

**Why Religion Isn't Green:
Explaining the Absence of Religions in the American Environmental Movement**

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Religions have played central roles in nearly every major American social movement. Local congregations, denominations and parachurch organizations have provided the ideological and material resources and developed the repertoires of contention that fueled the antislavery and temperance movements in the nineteenth century, and the peace, civil rights, and anti-abortion movements in the twentieth. However, religions largely have been absent from the environmental movement. I examine this historic anomaly and argue that ideological and strategic commitments of environmental movement actors push religious groups away from active participation and leadership, while at the same time a different set of ideological and strategic commitments of local religious groups pulls them away from environmental activism. In particular, I show how the environmental movement's reliance on science, law and human rights pushes religious groups away from active involvement, while religious actors' commitment to charity, moral suasion, and direct service to needy people pulls them towards other causes. In short, interrelated cultural and structural barriers limit religions' incentives, opportunities, and abilities to participate in the environmental movement.

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By Stephen Ellingson
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This past summer I interviewed the executive director of a parachurch organization whose mission focuses on educating churches about energy, global warming, and air pollution, and her comments revealed three possible answers to the basic question of this project – why isn't religion green? First, she began our conversation by telling me about attending meetings of the New York State Council of Churches and judicatory-wide meetings of her own mainline denomination – in both cases she said, “the environment simply isn't an issue among most Protestant church bodies. They are more concerned with things like the death penalty, drug laws, and helping the poor and the homeless, than with the environment.” Second, she noted that indifference to the environment extends to the congregations. In a voice laced with frustration she complained that not one of several hundred congregations in her region, had asked for information about energy conservation or how they could get involved in working to stop global warming, despite the consciousness-raising work her group does in church circles. She wryly commented that, “apparently, saving the earth doesn't sell well.” When I asked her why churches consistently met environmentalism with indifference she was at first mystified, but as I pressed her a third answer emerged: politics. She spoke about the angry letters she regularly receives from people in her denomination who claimed that the church shouldn't be involved in “environmental politics” and that global warming was not true. She also voiced her concern that her denomination was moving intentionally to the right at both the grassroots and at the

official levels. I asked her to explain and she said, the leaders of the national church are only interested in “butts and bucks” – fill the pews with bodies and keep the money rolling in while in the congregations the focus has become on evangelism – “convert, be saved, and go to heaven.” In other words, the environment doesn’t sell in mainline Protestantism because it is seen as overly political and on the wrong side of the political spectrum for some; because congregations and denominations have other social issues or concern that are more pressing than the environment; and because the environment simply is not a concern of people in leadership or in the pews – it is off the radar screen.

The lack of involvement with green issues raises questions about the relationship a between American Christianity and collective action. Historically, religions, especially Protestant denominations and congregations, have played central roles in nearly every major American social movement. Local churches, denominations and parachurch organizations have provided the ideological and material resources and developed the repertoires of contention that fueled the antislavery and temperance movements in the nineteenth century, and the peace, civil rights, and anti-abortion movements in the twentieth century. Religious organizations and their members also have been integral to national movements regarding immigration, nuclear weapons, capital punishment, homosexuality, and a more recently a growing number of efforts at the local level to improve neighborhood safety, public schools, and push for affordable housing and job training (see Warren, 2001; Wood, 2002). Recent surveys of American congregations reveal the central role congregations play in providing social services for needy, and more generally trying to change the world through social services, advocacy and moral suasion (see Ammerman, 2005; Chaves, 2004; Wuthnow, 2004). In particular

Ammerman (2005) documents the extensive ties congregations have with secular organizations and the routine nature of their cooperative work.

Given religions' long history and continued involvement in social reform, it is surprising that religions largely have been absent from the environmental movement in any sustained and decisive way. That's not to say that religions have not been involved in environmentalism, only that their involvement has been limited and peripheral in comparison to their involvement in other major social reform movements like the civil rights or peace movements. Thus the absence of religions from the American environmental movement is an intriguing empirical and theoretical puzzle. The puzzle is two-faced – one face concerns the lack of involvement by Protestant church bodies with the secular environmental movement and the other face concerns the low priority level given environmental concerns within church bodies. In other words, I'm interested in the answering two questions: why haven't Protestant church bodies been involved in any sustained and significant ways with the secular environmental movement; and why hasn't the environment become an important issue for denominations and congregations.

Data and Methods

Those are very large questions and my answers will be provisional at best as they are drawn from a pilot study of religious leaders involved in denominational and parachurch environmental organizations and activists from secular groups. During the summer of 2005 I conducted phone interviews with six religious leaders who represented three mainline denominations, two ecumenical parachurch organizations, and one evangelical environmental group, and with five activists from secular environmental

groups who represented the range of groups from wilderness preservation to toxic waste issues. Several were national organizations and a few worked at the state or regional level. I also collected documents – annual reports, newsletter and magazine articles, denominational and parachurch groups’ official statements or theological writings on the environment.

The Greening of Religion and the Limits on Participation

I began the project last spring by reading histories of the environmental movement and the scholarly literature on the secular movement as well as recent studies of religion and the environment documents. One of the important findings from the literature is that despite the nascent “greening” of religion, religious and secular environmentalism appear to operate in separate spheres. Religions have not been important resources or constituencies for the national secular environmental organizations, nor have they been regularly involved in major campaigns related to air or water pollution, wilderness protection, or global protection. Leaders of the major environmental social movement organizations (smo’s) have largely ignored religion and historical accounts of the movement indicate that religions or religious leaders played virtually no role in the development of the movement in the 1960s through the 1980s.¹ A review of the annual reports and newsletters, and other publications of several major national environmental organizations (Sierra Club, Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace)

¹ In an oft-cited passage from a 1998 essay by the executive director of the Sierra Club, Carl Pope acknowledged that, “for almost 30 years most professional environmentalists stubbornly, almost proudly, denied the need to reach out to the religious community. Many of us have inherited and uncritically accepted the 19th-century idea that religion could be discarded because it had been superseded by science” (Sierra, November/December, 1998). On histories of the movement, see Dowie, 1995; Gottlieb, 1993; Easterbrook, 1995; Cohen 1988; Bramwell, 1994).

suggest that secular organizations are growing more aware of religious environmentalism but there seems to be little evidence of interest in creating new partnerships or expanding their constituencies to include religious groups.

Second, the literature reports on an emergent environmentalism among major church bodies in the United States over the past 15-20 years, and the creation of a variety of parachurch organizations devoted to eco-justice, stewardship of creation, or environmental action. The impetus for the greening of religion is partly a response to the policies and actions of two Reagan administrations and to the 1991 “Open Letter to the American Religious Community” from 32 prominent scientists that urged religions to address the growing environmental crisis. These groups include the Eco-Justice Working Group at the National Council of Churches, the National Religious Partnership for the Environment, and the Evangelical Environmental Network (which ran the prominent, “What Would Jesus Drive” campaign in 2002). The literature reports on a growing body of eco-theologies and denominational social statements on the environment, and many of the mainline denominations have added environmentalism to their list of policy issues their legislative staffers take on in D.C. (see Moody, 2002; Fowler, 1995). Kearns (1996; 1997) and Shibley and Wiggins (1997) report on the emergence of Christian environmentalism, and in particular on the creation of new Christian environmental discourses and ethics by a variety of parachurch organizations, but suggest that support does not run deep.

While religious groups became more engaged in such issues as global warming, renewable energy, and the Endangered Species Act during the 1990s and 2000s, they have rarely worked with secular groups, but instead have concentrated on developing

theological rationales for religious environmentalism, fomenting ecumenical and interfaith cooperation on environmental issues, creating educational and worship resources as well as implementable green strategies (e.g. recycling) for local congregations. It may be that religious elites and activists at the level of denominations, judicatories and parachurch organizations are adopting environmentalism as a religious issue, but there is little evidence that congregations are also making the green turn.² Guth et al. (1995:366) also note that congregations seem to be unaware of or unconcerned by the green environmentalism of denominations or other church-based organizations. It appears that both denominational offices and parachurch groups operate above the radar of most congregations, and it is not clear how important they or their resources are for congregations. Thus, Christian environmentalism has been more concerned with developing its own positions on environmental issues and raising consciousness among its constituencies than in working within the secular movement.

At the level of congregations, the literature reports that local churches have periodically been involved in community efforts to protest toxic waste or prevent toxic waste dumping, lead poisoning, pesticide pollution, and the siting of toxic waste incinerators, but this has not translated into sustained involvement in either local or national green activities or the development of on-going involvement with secular

² For example, the National Religious Partnership for the Environment claims to monitor several thousand congregational environmental projects and to have passed out 135,000 resource kits to congregations for three consecutive years in the 1990s. Yet there is no information about the nature and outcomes of the projects nor about the number of congregations that used the materials (see <http://www.nrpe.org/accomplishments.html>, accessed August 2, 2005). In a 1998 Sierra Club Magazine article, Trebbe Johnson reports that the NPRE claims that there are more than 2000 “green congregations”, yet this represents less than 1% of all congregations in the United States, and Kearns (1997:356-57) reports that despite asking 38,000 evangelical churches to become “Noah Congregations” during the Evangelical Environmental Network’s 1996 campaign to strengthen the Endangered Species Act, only 1000 (of about 3%) signed on.

environmental organizations.³ The literature suggests that religious involvement may be limited to providing meeting space or the voice of a clergy person at protest rallies, but that few congregations are actively involved in the campaigns or occupy key leadership roles. Instead individual Christians, acting as Christians, but not as members of an organized religious body, are important actors in the anti-toxins movement.⁴ In addition, environmental advocacy or action appears low on the priority of most congregations and faith-based service or community organizing groups. Instead, churches and other religious organizations focus their attention on meeting human needs like poverty, hunger, homeless, education, or health care (see Ammerman, 2005; Wuthnow, 2004; Wood and Warren, 2002). Theologian, John Cobb, notes that Christians are primarily concerned with “neighbors in need”, and when faced with acting to secure justice for humans and justice for other living things, tend to side with helping people (2001:220-21).

In sum, the literature on religion and the environment suggest several initial answers to questions about religions’ absence from the larger movement, and the low priority the environment is given among denominations and congregations. First, there are organizational factors that limit involvement with the salience of environmentalism. It appears that secular smos and Christian environmentalism are at different points in the organizational development. On the one hand, secular smos are more mature and have well-developed tactical and ideological repertoires and clearly-defined goals and

³ On religions involvement in anti-toxins actions, see Bullard (2000[1994]); Schwab (1994), Kay (1994). and Guitierrez (1994).

⁴ One exception is the on-going initiative to clean up brownfields and toxic waste sites in Los Angeles that has been spearheaded by a coalition of thirty African-American congregations known as the Los Angeles Metropolitan Churches. The coalition is a faith-based community organization that also addresses crime and education in metro L.A. (see <http://www.lametro.org/default1.htm>, accessed , August 4, 2005).

constituencies. Historically religions have not been important constituencies or played leadership roles in the secular movement and thus we might expect secular smos to simply ignore religions. On the other hand, religious groups are still in the early phases of mobilization as they seek to articulate a uniquely religious injustice frame and a rationale for action. They are also focused on the task of raising consciousness among adherents and may not be ready to work with secular groups. Another organizational factor that may limit the religious involvement in environmentalism is the strong culture of congregationalism or local autonomy of churches and the concomitant distrust or perceived irrelevance of denominational, judicatory, or elite actors.⁵ In other words, while religious elites have been busy developing Christian environmentalism, their activities have been unnoticed or disregarded by many congregations who pursue their own service and advocacy agendas that target their specific community.

Second, ideological and strategic factors may also pull religions away from environmentalism in general and working with secular organizations. Some literature suggests that conservative Protestants believe the secular environmental movement is aligned with liberal politics or the radical left and thus is suspect. Association with them would politicize religion, or worse pollute religion. In addition, the ethic of service and care that is central to Christianity emphasizes care for human beings which may lead religious groups to downplay the importance of the environment. In addition, when congregations get involved in environmental issues they tend to be related to the anti-toxin campaigns which tend to be very local, short-lived and often do not involve

⁵ On the gap between congregations and judicatories, see Lummis (n.d.) “The Middle Judicatory as a System of Congregations Connected to the Regional Office.” http://hrr.hartsem.edu/org/faith_judicatories_research_lummisrpt1.html accessed, August 5, 2005. See also Djupe and Gilbert (2002) on the irrelevance of denominational support or resources for clergy activism.

activists from the large, national environmental smos. Thus churches tend not get connected organizationally or ideologically to the major secular players.

Findings

Organizational Factors

One of the main findings that emerged from my interviews with religious and secular environmentalists is that different organizational pressures and imperatives push and pull religion and the secular movement apart. From the side of the secular SMOs, religion rarely enters into their decision-making process in terms of mobilizing support for collective action or pending legislation. Several of the secular activists we interviewed noted the emergence of religious environmentalism but apart from one organization that works with an interfaith group on an ad hoc basis, none of their organizations “consciously seek out faith-based communities or religious individuals.” Perhaps most tellingly one interview ended by the activist announcing that, “I can’t recall ever having a discussion about religion with my colleagues.” Another activist said that his organization, “as a rule doesn’t partner with churches.” When pressed to explain this activist claimed that the mission and limited resources of his organization makes partnerships with faith-based groups difficult:

We are stretched very thin. We’re trying to do a lot with only so many staff. We only work with groups that we are sure will help us meet our goal of protecting bio-diversity. So we engage in a form of triage – we rank which groups on a given issue are the most important for addressing the issue – say protecting a watershed – and we work to develop

partnerships with them. Usually this means landowners, state and federal environmental agencies, businesses, and community groups.

He concluded by stating that he wasn't sure what benefit would accrue to his organization by working with religious groups. Again when I pressed him to explain he provided additional information about what pulled his group away from religion. He voiced his suspicions about the religious groups that historically have fueled non-engagement.

Namely, that religious groups attack secular groups for their positions on family planning and population growth. He complained that religious groups – really alluding to conservative Protestant and Catholic bodies attack secular groups if they promote family planning and controlling the human population. “Can't they see,” he said, “that if you limit population growth you limit human impact on the natural world.” He also noted that religious bodies fail to see how nature and the human beings are interconnected.

Another leader voiced his groups concern that religious groups had a very different agenda than his organization's agenda and that the two were incompatible: “we haven't looked to involve religious groups because we aim to save nature but they aim to save souls.” In other words, some secular organizations reduce all religions to a particular form of evangelically-oriented Protestantism and object to their attempt to replace environmental ends with religious ones. A leader of an ecumenical group confirmed this perception on the part of secular organizations, noting that some groups are wary of working with Christian organizations or church bodies because they're “afraid or suspicious” of religious groups because they think “they are about to be called down to the altar by some Jesus freaks.” At a less ideological and more pragmatic level, other activists noted that they had long-established partnerships with a variety of groups and

they didn't have the time, money, or inclination to create new partnerships with faith-based groups and that the different missions of religions and secular smos did not lend themselves to easy relationships. Two noted that their primary orientation towards working with the legislative process precluded religious partnerships.

Interviews with the religious leaders also revealed key differences in terms of organizational imperatives, ideological orientation, tactics, and resources that limit the interest in partnering with secular organizations and that keep environmentalism low on the priority list of many religious bodies. Five of the six interviewees expressed strong interest in working with secular organizations but viewed such partnerships warily. One denominational leader said his denomination does not form any "official partnerships" with secular groups and the evangelical activist I interviewed initially said his organization would consider working with secular groups in a few years – "we're simply not there yet". Later he reversed himself and indicated that his group wasn't really very interested at all in working with secular groups: "we don't need secular groups to care for creation."

All six interviewees voiced a fundamental distrust of secular groups, and identified several barriers to more regular partnerships. The primary concern they all had was that their distinctive religious voice or position would get drowned out in the secular partnerships. According to a leader in an ecumenical organization, "the religious eco-justice movement has its own agenda, its own positions, its own voices and we don't want to lose it. If we get co-opted by secular groups we will lose that voice and have problems with our base." She explained this by way of an example. "Recently," she said, "discussion about global climate change and energy has opened up the door to

reconsider nuclear energy, but we couldn't support nuclear energy because some of our member church bodies have long-standing anti-nuclear positions." The evangelical leader claimed that evangelicals were still "trying to establish our own voice and our own identity." Cooperating with secular groups would pull them away from finishing this important work. In addition, several of the religious activists noted that the current political climate in which religion appears to be important consideration for public policy have led some secular organizations to try to align themselves with religious groups in order to gain political capital. Religious leaders said they rejected these efforts and would only consider working with secular groups if they respected religious groups and allowed them "to keep their distinctive voices." One mainline staffer noted that some secular organizations, "come to us after they have set-up their own campaign and want to get religious voices involved in order to provide a veneer of moral authority to their work." A leader of one ecumenical organization also disapproved of the utilitarian approach to cooperation claiming that, "some groups see religions as just another constituency. They believe that they own the environmental issues and want to control the message. They want to be seen by funders and other in the public as having the support of religious groups." Another ecumenical activist claimed that "secular groups are just using the religious groups for purely utilitarian reasons. They don't understand us. They're just trying to frame the issues in the current political climate in which religion is really important. But they lack the moral vision to effectively frame the issues so in the end their use of religion is not authentic."

Fear of cooptation was not the only barrier to establishing or maintain cooperative ties with secular groups. Both mainline and evangelical leaders noted that many of their

members have ideological objections to working with secular environmental organizations. Many see the environmental movement as “liberal” and thus not something with which they wish their church to be associated. Even within one of the more liberal denominations of the mainline, environmentalism is viewed with suspicion by many members, as evident in the closing comment of an interview with one activist:

Given the conservative nature of many parishes they cannot stake out a more radical position or take action on the environment. Thus we must look for ways to cooperate with or forge compromises with business and government. If we sound like a PIRG [Public Interest Research Group], we’re going to lose support among our churches. But if we take centrist positions or work with business and government then we’re criticized by [secular] ecological groups.

Several of the religious interviewers noted that secular organizations were probably unfairly tarred as “pagan, new-age tree-worshippers” by church members, and leaders noted how they had to combat the misperception about paganism, usually at the congregational level. While mutual suspicion based on faulty assumptions about the beliefs and values of the other side may be one factor that prevents greater participation of religious groups in the larger American environmental movement, concerns about the anti-Christian orientation of environmentalism more generally marks it as a religiously illegitimate issue among some church members, especially evangelicals. In addition, the concern that the secular environmental movement is too liberal or radical for moderate and conservative members of church bodies may be another factor that keeps

environmentalism off the agenda of congregations and denominations. One mainline leader said people in his denomination see the environment as a “Democratic” issue not a “Republican issue” and thus have no interest in getting involved. Others see environmentalists as a “bunch of hippies” and thus shy away from the movement or the movement’s issues.⁶

Some of the religious leaders claimed that they still face an uphill battle to persuade church officials and lay members that the environmental is something in which Christians should be engaged. The evangelical leader I interviewed said that many evangelicals are indifferent at best and often hostile to environmentalism. He claimed that too often that his fellow evangelicals fail to see that environmental stewardship is really all about taking care of people. He noted that his organization works very hard at redefining environmentalism by using the language and ethics of evangelicalism. “We have to help people see that the environment is connected to their faith; we have to help them see how their relationship with Jesus should guide their stewardship of the God’s creation.” His organization primarily focused on educating evangelicals about the biblical basis for environmental action but to talk about the environment in the language of the secular movement “would ghettoize us.” Instead he uses the language of evangelicals to show how concerns about the environment are consistent with more conventionally Christian concerns about helping suffering humans or winning souls for Christ. For example, he argued that he aims to help evangelicals understand that being a disciple of Jesus means that they must work

⁶See Eckberg and Blocker (1996) on the ways in which Christians define environmentalism as overly politicized.

to end global warming because doing so is a way of loving your neighbor, or that Christians must work to end mercury poisoning because mercury can harm “unborn fetuses.” Thus reframing environmentalism as congruent with a “culture of life” seems to be the best way to raise consciousness and mobilize action among evangelicals. Similarly, a leader from a liberal denomination claimed the main reason the environment is not a very high priority in his denomination is that too many members have not have a conversion experience in which they come to see that the very meaning of human existence is tied to caring for the earth.

Implicit in their comments and made explicit in interviewees comments is the another ideological and tactical barrier to environmentalism. Many church bodies and individuals Christians emphasize caring for people rather than caring for the natural or created world. Thus they are more concerned about the provision of human services – feeding the hungry, working for peace – or about policing the morals of society, than about protecting the environment. One mainline leader reported that the environment ranks fifth is social issues behind hunger, poverty, international issues and sex. Another mainline activist lamented the invisibility of the environment among his denomination blamed on-going conflict over sexuality and economics as key factors that keep the environment of the agenda of congregations and judicatories. He stated that, congregations and the national church spend so much time fighting about homosexuality that we fail to consider more pressing justice concerns. The entire ethic that guides American culture is the bottom line. Because caring for the earth is usually seen as hitting us in the pocketbook, our churches avoid getting involved.”

The religious activists all voiced some concern over the tactics secular groups used, as suggested in some of the comments above. One mainline leader complained that secular smos can formulate “radical policies in order to attract members,” whereas his church “doesn’t do advocacy to increase their membership. He continued by noting that,

People don’t join our church because they care about the environment, but people join the Sierra Club because they have a priority to protect the environment. Our members have a much broader viewpoint so we have to be careful. I’m jealous of folks in secular groups because they can send out information to members that explicitly and forcefully state their goals.

This leader identified tactical differences that were based on different constituencies and implicitly on different organizational missions. Churches are not single-issue organizations. They often face multiple issues but lack the consensus and the resources to address all of these issues. Several of the religious leaders claimed that budget cuts in recent years due to declining memberships prevent national church bodies from implementing environmental policies or promoting environmentalism at the judicatory or congregational levels. My interviewees also identified two other factors that keep church members and church bodies from pursuing environmentalism or working with the secular movement.

Conclusion

Given the provisional and limited nature of my data, my conclusions must be similarly provisional and limited. It appears that there are three sets of organizational, ideological, and tactical factors that push religion and the environment apart and that limit the appeal of environmentalism among church bodies and their members.

At the organizational level three issues pull religious groups away from greater cooperation with secular organizations: Some groups are still developing their own distinct religious voice or religious perspective on the environment and think it is premature to start working outside their own domain; other groups have discovered their voice and have well-articulated theologies, ethics, and positions on a host of issues but wish to retain their distinct identities and not be co-opted by secular organizations who are perceived as looking to gain a veneer of religious legitimacy while not really being interested in what religious groups have to offer; third, nearly all of the religious leaders noted that they still have a lot of work to do to persuade both national and regional church leaders, pastors, and members of congregations that environmentalism should be a concern of Christians. From the perspective of secular organizations, they have been at the game of environmental activism for much longer and have well-established ideologies and repertoires of contention and do not believe they need the help of religion to be successful. More work on history of the secular movement would help identify the initial set of factors that kept church bodies out of the

environmental movement and how the anti-religious bias within the secular movement became institutionalized.

Another possible avenue for continued exploration would be to examine the networks of religious and secular activists and organizations. Several scholars argue that nature of individuals' or groups' social networks may encourage or discourage participation in a social movement. Individuals are more likely to be drawn into social movements if they have friends or relatives already active, or who are members of organizations linked to a given smo (see Snow, Zurcher, Ekland-Olson, 1980; McAdam and Paulsen, 1993), and groups are more likely to engage in joint action if they are either part of a preexisting network of smos, or can be connected to the central organizations in some campaign through third-parties (see Gerhards and Rucht, 1992; Klandermans, 1992). Moreover, because networks are one of the sources for identities, individuals and groups will be willing to forge new ties or enter into joint action to the degree that the new alliance allows participant to keep or develop a valued identity. In other words, if I have to abandon my religious identity in order to participate with secular smos, then I may choose forgo the opportunity. Therefore, one possible explanation for religions' absence is that secular and religious environmental operate independently of one another and share few ties, thus making joint action or mutual influence unlikely.

At the ideological level misperceptions (and sometimes accurate perceptions) about the different beliefs and values each side holds may keep the religious and secular movements apart. For church bodies and parachurch

organizations they face a number of framing tasks in order to persuade church members, ministers, and denominational officials to first see caring for the environment as part of the Christian witness and second to persuade them to promote environmentalism over other pressing, more directly human concerns. They also must overcome the pre-existing meanings attached to environmentalism that delegitimize it as too political or as too closely aligned with liberal, progressive, or democratic politics. Part of this is addressing a long-standing challenge within Christianity of making action in the public sphere a legitimate undertaking for Christians.

Christian groups often believe the tactics their secular counterparts use as too radical and that to cooperate would compel them to compromise on historic and deeply-felt value commitments. Moreover, because their constituencies are not ideologically or politically homogenous taking a particular position or advocating for some piece of legislation seems bound to anger and alienate some factions within a denomination or tradition. Church bodies may need to rely on the tactics of compromise and incremental change that may be viewed negatively by some secular smos. Thus different approaches to environmental activism may keep religious and secular organizations from greater participation. One avenue for future research would be to look into the ways in which secular smo tactics keeps them from considering religion as a potential partner. In particular I wonder if secular smo's adoption of the main strategies used in interest group politics – lobbying, legislation, and litigation – and the highly technical nature of

environmental politics may lead secular smos to believe that there is no pressing need to incorporate religions into the movement

Finally movement activities and success depend on the ability of smos to mobilize money, facilities, labor, and moral authority to undergird protest. While marshalling resources is a challenging task for most single-issues smos, it is a daunting task to religious bodies at both national and local levels because they are faced multiple and often competing demands for the money, time, and participation of their members. I suspect that the limited availability of resources, especially among Mainline Protestant denominations may deter more active engagement in environmental issues and that the resource crunch reported on by a few of the secular movement leaders may also limit the ability and interest of secular organizations from reaching out to religious groups. Moreover, if environmentalism is seen as negatively politicized then church leaders may face greater internal opposition and be blocked from mobilizing resources.

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