather patterns. Still, the victories have not been prolific enough to halt our continued collective march toward potential climatic catastrophe.

In the United States, one of the top polluting nations and the heart of the environmental movement, preserving the environment is still often forgotten. A 2005 survey by Duke University showed the environment consistently ranked last on voters' priorities when compared with other hotly debated political issues like gay marriage, abortion, illegal immigration, social security, taxes, and gun control.[7] As the survey indicated:

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2. Jeffrey Kiehl, *Lessons from Earth's Past*, 331 Science 158, 158 (2011).

3. *Id.*

4. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, *Climate Change 2007: Synthesis Report*, 2 (2007), http://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/assessment-report/ar4/syr/ar4_syr.pdf.

5. Kiehl, *supra* note 2, at 159.

6. *Id.*

7. Duke University et al., *Public Opinion Strategies and Hart Research Present a Report of Key Findings and Analysis From Research Conducted on Behalf of the Nicholas Institute* 3 (2005). "There is a disconnect in American public policy. Surveys consistently show Americans supportive of pro-environmental policies, yet rank the environment low on their list of priorities and vote determinants." *Id.*

[F]ewer than one-in-four voters (22%) say the environ-
ment has been a major reason in their vote determinant
for a candidate for ANY public office recently. Even
among self-described environmentalists, fewer than four-
in-ten (39%) say that they can recall a time 'when a candi-
date's position on an environmental issue was one of the
two or three most important reasons' they voted for or
against a candidate. Just 15% of the rest of Americans say
the same.[8]

The environmental movement appears to be losing the battle.
The entire dialogue must shift to begin winning the war. First, the
staunch proponents of environmentalism are often viewed as scien-
tists, academics, or "hippies." Unlike other social movements of the
past, where the leaders often belonged to one's local community,
such as black ministers in the Civil Rights Movement, the scientific
community, academics, and "hippies" nearly by definition occupy
the periphery of the populace. However, target audiences more
deeply trust *proximate leaders*—leaders to whom the audience closely
relates. Proximate leaders are also better positioned to repeat and
reinforce core principles of a social movement. For example, in the
Civil Rights Movement, various black churches infused weekly wor-
ship with relevant updates on the progress of the movement and
presented the congregation with opportunities for them to actively
support ongoing efforts.

A perhaps more pressing issue is that the environmental move-
ment nearly exclusively relies on logic, facts, and economic reason-
ing. Environmental *Social Movement Organizations* ("SMOs") defend
the urgency of the environmental crisis almost purely through sta-
tistical findings and appeals to scientific observations. Also, the
Tragedy of the Commons and the *Prisoner's Dilemma* complicate at-
tempts to defend environmentalism purely through appeals to rea-
son. *Rational self-interest*, according to the *Tragedy of the Commons*,
can lead to the deterioration of common spaces, like the land, the
sea, and the air. The *Prisoner's Dilemma* also shows how rational self-
interest can leave some individuals worse off than they would be
through cooperation.

Additionally, the movement's focus on facts contributes to an
over-investment in crafting technical policy solutions. Discussions
on these solutions sometimes devolve into debates on minutiae,
such as the appropriate level for a carbon tax or the proper alloca-

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8. *Id.* at 6.

tion of carbon credits. While such dialogue may be important, a coherent vision for success remains glaringly absent.

This article argues that the mainstream environmental movement needs to reframe its message. Instead of relying on cold logic, it must cultivate passion. Instead of only appealing to the mind, it must also tap into the heart. And instead of "convincing" people, it must also learn to *inspire* them. Facts alone do not inspire people. Neither does science nor logic. What inspires people is a moral imperative, one that transforms passive hopes of an improved environment into an active deeply held conviction in one's personal responsibility to help achieve it.

This stance diverges sharply from existing legal and policy papers. Not only do many articles focus on the development of detailed technical policy solutions,[9] which taken together would still likely fall short of solving the crisis we face, but also some articles venture into engaging on more foundational elements of the movement and adopt a descriptive historical approach[10], instead of offering proactive forward-looking strategies. No other article has been found that presents, from beginning to end, the entire message in this one. Given the urgency of climatic issues, and the unique opportunity legal scholarship has in synthesizing a wide spectrum of academic disciplines, this article hopes to spark an upsurge in more reflective dialogue on how to build momentum to avoid global catastrophe. This article explores not only the "what" but the "*how,*" specifically for activists and policy advocates most-equipped to effect change.

This article does not simply claim that the environmental movement needs to couch its core messages in more "moral" terms. In fact, various environmental SMOs have attempted to establish a moral imperative over the past thirty years, whether through "climate justice" efforts showing how climate change negatively affects vulnerable communities the most, or through advertising campaigns that include poignant images of polar bears or other endan-

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9. *See, e.g.*, Michael Waggoner, *Why and How to Tax Carbon*, 20 Colo. J. Int'l Envtl. L. & Pol'y 1, 1 (Fall 2008); Roberta F. Mann, *The Case for the Carbon Tax: How to Overcome Politics and Find Our Green Destiny*, 39 Envtl. L. Rep. News & Analysis 10118, 10118 (2009); Noah D. Hall, *Oil and Freshwater Don't Mix: Transnational Regulation of Drilling in the Great Lakes*, 38 B.C. Envtl. Aff. L. Rev. 305 (2011); Kristien G. Knapp, *The Legality of EPA's Greenhouse Gas Waiver Denial*, 39 Envtl. L. Rep. News & Analysis 10127 (2009); Patricia Ross McCubbin, *EPA's Endangerment Finding for Greenhouse Gases and the Potential Duty to Adopt National Ambient Air Quality Standards to Address Global Climate Change*, 33 S. Ill. U. L.J. 437, 440 (2009).

10. *See, e.g.*, Jedediah Purdy, *The Politics of Nature: Climate Change, Environmental Law, and Democracy*, 119 Yale L.J. 1122 (2010).

gered animals threatened by continued pollution. As the consistently grim scientific trends on the environment show, these efforts have not been enough. Environmental SMOs must determine how to establish a deeper moral imperative, one that will inspire enough people to support the societal changes required to avoid catastrophe.

This article proposes the solution can be found in religion. Although religious justifications for environmentalism already do exist,[11] few claim that they have provided a strong underpinning to the political or popular arms of the mainstream movement. Yet in American history, various mass social movements have been grounded not simply on "morality," but on faith. For example, the Women's Rights Movement grew out of the Civil Rights Movement, and the Civil Rights Movement would have been greatly stunted without the substantial mobilizing support of the black church.[12]

In the United States, as well as in many developing nations, religious devotion does not seem to be declining.[13] In fact, over fifty percent of the population still professes to belong to a religious faith.[14] According to the authors of GOD IS BACK, much of the modernization in the United States and in developing nations is actually occurring in tandem with expanding religiosity.[15] This presents a major opportunity for the environmental movement.

As this article will explain, using religion to convincingly justify environmentalism vastly expands the movement's audience. Doing so has clear policy implications, and could transform the arch of the entire environmental movement. It could galvanize more grassroots pressure in enacting beneficial regulation. It could finally pull environmentalism well outside the narrow and detrimental space of partisan politics by directly engaging some of the move-

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11. *See, e.g.,* JAME SCHAEFER, THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS: RECONSTRUCTING PATRISTIC AND MEDIEVAL CONCEPTS (2009); CLIFFORD C. CAIN, AN ECOLOGICAL THEOLOGY: REUNDERSTANDING OUR RELATION TO NATURE (2009); ACTION INSTITUTE, ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP IN THE JUDEO-CHRISTIAN TRADITION: JEWISH, CATHOLIC, AND PROTESTANT WISDOM ON THE ENVIRONMENT (2007); ANNE MARIE DALTON, ECOTHEOLOGY AND THE PRACTICE OF HOPE (2011); DAVID G. HORRELL, GREENING PAUL: REREADING THE APOSTLE IN A TIME OF ECOLOGICAL CRISIS (2010).

12. Allison Calhoun-Brown, *Upon This Rock: The Black Church, Nonviolence, and the Civil Rights Movement,* 33 POLITICAL SCI. & POLITICS 168, 170 (2000).

13. John Esterbrook, *U.S. Embraces Faith, Poll Shows,* CBS NEWS (June 6, 2005), http://www.cbsnews.com/news/us-embraces-faith-poll-shows/.

14. GLOBAL ATTITUDES PROJECT, *Among Wealthy Nations U.S. Stands Alone in Its Embrace of Religion,* PEW RESEARCH CTR. (Dec. 19, 2002), http://www.pewglobal.org/2002/12/19/among-wealthy-nations/.

15. JOHN MICKLETHWAIT & ADRIAN WOOLDRIDGE, GOD IS BACK 9 (2009).

ment's most ardent opponents—*the Religious Right.* Using religious justifications for environmentalism creates greater opportunity to transform how individuals engage in "greener" living who may not have otherwise viewed preservation of the environment as a moral imperative. It overcomes the *Tragedy of the Commons* and the *Prisoners' Dilemma* by relying on values-based argumentation over entrenched economic analyses that rely on monetized costs and benefits (as explained later in this article). A religious reframing of the movement could provide a new source of organizational resources and financing. It could provide an inherent support structure, a means of encouraging hope and resilience for supporters discouraged by the distressingly slow pace of progress. It could create a language of environmentalism that transcends national boundaries, political affiliations, and cultural traditions. In summary, it presents perhaps the best chance of realizing the potential of environmental conservation—of truly making the "green" movement global.

II.   Legal Literature

Some legal scholars believe that at the turn of the twenty-first century the state of the law and social norms demonstrated a relatively stable commitment to environmental protection.[16] Not all scholars agree a major problem even exists with the environmental movement. Professor Christopher Stone argues that although climate change is a major issue, it is not environmentalism's only vital sign. A variety of other metrics indicate laudable progress, for example "campaigns to sustain the oil drilling moratoria in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and the Western Gulf of Mexico . . . [and t]he International Whaling Commission's (IWC) moratorium on commercial whaling."[17] Based on various criteria, he characterizes the movement overall as being "effectively oriented and flexible."[18]

Yet Stone's perspective seems to be in the minority. Furthermore, brandishing the current environmental movement as adequate eclipses the fact that we are marching toward likely irreversible climatic changes with unpredictable ramifications around the world. Some scholars have looked to the Civil Rights Movement to garner lessons to bolster the environmental move-

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16. Cary Coglianese, *Social Movements, Law, and Society: The Institutionalization of the Environmental Movement*, 150 U. Pa. L. Rev. 85, 88 (Nov. 2001).

17. Christopher D. Stone, *Is Environmentalism Dead?*, 38 Envtl. L. 19, 21 (Winter 2008).

18. *Id.* at 19.

2015] RETURNING TO EDEN ment, reaching the conclusion that further coalitions must be built to facilitate change.[19] Other research reinforces this need for coalitions, emphasizing they must involve disparate groups[20] and involve an examination of privilege, diversity, interdependency, and distributional concerns.[21] Similarly, some have called for the strategies of the movement to extend beyond simple lobbying and litigation, to encompass direct grassroots organizing.[22] This article builds on the recommendation to creatively forge new alliances and suggests the mainstream movement might be better served by focusing on expanding coalitions and organizing with religious groups.

With how everything currently stands, some scholars even question the extent to which the modern environmental "movement" fits into the category of social movement, particularly given waning public involvement.[23] Furthermore, some believe the gains made in the 1970s through the passage of various environmental laws make it less likely further significant shifts in the law will occur for many years to come.[24] Given the urgency of the crisis, such inertia is unacceptable.

III.   RELEVANCE OF FRAMING IN SOCIAL MOVEMENT THEORY

As this article intimately addresses the mobilization of people, it would be remiss not to introduce dominant social movement paradigms. The reason for this introduction is not to story-tell or fit trends of the existing environmental movement into abstract frameworks. Instead, social movement paradigms are mentioned for the following reasons: first, to expand the vocabulary this article employs in evaluating the environmental movement; and second, to define "framing" and demonstrate its relevance in the promotion of environmental conservation.

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19. *See, e.g.*, Lincoln L. Davies, *Lessons for an Endangered Movement: What A Historical Juxtaposition of the Legal Response to Civil Rights and Environmentalism Has to Teach Environmentalists Today*, 31 ENVTL. L. 229 (2001).

20. Alice Kaswan, *Environmental Justice and Environmental Law*, 24 FORDHAM ENVTL. L. REV. 149, 177 (2013).

21. Eileen Gauna, *El Dia De Los Muertos: The Death and Rebirth of the Environmental Movement*, 38 ENVTL. L. 457, 458 (2008).

22. Richard Toshiyuki Drury, *Rousing the Restless Majority: The Need for A Blue-Green-Brown Alliance*, 19 J. ENVTL. L. & LITIG. 5, 5 (Spring 2004).

23. Claire Riegelman, *Environmentalism: A Symbiotic Relationship Between A Social Movement and U.S. Law?*, 16 MO. ENVTL. L. & POL'Y REV. 522, 523 (2009).

24. Coglianese, *supra* note 16, at 88.

A.   Early Social Movement Theories Fall Into One of Two
     Perspectives: A Focus on Grievances or a Focus on
     Resources

What is a social movement? Although definitions vary, many
include the following characteristics: (1) a widely dispersed organ-
ized network of people who (2) share a common goal or set of be-
liefs, and are (3) working to amend or overturn a social policy or
specified set of norms in society.[25] Before the mid-1980s, analyses
of social movement participation chiefly focused on two perspec-
tives. The first, termed "*psychofunctional*," relates to the view that
social movements sprout when a group is sufficiently disadvan-
taged.[26] Theories within this perspective focus on evaluating the
presence of grievances or a persistent perceived injustice.[27] Al-
though deeper discussion of specific theories is outside the scope of
this article, the names of some include *convergence,* the *hearts and
minds approach, breakdown,* and *relative deprivation.*[28]

   The second perspective among early social movement theories
focuses less on disadvantage and more on the availability of re-

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   25. *See, e.g.,* Herbert Blumer, Collective Behavior in an Outline of the
Principles of Sociology 199 (Robert E. Park, ed., 1939).

   > Social movements can be viewed as collective enterprises to establish a
   > new order of life. They have their inception in the condition of unrest,
   > and derive their motive power on one hand from dissatisfaction with the
   > current form of life, and on the other hand, from wishes and hopes for a
   > new scheme or system of living.

Id.; Doug McAdam, Political Process and the Development of Black Insur-
gency 1930-1970 25 (1982). "[Social movements are] those organized efforts, on
the part of excluded groups, to promote or resist changes in the structure of soci-
ety that involve recourse to noninstitutional forms of political participation." *Id.*;
see also Sidney Tarrow, *Power in Movement: Social Movements,* Collective Action &
Politics 4 (1994). "Rather than seeing social movements as expressions of ex-
tremism, violence, and deprivation, they are better defined as collective chal-
lenges, based on common purposes and social solidarities, in sustained interaction
with elites, opponents, and authorities." *Id.*

   26. David A. Snow, *Frame Alignment Processes, Micromobilization, and Movement
Participation,* 51 Am. Sociological Rev. 464, 465 (1986).

   27. *Id.*

   28. *See, e.g.,* Ralph H. Turner & Lewis M. Killian, Collective Behavior 1
(1972) (discussing convergence); *See, e.g.,* Nathan Leites & Charles Wolf, Jr.,
Rebellion and Authority 4 (1970) (discussing hearts and minds approach).
"Chapter 2 examines the pervasive view that insurgent conflict , unlike other con-
flicts—or to a greater extent—is a struggle for the hearts and minds of the people,
a political rather than military conflict." *Id. See, e.g.,* Charles Tilly et al., The
Rebellious Century, 1830-1930 1 (1970) (discussing breakdown). *See, e.g.,* Robert
K. Merton, *Social Structure and Anomie,* 3 Am. Sociological Rev. 672 (1938) (dis-
cussing sleep deprivation). American sociologist Robert K. Merton was among the
first to use the concept of relative deprivation in order to understand social devi-
ance. *See id.*

sources.[29] *Resource Mobilization Theory* and *Political Process Theory* both fall within this camp.[30] According to its founders, *Resource Mobilization Theory* was developed in response to the fact that sociologists had "ignored the ongoing problems and strategic dilemmas of social movements."[31] The theory posits that movements do not simply sprout from sections of the population suffering grievances; rather, they are the manifestation of professional group(s) of social movement organizations (SMOs) that successfully bring together money, supporters, public attention, alliances with decision-makers, and partner organizations.[32] *Political Process Theory* similarly explores the role of resources, but with a particular focus on how political opportunities contribute to the genesis of social movements.[33] Accordingly, this second perspective posits that movements are opportunistic, manifesting when the necessary "ingredients" combine for mobilization.

Some claim these two early perspectives—one focusing on grievances, the other on the availability of resources and opportunities—share several shortcomings. The first shortcoming is that the actual study of grievances tends to be simplistic. Analyses often end once grievances have been identified, without exhaustive discussion of the wide disparities in *how* grievances can be interpreted across the population.[34] Early theories also tend to under-explore how dynamic these grievances actually are. Such interpretations impact whether, how, and the extent to which individuals and SMOs act. According to sociologist David Snow, "[b]oth the psychofunctional and resource mobilization perspectives ignore this interpretive or framing issue."

The second shortcoming is that many early theories treat movement participation as a relatively static variable.[35] In other words, once an individual or social movement organization contributes to a particular movement's efforts once, various theories assume such involvement will continue. Early theories would often presume a "single, time-bound, rational decision."[36] However, this presumption contradicts real-life decision-making. In practice, mo-

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29. Snow, *supra* note 26, at 465.
30. *Id.*
31. John D. McCarthy & Mayer N. Zald, *Resource Mobilization and Social Movements: A Partial Theory*, 82 Am. J. of Sociology 1212, 1212 (1977).
32. *Id.* at 1213.
33. David S. Meyer, *Protest and Political Opportunities*, 30 Annual Rev. of Soc. 125, 125 (2004).
34. Snow, *supra* note 26, at 465.
35. *Id.* at 466.
36. *Id.* at 467.

bilizing supporters does not simply involve convincing individuals one time; it involves continuous engagement and re-engagement. This is because "[d]ecisions to participate over time are . . . subject to frequent reassessment and renegotiation."[37]

The third shortcoming is that early theories fail to explore how various processes for getting individuals involved differ across social movements—in other words, how various methods may be more or less effective given the goals of, opposition to, and organizational structure of a particular movement.[38] *Frame Alignment Theory* was developed in response to these shortcomings.[39] It serves as both a conceptual bridge linking psychological and resource mobilization views on movement participation, and as the predominant framework applied in this article.

B.   Frame Alignment Theory Bridges Both Perspectives in Early Social Movement Thought

Before discussing the importance of framing for the environmental movement, this article will clarify terminology. The term *frame* denotes a "'schema of interpretation' that enables individuals 'to locate, perceive, identify and label' occurrences within their life space and the world at large."[40] Simply put, frames allow us to organize and find meaning from discrete experiences—relating and personalizing them, thereby guiding our actions. *Frame alignment* is when an individual's values, beliefs, or interpretive frameworks match or complement the actions and vision of a social movement organization. It is defined as "the linkage of individual and SMO [Social Movement Organization] interpretive orientations, such that some of the individual interests, values, and beliefs and SMO activities, goals, and ideology are congruent and complimentary."[41] It follows that frame alignment is a prerequisite for social movements to successfully mobilize supporters.[42]

Research on past movements identifies four ways frame alignment can be achieved: frame bridging, frame amplification, frame extension, and frame transformation. *Frame bridging* refers to "the linkage of two ideologically congruent but structurally unconnected frames."[43] An example of frame bridging would be if a section of

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37. *Id.*
38. *Id.*
39. Snow, *supra* note 26, at 1.
40. *Id.* at 464.
41. *Id.*
42. *Id.*
43. *Id.* at 468.

the population already deeply frustrated by a societal norm is recruited by an SMO aiming to amend the same norm. This is often accomplished via outreach such as direct mailings.[44] *Frame amplification* refers to "the clarification and invigoration of an interpretive frame that bears on a particular issue, problem, or set of events."[45] According to Snow, this is usually accomplished either through *value amplification* (elevation of one or more values considered basic to prospective supporters—e.g., the peace movement's appeal to fundamental values like justice and the sanctity of human life) or *belief amplification* (elevation of presumed relationships between two things or a thing and a characteristic of the thing—e.g., abortion is murder, capitalists are exploiters, or black is beautiful).[46] *Frame extension* refers to the linkage of SMO programs or causes "in terms of values and beliefs that may not be especially salient or readily apparent to potential constituents and supporters"—e.g.,the use of rock-and-roll and punk bands to attract otherwise uninterested crowds to disarmament rallies.[47] *Frame transformation* applies to situations where "[t]he programs, causes, and values that some SMOs promote . . . may not resonate with, and on occasion may even appear antithetical to, conventional lifestyles or rituals and extant interpretive frames."[48] In such circumstances, new values and interpretive frames must be constructed and nurtured, old meanings overturned or discarded, and erroneous beliefs reframed to garner support.[49]

The significance of framing is clear. A cause cannot attract support without linking its goals to others' values, beliefs, or experiences. Some movements find this task easier than others. For example, movements involving a prominent personal trait central to individual identity, like race or gender, likely establish frame alignment more easily, at least among the subsection of the population sharing the trait.[50] One reason is apparent: those with the trait remain vulnerable to the outcomes of the movement, independent of their individual contributions.

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44. Snow, *supra* note 26, at 468.
45. *Id.* at 469.
46. *Id.*
47. *Id.* at 472.
48. *Id.* at 473.
49. Snow, *supra* note 26, at 473.
50. *Cf.* Thomas J. Burns & Terri LeMoyne, *How Environmental Movements Can Be More Effective: Prioritizing Environmental Themes in Political Discourse*, 8 Hum. Ecology Rev. 26, 26 (2001).

Unfortunately, the environmental movement does not involve any personal trait. While some may argue all people are stakeholders in the environment, few claim everyone is invested in the success of the movement. Some even reject the scientific premise that human civilization significantly contributes to environmental degradation.[51] In addition, major portions of the population, despite a desire for a healthy environment, do not actively translate this preference to behaviors or voting decisions.[52] Only sympathy abounds, though *support* is needed. For such passive participants, true frame alignment remains absent.

C. Effective Framing Proves Particularly Relevant to the Environmental Movement, Given Its Unique Nature

Unlike other social movements, which include supporters from groups most impacted by the implications of failure, groups most vulnerable to environmental degradation are often most absent from the dialogue. These vulnerable groups include the citizens of at-risk developing nations, unborn generations, and communities of color.[53] Whether it is the 200,000 or more people who died from the 2004 Tsunami in the Pacific,[54] the 9.5 million who required emergency assistance from the 2011 drought in Somalia, Kenya, Ethiopia and Djibouti,[55] or the faceless future masses who must one day cope with unmitigated environmental problems resulting from actions today, the greatest "victims" of environmental change do not have access to participate. They are unable to serve as activists; they are unable to share personal stories of misfortune and loss to capture the conscience of the world.

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51. Aaron M. McCright & Riley E. Dunlap, *Challenging Global Warming as a Social Problem: An Analysis of the Conservative Movement's Counter-Claims*, 47 SOC. PROBLEMS 499, 499 (2000).

52. Burns & LeMoyne, *supra* note 50, at 26.

53. John Vidal, *Climate Change Will Hit Poor Countries Hardest Study Shows*, THE GUARDIAN (Sept. 27, 2013), http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/20 13/sep/27/climate-change-poor-countries-ipcc. *See also* Richard Toshiyuki Drury, *Rousing the Restless Majority: The Need for A Blue-Green-Brown Alliance*, 19 J. ENVTL. L. & LITIG. 5, 5 (2004). "The logical place to begin is in the communities most adversely affected by environmental hazards—communities of color and labor. Ironically, these are precisely the communities that have often been ignored or even alienated by the American environmental movement." *Id.*

54. Adam Jay, *Tsunami Death Toll Rises to 225,000*, THE GUARDIAN (Jan. 19, 2005), http://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/jan/19/indonesia.tsunami200 4.

55. *UN Says Somali Famine is Over, But Action Still Needed to Forestall New Crisis*, UN NEWS CENTR. (Feb. 3, 2012), http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID =41133#.Uy4DCF7D7es.

The environmental movement must frame its message effectively, especially in the United States, given the most vulnerable victims of environmental degradation are not leading and participating in SMOs[56]; given the heaviest polluting nations are also comparatively least affected by the effects of their emissions[57]; and given the consensus from the scientific community that climate change is undeniably manifest and irreversible.[58] SMOs must proactively link "interpretive orientations" when cause-and-effect relationships are not obviously apparent—for example, when individuals may overlook how local daily habits contribute to climate change occurring halfway around the world. Even if the presence of grievances is clear, past movements teach "what is at issue is not merely the presence or absence of grievances, but the manner in which grievances are interpreted and the generation and diffusion of those interpretations."[59] Thus, although it may be more difficult to achieve frame alignment in the environmental movement, the same reasons it is difficult simultaneously signal why such alignment is so necessary.

IV. SHORTCOMINGS OF CURRENT FRAMING OF MAINSTREAM ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT

This section will not provide an exhaustive critique of how the mainstream environmental movement has been framed. Rather, it will present several of the most common criticisms, explore how the current logic-based framing has a limited capacity to influence individual and policy decisions, and then propose a new path given existing shortcomings.

This article focuses on the framing of the *mainstream* environmental movement because it most directly influences public perception of the urgency, danger, and moral imperative of environmental concerns. Not only does the mainstream movement affect the level of dedication among extant supporters, but it also influences how wholly-disconnected individuals learn about (and thus may potentially be enticed to join) the movement. As George

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56. *Cf.* Nicole Klenk et al., *Report of the First International Ecojustice Conference: How Will Disenfranchised Peoples Adapt to Climate Change? Strengthening the Ecojustice Movement* 1, 1 INST. FOR RESEARCH & INNOVATION IN SUSTAINABILITY (Apr. 16, 2009), *available at* http://iris.info.yorku.ca/files/2014/02/Ecojustice-Conference_final.pdf.

57. *Id.*

58. AM. ASSOC. FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCI., *What We Know* (2014), http://whatweknow.aaas.org/get-the-facts/.

59. Snow, *supra* note 26, at 466.

Lakoff, UC Berkeley Professor of Cognitive Science and Linguistics, explains, "How the environment is understood by the American public is crucial: it vastly affects the future of our earth and every living being on it."[60] Given the continued failure to halt or reverse global climate change, a deeper understanding of the mainstream environmental movement is vital.

"Mainstream" refers to the dominant SMOs, ideologies, and values shaping a movement, as well as the leading frames, strategies, and tactics employed. By no means do media portrayals offer an exhaustive picture of all that is happening in the environmental movement. However, they do serve as a useful instrument for understanding public perception, as well as for disaggregating which components of a movement are "mainstream" vs. "fringe." In other words, the values, beliefs, and messaging that continually resurface in the news and other public venues form the dominating storyline. They represent the predominant frame through which much of the public engages (or chooses not to engage) with the environmental movement.

A.   Environmental Leaders Craft Messages Based on Logic, Facts and Fear, Which Fail as a Strategy to Inspire Supporters

Headlines ranging from "Environmental activism needs its own revolution to regain its teeth"[61] to "The death of environmentalism: Global warming politics in a post-environmental world"[62] suggest growing pessimism about the progression of the movement. Yet the pessimism is not caused by any waning financial resources from environmental groups.[63] In fact, some of the larger SMOs have successfully expanded their donation base in recent years. Instead, mounting criticisms surround the framing of the movement.

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60. George Lakoff, *Why Environmental Understanding, or 'Framing,' Matters: An Evaluation of the EcoAmerica Summary Report*, HUFFINGTON POST (June 19, 2009), http://www.huffingtonpost.com/george-lakoff/why-environmental-underst_b_20 5477.html.

61. Charles Secrett, *Environmental Activism Needs Its Own Revolution to Regain Its Teeth: Today's Protest Tactics are Not Sufficient to Alter the Destructive Path Travelled by Virtually All Governments and Most Corporations*, THE GUARDIAN (June 13, 2011), http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2011/jun/13/environmental-acti vism-needs-revolution.

62. TED NORDHAUS & MICHAEL SHELLENBERGER, THE DEATH OF ENVIRON-MENTALISM: GLOBAL WARMING POLITICS IN A POST-ENVIRONMENTAL WORLD 1 (2004).

63. *Id.* at 11.
> The membership rolls and the income of the big environmental organizations have grown enormously over the past 30 years — especially since the election of George W. Bush in 2000. The institutions that define what environmentalism means boast large professional staffs and receive tens of millions of dollars every year from foundations and individuals.

Professor Lakoff, who has written extensively on language and interpretive frames, admits: "Facts matter. But for their importance to be communicated at all, they must be framed in moral terms. Facts by themselves are not meaningful to most people. Just arguing the science of global warming is not effective."[64]

Michael Shellenberger and Ted Nordhaus, consultants and public opinion experts, similarly express doubts on the power of facts alone. In DEATH OF ENVIRONMENTALISM[65] they write "the environmental movement acts as though proposals based on 'sound science' will be sufficient to overcome ideological and industry opposition."[66] Finally, Mary Evelyn, Tucker—Co-founder and Co-director of the Forum on Religion and Ecology and Senior Lecturer and Research Scholar at Yale University, echoes the belief in the limitations of logic-based framing: "We have failed to translate facts about the environmental crisis into effective action in the United States. We are discovering that the human heart is not

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64. George Lakoff, *For Planets, Persons and Species, Let's Communicate Effectively*, ECOLOGICAL BUDDHISM, (last visited Mar. 27, 2015), http://www.ecobuddhism.org /solutions/behaviour/lakoff.

65. This article has been cited frequently by various media outlets, and has led to a discussion on NPR, the publication of a book. It has also presented one of the most aggressive challenges to the framing of the environmental movement. Shellengberger and Nordhaus, environmentalists themselves, drafted this report after interviewing twenty-five of the environmental community's leaders, including Dan Becker, Phil Capp, Tim Carmichael, Ralph Cavanaugh, Susan Clark, Benadette Del Chiaro, Shelly Fiddler, Ross Gelbspan, Hal Harvey, David Hawkins, Bracken Hendricks, Roland Hwang, Eric Heitz, Wendy James, Van Jones, Fred Keeley, Lance Lindblom, Elisa Lynch, Jason Mark, Bob Nordhaus, Carl Pope, Josh Reichart, Jeremy Rifkin, Adam Werbach, Greg Westone, V. John White, and Carl Zichella. A significant criticism of Nordhaus and Shellenberger, as articulated by Professor Douglas Kysar of Yale Law School, is that their essay provides little to respond to the crisis of meaning they articulate. *See* Douglas A. Kysar, *Break Through: From the Death of Environmentalism to the Politics of Possibility. by Ted Nordhaus & Michael Shellenberger. New York: Houghton Mifflin Co. 2007. Pp. 344. $25.00*, 121 Harv. L. Rev. 2041, 2046 (2008). Nordhaus and Shellenberger claimed there was a problem with the messaging, but did not provide a clear answer for how to solve it. They did not discuss which actors would be the messengers, what new message would be delivered, or what new values would be instilled.

Although this article does not aim to defend the entire position of Nordhaus and Shellenberger, it does address some of Kysar's key criticisms of their work. At least at a grassroots level, this comment proposes spiritual leaders in local communities act as messengers conveying environmentalism defended through religious or spiritual language, symbolism, and practice. For this to occur, no new values would need to be instilled; rather, they would be a frame extension of the ones already inherent in the respective faiths.

66. Nordhaus & Shellenberger, *supra* note 62, at 10.

changed by facts alone but by engaging visions and empowering values."[67]

In framing environmentalism, the facts speak for themselves: "facts" do not speak loudly enough. The current discourse needs more direct appeal to values and morality. And yet, the mainstream environmental movement continues to predominantly communicate key messages through facts. On the National Resources Defense Council (NRDC) homepage, the main image comprises a map of the United States with the headline *Climate Change Heat Deaths in Top U.S. Cities.*[68] On the Sierra Club's website, the main image shifts between one that includes the message *Tar Sands Oil is Destroying Canada's Environment and Poisoning its Politics* and another one that says *Diesel in Your Drinking Water.*[69] Media outlets also promote environmentalism through similar "fact-and-fear" framing. On April 3, 2006, the front cover of Time magazine read "Be worried. Be very worried," with the word 'very' highlighted in red text.[70] This pattern of global warming alarmism, while undoubtedly helping to popularize the *urgency* of environmental issues, unsuccessfully generates *inspiration* to mobilize the support required to reverse the trends.

Contrary to the intrinsically *global* reach of climate change, the mainstream movement in the United States remains first and foremost a partisan political issue[71] confined within the narrow boundaries of liberal America. After lamenting the perception of the environmental movement as a "special interest,"[72] Shellenberger and Nordhaus hypocritically describe (in the same article) their brain-child Apollo project as part of an effort "to build a true, values-based *progressive* majority in the United States".[73] As this contradiction shows, many leading environmentalists presume conservatives are beyond reach. The mainstream movement is framed around political wins—intentionally aligned along political parties—even as it acknowledges much of its work requires *broad*

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67. Mary Evelyn Tucker & John Grim, *Daring to Dream: Religion and the Future of the Earth, reprinted in* Llewellyn Vaughan Lee, Spiritual Ecology: The Cry of the Earth (2013).

68. National Resources Defense Council (June 3, 2012), http://www.nrdc.org.

69. Sierra Club (June 3, 2012), http://www.sierraclub.org/.

70. Time Magazine (Apr. 3, 2006).

71. Kara Lindaman & Donald P. Haider-Markel, *Issue Evolution, Political Parties, and the Culture Wars*, 55 Political Research Quarterly 91, 101 (2002).

72. Nordhaus & Shellenberger, *supra* note 62, at 26.

73. *Id.* at 27 (italics added for emphasis).

individual person-to-person changes in lifestyle, changes that liberals, conservatives, and independents alike must adopt.

Table 1 shows that liberals are more than twice as likely to prioritize environmental protection over economic development compared to conservatives (55% vs. 22%). A similar split exists between Democrats and Republicans (46% vs. 19%). Additionally, only two subgroups viewed environmental protection as more important than economic development (age 18 to 29 at 51% and liberals at 55%), though only barely. While external factors, such as a struggling financial sector,[74] may cause more to prioritize economic development, they do not explain discrepancies *between* groups. Environmental issues remain polarized; and it matters little what came first—SMOs framing strategies that narrowly persuade only certain subgroups, or pre-existing discrepancies in how receptive subgroups are to environmental concerns. Unfortunately, it appears many leaders in the environmental movement presume the ideological split is unalterable.

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74. Riley E. Dunlap, *Show Us the Data: The Questionable Empirical Foundations of "The Death of Environmentalism" Thesis*, 19 ORG. & ENV'T 88, 92 (2006). "It appears that responses to this item are, as one would expect, highly susceptible to economic condition." *Id.*

TABLE 1: HIGHER PRIORITY FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OR
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, BY SUBGROUP, 2011.[75]

	% Environment	% Economy
Men	37	54
Women	35	55
Non-Hispanic white	33	58
All others	43	46
18 to 29 yrs.	51	44
30 to 49 yrs.	33	59
50 to 64 yrs.	35	54
65+ yrs.	30	59
East	43	49
Midwest	39	51
South	28	63
West	38	51
Postgraduate	46	45
College graduate only	25	68
Some college	35	57
High school or less	35	53
Conservatives	22	70
Moderates	42	48
Liberals	55	35
Republicans	19	74
Independents	41	50
Democrats	46	42

Gallup, March 3-6, 2011

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75. Jeffrey M. Jones, *Americans Increasingly Prioritize Economy Over Environment*,
GALLUP (Mar. 17, 2011), http://www.gallup.com/poll/146681/americans-increas
ingly-prioritize-economy-environment.aspx?version=print.

The politicized nature of mainstream environmentalism not only narrows the potential base of supporters, but also limits the creativity employed in framing core messages. Unlike some arms of the Civil Rights Movement, the mainstream environmental movement has no articulated "dream."[76] Only an impending nightmare of global climate catastrophe persists—a nightmare the movement is hoping will, perhaps through some combination of luck or providence, be avoided. Few social movements have been solely predicated on fear; in fact, sociology recommends hope as a stronger mobilizing tool.[77] And yet, leading environmental SMOs' decision to frame key messages around scientific facts traps dialogue on environmentalism into the realm of fear (especially given the consistently disheartening figures).

B. Technical Policy Solutions Distract the Movement from Portraying a Coherent Vision for Success While Self-Interest Weakens Logic-Based Justifications for Environmentalism

"The use of cost-benefit analysis is inherently anti-ecological."
- George Lakoff, Professor, UC Berkeley[78]

The mainstream environmental movement's reliance on logic-based justifications appears ineffective. Not only do certain recommendations fail cost-benefit analyses, partially due to the inherent difficulty of accurately monetizing current and future environmental value,[79] but economic models' reliance on rational *self*-interest also disconnects the intrinsically communal nature of environmental preservation. Individually optimal actions, when universalized, often yield socially suboptimal consequences.[80] Examples abound:

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76. Martin Luther King, Jr., *I have a Dream Speech* (Aug. 28, 1963).

77. James M. Jasper, *Emotions and Social Movements: Twenty Years of Theory and Research*, 37 ANN. REV. SOC. 285, 296 (2011). "Emotional liberation: a package of emotions that removes blockages to protest, including a shift of affective loyalties from dominant identities and institutions to protest-oriented ones, reflex emotions of anger rather than fear, moods of hope and enthusiasm rather than despair or resignation, and moral emotions of indignation."

78. Lakoff, *supra* note 64.

79. WILLIAM A. PIZER & RAYMOND KOPP, CALCULATING THE COSTS OF ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATION 40 (Resources for the Future, 2003). "The inability to measure benefits accurately."; LISA HEINZERLING & FRANK ACKERMAN, PRICING THE PRICELESS: COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION 1 (2002). "First, cost-benefit analysis cannot produce more efficient decisions because the process of reducing life, health, and the natural world to monetary values is inherently flawed." *Id.*

80. Garrett Hardin, *The Tragedy of the Commons*, 162 SCIENCE 1243, 1244 (1968).

the externalization of costs associated with polluting business practices and the decision of an individual to litter instead of recycle are merely two. Not only have the appeals to logic and economic reasoning failed to effectively inspire the population, but also, as the rest of this section explores, they perhaps inherently meet deep and potentially insurmountable challenges.

The mainstream environmental movement focuses on technical policy solutions. *Technical policy solutions* refer to economically-attractive micro-solutions, such as establishing an emissions standard for vehicles without curbing the growth of the domestic auto industry, or determining the best rate for a corporate carbon tax program that internalizes negative externalities.[81] Granted, the environmental movement and broader society does benefit from crafting economically-viable solutions. However, without a coherent shared vision for society—a vision with more teeth than simply a "greener earth" or a "cleaner planet"—the wide landscape of local, national, and international technical policy solutions may confuse lay supporters. These supporters may not only have difficulty keeping track of happenings, but may also struggle to prioritize their time amongst competing environmental efforts. This confusion may reduce lay supporters' actual investment in ongoing efforts.

Many leading environmental organizations focus on technical policy solutions, causing the movement to resemble a fragmented network of SMOs[82] raising their own funds and promoting their own agendas. Such disconnection reinforces incrementalist attitudes among individual SMOs: many of them focus on their individual pet projects,[83] accepting trivial progress, even as the planet continues declining toward climatic catastrophe. Additionally, some environmentalists may waste inordinate effort refining "the best" technical policy solutions, even though they are wholly divorced from sobering political realities.[84] The movement often fo-

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81. *See e.g.*, Jody Freeman, *The Obama Administration's National Auto Policy: Lessons from the "Car Deal"*, 35 Harv. Envtl. L. Rev. 343 (2011); Stephen Sewalk, *Carbon Tax with Reinvestment Trumps Cap-and-Trade*, 30 Pace Envtl. L. Rev. 580 (2013).

82. C.A. Bowers, The Culture of Denial: Why the Environmental Movement Needs a Strategy for Reforming Universities and Public Schools 19 (1997). "[T]he fragmented nature of the environmental movement." *Id.*

83. Karl Burkart, *Sierra Club: Last Hope for an Endangered Movement*, Mother Nature Network, (Apr. 23 2010), http://www.mnn.com/green-tech/research-in novations/blogs/sierra-club-last-hope-for-an-endangered-movement. "This was a sentiment expressed while discussing the lack of coordination amongst the big environmental NGO's at the Earth Day strategy session." *Id.*

84. *Cf.* Nordhaus & Shellenberger, *supra* note 62, at 25. "What's frustrating about . . . so many other visionary environmental books . . . is the way the authors advocate technical policy solutions as though politics didn't matter." *Id.*

cuses on smaller issues, while the vision and inspirational messaging remain tenuous. The vision of the mainstream movement cannot simply be to reverse global warming; the vision cannot be difficult to actually *visualize.* Nor can it be defined through impersonal numerical targets (e.g., a five percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions over the next two years). So, the question becomes, what does reversing global warming *look* like? Does it look like more trees or fewer hurricanes? Like the avoidance of some future doomsday climatic catastrophe? Hopefully it looks like more, as this last example is not even a vision but an *evasion* (of a dystopian vision); it is rather *un*-inspiring as a recipe for inspiring action.

The mainstream environmental movement focuses too heavily on technical policy solutions, which distracts it from answering foundational questions like what success would look like. Additionally, mainstream environmentalists' focus on technical solutions and economic reasoning forces the movement to engage in a futile intellectual debate. As economic modeling is likely to confirm, environmentalism in the developed world is not cheap, at least as required to prevent the impending environmental crisis. It may never be cheap. And so the mainstream movement's willingness to debate "cost-effective" piecemeal policies begins a dialogue which ends in disaster. It dilutes the moral force of the underlying message. When discussing which operation to perform on one's dying child, one does not rely on economic principles. One does not compare weighted averages—multiplying benefit times probability of survival minus costs to maximize expected outcomes in "the long-run." One simply chooses the operation most likely to save the child. The environmental movement needs to transcend piecemeal debates on policy and instead convince us to view the environment as our suffering child, or, perhaps more appropriately, our suffering parent. Economics is a tool, or framework, not an all-encompassing religion or faith. This distinction is often underappreciated; and even more frequently, forgotten.

Some decision-making situations benefit from using economics more than others. In many cases, environmentalism does not seem to be one of them. Two concepts that help explain the limitations of the environmental movement's logic-based framing are *the Prisoners' Dilemma* and the *Tragedy of the Commons.* Eerily, in his article "Tragedy of the Commons," Garrett Hardin notes that "an implicit and almost universal assumption . . . is that the problem under discussion has a *technical* solution."[85] In fact, he defines a whole set of

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85. Hardin, *supra* note 80, at 1243 (italics added for emphasis).

human problems as "no technical solution problems."[86] In other words, some of mankind's problems cannot be solved by a combination of individual piecemeal solutions. Hardin's article focuses on the problem of worldwide population growth; however, it seems feasible the environmental crisis falls within the same category, in a space unreachable purely by the curative capabilities of technical solutions.

Not only does Hardin explain how technical solutions cannot fix certain types of human problems, but he also laments the blind faith many ascribe to Adam Smith's concept of the *Invisible Hand*.[87] The *Invisible Hand* theory posits that individuals who attend solely to their own self-interested gain will be led by an "invisible hand" to promote the public interest.[88] As Hardin continues:

> Adam Smith did not assert that [the Invisible Hand] was invariably true, and perhaps neither did any of his followers. But he contributed to a dominant tendency of thought that has ever since interfered with positive action based on rational analysis, namely, the tendency to assume that decisions reached individually will, in fact, be the best decisions for an entire society.[89]

Many claim the environmental crisis persists due to the unrestrained furtherance of economic self-interest.[90] Individual actors fail to preserve the environment, since they do not "own" the land, the air, the water, etc. Individuals who are self-interested in the narrowest sense bear little desire to ensure the environment survives in a healthy state beyond their own lifetimes. Similarly, businesses who maximize profit aim to avoid costs associated with many externalities of production, such as pollution and environmental

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86. *Id.*
87. *Id.* at 1244.
88. *Id.*
89. *Id.*
90. *See, e.g.*, Devadatta Gandhi, *The Limits and Promise of Environmental Ethics: Eco-Socialist Thought and Anthropocentrism's Virtue*, ENVIRONS ENVTL. L. & POL'Y J., (Fall 2007), at 35, 44-45.

> Frankfurt School revisionist William Leiss argues that capitalism poses problems for a sustainable world: 'Capitalism gives rise to a form of need-satisfaction (commodity production) in which there is no limit to the demands placed on the natural environment by humans.' Leiss believes that 'as this form of production becomes universal, the natural world is debased into becoming merely a means for human satisfaction. Every attained level of satisfaction through possession of material goods only leads to demands for more, without end; this is the very opposite of a sustainable form of life.'

Id.

waste. In the absence of cooperation, as Hardin's *Tragedy of the Commons* theory suggests, regulators must protect against the destruction of the common space.[91] For example, in a scenario where farmers threaten to over-farm a finite track of common ground, the government may limit the area any individual can farm to five square meters. Alternatively, the government can mandate that the regions of the common space allowed for farming rotate from year-to-year, so the soil can recover.

However, given the complexity of global climate change, the environmental crisis cannot be solved so simply. For one, the "commons" under consideration, the environment, often falls outside the sovereignty of any individual state. Carbon emissions in Los Angeles influence temperatures in Sierra Leone. Coal plants in China affect the melting of glaciers at the poles. Few nations, if any, can effectively protect the global "commons" alone in light of the intrinsically interrelated nature of the environment. In addition, as Economics Nobel Laureate Elinor Olstrom argued, the complexity of the issues and diversity of the actors involved limit the effectiveness of single governmental units in coordinating work against environmental destruction.[92] While there have been international cooperation efforts, such as the Kyoto Protocol, reaching consensus on environmental protection can fall victim to another issue, the *Prisoners' Dilemma.*

The *Prisoners' Dilemma* originates in game theory analysis, and involves two prisoners being held on suspicion for a crime in two separate cells, unable to communicate with each other. The captors are attempting to get each prisoner to "rat on" the other one. The outcome of the game is as follows: if neither prisoner rats out the other, they both get one year in prison; if each prisoner rats out the other one, then they each get five years in prison; if only one prisoner rats out the other one, then the one who ratted out the other gets immediately released, while the prisoner who kept quiet gets ten years in prison. From the perspective of the individual prisoner, self-interest dictates one should always rat out the other prisoner: if the other prisoner also speaks, one's punishment decreases from ten years to five years, and if the other prisoner keeps quiet, then one's punishment decreases from one year to zero years. If both prisoners pursue narrowly self-interested decision-making, they each spend five years in prison. On the other hand, if they

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91. Hardin, *supra* note 80, at 1244.

92. Trong Vedeld, *New Global Game – And How Best to Play It*, THE NIBR INT'L BLOG (Feb. 12, 2010), http://blog.nibrinternational.no/#post9.

pursue the interest of the group by remaining quiet, they only spend one year in prison. This scenario demonstrates how reliance on "rational" self-interest can yield non-optimal outcomes for the group and the individual.

In environmental efforts, everyone benefits when an individual nation decides to reduce pollution. Still, any individual nation has a competitive advantage over other nations from being both the least committed and the last to reduce pollution levels. Similar to the *Prisoners' Dilemma*, if all nations adopt this stance of narrow self-interest, all nations wind up in a worse position, especially as the threat of environmental catastrophe continues. The macro-trends of global climate change appear ill-equipped to overcome the micro-incentives for individual nations, businesses, and actors to continue environmentally-destructive behavior.

As one of the last major U.S. social movements, The Civil Rights Movement represents an instance of sufficient pressure from the populace motivating widespread changes throughout society. The movement mobilized wide sections of the population. It had fervor that incited change. As Martin Luther King exclaimed, "there is a fierce urgency of now!"[93] In contrast, no such urgency exists among much of the population regarding environmentalism: the public today often relegates environmentalism to the margins, despite increasingly grim scientific indicators. Environmentalism is not the foremost issue in most political campaigns, or even a secondary one.[94] The fire and passion of the Civil Rights Movement is lacking when it comes to the environmental movement, even though more is arguably at stake—even though harmful unjust outcomes to marginalized populations similarly result—even though, unlike nearly all other social movements to date, the environmental movement aims to prevent an outcome detrimental to nearly all people involved. The goal should be common: to protect the "commons."

To establish this fervor, the environmental movement must first use a moral argument, not one primarily based on logic, reason, and scientific testimony. The environmental movement will remain an uphill battle, continue simply being a "special interest," until a moral imperative permeates not the public consciousness but *public consciences.* A moral shift must occur, one that elevates the sentiment "it would be great if the environment improved" to

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93. King, *supra* note 76.
94. Deborah Lynn Guber, *Voting Preferences and the Environment in the American Electorate*, 14 SOC'Y & NATURAL RES. 455, 455 (2001).

"it is deeply *my* responsibility to help in preserving the environment." As moral imperatives appeal to natural law, they apply to everyone; by definition they cannot be "special interests."

Fear does not create a moral imperative. Neither does data. Neither does cold, hard science.

V. MAJOR BENEFITS FROM RELIGIOUS RE-FRAMING OF ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT

> Environmentalists are in a culture war whether we like it or not. It's a war over our core values as Americans and over our vision for the future, and it won't be won by appealing to the rational consideration of our collective self-interest.
>
> - Michael Shellenberger and Ted Norhaus[95]

Religion is not "toxic," despite presumptions of the contrary among many intellectuals, liberals, and secularists. Religion is not antiquated. It is not absent, nor obsolete. Granted, religion misunderstood or manipulated can be, and has been, a dangerous force throughout history. And yet, it has also been one of the most surprising and inspiring ones. From Joan of Arc to Mahatma Gandhi to Martin Luther King, from the old slave spirituals in the American south[96] to the persisting defiance of martyred monks in rural Tibet,[97] unmatched is the capacity for religion to maintain a modicum of hope in the midst of blinding darkness, to preserve conviction despite demoralizing measures of progress.

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95. Nordhaus & Shellenberger, *supra* note 62, at 10.

96. John Lovell, Jr., *The Social Implications of the Negro Spiritual*, 8 THE JOURNAL OF NEGRO EDUC. 634, 638 (1939).

> The spiritual, then, is the key to the slave's description and criticism of his environment. It is the key to his revolutionary sentiments and to his desire to fly to free territory. With it, we can smash the hold romantic molds, which are still turning out ready made Negroes. But let us not put the emphasis on the negative side. Most important of all, the Negro spiritual is a positive thing, a folk group's answer to life.

Id.

97. Åshild Kolås, *Tibetan Nationalism: The Politics of Religion*, 33 J. OF PEACE RES. 51, 51 (1996).

> Tibetan Buddhism, rather than secular nationalist ideology, provides vital idioms for the political discourse on Tibetan independence. . . . It is argued that within and outside Tibet, popular expressions of Tibetan identity rely on religious symbolism. In Tibet, religious idioms are reappearing in completely new contexts, as political expressions of opposition to Chinese rule.

Lumbum Tashi & Yangdon Demo, *Two Tibetan Monks Self-Immolate on Crackdown Anniversary*, RADIO FREE ASIA (Mar. 16, 2014), http://www.rfa.org/english/news/tibet/burning-03162014125839.html.

Before assessing how the mainstream environmental movement can benefit from using religion in justifying its goals, let us first remove personal biases. Let us entertain the notion that, despite potentially negative perceptions of religion or a rejection of faith, there is something very real and tangible about spiritual traditions for those who believe. Let us accept that such traditions continue to form the "interpretive orientation," the foundational frame of reference, for many, if not most, people on the planet.[98] And also let us cast off the simplistic presumption that religion is simply relevant to those less "intelligent," less "rational," or less "modern." Contrary to the claims of Karl Marx, religion is much more than the "opium of the people,"[99] and so let us remember for every Nietzsche there is a Søren Kierkegaard;[100] for every Stephen Hawking,[101]

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98. Pew Research Religion & Public Life Project, *The Global Religious Landscape*, Pew Forum (Dec. 18, 2012), http://www.pewforum.org/2012/12/18/global-religious-landscape-exec/.Worldwide, more than eight-in-ten people identify with a religious group. A comprehensive demographic study of more than 230 countries and territories conducted by the Pew Research Center's Forum on Religion & Public Life estimates that there are 5.8 billion religiously affiliated adults and children around the globe, representing 84% of the 2010 world population of 6.9 billion.

99. Karl Marx, Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right (1843).

100. *See, e.g.*, http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/kierkegaard/ ("Søren Aabye Kierkegaard (b. 1813, d. 1855) was a profound and prolific writer in the Danish 'golden age' of intellectual and artistic activity. His work crosses the boundaries of philosophy, theology, psychology, literary criticism, devotional literature and fiction. Kierkegaard brought this potent mixture of discourses to bear as social critique and for the purpose of renewing Christian faith within Christendom. At the same time he made many original conceptual contributions to each of the disciplines he employed. He is known as the 'father of existentialism,' but at least as important are his critiques of Hegel and of the German romantics, his contributions to the development of modernism, his literary experimentation, his vivid representation of biblical figures to bring out their modern relevance, his invention of key concepts which have been explored and redeployed by thinkers ever since, his interventions in contemporary Danish church politics, and his fervent attempts to analyse and revitalize [sic] Christian faith.").

101. *See, e.g.*, David W. Freeman, *Stephen Hawking Bashes Religion, But What Does New Comment Say About God?*, CBS News (Aug. 8, 2011), http://www.cbsnews.com/news/stephen-hawking-bashes-religion-but-what-does-new-comment-say-about-god/. Stephen Hawking is an English theoretical physicist, cosmologist, author, and Director of Research at the University of Cambridge's Centre for Theoretical Cosmology. *See id.*

an Isaac Newton;[102] and for every Richard Dawkins,[103] a Stephen Carter.[104]

A. The Environmental Movement Can Expand Its Audience by Justifying Environmentalism through Religion

Earlier, this article lamented how environmentalism remains politically polarized. Still, there may be a solution, a way of presenting the message of environmentalism in a way that not only speaks to liberals, but also conservatives as well: religious justifications. According to the 2009 book by John Micklethwait, editor in chief of *The Economist*, and Adrian Wooldridge, *The Economist*'s Washington bureau chief and Lexington columnist, "God is back."[105] The book begins with a scene occurring in Shanghai, China. Assembled is a cross-section of the "new China"—involving everyone from management consultants to biotechnologists, doctors, ballet dancers, and entrepreneurs. They are not assembled for some business collaboration, nor a secular celebration, but worship and prayer at their weekly bible study session.[106]

Some have claimed that, since the Enlightenment, modernity has become increasingly incompatible with religion. Research suggests otherwise. Based on the synthesis of interviews, statistics, and field observations, Micklethwait and Wooldridge convincingly argue for both the continued relevance of religious faith in "developing" nations as they modernize, and its persistence among the population of the United States.[107] Specifically, the authors distinguish two equally viable trends of modernization: the European and American model.

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102. *See, e.g.*, William H. Austin, *Isaac Newton on Science and Religion*, 31 J. HIST. IDEAS 521, 521 (1970). "In his own time Isaac Newton was known as an acute and learned theologian." *Id.*

103. Richard Dawkins is an English ethologist, evolutionary biologist, and writer. He is an emeritus fellow of New College, Oxford, and was the University of Oxford's Professor for Public Understanding of Science from 1995 until 2008. *See, e.g.*, Ben Kendall, *'Religion is Redundant and Irrelevant': Richard Dawkins Takes on Ex-Archbishop of Canterbury Dr Rowan Williams in Cambridge Debate*, THE INDEPENDENT (Feb. 1, 2013), http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/religion-is-redundant-and-irrelevant-richard-dawkins-takes-on-exarchbishop-of-canterbury-dr-rowan-williams-in-cambridge-debate-8476499.html.

104. Stephen L. Carter is a professor at Yale Law School, legal- and social-policy writer, columnist, and best-selling novelist. He is also the author of THE CULTURE OF DISBELIEF (1994), a book that explains how the vital separation of church and state can be preserved while embracing, rather than trivializing, the faith of millions of citizens, or treating religious believers with disdain.
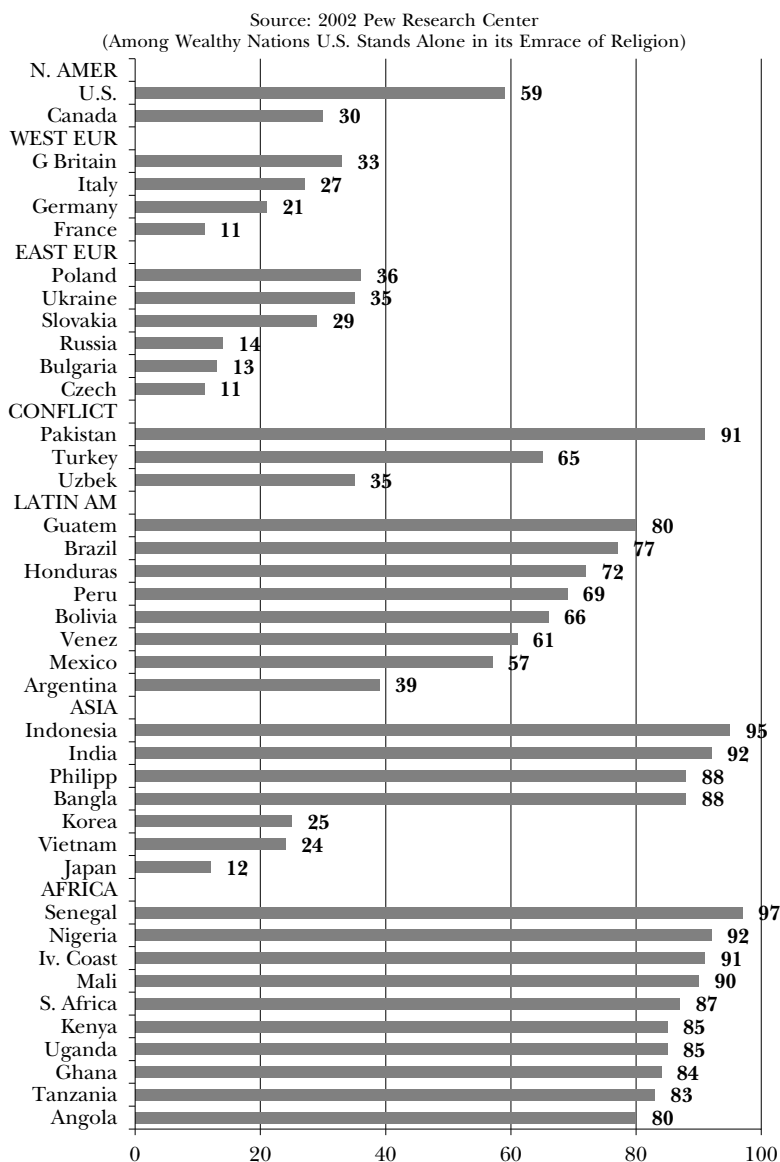
105. Micklethwait & Wooldridge, *supra* note 15.

106. *Id.* at 1.

107. *Id.* at 9.

In Europe, the prevailing presumption has been that modernity "would marginalize religion."[108] For European nations, this seems generally true. In 2002, the Pew Research Center administered a survey to over 38,000 respondents in forty-four countries around the world.[109]

TABLE 2: RELIGION VERY IMPORTANT (%)

Source: 2002 Pew Research Center
(Among Wealthy Nations U.S. Stands Alone in its Emrace of Religion)

Region / Country	%
N. AMER	
U.S.	59
Canada	30
WEST EUR	
G Britain	33
Italy	27
Germany	21
France	11
EAST EUR	
Poland	36
Ukraine	35
Slovakia	29
Russia	14
Bulgaria	13
Czech	11
CONFLICT	
Pakistan	91
Turkey	65
Uzbek	35
LATIN AM	
Guatem	80
Brazil	77
Honduras	72
Peru	69
Bolivia	66
Venez	61
Mexico	57
Argentina	39
ASIA	
Indonesia	95
India	92
Philipp	88
Bangla	88
Korea	25
Vietnam	24
Japan	12
AFRICA	
Senegal	97
Nigeria	92
Iv. Coast	91
Mali	90
S. Africa	87
Kenya	85
Uganda	85
Ghana	84
Tanzania	83
Angola	80

108. *Id.*
109. GLOBAL ATTITUDES PROJECT, *supra* note 14.

As Table 2 illustrates, not only does well under half the population in each European nation included in the survey not view religion as "very important," but also the European figures are the lowest of any region in the world.

In contrast, United States history defends the claim that modernity and religion "can thrive together."[110] According to recent surveys, eighty-three percent of Americans identify with a religious denomination, forty percent state they attend services nearly every week or more, and fifty-eight percent say they pray at least weekly.[111] Further, as Table 2 illustrates, fifty-nine percent of people in the United States in 2002 said religion played a "very important" role in their lives. In contrast to Western Europe, the United States experiences modernity co-existing with religious devotion, which seems to be the prevailing trend across most other non-European nations. Even in China, Micklethwait and Aldridge estimate that by 2050, it "could well be the world's biggest Muslim nation as well as its biggest Christian one," as measured through absolute volume of people.[112]

As the United States and other developing nations modernize, their religious devotion is not disappearing. However, modernization has still influenced the landscape of religious devotion in these nations. The population enjoys more choice than ever before, not only in selecting a broad religious classification (e.g., Christianity vs. Judaism vs. Buddhism), but also in choosing a local place of worship.[113] The emergence of mega-churches in the United States demonstrates this trend. Each one offers its own interpretation of scripture, structure for weekly worship, and format of service. There is now a marketplace of worship options, with religious institutions vying for increased membership, offering slightly different interpretations of faith, and offering personalized messages on how to translate teachings to everyday living.[114] Significantly, membership is opt-in: people select where to worship, and may do so based on congruence with personal worldviews, or its resonance with personal values.

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110. Micklethwait & Wooldridge, *supra* note 15, at 9.
111. ROBERT D. PUTNAM & DAVID E CAMPBELL, AMERICAN GRACE: HOW RELIGION DIVIDES AND UNITES US 5 (2010).
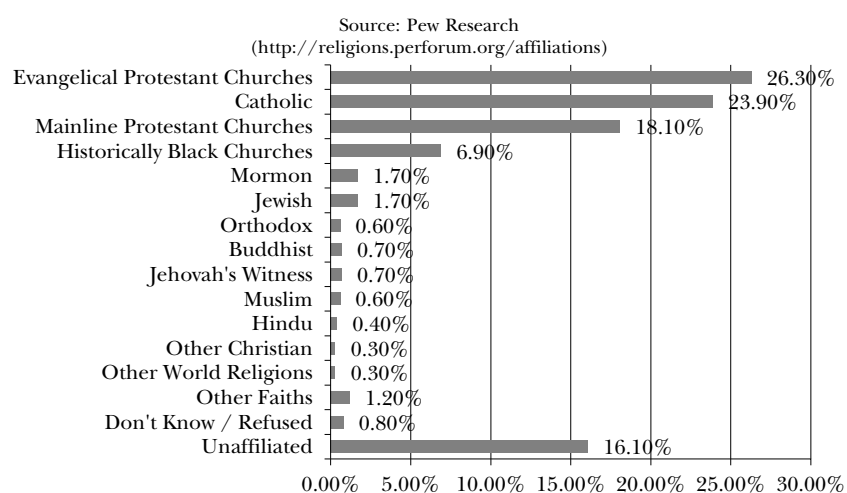112. Micklethwait & Wooldridge, *supra* note 15, at 5.
113. *See, e.g., id.* at 23. "For a growing number of people, religion is no longer taken for granted or inherited; it is based on adults making a choice, going to a synagogue, temple, church, or mosque." *Id.*
114. *Id.* at 174-80.

The environmental movement can benefit from the increased choice people have in making faith-based decisions. Perhaps more than ever before, where people decide to worship indicates how sections of the population order personal values and frame core foundational beliefs. In other words, environmental SMOs can gain a quick cursory understanding of individuals' frames simply by sharing a ride with them on Sunday—or Saturday—morning and taking note of their chosen church, synagogue, mosque, or temple.

Table 3: Religious Composition of the U.S.

Source: Pew Research
(http://religions.perforum.org/affiliations)

Affiliation	Percentage
Evangelical Protestant Churches	26.30%
Catholic	23.90%
Mainline Protestant Churches	18.10%
Historically Black Churches	6.90%
Mormon	1.70%
Jewish	1.70%
Orthodox	0.60%
Buddhist	0.70%
Jehovah's Witness	0.70%
Muslim	0.60%
Hindu	0.40%
Other Christian	0.30%
Other World Religions	0.30%
Other Faiths	1.20%
Don't Know / Refused	0.80%
Unaffiliated	16.10%

0.00%   5.00%   10.00% 15.00% 20.00% 25.00% 30.00%

As Table 3 illustrates, an effective Christian framing of the environmental movement could reach an audience of over half the U.S. adult population, over 100 million automobile drivers, energy consumers, potential recyclers, and currently un-mobilized supporters.

The United States and China will have the greatest impact on the near-term environmental condition of the planet.[115] Government regulations, business practices, and individual habits of Americans and Chinese may be the greatest determining factor in whether the planet faces or avoids the feared climatic consequences of global warming. Convincingly using religion to justify environmentalism may prove essential, given the volume of the world's population that remains committed to religion, given its continued centrality in the United States (which is the nation that currently

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115. *See, e.g.*, Richard Harris, *Greenhouse Gas Emissions Rise in China*, NPR (Mar. 14, 2008), http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=88251868. "By this reckoning, China overtook the United States as the leading emitter of carbon dioxide about a year ago." *Id.*

contributes most to pollution), and given its purported growth in China (which is projected to be the nation that will contribute most to pollution).

B.   The Environmental Movement Can Deepen Its Message by Justifying Environmentalism through Religion

"When faith enters the environmental conversation, simple issues become inspiring missions."

- Jonathan Merritt, *Green Like God*[116]

Before discussing in detail how a religious reframing deepens the message of the mainstream environmental movement, "deepening" must be defined. Borrowing from *Frame Analysis Theory* mentioned earlier in this article, deeper messages are ones that attain greater frame alignment across the population. In other words, they successfully link SMO priorities with interpretive orientations of potential supporters. Frame alignment is required to mobilize supporters. As previously described in depth, there are four ways to achieve alignment: (1) frame bridging (linking two frames), (2) frame amplification (clarifying and invigorating an existing frame through beliefs or values), (3) frame extension (linking SMO priorities with seemingly unrelated values or beliefs), and (4) frame transformation (establishing new values and interpretive frames).[117] These four processes are ordered according to increasing difficulty of accomplishing frame alignment. For obvious reasons, amplifying already present values proves easier than transforming ones not yet formed.

No vehicle, tradition, or coherent set of principles and values has defended the preservation of life as long as, and many adherents would argue *as well as*, religion.[118] At its core, the environmental movement is also about life, and it is about *how* to live.

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116. JONATHAN MERRITT, GREEN LIKE GOD: UNLOCKING THE DIVINE PLAN FOR OUR PLANET xiv (2010).

117. Snow, *supra* note 26, at 468-73.

118. *Cf.* William P. Marshall, *The Culture of Belief and the Politics of Religion*, 63 LAW & CONTEMP. PROBS. 453, 456 (2000).

Religion comprises a part of the social fabric from which political choices are made. Religious beliefs are not insular, and even when not overtly political in themselves, may be potentially laden with profound political overtones. Religious views on the sanctity of life, for example, may deeply affect such matters as animal rights and the environment, as well as such obvious issues as abortion, capital punishment, and physician-assisted suicide. The role of religion as a political force, in short, is essential and unavoidable.

Id.

Unfortunately, this inherent commonality between religious and environmental values has too often escaped the intellectual, professional, liberal leaders of the mainstream environmental movement who, as "children of the enlightenment, [may] believe they arrived at their own positions through logic and rational policies."[119] Environmental leaders often ignore religious justifications, even though religion informs the interpretive orientations of the majority of people not only in the United States, but around the world. Working within existing belief systems is often easier than imposing new ones. Thus, linking religion with environmentalism (frame amplification) may prove less onerous than establishing a new "environmental" ethic for the population to adopt (frame transformation).

According to sociologist David Snow, the success of mobilization efforts is contingent on the ability to achieve both "consensus" and "action" mobilization.[120] Consensus mobilization involves building a base of people sympathetic to the goals of the movement.[121] Action mobilization involves actually inspiring sympathetic individuals to proactively participate.[122] Snow identifies three core-framing tasks required to effectively mobilize supporters:

(1) A diagnosis of some event or aspect of social life as problematic and in need of alteration ("diagnostic framing");

(2) A proposed solution to the diagnosed problem that specifies what needs to be done ("prognostic framing");

(3) A call to arms or rationale for engaging in ameliorative or corrective action ("motivational framing").[123]

The first two tasks achieve consensus mobilization, while the third accomplishes action mobilization. Given the previous discussion on logic-based reasoning by the mainstream movement, it appears leading environmentalists are unsuccessfully using facts (task 1) to inspire individuals (task 3). Essentially, the mainstream movement relies on disheartening environmental data as self-evident justification for supporting environmentalism. No bridge links diagnosis with motivation—environmental crisis with personal moral imperative.

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119. Nordhaus & Shellenberger, *supra* note 62, at 13.
120. David A. Snow & Robert D. Benford, *Ideology, Frame Resonance, and Participant Mobilization*, 1 Int'l Soc. Movement Res. 197, 199 (1988).
121. *Id.*
122. *Id.*
123. *Id.*

Religious justifications for environmentalism could provide the bridge between diagnostic and motivational framing, while also deepening the message of the environmental movement in other ways. At various points, this article has explained the need for a convincing moral imperative for the movement. An obvious next question arises: How do people define "moral?" Research suggests that for most people around the world, morality is contingent on faith. In 2007, Pew conducted a survey showing how people around the world view the relationship between religion and morality:

> In much of Africa, Asia, and the Middle East, there is a strong consensus that belief in God is necessary for moral- ity and good values . . . . Meanwhile, opinions are more mixed in the Americas, including in the United States, where 57% say that one must believe in God to have good values and be moral, while 41% disagree.[124]

The implication of this finding is clear; the mainstream movement may need religious justifications to establish a convincing moral im- perative for environmentalism that goes beyond simply attaining passive agreement and instead successfully motivates supporters to *act.*

The mainstream environmental movement must move beyond the limiting language of economics, science, and self-interest. Global environmental issues have not arisen primarily from govern- ments failing to adequately regulate carbon emissions. Nor have they primarily arisen from slowness in developing hybrid car tech- nology, nor insufficiently promoting energy-saving light bulbs in homes. Environmental issues are not primarily linked with the im- perfect stipulations of the Kyoto Protocol, or the decision to burn coal instead of harvesting wind, or choose oil over solar. It is not gestalt, the snowballing of individual discrete micro-factors, that has led to the situation we now face. Some argue that global environ- mental issues primarily arise from the systemic relationship of econ- omy and ecology, or perhaps more accurately, economy *over* ecology. As George Lakoff admits, "Global causes are systemic, not local. Global risk is systemic, not local. . . . We have to think in global, system terms and we don't do so naturally."[125]

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124. GLOBAL ATTITUDES PROJECT, *World Publics Welcome Global Trade—But Not Immigration*, PEW RESEARCH (Oct. 4, 2007), http://www.pewglobal.org/2007/10/04/world-publics-welcome-global-trade-but-not-immigration/.

125. Lakoff, *supra* note 60.

Ecologist Lynn White recognized the need for global thinking. Through his landmark 1967 essay, "The Historical Roots of our Ecological Crisis," he sparked an explosion of debate across environmental ethics and theology. White claimed contemporary environmental issues can be traced back to Western civilization's historical definition of its relationship with the natural world. According to his theory, this relationship has been defined as "dominion *over* nature" and sprouts from entrenched Judeo-Christian interpretations of the Old Testament Book of Genesis.[126] For example, in Genesis 1:26 God says: "Let us make man . . . and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."[127] According to White, the "orthodox Christian arrogance" toward nature needs to be overcome before any real solutions to the environmental situation can be established. Adding support to White's claims, Emma Tomalin mentions in her book *Biodivinity and Biodiversity* that: Thoreau himself, as well as the Scotland born John Muir . . . and the ecologist and forester Aldo Leopold . . . and Rachel Carson . . . all critiqued the instrumental view toward nature that they found in the Christianity prevalent during their times.[128]

White claims many of our daily habits are linked with a prevailing presumption of perpetual progress, a belief that the expansion of technology is consistently advancing human civilization.[129] Thus, it appears the environmental crisis sprouts less from what we know (the facts, the data, the science), and more foundationally from what we *believe.* As such, White "personally doubt[s] that disastrous

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126. Lynn White, *The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis*, 155 SCIENCE 1203, 1205.

> By gradual stages a loving and all-powerful God had created light and darkness, the heavenly bodies, the earth and all its planets, animals, birds, and fishes. Finally, God had created Adam and, as an afterthought, Eve to keep man from being lonely. Man named all the animals, thus establishing his dominance over them. God planned all of this explicitly for man's benefit and rule: no item in the physical creation had any purpose save to serve man's purposes. And, although man's body is made of clay, he is not simply part of nature: he is made in God's image. Especially in the Western form, Christianity is the most anthropocentric religion the world has seen.

Id.

127. *Genesis* 1:26 (NIV).

128. EMMA TOMALIN, BIODIVINITY AND BIODIVERSITY viii (2009) (quoting Bron Taylor).

129. White, *supra* note 126, at 1205.

ecologic backlash can be avoided simply by applying to our problems more science and technology."[130]

It would be dangerous to interpret White's critique of Christianity as justification for continuing to divorce the mainstream environmental movement from religion. To the contrary, his message implies the need for *a more concerted union.* Not only does White use the Catholic Saint Francis of Assisi as an exemplar of a revolutionary environmentalist, one who possessed the deep humility that the rest of civilization needs to adopt in order to establish a sustainable relationship with nature,[131] but White further admits that "[m]ore science and more technology are not going to get us out of the present ecologic crisis *until we find a new religion, or rethink our old one.*"[132]

Of course, especially within the Christian community, many disagree with the claims set forth by Lynn White. His arguments sparked debates that still continue forty years after the publication of his essay, with more and more scholars clarifying the theological defense of environmentalism[133] and detailing concrete environmental efforts being led by churches.[134] In 2008, Harper published the "Green Bible," in which passages relevant to environmentalism have been highlighted in green.[135] Environmentalist Jonathan Merritt goes further, titling his book "God is Green."[136] Yale University founded the Forum on Religion and Ecology, which not only includes defenses of environmentalism from religious leaders of Christian, Buddhist, Muslim, and Jewish faiths, among others, but

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130. *Id.* at 1206.

131. *Id.*

132. *Id.*

133. *See, e.g.*, MARGARET BARKER, CREATION: A BIBLICAL VISION FOR THE ENVIRONMENT (2010); RICHARD BAUCKHAM, BIBLE AND ECOLOGY: REDISCOVERY OF THE COMMUNITY OF CREATION (2010); ELLEN DAVIS, SCRIPTURE, CULTURE, AND AGRICULTURE: AN AGRARIAN READING OF THE BIBLE (2009); NORMAN C. HABEL, AN INCONVENIENT TEXT: IS A GREEN READING OF THE BIBLE POSSIBLE? (2009); ECOLOGICAL HERMENEUTICS: BIBLICAL, HISTORICAL AND THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES (David G. Horrell et al. eds., 2010); DAVID G. HORRELL ET AL., GREENING PAUL: REREADING THE APOSTLE IN A TIME OF ECOLOGICAL CRISIS (2010); HILARY MARLOW & JOHN BARTON, BIBLICAL PROPHETS AND CONTEMPORARY ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS: RE-READING AMOS, HOSEA, AND FIRST ISAIAH (2009); MICK POPE & ANGUS MCLEAY, THE GROANING OF CREATION: A PAULINE ECO-MISSIOLOGY BASED ON A NARRATIVE READING OF ROMANS (2009).

134. *See, e.g.*, CHARLENE A. HOSENFELD, ECOFAITH: CREATING & SUSTAINING GREEN CONGREGATIONS (2009); BEN LOWE, GREEN REVOLUTION: COMING TOGETHER TO CARE FOR CREATION (2009); BILL MCKIBBEN, EAARTH: MAKING A LIFE ON A TOUGH NEW PLANET (2010).

135. THE GREEN BIBLE: NEW REVISED STANDARD VERSION (Michael B. Maudlin & Marlene Baer eds., 2008).

136. Merritt, *supra* note 116.

also organizes conferences and broadcasts relevant news on the synthesis of faith and the environment.[137] In contrast to White, many modern Christian environmentalists claim the Bible's guidance to man is to assume the role of steward, not exploiter.[138] In other words, man's relationship with nature is less master-to-slave, and more gardener-to-garden. Man's role is not to exploit the land, but to care for it.

Earlier, this article discussed several issues with logic-based framing of the mainstream environmental movement: the *Tragedy of the Commons*, the *Prisoners' Dilemma*, the absence of a moral imperative, the low prioritization of environmental issues in day-to-day life, and the economic cost associated with change. These persisting challenges lessen or dissolve through the adoption of a moral imperative grounded in faith. To understand how, let us examine Professor Candis Callison's description of Creation Care, which is a collection of evangelicals using biblical mandates to defend environmentalism:

> One of the primary arguments put forward by Creation Care leaders is that the messenger matters—Christian leaders (and a few select Christians who are also leading scientists) must 'bless the facts' in order for them to have traction and resonance within Christian communities. The notion of 'blessing the facts' neatly encapsulates the ways in which climate change is being cast as simultaneously intellectual, scientific, and moral. It also, however, glosses over, or even dodges the traditional debates over evolution that have pitted science against evangelical beliefs whilst directly confronting those who have chosen to side with climate skeptics. Creation Care translates climate change primarily into a Biblically-mandated concern for the poor—for how scientific predictions will exacerbate the afflictions of those less fortunate worldwide, as well as harkening back to older conceptions of Biblical stewardship or "tending the garden," referencing the idea of the natural world's beginning as the Biblical Garden of Eden. In this sense, climate change is a dictate for how to act in the world and respond to issues of inequality and poverty

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137. *See, e.g.*, *The Forum on Religion and Ecology at Yale*, http://fore.research.yale.edu (last visited Mar. 25, 2015).

138. *See, e.g.*, Laurel Kearns, Saving the Creation: Christian Environmentalism in the United States, 57 Soc. of Religion 55 (1996).

whilst eliding any critique of industrial capitalism, race and class issues in America, or recent globalization.[139]

By relying on justice claims, caring for the poor, and a God-mandated responsibility to preserve the environment, religious framing of environmentalism transcends economic cost benefit analyses frequently found in mainstream debates. No one quantifies or monetizes the costs and benefits of disobeying God's commandments. Additionally, the spokespeople for environmentalism shift from scientists, academics, and "hippies" to one of the most intimate and trusted counselors for many religious individuals, their spiritual advisor. Not only does this elevate the priority given to environmental conservation, but it deepens the audience's trust in the communicated messages and warnings. No *Tragedy of the Commons* exists when each person has responsibility to protect the commons, to "tend the garden." For the same reason, the *Prisoners' Dilemma* fades as well. "Self"-interest is elevated from secular to spiritual, which intrinsically blurs the line between "I" and "we." In other words, whether through the desire to become a better Christian, to live more in accordance with the Golden Rule, or to purify actions in hope of attaining salvation, economic self-interest is replaced by spiritual self-interest, which more closely aligns with the community's interest.

Still, the mainstream movement greatly ignores religion's ability to deepen the justifications for environmentalism. Many people, if not most, know little about the strong link between faith and environmental preservation. Much of what spiritual leaders are saying and doing is not being widely broadcast, introduced to local churches, or being used as the fulcrum to establish the necessary moral imperative for change.

Admittedly, fully convincing individuals of the religious justification for supporting the movement must occur, to some extent, at the local level. Similarly, the precise contours of the religious message will be guided by the interpretive decisions of individual spiritual leaders in individual congregations and places of worship. However, environmental SMOs can still help re-invigorate the movement by reducing information silos and encouraging conversation between different religious institutions who have already embraced the message of environmentalism. Additionally, the mainstream environmental movement can, and should, advertise

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139. Candis Callison, *How Climate Change Comes to Matter* 45 (Apr. 24, 2012) (unpublished manuscript).

and popularize the fundamental similarity in core values between environmentalism and many religions: namely, the preservation of life.

The religious justifications for environmentalism continue to fly beneath the radar. Perhaps the activists most adept at religious framing over-estimate how much the broader population is aware of connections between faith and stewardship of the environment. Similarly, those who actually do frame the mainstream movement underestimate how religious justifications can create a needed moral imperative and inspire active support for ongoing environmental efforts. Such misperception on both sides represents a modern-day tragicomedy. Especially when so many self-identify as members of a faith, it is difficult to believe many of the religious justifications for environmentalism have remained dormant and unknown within the dusty pages of library books, well outside the glare of the media spotlight. This is a disservice not only to the scholars who have toiled to establish such groundwork, but also to the rest of the movement and to the environmental state of the planet as a whole.

C.   Religious Re-Framing of the Mainstream Environmental
      Movement Will Provide Organizational Support and
      Resources

> Nobody could have ever argued segregation and integration and gotten people to do anything about that. But when Martin [Luther King] would talk about leaving the slavery of Egypt and wandering into the promised land; somehow that made sense to folks. . . . It was their faith; it was the thing that they had been nurtured on. And when they heard the language they responded. . . . I think it was the cultural milieu, when people were really united with the real meaning of that cultural heritage, and when they saw in their faith also a liberation struggle that they could identify with, then you kind of had 'em boxed. And when you finally helped them see that religion meant involvement in action, you kinda had 'em hooked then.
>
> - Andrew Young[140]

Like reading tomorrow's newspaper to find today's winning lottery numbers, it would be immensely valuable to foresee the precise effect religious reframing of the mainstream environmental

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140. Calhoun-Brown, *supra* note 12, at 172-73.

movement would have; how it might permeate the public's con-sciousness, catalyze unprecedented grassroots political pressure, embolden individual lifestyle changes. Unfortunately, history never runs backward. Neither does it repeat itself. Yet sometimes, per-haps, it rhymes.[141]

This section will first evaluate how the "black church" bolstered the efforts of the American Civil Rights Movement. A historical comparison helps to envision how religious framing could provide organizational support and resources to the mainstream environ-mental movement. Afterward, the section will discuss how the "black church" may parallel contemporary religious communities, such as the Religious Right, potentially providing an opportunity for the environmental movement to finally transcend partisan polit-ics. Finally, it will discuss some of the challenges associated with establishing a religious reframing.

Before beginning discussion on the role of the "black church" in the Civil Rights Movement, terminology must be defined. As Professor Allison Calhoun-Brown explained, because "to some ex-tent, all black churches share a common history, the term 'black church' is often used by historians to discuss all predominantly black Christian congregations."[142] The black church is not a fully-formed ideologically-consistent faith, but rather the network of in-dependent black congregations sharing both the historical context of arising in response to prevailing racial injustice, and a central supporting role in the African-American community.[143] In other words, the particular ideology of the black church is contingent on the individual church, pastor, and congregation. What unites them is a common role in the community, and a shared history.

Much research emphasizes the significance of the black church and the African-American religious culture to the American Civil Rights Movement's success.[144] Several factors allowed the black

141. The quote "History does not repeat itself, but it does rhyme" is often attributed to Mark Twain (though there is some controversy on the matter).

142. Calhoun-Brown, *supra* note 12, at 169.

143. *Id.*

144. *See, e.g.,* DOUGLAS MCADAM, POLITICAL PROCESS AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF BLACK INSURGENCY, 1930-1970 (1985). The author compares theoretical concerns to empirical analysis by focusing on the crucial role of three institutions that foster protest: (1) black churches; (2) black colleges; and (3) Southern chapters of the NAACP); Aldon Morris, *Black Southern Sit-In Movement: An Analysis of Internal Organ-ization,* 46 AM. SOCIOLOGICAL REV. 744, 746 (1981).

A local movement center is that component of social structure within a local community that organizes and coordinates collective action. A local movement center has two major properties. First, it includes all protest organizations and leaders of a specific community that are actively en-

church to contribute so extensively. First, the black church "helped leaders to frame the meaning of the nonviolent message and encouraged churchgoers to respond to it positively."[145] Not only did the black church reinforce the moral justification for the Civil Rights Movement by linking the struggle of African-Americans to that of oppressed people in the Bible, such as the Jews in the Old Testament,[146] but it also informed members of the congregation of upcoming civil rights efforts. The church bridged motivation and inspiration with information and *action*: churchgoers were able to directly contribute time and money to the efforts of the broader Civil Rights Movement through efforts coordinated by local congregations.

The black church also benefitted the American Civil Rights Movement by providing essential tactical support. As explained earlier in the discussion of *Frame Analysis Theory*, SMOs must establish one-time "frame alignment" with supporters, and maintain a process of "reassessment and renegotiation" to ensure supporters remain actively committed to the cause. The black church represented a structure with built-in reengagement; namely, weekly mass services. The regular cadence of interaction with the congregation not only allowed Civil Rights leaders to attract new supporters, but also allowed them to reengage and re-empower existing ones. The black church thus represented an essential barrier against natural disengagement; in other words, the church helped prevent the natural mundane realities of everyday Monday through

gaged in organizing and producing collective action. During the sit-ins, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), Youth Councils of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), and 'direct action' churches existed in numerous Southern black communities. A local center within the Civil Rights movement included all these organizations and leaders. Second, a local movement center contains a unit that coordinates protest activities within the local movement and between the local center and other institutions of the larger community. During the Civil Rights movement, a particular church usually served as the local coordinating unit. Through this unit the protest activities of the church community, college community, activist organizations, and their leaders were mobilized and coordinated. Thus, movement centers provide the organization and coordination capable of sustaining and spreading collective action.

Id.

145. Calhoun-Brown, *supra* note 12, at 170.

146. *See, e.g.*, King, *supra* note 76. "But let justice roll down like a river, and righteousness like a mighty stream" closely resembles *Amos* 5:24 (NIV)); King, *supra* note 76 ("Every valley shall be exalted, every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places with be made plain and the crooked places will be made straight" closely resembles *Isaiah* 40:4-5 (KJV)).

Saturday life from distracting individual members from actively engaging in the movement. As mentioned earlier in this article, the environmental movement suffers from having "sympathizers" and not enough active supporters. Unlike the Civil Rights Movement, the environmental movement continues to leave much of the population informed yet uninspired and unengaged, with frame alignment too often remaining absent.

Another way the black church benefitted the American Civil Rights Movement was its built-in support network of people from the same community—people who shared a similar background and values. SMOs often single-dimensionally seek to receive support for their efforts. However, active supporters who contribute their own valuable time, money, and resources can suffer low morale and fatigue, especially when working to change extraordinarily entrenched and complex social issues. Supporters also need support. Otherwise, they may become discouraged by the slow march of progress. As sociologist David Snow explains, if people are to act collectively, they "must believe that such action would be efficacious, i.e., that change is possible but that it will not happen automatically, without collective action."[147] Significantly, such "beliefs or expectances [of optimism or pessimism] are temporally variable and can be modified during the course of actual participation and by the micromobilization efforts of SMOs as well."[148]

The environmental movement represents a monumentally daunting effort. Its scope extends beyond individual lifestyle changes, local policies, and even national regulation. In many ways, its scope is global. Today, supporters of the environmental movement constantly face depressing and worsening scientific data. Without a means of preserving hope, supporters may eventually become disaffected and shift from active supporters to passive sympathizers. Thus, it is crucial for SMOs to encourage the optimism of their supporters. Some believe religion inherently helps maintain morale,[149] perhaps because it is often predicated on faith-based hope, accessed less through knowledge and more through "blind"

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147. Snow, *supra* note 26, at 470.

148. *Id.* at 471.

149. *See, e.g.*, Steve Crabtree & Brett Pelham, *Religion Provides Emotional Boost to World's Poor*, GALLUP (Mar. 6, 2009), http://www.gallup.com/poll/116449/Religion-Provides-Emotional-Boost-World-Poor.aspx; Anna Brown, *Study: Religious People More Likely to Reject the Idea That Life Has No Purpose*, PEW RESEARCH CENTER (Sept. 16, 2013), http://www.gallup.com/poll/116449/Religion-Provides-Emotional-Boost-World-Poor.aspx. "Adults who attended religious services once a week or more often were significantly more likely to report feeling 'very happy' (36%) than those who attended seldom or never (23%) . . . .").

belief. Religious institutions also boost morale. The weekly cadence of religious worship allows for person-to-person self-reinforcing support among those participating in the movement. As John Lewis recalls during his experiences in the Civil Rights Movement, "The First Baptist Church . . . became a rallying point, it became the meeting place, it became the place where students, young people, community leaders, could come and discuss, debate, and argue about what the city should become."[150]

The black church promoted the American Civil Rights Movement in other ways as well. According to Professor Calhoun-Brown, past literature on the movement explains "the black church could offer social communications networks, facilities, audience, leadership, and money to the movement."[151] Although the Civil Rights Movement is quite different from the environmental movement, similar benefits may follow from an effective religious framing. However, the mobilizing capacity of religion is deeply linked with the extent to which religion forms the backdrop of a community's world outlook, its perceptions of morality, and its prevailing social norms. During the Civil Rights Movement, as the black church was "the most resource-rich institution in the African-American community and the one most closely associated with civil society, the church had much to contribute."[152] The role the 1960s black church had in the local community may parallel the role of contemporary evangelical churches in the South. If this is the case, then perhaps the mainstream environmental movement may, through an effective religious framing of its cause, galvanize the constituency often portrayed as one of its staunchest opponents: the Religious Right.

For obvious reasons, the mainstream movement greatly benefits from repositioning the stance of the Religious Right on environmental matters. Not only would it greatly expand the base of supporters, but it would finally also elevate the environmental movement into its appropriate place well above the distracting noise of political bickering and maneuvering. The numbing theatrics of partisan politics would no longer frustrate efforts of the environmental movement, nor would changes in the Presidency drastically affect the priorities and commitment of the EPA and other government agencies. Further, politicians would not rely so

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150. Calhoun-Brown, *supra* note 12, at 171.

151. *Id.* at 170.

152. *Id.*

heavily on economic rationales over ones based on justice and values in enacting domestic and international environmental policies.

The predominantly liberal leadership of the mainstream movement might be ill-equipped to effectively craft and advertise the religious justifications for environmentalism. As a result, the leaders will need to aggressively reach across the aisle, as well as across backgrounds, political beliefs, and interpretive orientations. Religious communities will need to be actively approached and enlisted. Partnerships will need to be made, as altering the perceptions of individual congregations requires the buy-in and messaging of individual pastors. As Professor Callison recounts:

> I heard Al Gore say to a Southern Baptist, 'You mean to tell me that the fact that there are 900 peer reviewed scientific articles confirming human-induced climate change. . . Do you mean to tell me you need to have someone in the leadership of the church authenticate the reliability of those studies?' And the—the man he was speaking to said, 'Yes' and Al Gore said, 'That's just utterly amazing.'[153]

The media and the environmental movement can better popularize examples of religious leaders defending the environment. Leading environmental SMOs can better link their resources, reach, and organizational support with the religious community. It is not enough simply to have the goals and tactics of the movement articulated in a religious context or to simply author a convincing essay countering Lynn White's claims by establishing stewardship as the true biblical paradigm of man's relationship with nature. Practitioners of faith—be they priests, preachers, or parsons—bear the task of cultivating, promoting, and reinforcing the religious framing of environmentalism for local audiences in their respective places of worship. Significantly, in the Civil Rights Movement, the dominant SMOs worked directly with the churches in helping to craft and popularize the religious message. As Professor Calhoun-Brown explains, ". . . organizations like the SCLC worked hard in churches to make political activism an expression of practical Christianity. . . . [T]he translation of black Christianity through black churches into a nonviolent political movement was by no means automatic."[154]

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153. Callison, *supra* note 139, at 68 (quoting Richard Cizik, VP of Government Affairs at the National Association of Evangelicals).

154. Calhoun-Brown, *supra* note 12, at 171-72.

Using religion to frame the message of the Civil Rights Movement required a lot of work. It required leading SMOs to understand, prioritize, and internalize the strategy of enlisting religious institutions. Even if the Religious Right never supports the environmental movement, other religious communities likely would. One obvious option is *today's* black church. In many urban neighborhoods, people remain unconcerned about environmentalism and sustainable living practices. Granted, President Obama's Trinity Church in Chicago unveiled plans in 2012 for Imani Village, a 27-acre community envisioned to have sustainable housing and an urban farming and agricultural center, among other features.[155] However, the fact that this development represents "one of the most ambitious in the nation"[156] suggests the lagging involvement of black churches in the environmental movement. It also demonstrates how the black church today can continue contributing to social progress. The environmental movement may thus benefit from proactively enlisting churches in urban centers, especially since Creation Care—described above as the collection of evangelicals using biblical mandates to defend environmentalism—focuses on evangelical communities in more rural areas.

The mainstream environmental movement can also more deeply explore relationships with the Catholic Church. As Table 3 earlier illustrated, nearly 25 percent of the U.S. population is Catholic (approximately 80 million people). In 2009, Pope Benedict XVI published *Ten Commandments for the Environment*,[157] which articulates an environmentally sustainable lifestyle as a moral responsibility to help the poor. This publication, along with other statements issued by the Church,[158] demonstrates the Catholic lead-

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155. Manya A. Brachear, *As Obama Seeks Re-Election, His Former Church Expands Its Vision*, Chi. Trib. (Jan. 17, 2012), *available at* http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2012-01-17/news/ct-met-trinity-after-obama-0118-20120117_1_church-members-church-leaders-sustainable-housing.

156. *Id.*

157. Benedict XVI, Ten Commandments for the Environment: Pope Benedict XVI Speaks Out for Creation and Justice (2009).

158. Jame Schaefer, Theological Foundations for Environmental Ethics: Reconstructing Patristic and Medieval Concepts 2 (2009).

Some prominent leaders of the world's religions have encouraged scholars to examine promising teachings from their traditions. When delivering his 1990 Message on the World Day of Peace, Pope John Paul II underscored the need to recognize the ecological crisis as a moral responsibility. Many Catholic bishops from around the world responded, including the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, which specifically called upon biblical experts, theologians, and ethicists 'to help explore, deepen, and advance the insights of our Catholic tradition and its relation to the environment' and especially 'to explore the relation-

ership's embrace of the theological justification for environmentalism. Similarly, prominent members of other religious institutions have also expressed receptiveness to the call of environmentalism, such as Abraham Joshua Heschel (Judaism),[159] Nandini Iyer (Hinduism),[160] Seyyed Hossein Nasr (Islam),[161], and Zaid Shakir (Islam),[162] among others.

During the American Civil Rights Movement, SMOs confronted and overcame many challenges to mobilize support. Lessons from that era can be gleaned today:

> [R]esources and the existence of grievances are necessary *but insufficient* conditions for giving rise to social movements. . . . [M]uch of the work done by a social movement organization involved, literally, making meanings and *communicating the appropriate mobilizing messages* to its constituents.[163]

D.   The Mainstream Movement Faces Difficult Challenges in Convincingly Communicating Religious Justifications for Environmentalism

Many challenges confront the successful religious reframing of the mainstream environmental movement. As with other large-scale efforts that involve accomplishing an ambitious goal, there are at least two components of success: (1) the strategy or *what to do*; and (2) the execution or *how to do it*. Much of this article focuses on the first component, and articulates why such a strategic shift would be advantageous. Additional research, comparative case studies, or trial-and-error efforts by activists on the ground are still needed to determine the best method for executing this re-framing of the environmental movement. A brief discussion of some salient challenges follows.

One set of challenges the mainstream movement faces in convincingly communicating religious justifications for environmentalism sprouts from the ideological rigidity of the Religious Right and

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ship between this tradition's emphasis upon the dignity of the human person and our responsibility to care for all of God's creation.' Several other Christian denominations have issued statements indicating their faith-based positions on caring for God's creation.
Id.

159. Abraham Joshua Heschel, *Beyond Civilization*, HOLY GROUND 102 (2008).

160. Nandini Iyer, *Reborn in the Flames*, HOLY GROUND 125 (2008).

161. Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Restoring the Inner Landscape*, *in* HOLY GROUND 170 (2008).

162. Zaid Shakir, *The Zaytuna Ruku Tree*, HOLY GROUND 214 (2008).

163. Calhoun-Brown, *supra* note 12, at 171 (italics added for emphasis).

other religious groups. One of the biggest hurdles is not telling a new story, but having to *re*-tell one of the oldest ones. In other words, this might involve re-contextualizing or completely re-defining some people's long-held interpretations of the biblical guidance on man's relationship with nature. Modifying secular perceptions is rarely an easy task. Altering religious ones is even less so. For example, on February 6, 2012, Republican Presidential candidate Rick Santorum stated, "We were put on this Earth as creatures of God to have dominion over the Earth, to use it wisely and steward it wisely, but for our benefit not for the Earth's benefit."[164] This quotation exemplifies the Judeo-Christian ethic Lynn White lamented forty years ago.[165] Another ideological challenge involves the eschatology of Christianity, specifically, the belief that the world must become monumentally worse before the Second Coming of Christ. As the book GARDENING EDEN colorfully describes, this eschatology "indicates the earth is headed for ruin anyway, so there's no point in trying to rearrange the furniture on the *Titanic*."[166] Another challenge involves how various religious groups uncompromisingly link mainstream environmentalism with the liberal political agenda. For example, one environmentalist admits to being called "'anti-capitalist and having an underlying hatred for America' simply for speaking out on behalf of creation care."[167] Finally, other challenges of reaching various [mostly Christian] religious communities involve deep-seated distrust: toward mainstream science due to disagreements on evolution, toward the mainstream media for "scaremongering" and supposedly conflating the urgency of environmental concerns, and toward governmental solutions due to belief in free-market economics.[168]

Another set of challenges the mainstream movement faces in communicating religious justifications sprouts from the rigidity of leading environmental SMOs. Not only do many leading environmentalists fail to appreciate the significance of religion, but they also may consider it too difficult if not impossible to convincingly establish a religious justification for their efforts. As Shellenberger and Nordhaus state: "Most of the movement's leading thinkers,

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164. *Rick Santorum: I've Never Believed in The 'Hoax of Global Warming*, THE HUFFINGTON POST (Feb. 7, 2012), http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/02/07/rick-santorum-global-warming-hoax_n_1260168.html.

165. White, *supra* note 126.

166. MICHAEL ABBATE, GARDENING EDEN: HOW CREATION CARE WILL CHANGE YOUR FAITH, YOUR LIFE, AND OUR WORLD xii (2009).

167. SALLY BINGHAM, LOVE GOD HEAL EARTH 2-3 (2009).

168. *Id.*

funders and advocates do not question their most basic assumptions about who we are, what we stand for, and what it is that we should be doing."[169] Popularizing the religious framing may require leading environmentalists to aggressively reach out to groups and individuals who have traditionally been considered adversaries. Additionally, some environmental SMOs may lack the organizational sophistication required to constructively communicate with the diffuse, high volume of churches and other places of worship throughout the nation and world.

The final set of challenges the environmental movement faces in communicating religious justifications relates to the general population. First, it will take time for the mainstream environmental movement to change popular perceptions of the urgency and personal moral imperative for environmentalism. Even if convincing religious advertising began overnight, environmental SMOs must be prepared for a potentially slow and frustrating process. Only time will tell the extent to which religious justifications for environmentalism will lead to actual changes in individual lifestyles, voting preferences, and increased pressure on governing bodies to enact beneficial legislation. In any case, the results will undoubtedly be heavily contingent on the quality and commitment of the implementation.

VI. Conclusion

The mainstream environmental movement needs to reframe its core message. Instead of relaying scientific observations of the external world, the movement must turn the mirror around to portray a convincing and drastic rethinking of mankind and its role. Yet the goal cannot simply be to convince, but to inspire. It is not simply about transforming society, but about being transformed—through daily sustainable lifestyle habits, through a healthier perception of man's relationship with nature, and through active engagement in larger-scale efforts to establish beneficial environmental policies. To accomplish this transformation, more than science, economic incentives, and the arch of logic-based thinking are required. As much as the mainstream environmental movement has shied away from injecting spirituality into its dialogue, it may prove essential in attaining the ambitious vision of an environmentally sustainable tomorrow.

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169. Nordhaus & Shellenberger, *supra* note 62, at 8.

Of course, significant sections of the population remain agnostic, atheistic, or minimally religious. For these reasons, as well as the advantages of cost-benefit analyses in certain contexts, leading environmental SMOs should not completely excise facts, science, and logic-based reasoning from the mainstream messaging. The decision to prioritize religious framing or scientific views should not simplistically be "either/or," but rather "both/and." There is a unique opportunity for environmentalism to be touted by scientists, hippies, pastors, and preachers alike—not just by Al Gore and Greenpeace, but also by Al Sharpton and the authors of *God is Green.*

With the benefits from religious backing, perhaps one day, the urgency, implications, and reality of the current environmental crisis will fully fade away, only to be remembered by future generations upon chance re-viewings of the *Inconvenient Truth.* Perhaps one day, proper environmental stewardship will be elevated and maintained as a top concern of the United States, if not *all* nations. Perhaps one day, a brilliantly new paradigm will form and take root, forever making "environmentalists" as obsolete as abolitionists are today. Perhaps "one day" will not be too many days away.

Today, though, with the continued precarious state of the environmental movement, it is appropriate to end with words lightly colored with optimism, yet greatly moderated by sobering concern:

> *Something much more powerfully proactive is required to persuade the majority to change course before it is too late—something that stirs up a social force to match (peacefully) the citizen revolutions overturning the established order across the Middle East. The movement has the resources to do so. But does it have the ideas and the will?*[170]

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170. Secrett, *supra* note 61.