

Is It This Hot In Hell?

Climate Change Strategies for Religious Environmentalists

By Kara Kaminski

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	pg 2
Chapter 1: The Evolution Debate.....	pg 4
Chapter 2: Civil Rights.....	pg 14
Chapter 3: The Sanctity of Life and Marriage.....	pg 23
Chapter 4: Climate Change, The Next Big Issue.....	pg 35
Chapter 5: Interviews on the Strategy of Religious Environmental Leaders.....	pg 40
Chapter 6: Interview Analysis and Strategy Recommendations.....	pg 67
Bibliography.....	pg 76
Appendix A: Interviewees.....	pg 80
Appendix B: Interview questions.....	pg 81
Appendix C: <i>Is the Bible True?</i> By William Jennings Bryan.....	pg 82
Appendix D: National Opinion Research Center Abortion Survey Data.....	pg 84
Appendix E: <i>Open Letter to American Religious Community</i> , January 1990.....	pg 84

Introduction

The inspiration for my thesis came from two summers of working for theologian Dr. Erin Lothes Biviano on her book *Green Hope, Green Blues*, about what drives American religious environmentalists to act. She conducted many interviews, some of which I had the pleasure of attending, asking religious groups what motivated them. I spent a large part of my work for her listening to and transcribing these interviews. The ability for so many different religious groups to feel an environmental calling intrigued me.

Being a self-proclaimed environmentalist and politically minded individual, I wondered how these religious individuals translated their motivation into action. This is my thesis. I studied several religious movements on my own time and followed the works of Proposition 8 of California in the news. Listening to and reading about the arguments of the religious community I often thought to myself about how a different wording may have made their message more appealing to their audience. In my curiosity, I had to know the religious community's strategy for the planet's environmental crisis.

I researched how the religious community can make their actions to mitigate climate change more effective. I gained this knowledge from religious climate activists across the country. I chose ten individuals based on their involvement with religious environmental organizations, location in the U.S, and their religious affiliation. I interviewed Christian sects including Southern Baptist, Evangelical Protestant, a Methodist, a Mormon, Roman Catholic, a member of the United Church of Christ, as well as leaders of more minority religions in the U.S. including Judaism and Islam. Their locations included New York City, Houston, Grand Rapids, Salt Lake City, Newark, Washington D.C, Seattle, and Lexington. The varying locations and

affiliations attempted to bring a greater balance to the response and gain knowledge of the strategies of the religious community as a whole rather than one religious or geographical group.

These ten individuals who answered a number of questions (listed as Appendix B) that focused on what strategies work, and what does not, in categories such as when speaking to the religious community, working with interfaith or secular organizations, or educating. This is my chapter five. Here, I presented the product of ten interviews from religious leaders across America and from different religious groups. I categorized their responses to five general questions into four sections, attached as Appendix B; message and framing, education and awareness, organization and leadership, and finally, interfaith and advocacy. I focused the interviews on the individual's strategies for mitigating the environmental crisis by any means.

To analyze the efficiency of their strategies, I both compared their comments against one another and against historical cases. I researched the arguments of anti-evolutionists, religious civil rights leaders, and those posed during anti-abortion and anti-gay marriage debates. I determined the efficiency of historical arguments by their outcome. For the cause of anti-abortion and anti-gay marriage, I analyzed these debates as is. I considered them complete enough to analyze because they have both lost the political spot light in the name of other movements, particularly, climate change and the environment.

Chapter six, the recommendations section, culminates my thesis by suggesting five statements of advice for improvement. These five statements are what religious environmentalists should consider these when starting organization, to troubleshoot a problem, make their organization more efficient, or cooperate with organizations or individuals from a point of view other than their own (i.e. secular, different religion, or religious sect). I

substantiated every recommendation with either historical evidence or an interviewee's personal experience, and mentioned the area of my thesis to refer to when considering a specific recommendation.

My goal is to help religious environmental organizations accomplish more with the resources they have. Because funding is limited, every word and action should work to accomplish an organization's goal in the best way possible. I hope to share this work with religious environmentalists who seek guidance and can learn from my research.

Chapter 1: The Evolution Debate

The debate over teaching evolution in schools was the first modern involvement of religion in politics. The evolution debate began in 1925 with the Butler Act in Tennessee, and arguably ended with *Kitzmiller, et al. vs. Dover* in 2005. The rhetoric used to frame the evolution debate changed from 1925 to 2005 and consisted of three phases; creationism, creation science, and intelligent design. Each subsequent stage of the evolution debate -- from the early Butler Act and Scopes trial, to the compromises of the 1960s, to early 2000s -- built upon knowledge from past victories and defeats. Ultimately, as in the case *Kitzmiller, et al. vs. Dover*, anti-evolutionists failed to affect the teaching of evolution to be in line with their religious beliefs as a result of ignoring the careful science of rhetoric and political sensitivities of the time.

Creationism: Rhetoric and the Butler Act

William Jennings Bryan, a lawyer, politician, and devout Presbyterian, was the charismatic leader of the original anti-evolutionist movement in Tennessee. He was also the lawyer representing Tennessee and defending the Butler Act of 1925 during the Scopes trial. The Butler Act stated:

That it shall be unlawful for any teacher in any of the Universities, normals and all other public schools of the State which are supported in whole or in part by the public school funds of the State, to teach any theory that denies the story of the Divine Creation of man as taught in the

Bible, and to teach instead that man has descended from a lower order of animals.¹

To contest this act, the American Civil Liberties Union financed the trial involving John Scopes, a high school teacher who violated the act by teaching evolution in his science classroom.

The Scopes trial ended in the government upholding the local law, stating that it did not violate the constitution. The case did not reach the federal appeals court or the U.S. Supreme court.² Bryan's leadership and persuasion won the case, though he also experienced a notable shortcoming during the trial. A year before the case began, Bryan contributed to the passing of the Butler Act through an influential speech given in Nashville, entitled *Is the Bible True?* Each member of Tennessee's General Assembly received a reprinted version of the speech as the guide to the evolution debate.³ To read the speech, see Appendix C. In the beginning of this speech Bryan states, "The Bible is either true or false; it is either the Word of God or the work of man. If the bible is false, it is the greatest imposter that the world has known."⁴ Bryan made the debate black and white for his audience. He forced the General Assembly to decide between Christianity, as they knew it, and the scientific concept of evolution. He summarized his poignant argument saying, "The assaults that are made upon the Bible today are not attacks upon the copying or upon the translation; they are attacks upon that which the Old and New

¹ "Tennessee Anti-evolution Statute - UMKC School of Law." UMKC School of Law. <http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/scopes/tennstat.htm>.

² Singham, Mano. *God vs. Darwin: The War between Evolution and Creationism in the Classroom* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Education, 2009), 1.

³ Linder, Doug . "William Jennings Bryan." UMKC School of Law. <http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/scopes/bryanw.htm>.

⁴ Bryan, William Jennings. "Is The Bible True?." *The Inspiration of the Bible*. academic.brooklyn.cuny.edu/history/dfg/amrl/bryan.htm.

Testaments offer as Divine truth.”⁵ Bryan continues to categorize non-believers, implying that those who did believe in evolution were either atheists, agnostics, or another category which seemingly referred to either Jews or Muslims. He framed the debate by giving the reader no choice but to disagree with evolution or to renounce their faith as a Christian.

After establishing the validity of his argument and convincing the audience of the divinity of God and the Bible, Bryan brings in the subject of children. When describing what an Orthodox Christian says to a child, he stated, “The Bible is the word of God. It contains the truth about the science of how to live, and all the truth that it is necessary for one to know.” He then addresses parents by asking, “What is the attitude of the parent who believes that the Bible contains error?”⁶ Bryan influenced readers, who may have been unsure of evolution, causing them to believe the theory deeply contrasted with their Christian religion and that they should consider what it would teach their children.

Bryan touches the listener where they are most vulnerable: their definition of themselves as both a Christian and a parent. When he distributed the piece immediately prior to the Butler Act’s passing, Bryan removed any small excuse a politician could grasp to justify not supporting it. With no loopholes available, most would have no choice but to agree with Bryan’s inexorable rhetoric and approve the anti-evolution act.

The efficacy of Bryan’s argument was undeniable. During the debate of the bill, several senators gave emotional speeches in support. Lew D. Hill, a Tennessee Senator, stated, “If you take these young, tender children from their parents by the compulsory school law and teach them this stuff about man originating from some protoplasm or one-cell matter...they will never

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Bryan, William Jennings. "Is The Bible True?." The Inspiration of the Bible. academic.brooklyn.cuny.edu/history/dfg/amrl/bryan.htm.

believe the Bible story of divine creation – that God created man after his own image and blew into his nostrils the breath of life”⁷ The connection between evolution and the degradation of youth and Christianity was apparent to nearly all senators at the time. The bill won in the Tennessee State Senate by a sweeping 24 to 6.⁸

During the Scopes trial, Bryan suffered a significant blow to his credibility. He swayed from his firm interpretation of the Bible, and thus the foundation of his arguments against evolution. Clarence Darrow, the opposing lawyer, called Bryan to the stand as an expert witness on the Bible. During questioning, Darrow exposed how Bryan’s interpretation of the Bible was not always literal. Darrow questioned Bryan on biblical stories such as when God took one of Adam’s ribs to give Eve. Bryan compromised his legal foundation when he admitted that God may have not physically removed Adam’s rib to create another person.⁹ This conflicted with Bryan’s legal view of the necessity of literal interpretation. He did not have the chance to cross-examine Darrow. The judge decided that the entire examination of Bryan was irrelevant to the case. The case closed with a guilty verdict and fined Scopes 100 dollars.¹⁰

After the case, Bryan was not satisfied with his victory and continued to attack evolutionists and Darrow, stating that evolutionists were “a militant minority, made up of atheists, agnostics, and other dissenters from orthodox Christianity,” and that the lawyer embodied “all that is cruel, heartless, and destructive in evolution.”¹¹ Bryan passed away soon after the Scopes trial, so the repercussions of his newly combative language remain unknown. However, the Butler Act remained a firm law in Tennessee, providing an example for many

⁷ Webb, George. *The Evolution Controversy in America* (Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 2002), 83.

⁸ Ibid, 83

⁹ Scopes Trial - Day 7 ." UMKC School of Law. <http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/scopes/day7.htm>.

¹⁰ Linder, Doug . "William Jennings Bryan." UMKC School of Law. <http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/scopes/bryanw.htm>.

¹¹ Webb, George. *The Evolution Controversy in America* (Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 2002), 90.

states to follow suit and develop similar acts throughout the coming years. Even through all of this, the question of evolution in schools remained local in scope, never reaching the national level at this time. Tennessee repealed the Butler Act in 1967.¹²

Creation Science and Compromise

It was not until the 1960s when this issue arose again and America saw the need to update the anti-evolution arguments. Some states invalidated their bans on evolution education, and religious activists thought it necessary to reestablish the dominance of anti-evolutionism. In their view, it was no longer enough to evoke the tenants of Christianity; they needed to compromise.

In 1963, two women from Orange Country California, Nell Segraves and Jean Sumrall, reformed the debate in their state. They claimed that if it was unconstitutional to force non-believing children to pray in school, it should also be unconstitutional to teach believing children the absence of God.¹³ The women proposed textbooks clearly state evolution as a theory, and not fact. Assistant Attorney General Norbert A. Schlei agreed with the argument and the California Superintendent of Public Instruction ruled that all California textbooks must label evolution as only a theory. By requesting evolution be taught as theory, and thus reducing it to a mere option, religious families would still be able to teach their children creationism at home without the school presenting a strong conflicting argument to their children.

¹² "Tennessee Anti-evolution Statute." UMKC School of Law.
<http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/scopes/tennstat.htm>.

¹³ Nelkin, Dorothy. *The Creation Controversy ,Science or Scripture in the Schools 1982 publication* (Canada: W. Norton&Co,1982), 107.

The Supreme Court case Engel v. Vitale in 1962 determined that it is unconstitutional for state officials to compose an official school prayer and require its recitation in public schools.

With evolution now taught as theory, anti-evolutionists wanted creation theory to have an equal place in education. In 1969, a sub-committee of the State Board of Education presented their recommendations for science education to the Board of Education. The committee's recommendation included a brief statement from Vernon Grose, an aerospace engineer and Pentecostal, discussing how creation theory is applicable to evolutionary theory as it fills in gaps such as the regular absence of transitional forms, while evolution better explains creation theory with data on subjects such as the transmutation of species.¹⁴ Grose compromised to further the anti-evolutionist agenda without alienating those he was trying to persuade. He did not demand abolishing the teaching of evolution as a theory, but instead requested that creation theory share the curriculum.

The Board of Education held a hearing in 1972 to properly determine the public opinion by listening to the arguments of both creationists and evolutionists. The purpose of the hearing was to clarify what content was appropriate for children's textbooks. Creationists brought engineers to the stand while evolutionists brought theologians, both hoping to present a more convincing argument. Of the 23 creationist witnesses, there were only 3 ministers, but 12 scientists and engineers among the group. The evolutionists brought 4 scientists but also individuals of the Presbyterian, Episcopalian, Mormon, Catholic, and Buddhist clergy.¹⁵ A journalist at the hearing wrote, "Witnesses from each side appeared in each other's clothing."¹⁶ The hearing exemplified how a group will attempt to frame itself as the one most appealing to its audience, using rhetoric the audience will relate to.

¹⁴ Nelkin, Dorothy. *The Creation Controversy, Science or Scripture in the Schools* 1982 publication (Canada: W. Norton&Co,1982), 110.

¹⁵ Ibid, 112.

¹⁶ Ibid, 111.

In 1974, a group of parents in Kanawah County, West Virginia were enraged when they learned the school taught their children evolution. One family even sued the Kanawah school board on the grounds of their “encouraging disbelief in a supreme being.”¹⁷ The courts found no grounds for this case brought against the school board, and suggested the parents contact the Board of Education. The result was compromise: classrooms kept books that taught evolution but they also adopted a creationist textbook, and any parent could object to either book based on religious or moral grounds.¹⁸ This compromise did not last long. In 1975, the U.S. Court of Appeals ruled it unconstitutional, in *Daniel v. Waters*, for there to be balance of the teaching of evolution and biblical stories in schools.¹⁹

In 1978, Wendell Bird, a Yale law graduate and Institute for Creation Research (ICR) affiliate, and Paul Ellwanger, president of Citizens for Fair Education, changed the argument over creation theory in science classes by creating the idea of “creation science”.²⁰ Because the government viewed previous anti-evolutionist arguments as conflicting with the first amendment guarantee of freedom of religion, Bird and Ellwanger focused the creation argument on science rather than religious texts and teachings. The ICR began developing books that catered to the concept of creation science. When a textbook formerly stated “God” it would then state “master designer” and the “creative work of God” became “creation.”²¹ Ellwanger took this idea and put it in the form of a bill, consciously avoiding biblical wording and grounding his statements in creation as a science. Arkansas and Louisiana signed his bill into law in 1981. At the same time,

¹⁷ Nelkin, Dorothy. *The Creation Controversy, Science or Scripture in the Schools* 1982 publication (Canada: W. Norton&Co,1982), 96.

¹⁸ Ibid, 97.

¹⁹ Singham, Mano. *God vs. Darwin: The War between Evolution and Creationism in the Classroom* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Education, 2009), 2.

²⁰ Nelkin, Dorothy. *The Creation Controversy, Science or Scripture in the Schools* 1982 publication (Canada: W. Norton&Co,1982), 99.

²¹ Ibid, 100.

about twenty states prepared similar bills for state congresses.²² This strategy worked for six years until the U.S. Supreme Court ruled it unconstitutional in 1987, stating creation science was the same as creationism in *Edwards v. Aguillard*.²³ This decision guaranteed there would be no mention of religion allowed in the education system.

Intelligent Design: The Dover Trial and the End of Anti-Evolutionists

The next phase for anti-evolutionists was intelligent design. Intelligent design theorists implemented careful strategy to remove any wording that may indicate its possible religious underpinnings. The book *Of People and Pandas*, published in 1989, was the first book specifically on the subject of intelligent design.²⁴ It is possible that the theorist's keen strategy is why books such as *Of People and Pandas* remained uncontested in courts until 2005. In the case *Kitzmiller, et.al. vs. Dover Area School District*, the Dover school board was not able to uphold this strategy. In 2005, eleven parents in Dover, Pennsylvania sued the school district for teaching intelligent design as science to its students. This was the first evolution case brought to the U.S. federal courts.

Mano Singham, author of *God vs. Darwin*, explained why the school board lost the case. He said, "The Dover school board was much too clumsy in its attempts to introduce ID [intelligent design] ideas into its curriculum. They had little patience for the subtlety of the slow, long-range plan envisaged by the Discovery Institute [intelligent design theorists]. They wanted

²² Nelkin, Dorothy. *The Creation Controversy, Science or Scripture in the Schools 1982 publication* (Canada: W. Norton&Co,1982), 99.

²³ Singham, Mano. *God vs. Darwin: The War between Evolution and Creationism in the Classroom* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Education, 2009), 2.

²⁴ Matzke, Nick. "Of Pandas and People." National Center for Science Education - Defending the Teaching of Evolution in Public Schools.. <http://ncse.com/creationism/analysis/critique-pandas-people>.

God, the Bible, and prayer back in their schools, and they wanted it now.”²⁵ Singham continues to say that the school board “left their religious fingerprints all over the policy” which the intelligent design strategists knew would cause the school to lose the case.²⁶ Because the case was against the Dover school district rather than intelligent design theorists, the religious wording of school district employees was enough to prove to the court the connection between religion and intelligent design.

One significant cross-examination was of Professor Behe, an author of *Of Pandas and People*. Behe fumbled over the definition of scientific theory, seemingly stating that intelligent design both was, and wasn’t, scientific theory. At one point the examining lawyer stated, “But you are clear, under your definition, the definition that sweeps in intelligent design, astrology is also a scientific theory, correct?”²⁷ Behe agreed. Many testimonies similar to Behe’s made it apparent that the teaching of Intelligent Design either had religious reasoning behind it or was not a scientific theory to be presented in a science classroom. The narrow questioning in the courtroom resulted in the defeat of the Dover school district.

Conclusion

The phases of creationism, creation science, and intelligent design show the incredible adaptability and perseverance of anti-evolutionists. They contended with evolving interpretations of the constitutions and what was constitutional. Though anti-evolutionists won cases within each phase, continuous legal changes forced them to alter their argument and start again after courts overturned their decisions years later. The meticulous way in which the religious

²⁵ Singham, Mano. *God vs. Darwin: The War between Evolution and Creationism in the Classroom* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Education, 2009), 123.

²⁶ Ibid, 123.

²⁷ "Kitzmiller v. Dover: Day 11, PM: Michael Behe." Exploring the Creation/Evolution Controversy. <http://www.talkorigins.org/faqs/dover/day11pm.html#day11pm132>.

community was able to adapt so quickly is evident in the fact that the evolution debate lasted from 1925 until 2005. The strategy of the debate was lost in the last Kitzmiller, et al. vs. Dover Area School District, et al. when the same meticulous detail was not presented in this argument.

Chapter 2: Civil Rights

The religious community led the civil rights movement. Faith leaders, such as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., framed civil rights as a battle for equality and not simply as a battle for the elevated status of African Americans. Despite the peaceful message of civil rights leaders, violence often followed their demonstrations. It was not only the general white supremacist population, but also the local police enforcement that propagated this violence. These events also coincided with the television revolution. Over the course of the civil rights era, from 1955 to 1964, the percentage of American homes with television sets went from 56 to 92 percent.²⁸ The combination of these three facts created great support for the civil rights movement. The awareness caused by media coverage significantly influenced its success.

Peaceful Rhetoric of Civil Rights Leaders

When compiling the book *Rhetoric, Religion, and the Civil Rights Movement*, Davis Houck and David Dixon state that they realized, “civil rights was fundamentally a religious affair.”²⁹ They stated that the force that moved a black man to vote “was not primarily about political self-interest so much as it was a divine call to personhood, a faithful enactment of God’s plan.”³⁰ The success of civil rights was due to strong religious support and its frame in equality and forgiveness. In their introduction, Houck and Dixon mention several important faith leaders beyond Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., such as Lawrence Campbell, Reverend Edwin King, and

²⁸ "The Civil Rights Movement and Television." The Museum of Broadcast Communications. <http://www.museum.tv/eotvsection.php?entrycode=civilrights>.

²⁹ Houck, Davis W., and David E. Dixon. *Rhetoric, Religion and the Civil Rights Movement, 1954-1965* (Waco: Baylor UP 2006), 2.

³⁰ *Ibid*, 3.

Fannie Lou Hamer. Each of these individuals framed civil rights as a plight for equality supported by a forgiving God.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s famous *I Have a Dream* speech of August, 1963 continuously referred to "all of God's children," a phrase that evokes peaceful equality and non-violence. Dr. King explained his vision of achieved equality and said:

This will be the day when all of God's children will be able to sing with a new meaning," and recited "My Country, 'Tis of Thee'... When we let freedom ring... we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual, "Free at last! Free at last! Thank God Almighty, we are free at last!"³¹

Dr. King framed his speech as one for freedom for everyone, black or white, from racism and inequality. Dr. King specifically wants Christians to see that "the meaning of Christian discipleship was at the heart of the African American struggle for freedom and equality."³² Speaking from his religious standpoint, everyone, even those that support segregation, are God's children.

Lawrence Campbell, a local minister in Danville, VA, gave a similarly framed speech for the Danville Christian Progressive Association in December, 1963. When referring to the mayor of the town, he said, "God is able to change him until he will make a just law. I believe that God

³¹ "I Have A Dream Speech ." Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. speeches. <http://www.mlkonline.net/dream.html>.

³² "Letter from a Birmingham Jail." African Studies Center, University of Pennsylvania. http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Articles_Gen/Letter_Birmingham.html.

can do anything but fear.”³³ Campbell did not condemn the mayor for not supporting equality of races; he instead spoke about his faith in God to help the mayor eventually make the right choice. Campbell also said, “God knows how to step in! I have seen God turn the darkness into light. I have seen him turn our failures into success,” assuring the crowd that even though the battle for equality had not yet been won, God would eventually guide them to victory.³⁴ Campbell’s framing is the same as Dr. King’s. His words were not hateful, they were of peace.

Reverend Edwin King, an active member of the Council of Federal Organizations (COFO) gave part of the Address at the Funeral Service for James Chaney in August, 1964. Dave Denis, another member of COFO, spoke first about how it was acceptable to feel anger because of the deaths occurring. Rev. King continued Denis’s speech and assured the crowd that while it was necessary to be angry, they must channel their anger into peaceful activism. When discussing the image of freedom after the end of the civil rights movement, he said, “We will be free to kneel before the ruins of burned churches, bombed homes, and newly dug graves and hold hands, black and white together and say, ‘we are brothers in Christ despite all that there is to keep us from being brothers.’ The love of God can overcome even in Mississippi.”³⁵ By saying this, Rev. King is still framing his speech in terms of a peaceful equality of races. He tells the audience that God will bring peace to all, even those who are the biggest proponents of segregation.

Fannie Lou Hamer was a Mississippi sharecropper with a 6th grade education. Despite her education, her eloquence still managed to catch the attention of President Lyndon Johnson, who

³³ Houck, Davis W., and David E. Dixon. *Rhetoric, Religion and the Civil Rights Movement, 1954-1965* (Waco: Baylor UP 2006), 679.

³⁴ Houck, Davis W., and David E. Dixon. *Rhetoric, Religion and the Civil Rights Movement, 1954-1965* (Waco: Baylor UP 2006), 681.

³⁵ *Ibid*, 783.

decided to preempt one of her televised speeches with a presidential press conference, giving her the advantage of greater visibility to the press.³⁶ A speech she gave in September, 1964 presented this same message of equality of all races before God as the previously described civil rights leaders. When discussing time she spent in jail after a peaceful civil rights demonstration, she told the story of a friend in the next cell over. She said, “During the time they was beating Miss Ponder, I heard her when she began to pray. And she asked God to have mercy on those people, because they didn’t know what they was doin’ [sic].”³⁷ The activist prayed to God for mercy on the men who were beating her, even though they caused her pain. Hamer spoke of her own similar belief when she said, “Every night of my life that I lay down, before I go to sleep, I pray for these people that despitefully use me.”³⁸ Hamer framed the civil rights movement, again, as one of peaceful equality and encouraged prayer to a forgiving God even while being beaten by those they were fighting against.

These religious civil rights leaders who framed their speeches and actions as being in the name of a forgiving and benevolent God clearly succeeded. That the majority of the religious community spoke the same peaceful words and passed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 is proof of the success of their framing.

Police Violence as a Response to Peaceful Demonstration

Instead of protecting civil rights activists from violent groups such as the Klu Klux Klan, police forces in the South propagated violence. Activists were beaten, arrested, and often murdered as a result of their peaceful demonstrations.

³⁶ Ibid, 4.

³⁷ Houck, Davis W., and David E. Dixon. *Rhetoric, Religion and the Civil Rights Movement, 1954-1965* (Waco: Baylor UP 2006), 789.

³⁸ Ibid, 792.

In jail, activists “were crammed into tiny, filthy cells and sporadically beaten. In Jackson, Mississippi, some male prisoners were forced to do hard labor in 100-degree heat.”³⁹ For those who transferred to Parchman Penitentiary near the town, their lives were not easier. Food for prisoners was often purposely over salted and the prison denied them mattresses. On hot days, jail attendants shut cell windows it would be difficult for the prisoners to breathe.⁴⁰

Demonstrators consistently met violent responses from the police. In Alabama, police would let attack dogs loose on crowds or firemen would blast hoses “set at a pressure to remove bark from trees and mortar from brick.”⁴¹ On “Bloody Sunday” in Selma, Alabama, police and troopers beat marchers and fired at them with tear gas. In Selma, Sheriff Jim Clark and his deputies crowded 165 students into a three-mile run and chased them with cattle prods.⁴² In Dr. King’s Letter from a Birmingham Jail, written on April 16, 1963, he detailed images of what police forces did to African Americans and peaceful protests. He said:

But when you have seen vicious mobs lynch your mothers and fathers at will and drown your sisters and brothers at whim; when you have seen hate filled policemen curse, kick and even kill your black brothers and sisters; when you see the vast majority of your twenty million Negro brothers smothering in an airtight cage of poverty in the midst of an affluent society... You warmly commended the Birmingham police force for keeping "order" and "preventing violence." I doubt that you would have so warmly commended the police force if you had seen its dogs sinking their teeth into unarmed,

³⁹ "We Shall Overcome ." U.S. National Park Service - Experience Your America. <http://www.nps.gov/nr/travel/civilrights/cost.htm>.

⁴⁰ "We Shall Overcome ." U.S. National Park Service - Experience Your America. <http://www.nps.gov/nr/travel/civilrights/cost.htm>.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

nonviolent Negroes. I doubt that you would so quickly commend the policemen if you were to observe their ugly and inhumane treatment of Negroes here in the city jail; if you were to watch them push and curse old Negro women and young Negro girls; if you were to see them slap and kick old Negro men and young boys; if you were to observe them, as they did on two occasions, refuse to give us food because we wanted to sing our grace together. I cannot join you in your praise of the Birmingham police department.⁴³

Dr. King describes police brutality and criticizes those that refuse to see it. In his speeches, he was able to publicize abuses and make verbal connections between the demonstrations and extreme responses. Dr. King's ability to do this verbally solidified the connection between the two actions. Because he was one of the few televised civil rights speakers, Americans directly heard his connections on the news. Even with the violence, civil rights activists did not step down from their cause as Dr. King urged them not to. But, as violence increased so did the media attention.⁴⁴

Media: Connecting the Civil Rights Movement and Police Violence for Americans

New technical advancements of portable cameras for news gathering allowed the peaceful demonstrations of the civil rights movement and the violent responses of the Southern law enforcement be publicized to the entire nation.⁴⁵ At this time, news shows moved from fifteen minute to thirty minute slots. This new time slot equally covered local and national news.

⁴³ "Letter from a Birmingham Jail." African Studies Center, University of Pennsylvania. http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Articles_Gen/Letter_Birmingham.html.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ "The Civil Rights Movement and Television." The Museum of Broadcast Communications. <http://www.museum.tv/eotvsection.php?entrycode=civilrights>.

During this time in history, news narrated only facts, without inserting personal opinion. African-American civil rights activists rarely ever received the opportunity to speak directly to America's television audience. Despite the lack of editorial and ability for activists to represent themselves, the images on television spoke for them; "the ascendancy of television as the new arbiter of public opinion became increasingly apparent at this time to civil rights leaders and television news directors alike."⁴⁶ It was not necessary to televise opinions supporting the civil rights movement; the images were enough for America to be convinced of the crimes against African Americans.

Social movement specialist, Sidney Tarrow describes the impact of television on civil rights in three ways. "First, television brought long-ignored grievances to the attention of the nation and particularly to viewers in the North; second, it visually contrasted the peaceful goals of the movement with the viciousness of the police; third, television was a medium of communication for those inside the movement."⁴⁷ Tarrow explains how television helped to reinforce the power of the movement itself because portions of the movement in other areas were able to witness their comrades and how they peacefully responded to police violence.⁴⁸

One instigator of the civil rights movement was the murder of Emmett Till, a black teenager who whistled at a white woman. After whistling at the woman in a general store, two white men, Roy Bryant and J.W. Milam, went to Till's great uncle's home where he was staying and dragged him to their car. Till's family reported him missing and his body was found three days later severely disfigured. Till's mother insisted that his body be returned to his home,

⁴⁶ "The Civil Rights Movement and Television." The Museum of Broadcast Communications. <http://www.museum.tv/eotvsection.php?entrycode=civilrights>.

⁴⁷ Tarrow, Sidney. *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics (Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics)*. 2 ed. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998),115.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

Chicago, and for him to have an open casket funeral so his disfigured body could be seen. Thousands of people attended Till's funeral and photographs of his corpse were published in *Jet* magazine, a publication geared toward African-American readers. When the trial of the men who murdered Till was held it drew more than 70 newspaper, magazine, radio, and television reporters from across the nation.⁴⁹

The intense criticism of Mississippi racism caused Governor Hugh White to state that, "This is not a lynching... It is straight out murder," in attempt to deflect the claim that the murder was a result of racism. The white population of the South made Bryant and Milam martyrs and in the closing remarks of their trial one defense attorney said, "every last Anglo-Saxon one of you men in this jury has the courage to set these men free."⁵⁰ The outcome of the trial created uproar across America causing the public to fear that not even children were safe from race violence in the south.⁵¹ Instead of defending themselves against the uproar caused by mass media, the racist white population of the south gave America greater reason to support civil rights. The movement succeeded in 1964 when the Civil Rights Act became law.

Conclusion

The success of the civil rights movement was greatly due to the perseverance of demonstrators inspired by the words of religious leaders and the vicious response to their actions. These events occurred at a time when television became increasingly popular and news coverage grew with it. Civil rights was not a movement of racist Southern states, but instead a movement that pervaded the home of any news watching American. Both the exchange between activists

⁴⁹ "The Lynching of Emmett Till ." The History of Jim Crow.
http://www.jimcrowhistory.org/resources/lessonplans/hs_es_emmett_till.htm (accessed May 18, 2010).

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

and police and the timing of technology created an unbeatable force that resulted in the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Chapter 3: The Sanctity of Life and Marriage

Rhetoric and media were integral during the civil rights movement and the battle to get the teaching of evolution out of schools. Subsequently, a new focus for religious activists was the sanctity of life and marriage, which took control of these, and new, repertoires of contention. Three significant “areas of contention” manifested; redefining rhetoric and framing, control of old media and use of new media, and mobilization for unprecedented funding.

The most effective forms of rhetoric (beginning in the 1980s), continued on the path of creating an “us versus them” frame, but began to effectively utilize strategic framing to gain the upper hand. In the past, news networks and newspaper editors held greater control of interpreting the intentions of religious activists. With the issues of the sanctity of life and marriage, religious groups gained increasing control of traditional media such as television, newspapers, and radio, and also brought in new media such as interactive websites. The definitive difference between past movements and the new era was funding. Powerhouse organizations such as Focus on the Family, The Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints, the Christian Coalition of America, and the Knights of Columbus brought unprecedented financial support for political lobbying by tapping into their donor base. These renovated repertoires of contention within this area culminate in the success of religious lobbying against Proposition 8, a ballot proposition to restrict the definition of marriage to opposite sex couples, on the November 2008 Californian ballot.

The Rhetoric and Framing of Anti-abortionists and the Beginnings of Anti-gay marriage

Robert F. Drinan, in his famous piece “Strategies on Abortion,” quoted a familiar motto of rhetoric, “he who frames the question has the debate half won.”⁵² An example of framing in this case is whether or not one uses abortion debate terms like anti-choice and pro-choice, or anti-abortion and anti-life. When you look at the former frame one thinks of how choice is a basic right of an American and will choose choice. Conversely, looking at the latter frames, who would be supporting the concept of abortion itself and who would support someone against life? The basic words used in the everyday debate of a given issue are integral in forming the listener’s original mindset for an issue.

Advocates of legal abortion were at the forefront of framing and defining the debate for some time. The terms pro-choice and pro-life were common, but the pro-choice side was able to root their side in American values, while making the word life be defined scientifically, overshadowing religious group’s biblical definition.⁵³ Religious groups then focused too hard on rhetoric and too little on framing the issue, thus losing more supporters than they gained and ultimately the abortion debate.⁵⁴

Religious leaders like Jerry Falwell of the Moral Majority, James Dobson of Focus on the Family, and Pat Robertson of the Christian Coalition, consistently used emotionally charged terms when debating, and created images of black or white, good or evil. Warren Vinz, author of Pulpit Politics, describes the polarized words as God-terms and devil-terms. God-terms are words like “mother”, “God-fearing Americans”, “free enterprise system”, “morality”, “moral

⁵² Jersild, Paul T., and Dale A. Johnson. *Moral Issues and Christian Response* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971), 172.

⁵³ Vinz, Warren L. *Pulpit Politics: Faces of American Protestant Nationalism in the Twentieth Century* (Albany: State University Of New York Press, 1997), 178.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, 178.

Americans”, and pro-family inspire ideas of traditional, “good” American families. In contrast to devil-terms, words like “feminist”, “Godless Humanists”, “Communists”, “Socialists”, “minority”, “homosexuality”, “idolaters”, “abortion”, and “bleeding-heart liberals” evoke this idea of enemies of religion and God.⁵⁵ Falwell, Dobson, and Robertson sought a return to “family values”, evoking a direct relationship between God’s will and particular political arrangements involving abortion and gay marriage.⁵⁶ The opinion of vocal religious commentators built off the words religious Americans identified with their faith and tapped into the existing legitimacy of religion itself. They intended their rhetoric to both inspire and create a form of outrage and urgency.⁵⁷

Sociologist Rhys Williams describes a divine sense of rules and boundaries that people of faith live by and that, “These boundaries, and the clear and complementary roles they protect, must not be tampered with, lest social order and moral health disintegrate.”⁵⁸ The use of God-terms by men like Jerry Falwell, James Dobson, and Pat Robertson evoked this image of American families needing to defend the traditional American lifestyle in the face of those seeking to destroy it. Jerry Falwell said, “It is now time to take a stand on certain moral issues, and we can only stand if we have leaders. We must stand against the Equal Rights Amendment, the feminist revolution and the homosexual revolution.”⁵⁹ Here he asks for unity in the face of revolution. According to Falwell, feminists and homosexuals are threatening the basic

⁵⁵ Vinz, Warren L. *Pulpit Politics: Faces of American Protestant Nationalism in the Twentieth Century* (Albany: State University Of New York Press, 1997), 177.

⁵⁶ From the “Beloved Community” to “Family Values” Rhys Williams pg 252

⁵⁷ Vinz, Warren L. *Pulpit Politics: Faces of American Protestant Nationalism in the Twentieth Century* (Albany: State University Of New York Press, 1997), 177.

⁵⁸ Taylor, Mark Lewis. *Social Movements: Identity, Culture, and the State* (New York: Oxford University Press, USA, 2002), 259.

⁵⁹ Taylor, Mark Lewis. *Social Movements: Identity, Culture, and the State* (New York: Oxford University Press, USA, 2002), 258.

boundaries religious individuals live by. When religious groups pose themselves as the victim, they elicit a need for other members of the group to defend themselves.

Showing that religious organizations are on the defensive end of abortion and gay marriage helps to define the “us” factor while the devil-terms define the “them.” A prime example of this wording is Falwell’s famous quote, “Homosexuality is Satan's diabolical attack upon the family that will not only have a corrupting influence upon our next generation, but it will also bring down the wrath of God upon America.”⁶⁰ The wording and concept of homosexuality as “Satan’s diabolical attack on the family” galvanized those that already agreed with Falwell. For those who did not, the statement alienated more than it converted.⁶¹ Empathy notes were in his defensive statement, which brought up ideas of care for the next generation. By being on the defensive, this quote evoked empathy from the listeners who believed in the general concept of American ideals but may not have thought to specifically consider the issue at hand.

An even more controversial quote of Falwell is his statement pointing blame for September 11th attacks. He stated, "I really believe that the pagans, and the abortionists, and the feminists, and the gays and the lesbians who are actively trying to make that an alternative lifestyle, the ACLU, People For the American Way, all of them who have tried to secularize America. I point the finger in their face and say, you helped this happen.”⁶² So polarized was this statement, Falwell had to publically apologize and explain that he did not actually believe that pagans, abortionists, feminists, and homosexuals caused the September 11th attacks and he was merely extrapolating that the attack could be considered the wrath of God. This degree of

⁶⁰ "Falwell apologizes to gays, feminists, lesbians." CNN.com.
<http://archives.cnn.com/2001/US/09/14/Falwell.apology>.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² "Falwell apologizes to gays, feminists, lesbians." CNN.com.
<http://archives.cnn.com/2001/US/09/14/Falwell.apology>.

rhetoric shows how such language may galvanize followers, but the speaker will eventually cross a line and become too extreme for all others. Falwell was persuading no one of his opinion with this statement.

Vinz makes a clear point when he comments on Falwell's choice of rhetoric stating, "His rhetoric did not lend itself to rational dialogue. It was rhetoric that could be used to easily justify firebombing abortion clinics and shooting doctors who "murder babies."⁶³ As will be discussed in the posing of arguments in the issue of gay marriage, rhetoric needs to be rational. Falwell, as well as all of the big name religious leaders of his time, used rhetoric that polarized instead of convinced.

Drinan's "Strategies on Abortion" discussed several concepts that religious groups should have taken into account based on empirical data of the National Opinion Research Center provided in Appendix D. The survey asked six different questions on the subject of: "Do you think it should be possible for a pregnant woman to obtain a legal abortion?"⁶⁴ The data implied that opponents of legalized abortion should have taken a more positive stand and focused the debate on cases of rape, incest, and predictably deformed infants. Drinan states that the isolation of the debate to these rare cases would prevent the possibility of a broadly written bill that would legalize all abortion.⁶⁵ Religious groups and their leaders did not utilize such data when debating their position; instead emotional and over the top rhetoric filled their side of the debate. This is likely the reason the anti-abortion movement did not succeed. One can extrapolate this fact because the movement is no longer at the forefront of debate and *Roe v. Wade* was never

⁶³ Vinz, Warren L. *Pulpit Politics: Faces of American Protestant Nationalism in the Twentieth Century* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997), 178.

⁶⁴ Jersild, Paul T., and Dale A. Johnson. *Moral Issues and Christian Response* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971), 171.

⁶⁵ *Ibid*, 171.

overturned. We will later discuss how in the case of Proposition 8, anti- gay marriage activists were wiser and changed the framing of their predecessors.

Christian Media and Proposition 8

While partisan news networks and newspapers had predominately run religion in the media, recently religious groups have begun to take media into their own hands. Now, Christian broadcasters hold more than 10 percent of U.S. broadcast licenses.⁶⁶ National Religious Broadcasters, a non-partisan association of Christian communicators, state that 141 million people in America listen to or view their programming at least once a month, more than the number that attends church during the same period.⁶⁷ This trend began in the 1970s when the FCC began accepting fundraising televangelists to fill public interest requirements, a necessary quota for television channels.⁶⁸ Numbers like these show the sheer degree to which Christianity permeates American media today.

The American Family Association (AFA), a pro-family non-profit founded by a First United Methodist Church pastor, is considered a Christian media powerhouse. Their website states; “Today, AFA is one of the largest and most effective pro-family organizations in the country with over two million online supporters and approximately 180,000 paid subscribers to the AFA Journal...AFA web sites average over 40 million hits and five million visitors each month.”⁶⁹ All of these supporters and subscribers are listening to the specifically Christian point of view on the preservation of marriage and the family, decency and morality, sanctity of human life, stewardship, and media integrity.

⁶⁶ "Religion and Politics." Fairness & Accuracy In Reporting . <http://www.fair.org/index.php?page=2692>.

⁶⁷ "NRB." NRB: Christian Communicators Impacting the World. http://nrb.org/about/our_mission.

⁶⁸ "Religion and Politics." Fairness & Accuracy In Reporting . <http://www.fair.org/index.php?page=2692>.

⁶⁹ "Who Is AFA?." American Family Association. <http://www.afa.net>.

These massive networks of followers are then open to listen to the messages of religious organizations. One example of this is AFA's video "It's Not Gay," a 28 minute segment that has been shown in over 10,000 churches about the "tragic consequences of the homosexual lifestyle."⁷⁰ This extremely successful video features many interviews with former homosexuals. Richard Cohen, psychotherapist and former homosexual states, "It's not an identity, no one's born this way, no scientific data, none whatsoever. You come and show me."⁷¹ He continues to explain how after visiting many doctors, they provided no data for why he had the sexual tendencies he did. The video stated each claim as fact, as with any persuasive argument, and the many interviewees gave heartfelt stories of their former lives as homosexuals and why they regretted their actions. The video highlighted medical data that showed a great spike in diseases rates of homosexual men and posed the situation as a health issue. A mother evokes empathy when she comes on the screen and laments the loss of contact with her son who spends more time with his homosexual friends and ignores invites from his family. While one may not agree with this point of view, the AFA's ability to pose a controversial issue as one not of anger but of scientific theory, of lack thereof, and experience is extremely persuasive to someone that may be unsure of their opinion of homosexuality. Compare this argument to the quotes of Falwell stated earlier in this chapter which had no basis in science. The AFA's use of "fact" rather than emotion makes their opinion much more persuasive than the arguments of anti-abortionists.

Fundraising for Proposition 8

Proposition 8 campaign, the California Marriage Protection Act of November 2008, was the single most expensive social ballot issue in U.S. history, totaling over \$83 million, \$40

⁷⁰ "Who Is AFA?." American Family Association. <http://www.afa.net>.

⁷¹ *It's Not Gay; Former Homosexuals Tell a Story Few Have Heard "VHS Video"*. Film. Directed by American Family Association. Tupelo: American Family Assoc., 2000.

million of which was from proponents of the proposition and \$43 million from opponents, according to the California secretary of state.⁷² Proposition 8 ushered in a new era of fundraising for religious organizations. Donations from Focus on the Family donated \$727,250 in cash and services to the protectmarriage.com, the main source of political support for the Proposition 8 campaign, \$50,000 of which was the seed money for the organization to start.⁷³ The Family Research Council, from Washington D.C., donated 74,400 to ProtectMarriage.com.⁷⁴ The Knights of Columbus, a Connecticut based Catholic organization, donated 1,400,000 to ProtectMarriage.com and the National Organization for Marriage in California, not to mention another 375,000 dollars to Proposition 4 on the same ballot supporting parental notice for underage abortions.⁷⁵ Out of the total \$22 million raised from July through September by the official campaign managers for Proposition 8, over 40 percent came from members of the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints.⁷⁶ It is quite clear that religious organizations had a heavy hand in funding the several forms of advocacy for Proposition 8

This substantial funding was the majority of support most religious groups gave to pass Proposition 8. While substantial funding is effective, there is a clear line religious organizations must maintain. The Christian Coalition sustained yearly contributions peaking in 26.5 million dollars in 1996. The Coalition, started by Pat Robinson, was an advocacy group that educated conservative Christians interested in politics. The Internal Revenue Service allowed tax-exempt status, given to any non-profit that is not politically active, for several years, but when it became clear that the educational materials distributed by the Coalition were non-partisan, they were

⁷² Campaign Finance." California Secretary of State. <http://cal-access.sos.ca.gov/Campaign/Committees/Detail.aspx?id=1221947&view=expenditures&session=2007>.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Schubert, Frank, and Jeff Flint. "Passing Prop 8." *Politics Magazine*, February 2009. 3.

denied non-profit status and their donations dropped to 3 million annually.⁷⁷ Because less than 10 percent of their funds can go to political action, according to the tax-exempt 501(c) designation, it is important for religious organizations to remain non-partisan.⁷⁸

Framing in Proposition 8: Using Professional Campaigners and New Media

Frank Schubert and Jeff Flint, managers of the Yes on Proposition 8 campaign explain the basic strategic positioning in their article “Passing Prop 8” in *Politics Magazine*, “We decided to withhold criticism of the same-sex couples who were getting married (after all, they were simply taking advantage of the rights the Court had granted them), and urged all our supporters to refrain from demonstrations, protests or rallies opposing the marriages.”⁷⁹ Because the LDS was on the executive committee of the advertisement firm representing the Yes on Proposition 8 campaign, they received considerable instruction from campaign managers on how to direct their own efforts according to this strategy. The LDS clearly carried out through their support of the website preservingmarriage.org where the issue was framed as not being against homosexuals but being in support of “traditional” marriage.

The battle for voters when Proposition 8 was on the ballot in California shows the pinnacle of the multimedia capability of religious activists. Preservingmarriage.org was well formatted, clean cut, and simple. Starting with the title, “Preserving the Divine Institution of Marriage,” the viewer will see the God-terms mentioned earlier. The message was defensive and described something the church is trying to protect. Before the website even posed its argument the viewer saw this frame. The website videos then featured common citizens who sought more information about the issue. Each video began with a spoken question stated in colloquial

⁷⁷ Heltzel, Peter. *Jesus and Justice: Evangelicals, Race, and American Politics*, (New Haven: Yale UP), 92.

⁷⁸ *Ibid*, 92.

⁷⁹ Schubert, Frank, and Jeff Flint. "Passing Prop 8." *Politics Magazine*, February 2009. 1.

language with the pauses and phrasing of a curious individual. Some sounded as though the individual was somewhat annoyed with the concept of Proposition 8, but was still searching for information. The key is that the voice was curious and looking for answers. This form of entry allowed the listener and visitor of the site to feel as though they were sitting in the same room as “RJ from Huntington Beach CA,” asking a thoughtful, important question and being open to the answer to come. The initial posing of the question as the voice came while the text of the question appeared; the video did not show the individual who was asking. By not showing the individual asking the question, this made the question itself exist and relate to the viewer, but not the questioning person.

The answer within each video featured many individuals of varying ages and ethnicities who responded eloquently and concisely to the questions at hand. The only commonality between the vast numbers of people interviewed is that they are all religious Californians. While a single person who answered the question may have seemed canned or the opinion of the minority, the video made it seem that everyone should care and believe in voting Yes on Proposition 8. Each video ended with the phrase, “Be wise, be informed.”⁸⁰ This simple phrase embodied the idea that you have come with your question, have had it eloquently answered, and are now ready to make an informed decision to vote Yes on Proposition 8.

Each video framed the issue framed as being a defensive and not offensive or judgmental. One video presented an image of same sex marriages forced upon churches that rent out their facilities. The statement made the listener feel that Proposition 8 would abuse people of faith. Another video stated, “There will be serious clashes between the public schools and parents who

⁸⁰ “Preserving the Divine Institution of Marriage.” Preserving the Divine Institution of Marriage. <http://www.preservingmarriage.org>.

desire to teach their children their own values and beliefs.”⁸¹ Again, families of faith were the victim. Teaching children morals is what anyone American would consider a basic, unsaid privilege.

The final video responded to the statement, “I’m sick and tired of the intolerance and bigotry of religious people – That’s why I’m voting against Prop 8.”⁸² The video stated that the labels are inappropriate, hateful, and meant to intimidate, placing religious individuals again as the victim. It also subtly implied that this was a common reason to vote against Prop 8 not based specifically in anything relevant to the issue. Another quote responded to those voting against Prop 8 by stating, “Although the argument of redefining marriage is cached in happiness or equal rights, it’s really about gaining control, forcing all of us to give up the very foundation of speech and religious freedoms on which this country was founded.”⁸³ Here the video not only framed the gay marriage issue in their own terms, but it negated the framing of the opposing side. On top of this fact, the video also put their frame on the foundation of the U.S. basic rights that any citizen would identify with. The website did the same foundational statement when it responded to whether gay and lesbian couples deserved happiness. It was not that their love is not equal to heterosexual love, it was “a question of what this country was founded on” or the video said, “This isn’t about hating gays or their lifestyle; it’s about protecting the institution of marriage.”⁸⁴ Using these videos, the campaign to vote Yes on Proposition 8 framed the debate on their own terms. The videos automatically gave a reaction to the frame presented, by the wavering inflection of the question in comparison to the strong, persuasive answers.

⁸¹ "Preserving the Divine Institution of Marriage." Preserving the Divine Institution of Marriage. <http://www.preservingmarriage.org>.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

The religious community successfully removed the framing of the opposition and created a seemingly superior frame of moral values and religious background, founded in the basic tenets of the U. S. constitution. The frame change was seamless and systematic. The use of new media, via website and video, reached all audiences and fit the attention span and minds of the average American. The website also reached beyond only sermons which would not leave the church or existed only on a church website where only parishioners or possible parishioners would visit. The combination of intelligently worded debate and use of new media is the reason behind the success of the Prop 8 movement.

Conclusion

Over the past 30 years, contentious religious based politics have learned from the secular side of debate. In any argument, one needs to know one's audience and how to persuade them. While the debate of abortion was poorly framed and too polarized, the debate of gay-marriage was increasingly less so and utilized media and fundraising which culminated in the success of Proposition 8 in California. The ability of religious groups to mobilize and work in conjunction with professional campaigners shows a new era of religious politics moving past emotional rhetoric.

Chapter 4: Climate Change, the Next Big Issue

Moving into the 21st century, climate change is the upcoming movement for religious activists. However, in order to apply past strategies used in religiously-led social movements, the first step is to discover how climate change differs from past issues. Without realizing the similarities and differences between these movements, a given group cannot efficiently accomplish their new goals. There are several important areas for analysis, including climate change as a matter of action and rights, the time limit for action, the issue of climate change being a global versus a domestic issue, and the involvement of corporations which brings up the question of whether or not this is an issue that can be achieved by one law.

The first issue to contend with that climate change is a matter both of action and rights. While the U.S. Constitution does not provide the right to a clean environment, some state constitutions do. For instance, Pennsylvania, on May 18, 1971, created Article I, Section 27 that reads:

The people have a right to clean air, pure water, and to the preservation of the natural, scenic, historic and esthetic values of the environment. Pennsylvania's public natural resources are the common property of all the people, including generations yet to come. As trustee of these resources, the Commonwealth shall conserve and maintain them for the benefit of all the people.⁸⁵

There have also been efforts by different groups, such as the Center for Creative Change and The Alliance for a Clean Environment, to pressure courts to recognize the constitutional

⁸⁵ Franklin Kury, *Pennsylvania's Environmental Rights Amendment*. Pennsylvania Land Trust Association, 2005. http://conserveland.org/pp/ppenviro_amend.

right to a clean environment. They often cite the Fifth, Ninth, and Fourteenth Amendments which cover due process, rights not specifically enumerated in the Constitution, and the definition of citizenship, respectively.⁸⁶

When comparing the movement for the right to a clean environment with the political movements mentioned previously in this paper, this agenda seems to lack a tangible goal. Anti-evolutionists fought the teaching of evolution in school, African-Americans of the civil rights movement fought segregation and voting restrictions, and those against abortion and gay-marriage specifically fought to outlaw these practices. A clean environment is much vaguer, as there is no exact definition for “clean”. The ability to have a clean environment is also a long-term process. American culture does not coincide with the idea of planning for the long-term. Protecting the environment is not something that can happen with the passage of a new program. Rather, it is a long-term goal that requires careful measures over many years. Passing the right to a clean environment would protect all citizens from contaminated areas outside of their control. But with this constitutional right, Americans would possess legal recourse for any poor environmental conditions. The government would not be prepared to handle the wealth of court cases which would ensue.

It requires mass action to create a clean environment. Individual choices like water use, light bulb choice, or frequency of car use can all contribute to a better environment. In a democracy, the government cannot micromanage citizens’ lives. Real environmental improvements are a mentality of every citizen. A certain level of awareness is necessary to create an automatic level of environmental consciousness.

⁸⁶ Brooks, Richard O, and Thomas M Hoban. *Green Justice: The Environmnet And The Courts, Second Edition*. 2 ed. Oxford: Westview Press, 1996. Pg 10.

Previous religious movements were working to see a certain progression in society. Though religious activists feel a certain sense of urgency, progression innately does not have a time limit, as exemplified in the 80-year quest for creationism in schools. Civil rights is another ongoing goal. While the movement succeeded in the 1960's, there are still activists working toward even greater equal rights, such as equality for women in the workplace. The abortion and gay-marriage movements may have settled down, but they are not over. However, climate change activists do not have the luxury of being part of an ongoing historical progression.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) estimates a 4-6 degrees Celsius temperature rise, if not more, by the end of this century.⁸⁷ The generally accepted numbers of 1.5 to 2 degrees Celsius increase above the pre-industrial level risks mass extinction and major ecosystem disruption.⁸⁸ This is the tipping point, the environmental “point of no return”. At this point, damage to the planet is irreparable and it subsequently creates a cascade of problems that will be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to stop. One contributor to climate change has been greenhouse gas emissions. Many domestic environmental groups have pushed politicians for an 80 percent reduction by 2050, but this goal will not eliminate the risks the planet is sure to face.⁸⁹ Countries not only need to cease adding to the problem, they need to mitigate the crisis already created. There is an issue of immediacy with the case of climate change. Environmental standards seen as a slow progression to the ultimate goal of a healthy planet will not do. Deadlines are in place and though they are approximate, even the most optimal deadlines are rapidly approaching.

⁸⁷ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), *Climate Change 2007: Synthesis Report. Summary for Policymakers* (Geneva: 2007).

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

Climate change is also not only a domestic issue, it is a global one as well. When asked about what would happen if the recent United Nations meeting at Copenhagen failed, President Mohamed Nasheed of Maldives said, “We are all going to die.”⁹⁰ Maldives is facing the likely possibility of being underwater if the current pace of sea level rise continues. Most of Maldives is 1.5 meters above sea level, and the IPCC predicts that sea levels will rise 18 cm by the end of the century.⁹¹ The president of Maldives has even begun setting aside money to purchase a new home for his citizens, who may otherwise become refugees.⁹² In 1991, Canada and the United States signed a Canada-U.S. Air Quality Agreement because U.S. air pollution caused acid rain in Canada.⁹³ Brazil created The Amazon Fund in an effort to finance the cost of refraining from cutting down the rainforest. While the rainforest is a resource on Brazil’s soil and thus legally at their disposal, Brazil has sought reparations for a resource the global community wishes them to not use due to its function as a carbon extractor, which offsets global emissions.⁹⁴ While the U.S. has domestic environmental issues, climate change is a global problem. Any country will have the same problem of motivating their citizens to make more environmentally conscious choices. Global action and a global mentality are the only hope of solving the climate issue.

Making the issue even more difficult, “global” does not only refer to countries anymore. Both domestic and multinational corporations are part of the global environmental problem. *The Guardian* reported on an unpublished U.N. study which estimates that 3,000 of the largest public

⁹⁰ "Welcome to the President's Office." Welcome to the President's Office.
<http://www.presidencymaldives.gov.mv/4>.

⁹¹ "From underwater, Maldives sends warning on climate change - CNN.com." CNN.com - Breaking News, U.S., World, Weather, Entertainment & Video News.
<http://www.cnn.com/2009/WORLD/asiapcf/10/17/maldives.underwater.meeting>.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ "Clean Air Online - Canada- United States Air Quality Agreement." Environnement Canada - Environment Canada. http://www.ec.gc.ca/cleanair-airpur/Canada_US_Air_Quality_Agreement-WS83930AC3-1_En.htm.

⁹⁴ "Amazon Fund." Amazon Fund. <http://www.amazonfund.org>.

companies have caused a combined 2.2 trillion dollars worth of damage to the environment.⁹⁵ Over half of this total was a result of greenhouse gas emissions. Estimates will account for long-term effects such as toxic waste and have a higher total damage when the study is published. In the United States and most developed nations, the capitalist mentality and linked economic system often makes it more difficult to regulate corporations.

Climate change has many more intricate parts when compared to movements previously taken on by religious activists. Activists have to expand their previous repertoires of convention to encompass a new realm of problems, but still not lose sight of the wealth of knowledge their previous engagements have given them. Religious environmental groups must also learn how to consolidate and make their actions more efficient and significant.

The current environmental crisis is a multi-faceted, complex issue. At first glance, there is no clear strategy to address. The next chapter will detail responses from ten interviews of religious environmentalists and their strategies for mitigating the planet's current environmental crisis.

⁹⁵ Jowit, Juliette. " World's top firms cause \$2.2tn of environmental damage ." The Guardian. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2010/feb/18/worlds-top-firms-environmental-damage>.

Chapter 5: Interviews on the Strategy of Religious Environmental Leaders

I interviewed ten leaders from different religious backgrounds and geographical areas on what strategies they are employing to mitigate the planet's current climate crisis. These activists represent a wide array of ideals and each provided anecdotes on their experiences implementing their own strategies. I categorized their responses to five general questions into four sections (attached as Appendix B): message and framing, education and awareness, organization and leadership, and finally, interfaith and advocacy.

Rhetoric: creating a clear and balanced message

It is often difficult for individuals who are not already familiar with the environmental crisis to comprehend what is necessary to mitigate the problems at hand. As previously discussed, rhetoric has been integral to American religious movements. In the past, activists have focused their message on convincing politicians and the secular community of their position. For the environmental movement, religious environmentalists must be able to focus their conversation not only on the secular world, but also on individuals within their own congregation or faith community. When speaking to the faith community, leaders must not shy away from the importance of changing the mindsets and habits of the audience by tempering the message. At the same time, they must not frighten listeners with “gloom and doom” images. Activists also need to be aware of the comfort level and knowledge of the audience and tailor their message accordingly. Lastly activists must give the audience a “why”. A common complaint I heard was that activists often tried to give their audience orders on what to do to help the environment without providing justification.

Religious environmentalists have found that they need to portray a stern but optimistic message when discussing action against climate change. Ibrahim Abdul-Matin, a Muslim environmentalist and author of the blog Brooklyn Bedouin in New York City, stated that he felt the political left in America used global warming in the same way the conservative right uses terrorism.⁹⁶ Politicians on the right describe terrorism as a constant threat to the American way of life, which in turn frightens citizens into supporting their policies. Environmentalists try to motivate Americans with apocalyptic messages of the planet ceasing to function, causing a dramatic change to the human quality of life. In both these cases, fear is a motivator. When this happens, commitment to an issue is often fleeting. After the initial threat is gone, no one wants to be involved in the next situation. Fear is also difficult to sustain because it relies on listeners to consistently believe in the words they are being told. Religious environmental activists have used a similar form of fear with “gloom and doom” speeches. When his organization focused on the horrible repercussions of climate change, Dan Misleh, Executive Director of the Catholic Coalition on Climate Change in Washington D.C., has had individuals come to him feeling depressed after listening to one of his speeches.⁹⁷ Realizing that this form of persuasion was not effective, Misleh and the Catholic Coalition decided to instead remind people that stewardship was part of their faith. Misleh explained that gloom and doom usually causes people to stop listening and at best it makes them feel extremely overwhelmed. He described how faith is effective in providing hope and that focusing on hope rather than apocalyptic images leads people would pay more attention.⁹⁸ Rev. Jenny Phillips, Executive Director of the environmental consulting organization, Creation Change, is one of just over a hundred faith leaders trained by

⁹⁶ Abdul-Matin, Ibrahim. Interview by author. Tape recording. New York, NY, November 13, 2009. 15:20.

⁹⁷ Misleh, Dan. Interview by author. Phone interview. Boston, MA, January 11, 2010. 14:38.

⁹⁸ Misleh, Dan. Interview by author. Phone interview. Boston, MA, January 11, 2010. 11:20.

Al Gore to give his Climate Project presentation. Gore advised her to temper despair with humor, hope, and empowerment and that people need to feel a sense of hope that humans can reverse the planet's problems or they will shut down.⁹⁹ When despair is not tempered, the listener will not want to hear of any other environmental issues because the issues seem unsolvable and not worth their effort.

Misleh described how focusing on hope is still difficult because moving too far in the positive direction will not inspire individuals into action. The environmental crisis is largely due to overconsumption so part of the solution to climate change must be sacrifice. Thus, one must be careful with how one presents the issue.¹⁰⁰ Misleh described how within the Catholic Church, most priests no longer highlight the nature of fasting anymore and that self denial for the benefit of others was not part of American culture.¹⁰¹ It is a troubling issue for Misleh to empower those of his religion into self denial when they no longer participate in fasting as a tenet of their own faith. He continued his explanation calling the idea of sacrifice a “foreign language” to those in the U.S. where everyone believes that because they live in America; they can have whatever they like. The issue is not only of a person's dedication to their faith's message but also that sacrifice goes against American culture of consumption.¹⁰²

Evonne Marzouk, Executive Director of Jewish environmental group Canfei Nesharim based in Washington D.C., has found a path toward mitigating the issue of discussing sacrifice. When she gives a speech she does not discuss sacrifice, but instead discusses good use of what one has. She describes how people do not respond to the idea of sacrifice that the culture of

⁹⁹ Phillips, Jenny. Interview by author. Phone interview. Boston, MA, January 19, 2010. 17:35.

¹⁰⁰ Misleh, Dan. Interview by author. Phone interview. Boston, MA, January 11, 2010. 16:25.

¹⁰¹ Ibid, 17:20.

¹⁰² Holt, Douglas. *The Consumer Society Reader*. (New York: New Press, 2000), 187.

environmentalism often encourages.¹⁰³ When she speaks on the topic, she often has the audience imagine that they are in a store and they come across something they want dearly and believe will make them much happier to own. She asks the audience to think hard about using the product on a daily basis and what tangible difference it would make in their life. Along these same lines, she also discussed the concept of quality over quantity. When giving the example of shoes, Marzouk encouraged having several pairs of hearty, and possibly more expensive, shoes one would love over collecting masses that will just gather dust. She said that when people consider consumerism this way, they will not only live with less, but will truly enjoy what they have.¹⁰⁴ Her examples directly relate to solving the issue of overconsumption that caused the environmental crisis. By giving her audience a smaller, relatable example, she is able to mitigate the problem of overconsumption at its source, individual consumerist tendencies.

Marzouk has a few other key speaking notes she touched on that she has found to be very effective. One she called “Am I my planet’s keeper?” In this speech, she starts with Jewish values and Jewish stories about how when God created the world, it was perfect. She then lists the responsibilities laid out for mankind and asks, “How are we doing?”¹⁰⁵ With this thought process, individuals are not acting for the environmental movement or their country; they are acting to maintain their relationship with God and fulfill his request for them to care for the Earth.

Marzouk delved deeper into how she keeps the attention of her audience. She said, “There’s a moment where the audience starts to pay attention...there’s a point you can see that

¹⁰³ Marzouk, Evonne. Interview by author. Phone interview. Boston, MA, February 2, 2010. 24:00.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, 24:00.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, 13:20.

something you said touched them,” and to hold their attention with that.¹⁰⁶ Her speech is slightly different depending on each audience and their needs. After a religious environmentalist has the attention of the audience, trust can begin to be established. Abdul-Matin discussed how there must also be a certain level of trust with an Imam before he can ask environmental questions. After he has gained their trust, he can ask the Imam’s questions like, “What is your energy bill? How can we reduce that? What steps can we take?”¹⁰⁷ Attention and trust are both necessary to establish a relationship where advice can be given for change. This is necessary when proposing environmental solutions to a group.

Both Rev. Phillips and Abdul- Matin specifically stated, “Meet people where they are,” and explained that a faith leader must first listen to people’s concerns and then decide how to approach them.¹⁰⁸ Rev. Phillips described how a leader needs to start small, listen and hear the concerns people have, and help them connect it with their faith. Abdul-Matin said the one way to do this is to not only have the leader bring his knowledge to the discussion, but also allow the audience express their thoughts.¹⁰⁹ Do not expect radical immediate changes by demanding it; instead, guide people to seeing the benefits for themselves. By “meeting people where they are” the faith leader can properly determine how to best listen to and help people with the environmental concerns they have.

Marzouk explains a five step progression people fall into when thinking of any given activist issue. Her first category was people who either have no idea what is going on, or do not care. Her next category is those that care little, but don’t know very much about an issue. The next is those who know and care, but do not act. Then it is those that make small actions,

¹⁰⁶ Marzouk, Evonne. Interview by author. Phone interview. Boston, MA, February 2, 2010. 15:00.

¹⁰⁷ Abdul-Matin, Ibrahim. Interview by author. Tape recording. New York, NY, November 13, 2009. 2:30.

¹⁰⁸ Phillips, Jenny. Interview by author. Phone interview. Boston, MA, January 19, 2010.11:20.

¹⁰⁹ Abdul-Matin, Ibrahim. Interview by author. Tape recording. New York, NY, November 13, 2009. 9:55.

followed by activists. She said the goal is to slowly move people to each subsequent level, but that this can take a very long time.¹¹⁰ She commented on how even someone who is just starting to turn the water off while brushing their teeth is progressing into action and progression becomes quicker after each step.¹¹¹ Reinforcing this concept, Rev. Phillips commented on how a religious leader can never pressure people to make changes they are not ready for. There will only be backlash.¹¹² When working with a group long-term, patience is necessary to allow progression to occur at a natural pace rather than forcing it.

Three familiar themes in Catholic charity work are prudence, poverty, and the common good. Catholics with this interest know these themes and can apply them to climate change. Misleh explained the relationship to me. Prudence means one does not always have to know every fact in order to act. He compares this to the Bishops' statement in 2001 declaring climate change as an important issue for the church, and that they need not wait for more information. Poverty means taking care of strangers, orphans, and the downtrodden. Climate change is already affecting the poor around the world and hence it becomes a Catholic responsibility to keep them and avoid the worst of these impacts. Common good applies because climate change does not have borders, and so resources must be intended for the benefit of everyone.¹¹³ Misleh commented on how this thought process is different from what one will hear from most environmental groups. The themes also resonate with what Catholic activists know, making it easier for them to understand the climate concepts at hand.

It is also important to bring in scientific data as supporting information, but keep the conversation faith based for a religious audience. For Misleh, he briefly mentions science but

¹¹⁰ Marzouk, Evonne. Interview by author. Phone interview. Boston, MA, February 2, 2010. 7:40.

¹¹¹ Ibid, 9:00.

¹¹² Phillips, Jenny. Interview by author. Phone interview. Boston, MA, January 19, 2010. 20:10.

¹¹³ Misleh, Dan. Interview by author. Phone interview. Boston, MA, January 11, 2010. 9:00.

spends the majority of his time speaking about tradition and creation.¹¹⁴ When Marzouk speaks to a Jewish community, she spends time explaining the teachings of ancient Jewish texts. She talks about long term sustainability, water, general resource preservation, waste, and generational thinking.¹¹⁵ Marzouk helps those who care about Jewish issues learn that environmentalism is a Jewish issue instead of teaching environmentalists who happen to be Jews about the links to Judaism.¹¹⁶ When a rabbi comes to Marzouk's organization she can give them support, resources, and leadership training to do the same in their own synagogue. She describes how these rabbis do not want to seem like the "crazy environmental one" so they can educate themselves to know the links between environmentalism and Judaism before bringing environmentalism to the community conversation.¹¹⁷

Richard Ingebretsen M.D, Ph.D., president of Glen Canyon Institute, an organization working to restore the Colorado River, is a practicing Mormon who heads a secular environmental organization. He said, "I don't go around saying we should restore the Colorado River because God wants us to, but that certainly drives me personally."¹¹⁸ It is his experience that just as other faith leaders need to speak of environmentalism in faith terms: he must do the opposite to a secular audience. Ingebretsen spoke of when he learned this fact: "I gave a talk in Arizona once to just a group of environmentalists and I talked about God wanting to get involved in the environment and people walked out...They got mad at me. They said don't ever bring God into the environmental movement again, we will never support you."¹¹⁹ Because Ingebretsen's audience consisted of secular individuals, they were not inspired and did not care about his

¹¹⁴ Ibid, 25:50.

¹¹⁵ Marzouk, Evonne. Interview by author. Phone interview. Boston, MA, February 2, 2010. 3:40.

¹¹⁶ Ibid, 4:25.

¹¹⁷ Ibid, 6:05.

¹¹⁸ Ingebretsen, Rich. Interview by author. Phone interview. Boston, MA, January 11, 2010. 3:18.

¹¹⁹ Ibid, 19:00.

personal motivations from God. From this point on Ingebretsen kept his personal motivations to himself when working with secular organizations because he realized it is not a topic the audience will effectively respond to.

When speaking to a group, one needs to know where they are and what they want to listen to. Though these faith leaders wish to teach and speak about environmentalism, they must tailor the message for what the audience wants to hear, not what the speaker wants to tell them.

It is also always important to give the audience a “why”. Even if people respond to being told to do one action for the environment, the message is not sustainable if it doesn’t change how the person thinks and acts toward environmental issues overall. Misleh explained how the “why” of an important issue is not always evident, and climate change is a complicated issue to understand with complicated solutions.¹²⁰ Because climate change is a slow motion event, people can blame freak weather for anything tangible they may experience. Misleh compared this to September 11th where everyone felt affected by the emergency, it was tangible. Misleh said the problem is, “How do we communicate a sense of urgency when no one feels in their bones any urgency?”¹²¹ Activists must give their audience a “why”, a purpose for action so they understand the urgency of climate change for themselves and can then sustain their own drive.

An effective way of getting through to an audience about environmental issues they may not be able to easily understand is through metaphors. Marzouk did this through her presentations at Tu B’Shevat Seders, a Jewish holiday that is the “New Year of the Trees” celebrating the coming of spring. A large part of this Seder is eating many types of fruit. She asks her audience to close their eyes and taste their fruit. She asked them to focus on the flavors

¹²⁰ Misleh, Dan. Interview by author. Phone interview. Boston, MA, January 11, 2010. 23:06.

¹²¹ Misleh, Dan. Interview by author. Phone interview. Boston, MA, January 11, 2010. 24:44.

and consistency and experience the fruit as a blessing from God and to experience the nourishment of their souls, not just their bodies. After this exercise, people came back telling her they had never tasted fruit that way before and that they enjoyed it more.¹²² This concept of appreciating and valuing what one has connects to her message of better use instead of using more. Going back to her good use of resources speech, Marzouk also talks about obstacles in life. She asks people to think of times where they seemingly cannot control themselves when purchasing and to think of the root of their desire for a product. After the exercise, the audience realizes how much advertising permeates their lives and convinces them to buy things that either aren't good for them or they do not need.¹²³ Using exercises like Marzouk's can teach people the necessity of better use when solving the environmental crisis as opposed to sacrifice.

Abdul-Matin uses many images when speaking to people about the environment. When speaking to an Imam about better energy resources, he evoked the memory of the 2003 blackout. He said, "Imagine during the blackout if all the mosques and all the churches and all the synagogues had light, imagine if they were completely off the grid and all the houses of worship had light and they were like Ah, alright let's talk."¹²⁴ Abdul-Matin used similar techniques when talking to Inner-city Action Network in Chicago. This organization was already in the process of purchasing run down property in attempt to revitalize a neighborhood through remodeling. Abdul-Matin convinced them to combine their finances with green stimulus money and a program to give former prisoners green jobs to make these buildings more energy efficient and give the entire program a green twist. When describing to the organization how the end result would look, he drove through the run down side of Chicago and discussed how to transform it.

¹²² Marzouk, Evonne. Interview by author. Phone interview. Boston, MA, February 2, 2010. 18:40.

¹²³ Ibid, 22:20.

¹²⁴ Abdul-Matin, Ibrahim. Interview by author. Tape recording. New York, NY, November 13, 2009. 11:30.

He asked those with him to imagine what the neighborhood would look like if buildings started to be bought up block by block and how the drug dealers and prostitutes would be forced out and replaced by green property.¹²⁵ By creating an image other individuals can relate to, Abdul-Matin is much more persuasive when trying to reframe current issues as environmental ones.

When speaking to me, Abdul-Matin also used several small metaphors. When discussing the different ways people can use the land, he brought up Lord of the Rings. He compared those who want to use resources well and be energy efficient to hobbits that went to the Shire and built their homes in the hills. He contrasted this to Orcs who demolished the land and reshaped it to fit their own needs.¹²⁶ Abdul-Matin also said that people have a symbiotic relationship with the Earth. Thinking about ice caps melting does not relate to them and saying environmentalism is what God wants isn't effective either.¹²⁷ He used an interesting climate change analogy to connect creation with science. He said that people should think of the planet as a body and how a temperature rise in our body of a few degrees means sickness and further means death. This temperature rise is the same issue currently occurring with the planet.¹²⁸ Like images, metaphors are easy to visualize. By using metaphors, Abdul-Matin is able to supplement his explanations with concepts every person can understand.

My interviews have shown that it is important to not bring an overly prepared speech to a group and expect every audience to respond to the same examples. Each faith leader knew their audience well and would quickly adapt to any feedback. Many leaders found that there must be a proper balance of urgency and hope to inspire people to act without causing them to feel like acting is pointless. Strong evidence will explain clearly why people should act, and leaders

¹²⁵ Ibid, 7:20

¹²⁶ Ibid, 10:15

¹²⁷ Ibid, 17:00

¹²⁸ Abdul-Matin, Ibrahim. Interview by author. Tape recording. New York, NY, November 13, 2009. 25:00.

cannot make assumptions that their audience can move immediately from being unaware to being an activist. When trying to get through to an audience it is best for religious leaders to use imagery that relates to them and what they know.

Raising Awareness

Religious environmental activists utilize discussion, education, and newsletters to raise awareness of their movement in the faith community. Open discussion allows for individuals to feel that environmentalism is not being forced on them, but that they are consciously educating themselves and making their own choices. Direct education gives people the wisdom to apply their new knowledge to their opinion. Newsletters and emails allow individuals to learn about environmental issues on their own time because they can read the information in their leisure.

Dr. Jack Allen, the Director of the Nehemiah Center for Church Planting, is a proponent of open discussion and believes that when made aware of what the environment needs, most will make the right decision. He said, “Some of this is just making people aware...we tend to trust that if people have adept knowledge that they’ll tend toward good decisions. They may not but we need to leave them the freedom to make good decisions.”¹²⁹ Dr. Allen further described his methods when stating that, “We try to let people discuss very openly what their opinions are and we try to find out what are the facts behind those. What gears that up? Once people have the opportunity to really dig in and investigate and read what is the science behind it, what are we learning that’s real, what can we measure, then it’s really impressive.”¹³⁰ He also states the key to having a discussion that accomplishes all of this is a good facilitator. It is necessary to draw people to ask the real questions on their minds. He said that his discussions often end up with

¹²⁹ Allen, Jack. Interview by author. Phone interview. Boston, MA, January 14, 2010. 2:45.

¹³⁰ Ibid, 7:50.

someone asking, “Well why isn’t the government doing something about this?” but a good facilitator brings the conversation back to what we should do, not what should someone else should do.¹³¹ Dr. Allen gave further example of how people just need to be made aware and that they naturally have an inclination to help others.

“My experience has been that people want to do the right thing is. They’ve been struggling to understand what is the right thing....Does it matter that I use foam cups? Does it matter that we have two cars? Once they realize that yeah, it actually does matter and that taking care of the Earth is a way of honoring God it’s not some touchy feeling weird thing, it’s our job, it’s something we’ve been given to do. It’s a command...When people realize their neighbor is going without food people are very generous, people want to pitch in.”¹³²

A more specific example is of one man in a discussion group who was unaware of the dangers of pouring automotive oil down the sewer after tending to his car. The man said that it never occurred to him to do anything else with the oil because that was what he his father had taught him. Dr. Allen said, “He immediately, right there, said ‘well I’ll never do that again’”¹³³ Individuals sort out the problem for themselves when given the opportunity to do so. He stated that when one person orders another to do something they will only want to push back, not listen.¹³⁴ Rev. Phillips made a similar comment. She states that connections are necessary because many people want to believe environmental concerns are side issues, a niche interest they do not need to concern themselves with. “You have to help them see without being overwhelmed,” she said.¹³⁵ Only then will they realize how environmental concerns permeate every aspect of our lives. Discussion empowers individuals much more than telling them how to think.

¹³¹ Ibid, 9:20.

¹³² Ibid, 4:30.

¹³³ Allen, Jack. Interview by author. Phone interview. Boston, MA, January 14, 2010. 10:20.

¹³⁴ Ibid, 15:00.

¹³⁵ Phillips, Jenny. Interview by author. Phone interview. Boston, MA, January 19, 2010. 15:10.

Other methods of raising awareness can be presentations and conferences. Sally Wyman, a member of Hancock Environmental Action Team (HEAT), has been part of putting on several awareness raising events at her church. One evening her group showed the movie “Renewal.”¹³⁶ On a separate occasion, as part of a series HEAT calls Environmental Stewardship Sunday, the group brought in Bill McKibben to speak on how he felt about environmental action.¹³⁷ Catherine Furlani, member of the New Jersey Climate Coalition and employee of the Newark Archdiocese, recounted how her group posted “Homily Helps” on their website. The purpose of the posts is to help priests to relate environmental issues to their sermons. They allowed them to be much more knowledgeable about the church’s teachings on the environment. Though this was a useful source, when asked about distribution Furlani said that she was unsure of how many priests used their website because there was no counter installed.¹³⁸

One widely successful event put on by the NJ Climate Coalition was their first conference at Princeton. Even though church bulletins and emails were the only method of distribution, over 200 people attended the event. The conference held events such as workshops on climate change, specific small events for children, and lectures.¹³⁹ Though their first conference was extremely effective, Furlani explained how her group is now almost nonexistent. Member’s attention moved to other things, whether it was children, moving, or new jobs. However, she still consistently spreads awareness by sending out important news and columns she writes to the Coalition’s large mailing list and to churches within the Newark Archdiocese.

The last option to discuss is courses to raise awareness. Rev. Ed Perkins, member of Western Michigan Environmental Action Council and former pastor of Trinity United Methodist

¹³⁶ Wyman, Sally. Interview by author. Tape recording. Boston, MA, January 21, 2010. 8:40.

¹³⁷ Ibid, 7:10.

¹³⁸ Furlani, Catherine. Interview by author. Tape recording. Newark, NJ, November 12, 2009. 8:30.

¹³⁹ Furlani, Catherine. Interview by author. Tape recording. Newark, NJ, November 12, 2009. 19:50.

in Grand Rapids, MI, co-teaches a course entitled “Caring for All Creation” using materials published by the Intercommunity Peace and Justice Center in Seattle, WA. Rev. Perkins advertises for his course through church bulletins and email lists. His course runs four to five sessions and talks about both the science and the faith based aspects of environmentalism and climate change. Specifically, the course starts out with the big bang and creation, focuses on interconnectedness, looks at global warming, water, and toxics, social economic aspects of environmental concern and what one can do to both make one’s own life more environmentally friendly and one’s parish more involved.¹⁴⁰ The course is Judeo-Christian centric, though Rev. Perkins is open to expanding the course to include Islam.¹⁴¹ Rev. Perkins’ first session had around twenty-four students. While this was a large audience, he did comment on how the course inherently attracted those who already had an interest in the subject. The course mainly gave support to those who were in need and provided them with more information to form their opinions.¹⁴² The course’s first session used Lutheran environmental materials, the next session using Catholic materials. Rev. Perkins described how although the Lutheran resources were very good, they wanted to branch out and experience several methods of teaching.¹⁴³

In each of the previous examples, faith leaders utilized church bulletins and email to advertise their events. Wyman discussed how HEAT advertises all of its events in the church bulletin. Her organization also has a bulletin board in the church that one member updates regularly.¹⁴⁴ Furlani sends out her columns on the environment through the Archdiocese of Newark’s newsletters and sends interesting articles and information to those signed up for her

¹⁴⁰ Perkins, Ed. Interview by author. Phone interview. Boston, MA, January 16, 2010. 7:15.

¹⁴¹ Ibid, 23:44.

¹⁴² Perkins, Ed. Interview by author. Phone interview. Boston, MA, January 16, 2010. 14:55.

¹⁴³ Ibid, 13:50.

¹⁴⁴ Wyman, Sally. Interview by author. Tape recording. Boston, MA, January 21, 2010. 33:20.

email list.¹⁴⁵ She commented on how the newsletters and emails are able to educate people directly without needing them to make a direct commitment.¹⁴⁶ Misleh even goes so far as to send bishop policy suggestions from the Catholic Bishops Convention through email or phone calls to the local diocese asking them to contact their local senator or representative.¹⁴⁷

Organization and Leadership

Religious environmental organizations use two separate organizational models, the grassroots business model and the trickle-down leadership model. Timing is important according to those that implement these models. In addition to the various facets of both models, organizations must also sustain themselves past the launching period by keeping their volunteers interested and avoiding donor fatigue; having both the patience to wait for impact of work and perseverance.

Organization and efficient leadership are qualities any effective social movement needs both for their own survival and in order to be effective. Abdul-Matin brings up an interesting analogy when he compares starting a grassroots organization to starting a business. He said that one needs to start with the initial means to launch the business, someone knowledgeable about the market, and the right timing.¹⁴⁸ Wyman's organization HEAT follows this model. For HEAT, volunteers are the metaphorical funding that launches an organization. The organization also found that knowledgeable leaders at the top of their organization make their movement extremely effective. For timing, the group attempted to avoid event competition with well-established groups within the same churches or neighborhoods by working with them. A separate

¹⁴⁵ Furlani, Catherine. Interview by author. Tape recording. Newark, NJ, November 12, 2009. 7:25.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid, 17:50.

¹⁴⁷ Misleh, Dan. Interview by author. Phone interview. Boston, MA, January 11, 2010. 6:10.

¹⁴⁸ Abdul-Matin, Ibrahim. Interview by author. Tape recording. New York, NY, November 13, 2009. 13:40.

organizational model is the trickle-down method where their religious leaders are educated so they can then educate their own communities.

HEAT, a self-proclaimed grassroots environmental organization, has experienced all facets of the business analogy. HEAT began during a church listening period. The pastor approached each member of her congregation to talk about their needs and what they wanted in their church's growth. Many individuals brought up environmental concerns and these self-identified individuals were able to get in contact with each other to form HEAT.¹⁴⁹ Because the members were self identified, HEAT started with a very strong base of individuals that wanted change in their church enough to address the problem openly. This foundation likely stymied the problem of initial "donor fatigue" when their volunteers become bored with working for the organization.

For HEAT, the original knowledge base was three engineers that lead the group. By working with established organizations at their own church, HEAT did not have to grasp for new attention. When they were more established, the organization still considered timing by navigating the church schedule to make sure their events' message was not lost among the many other competing events. Wyman explains how HEAT arranges its own events schedule around the rest of the church calendar.¹⁵⁰ Her group also made sure to combine their events with other groups in the church to initially gain a stronger voice and to become more visible to the community.¹⁵¹ After several years, HEAT is now a well respected group at Hancock church and

¹⁴⁹ Wyman, Sally. Interview by author. Tape recording. Boston, MA, January 21, 2010. 19:30.

¹⁵⁰ Wyman, Sally. Interview by author. Tape recording. Boston, MA, January 21, 2010. 11:55.

¹⁵¹ Ibid, 9:50.

used as an example for how other groups should form.¹⁵² Wyman’s organization effectively followed Abdul-Matin’s business model, though unintentionally, and experienced wide success.

Educating elite leaders, who will subsequently share this education with their own faith communities, is another trickle-down method and system discussed. Peter Heltzel, former chair of Faith Leaders for Environmental Justice based in New York City and author of *Jesus and Justice*, believes in the efficiency of trickle-down education over grassroots movements. Heltzel discussed the significance of a call from Senator Kerry or significant scientists to religious leaders asking for support on the Green Energy Act.¹⁵³ Faith Leaders for Environmental Justice has a similar idea: a quarterly breakfast with around 40 to 50 inter-faith leaders. In the past, the breakfasts focused on educating the leaders with the science behind climate change so they could bring this knowledge to their faith community. Starting last December, the group focused on how to mobilize their respective communities.¹⁵⁴ When I asked him the reason for the change of focus, Heltzel responded by saying “it was the time” to do so. The change of focus was due to a general consensus on “feeling” rather than any schedule. Even with the trickle-down method, it is necessary to know when to shift the focus of discussion for leaders from education to action. This shift will cause a subsequent shift in what they share with their own communities. Heltzel also participated in a trip to Alaska with four other Evangelicals from the National Association of Evangelicals and five climate scientists, mostly from Harvard. The goal of the trip was to point out the repercussions of climate change and to devise strategies to mobilize the Evangelical church. In Alaska, Heltzel saw “grey ghosts”, trees that were dead because of beetle infestation as a result of a warmer climate. He said, “I’m expecting Alaska to be this beautiful pristine

¹⁵² Ibid, 13:10.

¹⁵³ Heltzel, Peter. Interview by author. Tape recording. New York, NY, November 14, 2009. 7:00.

¹⁵⁴ Heltzel, Peter. Interview by author. Tape recording. New York, NY, November 14, 2009. 5:15.

nature and it was like a war field.”¹⁵⁵ Trips like this enable leaders, like Heltzel, to have first hand experiences with climate change that they can bring back to their faith communities. The visuals mobilize the faith leaders, who will then mobilize others.

The first of the additional factors that are important to an organization is maintaining the attention of the volunteer base. The initial step HEAT made to sustain the interest of their volunteers was by maintaining two separate emailing lists. The first list is for general meeting notifications and important group information. The second is for those who were self selected to be part of the core organizing portion of HEAT.¹⁵⁶ The separation attempted to not bog down general volunteers with too much information. For this core group list, Wyman comments on how one particular lead member sends, on average, a minimum of 20 emails a week. In one day 7 or 8 emails could go out.¹⁵⁷ Having two separate lists allows HEAT to not tire members that only wish to volunteer at key events with the intense discussion of the organizers.

Despite HEAT’s organizing ability, they still experienced donor fatigue. Wyman comments on how HEAT only has about half of the members it did three years ago.¹⁵⁸ When asked why, she speculated that people may have found other projects they found more interesting or that they became more involved with changes in home life. These reasons are similar to the ones Furlani mentioned about the decline of her organization. Another reason Wyman considered was that the core leadership consisted of detail-minded engineers. Meetings often focused on the minute organizational details of events and the numbers involved with the church’s carbon footprint. She said that it is possible that the “techy” nature of the meetings may

¹⁵⁵ Ibid, 20:00.

¹⁵⁶ Wyman, Sally. Interview by author. Tape recording. Boston, MA, January 21, 2010. 38:29.

¹⁵⁷ Wyman, Sally. Interview by author. Tape recording. Boston, MA, January 21, 2010. 25:50.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid, 31:40.

have dissuaded some individuals from coming to the general meetings.¹⁵⁹ Having engineering-based leadership had both positive and negative repercussions for HEAT. Wyman mentions how they may have uninspired members at meetings, but she also mentions how HEAT was able to have NSTAR do an audit for each room in the church to find which rooms would benefit from certain types of lighting. HEAT also advocated for an energy efficient furnace when the church's own finances needed replacing, saving 300 dollars off of the it's energy bill from the previous year.¹⁶⁰ In her opinion, HEAT has been so successful because of the commitment of its leaders and core members.¹⁶¹ Wyman's conflicting explanations of the productivity of HEAT's leadership and contribution to donor fatigue shows that HEAT has great difficulty balancing the detailed nature of good leadership with the boredom of members with this same nature.

Religious environmentalists also need patience to allow others to be educated and to not force them into environmentalism. Marzouk explained how some people come to her wanting immediate action and change in their synagogue. They come to her with questions such as, 'how do I get rid of Styrofoam plates?' She replies with, "Well are there other people that feel that way? Where are the other people in your community?"¹⁶² Marzouk commented on how action too early almost always backfires and she recommends activists need to do ground work and explain to people why action would be beneficial in examples such with the Styrofoam plates. Marzouk said, "It takes a lot of time and energy to change people's minds but if we aren't changing people's minds what's the point?"¹⁶³ It is necessary to takes time to convince a community of change may be lengthy for sustainable choices to be made.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid, 35:40.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid, 21:20.

¹⁶¹ Ibid, 13:30.

¹⁶² Marzouk, Evonne. Interview by author. Phone interview. Boston, MA, February 2, 2010. 29:00.

¹⁶³ Marzouk, Evonne. Interview by author. Phone interview. Boston, MA, February 2, 2010. 45:00.

Rev. Phillips agrees with Marzouk. She has many groups come to her that have a great deal of ambition on what they believe everyone else in their congregation should be doing. She explains to them about how they first need to get “buy in” from the majority of their congregation’s community.¹⁶⁴ This idea of buy in also links back to the need to organize with established groups. Rev. Phillips gave an example of this when one environmental group suggests a creation care theme for the congregation’s annual retreat. The group utilized an event that already existed instead of creating a new need.¹⁶⁵ Rev. Phillips also mentioned that depending on the group, there are different ways to empower them. At times it is action, sometimes it is education, but it is often a combination of both that is most productive.¹⁶⁶ To know how to best empower a group, a leader must spend time with them actively analyzing what the members respond to.

This idea of buying in and being aware of the needs of the community are both attempting to ease the congregation into environmentalism and not create backlash. Dr. Allen, who believes in open discussion, described how he would never force his opinion on someone else because they need to come to their own realization. He said, “If a congregation asks me to come speak to him on something I’ll be happy to tell him what my research has taught me...but I’m not going to go stand in front of somebody’s church and say you drive too big a cars [sic].”¹⁶⁷ Marzouk complains that these forceful tactics are creating too many enemies, exactly what the Democratic environmental movement is doing. The example she gave was when President Reagan almost dismantled the Environmental Protection Agency. She said, “The

¹⁶⁴ Phillips, Jenny. Interview by author. Phone interview. Boston, MA, January 19, 2010. 9:10.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid, 10:00.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid, 16:50.

¹⁶⁷ Allen, Jack. Interview by author. Phone interview. Boston, MA, January 14, 2010. 30:20.

environment will not be protected until it's not an issue."¹⁶⁸ By this she means the environment should be a non-partisan topic that is closer to a general right. This reality is still a slow progression that religious environmentalists, as well as environmentalists overall, must be patient and wait for. Activists need to help a community want to act on its own behalf, rather than forcing action.

Dr. Ingebretsen discusses the need for patience, for perseverance, and to know where the main focus of one's attention should be. His organization, the Glen Canyon Institute, is a non-profit environmental that seeks to restore the Colorado River through Glen Canyon, which is currently covered by Lake Powell, a reservoir created by Glen Canyon Dam.¹⁶⁹ Glen Canyon Institute has collected data since 1991 on the reservoir's surrounding environmental issues and has watched its water levels decrease over the years.¹⁷⁰ Dr. Ingebretsen discussed how the reservoir was a popular beach and water ski area for the neighboring towns. When I asked about the problem he may have had convincing the town that the reservoir was not a sustainable source for drinking water, he simply said it did not matter. Drinking water was more important than water skiing in the eyes of the government.¹⁷¹ Dr. Ingebretsen's organization went to water quality officials to provide his data. Though no one listened to the Glen Canyon Institute originally, Dr. Ingebretsen explained how the organization soon became the leader in its field. He said, "In our case, ten years later the reservoirs are empty and low and behold we are looking good...ten years ago we were just a voice and now we are the go-to organization."¹⁷² Even though his organization's message was not originally accepted, it continued to gather data on the reservoir and the necessary changes that needed to maintain adequate levels of drinking water for

¹⁶⁸ Marzouk, Evonne. Interview by author. Phone interview. Boston, MA, February 2, 2010. 41:20.

¹⁶⁹ "Glen Canyon Institute." Glen Canyon Institute. <http://www.glencanyon.org>.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Ingebretsen, Rich. Interview by author. Phone interview. Boston, MA, January 11, 2010. 12:30.

¹⁷² Ibid, 18:00.

the area. Dr. Ingebretsen explained how for, “one of the first times in the environmental movement, they [the government] are listening to us because we make sense,” and that the government was now thanking Glen Canyon Institute for its data.¹⁷³ The government initially ignored Dr. Ingebretsen’s organization, but over time they became the sole source to save drinking water in his area. His story shows how perseverance and patience are necessary for the long-term goals of an organization.

Both the grassroots business and the trickle-down model prove to have considerable efficiency when applied, but still have various stumbling points. When asked about the organizational problems of the religious environmental movement, Heltzel said, “I don’t think our organizing strategy is that sophisticated... We need more depth in our organizing.”¹⁷⁴ He believes that while religious environmental organizations are working in the right direction and have the right foundation, they need to be more precise in their implementation.

Communication between religious and secular environmental groups

The faith community as a whole has a significant audience in the United States. Within the entire community, there are many smaller communities, whether they are Islamic, Jewish, Baptist, Catholic, or any other religion or religious sect. My interviews have shown that as a faith community, leaders agree that their voice is different from a secular voice and that their faith is able to touch individuals in a way that other aspects of an individual’s life cannot. Though this is true, one interviewee describes a lack of cooperation between different religious groups. There is also a gap between acting within the faith community, and acting outside of it. While several

¹⁷³ Ibid, 17:00.

¹⁷⁴ Heltzel, Peter. Interview by author. Tape recording. New York, NY, November 14, 2009. 20:25.

religious environmental organizations have been able to bridge this gap, others remain within the scope of their own faith community.

Misleh believes that the huge audience of the faith community is a large part of the benefit of being part of a faith-based organization rather than a secular one. He explains that religious environmentalists are able to convey a message that applies to who people are and what they do as a person of faith, and he sees a disadvantage for the secular environmental movement that they cannot touch peoples' lives in the same way. Misleh boiled it down to, "before Earth Day was Genesis."¹⁷⁵ He believes religion gives people a sense of purpose, longevity, and hope that is integral to the environmental movement.¹⁷⁶ Rev. Phillips also firmly believes in the ability of the faith community. She said, "With a faith-based organization it really is about a response to your faith, it's about responding to what God is calling us to do...It's just another mode that accesses people's hearts and minds, in my mind is really is an expression of faith, caring about creation, caring about the environment."¹⁷⁷ Both Rev. Phillips and Misleh realize the importance of religion in people's lives and its unique ability to call them to action.

Marzouk believes in the value of religious wisdom. She complains that the secular environmental movement is too "short term". She is concerned that there needs to be a culture change. In her opinion, the secular movement's tendency to find small problems and attempt to solve them individually will not work to solve the overarching problem of climate change and new environmental issues that will always appear.¹⁷⁸ Marzouk also mentions the *Open Letter to the American Religious Community*, written by scientists addressing the religious community on

¹⁷⁵ Misleh, Dan. Interview by author. Phone interview. Boston, MA, January 11, 2010. 29:15.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid, 27:35.

¹⁷⁷ Phillips, Jenny. Interview by author. Phone interview. Boston, MA, January 19, 2010. 20:30.

¹⁷⁸ Marzouk, Evonne. Interview by author. Phone interview. Boston, MA, February 2, 2010. 36:00.

the need to become involved in the environmental movement.¹⁷⁹ Refer to this letter in Appendix E. She comments on how the secular community believed in religion's transformative power but would not let the religious community get involved on their own terms.¹⁸⁰ She is referring to difficulty working with secular organizations similar to Dr. Ingebretsen's experience detailed in the first section of this chapter. Marzouk voiced frustration with the secular community that they do not focus enough on long-term issues. She said, "If we can't see beyond climate change than we're not going to win."¹⁸¹ Marzouk is looking for the secular environmental movement to widen their scope and more fully realize the ability of the religious side of the movement. In her case, she is both frustrated with the strategy employed by secular environmentalists and their inability to listen to the strategies of religious environmentalists.

Abdul-Matin delved deeper into the problems of communication both within the entire faith community and between the religious and secular environmental movements. He mentioned the difficulty for many religious organizations to work with one another outside their religion. Though this exists, Abdul-Matin doesn't see a reason for it. He bluntly stated, "You don't have to talk about how different you are, you just have to work...God bless you and do what you've got to do."¹⁸² Abdul-Matin finds the lack of communication between the religious and secular community to be more troublesome. When I mentioned the secular environmental movement, he said, "I feel like their approach is limited and it will always be limited...unless they develop an understanding of how to interact with the faith based community."¹⁸³ He describes a sort of translation that is missing on both sides. There is a motivational understanding of the other side

¹⁷⁹ "Preserving and Cherishing the Earth: An Appeal for Joint Commitment in Science and Religion." Forum on Religion and Ecology. fore.research.yale.edu/publications/statements/preserve.htm.

¹⁸⁰ Marzouk, Evonne. Interview by author. Phone interview. Boston, MA, February 2, 2010. 37:40.

¹⁸¹ Ibid, 38:15.

¹⁸² Abdul-Matin, Ibrahim. Interview by author. Tape recording. New York, NY, November 13, 2009. 21:25.

¹⁸³ Ibid, 25:30.

that both the secular and religious communities are lacking.¹⁸⁴ Abdul-Matin is concerned about untapped resources in the entire environmental community. In his opinion, open communication could be used to benefit everyone involved.

Some religious environmental groups have made progress toward overcoming this communication barrier. Misleh commented on how the National Religious Partnership for the Environment is a powerful voice in the environmental movement and has been very effective in influencing climate legislation. The group spent time working on cap and trade and talking with the staff of politicians. He describes the group as being a, “consistent and persistent presence on Capitol Hill.”¹⁸⁵ He did state that though the organization was extremely influential, there were often necessary differences that complicated interfaith work. An example of this is that the hierarchy of the Catholic Church ties them to statements previously made by the Vatican.¹⁸⁶ An individual Catholic has a difficult time speaking for the entire Catholic community. On a smaller scale, HEAT has also had significant progress advocating for policy changes. Wyman explains how the group wrote over 100 letters to NSTAR advocating for the green wind power option for customers.¹⁸⁷ HEAT also requested that their state senator visit the church to discuss the political process with them so the group could better learn how to be more effective with their time.¹⁸⁸ Within the town of Lexington, where HEAT’s church is located, the group advocated for Stretch Building Codes with other environmental faith groups in the area.¹⁸⁹ When Stretch Building Codes are adopted, buildings must be 20% more energy efficient than what would be required

¹⁸⁴ Ibid, 27:15.

¹⁸⁵ Misleh, Dan. Interview by author. Phone interview. Boston, MA, January 11, 2010. 33:15.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid, 31:40.

¹⁸⁷ Wyman, Sally. Interview by author. Tape recording. Boston, MA, January 21, 2010. 3:50.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid, 5:10.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid, 5:40.

under the normal standards for the area.¹⁹⁰ In the future, HEAT is hoping to become more involved in creating an interfaith chapter of the global 350 campaign in their area.¹⁹¹ While accomplishing all this, Wyman explains that the group is very careful to not advocate for any specific candidate, and to just expose environmental issues at hand and help the public realize what they should be looking for in a given issue.¹⁹² She mentions this because religious congregations are tax-exempt as long as they remain non-partisan in their actions. HEAT and the National Religious Partnership for the Environment are part of a population of religious environmental organizations that have the ability to work across interfaith and secular lines to accomplish their goals.

A large part of the interfaith and secular-religious barrier to working together is a communication problem. The religious environmental community recognizes that they have a great deal to bring to the conversation but some have expressed a difficulty of getting into the secular conversation. However, the existences of religious environmental organizations that have been able to break through these barriers are promising for those that still have difficulty.

Conclusion

These various themes show the current actions of religious environmental leaders. With their vast experiences, these leaders have been able to concisely explain what strategies have worked and what does not work. In the next section, I will condense their answers and clarify several using the foundation of historical analysis from chapters one through three, into five recommendations for religious environmental strategy.

¹⁹⁰ "Stretch Building Code ." Law and the Environment. <http://www.lawandenvironment.com/tags/stretch-building-code>.

¹⁹¹ Ibid, 2:20.

¹⁹² Ibid, 7:50.

Chapter 6: Interview Analysis and Strategy Recommendations

After comparing the historical efficiency of religious activists' past strategies with current strategies of religious environmentalists, I found several integral themes to suggest to religious environmentalists. I carefully considered each of these recommendations as a direct result of comparing the interviews against both one another and against historical accounts. Each recommendation addresses a reoccurring theme mentioned by many interviewees, was a poignant note mentioned by one which applied to all, or in the case of feedback, was a stumbling question for all interviewees.

1. Clarify and hone the message.

Have a clear, straightforward message that does not tend toward either extreme hope or extreme fear. When attempting to engage an audience, many religious leaders tend to list frightening statistics or use apocalyptic imagery to catch the attention of their audience.

Historically, consider the language of the abortion and gay marriage campaigns in chapter three. The language used was too intense to succeed in the abortion movement, and *Roe v. Wade* was never overturned. The gay marriage campaign is successful at this time, in small part due to the milder framing of their argument. Now, consider the civil rights movement from chapter three. The message of religious activists was of peace and equality, which is less polarizing than the framing of the gay-marriage campaign. Faith leaders of the civil rights movement spoke of equality of both themselves and their oppressors. They spoke of a forgiving God that would have mercy on their opponents and would lead the downtrodden to victory. The peaceful message of faith leaders juxtaposed against massive police brutality allowed for civil rights leaders to

morally undermine the opposite side. This is not the case for the modern religious environmental movement.

To be effective, the religious environmental movement must stay the middle ground between two messages. The key is to not trumpet a “gloom and doom” message that will frighten the audience, causing them to leave depressed and believing no amount of action could help the environmental cause. If the message is too optimistic, the audience will leave feeling that, while the environment may be an important issue, it is not in need of their immediate action. They will feel the problem is under control.

An example of a topic that needs this middle ground message is that of sacrifice. The word sacrifice evokes an image of drastically bringing down one’s quality of life for a cause. This concept is not appealing. If one mentions the word sacrifice, most people will not listen. Yet, the concept of sacrifice and doing with less is integral to the environmental movement. The environmental problem is due to excessive and inefficient consumption. When bringing up the need to cut back on consumption, think back to the beginning of chapter 5 and Evonne Marzouk’s message. Have the audience consider better utilizing what they already have. Frame it as a money-saving technique. Instead of collecting clutter, have the audience imagine themselves using a product before they buy it, portion out the cost to the use. Is the product worth the expense? In this way, sensible life change that will both help the environment and save money are framed as sacrifice instead of being part of an unsavory ascetic ideal.

2. Know the audience.

A packaged speech will not be effective when speaking to different audience on the topic of climate change and the environment. Religious environmentalists may speak to their own home congregation, another congregation or religion, an interfaith organization, a secular

environmental organization, or a government official. It is important to know the vocabulary of those one wishes to work with.

First, one must know the direct audience of their own congregation, or if a traveling speaker, the congregation one is currently speaking to. Marzouk discussed the five step progression individuals fall in to that can tell a speaker how to frame their discussion. Her first category was people who either have no idea what is going on, or don't care. Her next category is those that care little, but don't know very much about an issue. The next is those who know and care, but do not act. If one's own congregation is in question, it is best to ask parishioners what their opinion is on the environment and climate change. If it is another congregation, ask the faith leader of that congregation. After the initial assessment, one can determine where in the five steps a population is. When the category is determined, one can have a set number of examples to intrigue an individual with that specific mindset. Even further, the speaker must pay attention to the audience's reaction when they speak. If one example that usually works is boring a given audience, use another. The speaker must be able to be flexible with their words whether the audience is one individual, a small group, or an entire mega-church.

When deciding upon effective examples, it is often helpful to use imagery and metaphors. Science and evidence from religious texts are always necessary when making a religious argument for environmentalism, but a conversation based on only these two sources will become dry. Keeping an audience's attention is much easier when you can explain complex concepts through real life examples anyone can understand. One metaphor given in chapter five was Ibrahim Abdul-Matin's example of climate change being similar to the human body with a fever. While an audience may not believe the planet changing a few degrees is significant, they will understand how their child is sick with a fever of a few degrees and how the child becomes

in danger of death after a few degrees beyond that. Metaphors like this can make the difference between a listener who is starting to understand but walks away from a speech and forgets, and someone that has a speech resonate with them and shares their epiphany with friends.

Consider the difference of styles to be another language, as Abdul-Matin does in the end of chapter five. One must be able to speak the language of another religious sect, religion, or secular institution. If one is a Christian working with an Islamic or Jewish organization, do not preach to them about Jesus Christ. As Abrahamic faiths, there is a great deal of history these religions have in common. Leaders must put aside their differences for the sake of cooperation. Similarly, any religious organization does not need to impose their religiosity on a secular organization. Know and recognize what motivates the other organization and do not impose the ideals that solely motivates one's own.

Now consider the case of the anti-evolutionist movement discussed in chapter one. In 1925, during the era of the Butler Act and the Scopes trial, religious rhetoric was effective to the general American audience. But by the time of the Dover trial in 2005, no mention of religion was effective to the general American audience. Within each stage of the anti-evolution debate, from 1925 to 2005, religious leaders tapered their argument to their changing audience. The efficacy of their strategy is evident by the fact that the debate lasted 80 years. It only failed when the Dover Area School District was not able to sustain this strategy during trial.

Flexibility in explaining one's message is necessary for being able to deliver the message to the audience properly. The skill of creating intriguing prose that makes the audience want to listen is necessary to deliver.

3. Always ask for feedback.

One unnerving theme I noticed through my interview was how no one seemed to have concrete feedback on which programs were effective. While one may not think to ask for feedback after a speech, with academic resources, such as course curriculum of Rev. Perkins or online homily helps of Catherine Furlani, such information is a necessity. If a religious organization has an online resource such as these online homily helps, have anyone using the site sign in. Occasionally, send an email out requesting feedback on how helpful the resource was and what improvements there could be. If there are several online resources, it is possible that one is not beneficial and another has potential but no one knows to develop it. For organizations that provide academic resources for faith leaders and their congregations, once each leader completes a certain portion or level of resources, request feedback. There is always room for improvement, no matter how effective the materials may be. For courses, request feedback from students during and after the completion of the course. If during, presentations can be tapered to what educates them best. After the completion of a course, feedback can be used to modify the curriculum for the next session. Without feedback, it is impossible to spend resources properly. Funding and manpower is limited. If there is no feedback to make programs more efficient, then the given organization will fall victim to the wasteful mentality that brought the planet into its current crisis in the first place.

4. Organize according to a business model like the secular world.

Every organization, non-profit or not, will benefit from thinking of their organization as a business. Instead of the goal being profit, it is change. Measure change with feedback (as explained above), not dollars. Because feedback is the currency, this emphasizes even further its

necessity. One cannot sustain an organization without it. As a business does, focus on the goal of whatever specific change the organization wants to make, and systematically go about accomplishing that end.

If the organization is small, compare it to a small business instead of a corporation. There needs to be someone to handle communications both within the organization and outside, a president, someone to handle finances- all the way down to the secretary that in charge of email correspondence and meeting minutes. As with any business, heads of the organization should have solid roles while the lower ranked “workers” have flexibility in their positions to fill changing needs. This is the same as a volunteer base.

A business model will not only increase the efficacy of the organization, it will also empower members with a sense of responsibility. Volunteers feel that they are part of something and working to make a difference only when the organization they are part of actually makes progress. While I say this, it is still important to consider message and knowing the volunteer (the audience in this case) to see what motivates them and modify the speech accordingly. If one compares an organization to a factory business, volunteers are the factory workers. Without them, there is no product to sell, in other words, no pamphlets created, no classes taught, no tables manned, etc.

The business model takes much guesswork out of organizing. Refer to the organizing section of chapter five for an example about how the Lexington, MA organization HEAT was able to accomplish this, what their failures were, and picture how to learn from their experience and effectively apply it to the organization in question.

5. Don't fear advocacy.

Many religious organizations may choose not to participate in advocacy for organizational or resource reasons. This choice is perfectly legitimate. That said, many organizations fear advocacy because they do not fully understand their rights and do not want to risk their 501(c)(3) tax exemption. When reading the Internal Revenue Code, one can see that many advocacy programs are legal. The summarized code is provided.

Under the Internal Revenue Code, all section 501(c)(3) organizations are absolutely prohibited from directly or indirectly participating in, or intervening in, any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for elective public office. ... Certain activities or expenditures may not be prohibited depending on the facts and circumstances. For example, certain voter education activities (including presenting public forums and publishing voter education guides) conducted in a non-partisan manner do not constitute prohibited political campaign activity. ... On the other hand, voter education or registration activities with evidence of bias that (a) would favor one candidate over another; (b) oppose a candidate in some manner; or (c) have the effect of favoring a candidate or group of candidates, will constitute prohibited participation or intervention.¹⁹³

In general, no organization may qualify for section 501(c)(3) status if a substantial part of its activities is attempting to influence legislation (commonly known as *lobbying*). A 501(c)(3) organization may engage in some lobbying, but too much lobbying activity risks loss of tax-exempt status. ..An organization will be

¹⁹³ "The Restriction of Political Campaign Intervention by Section 501(c)(3) Tax-Exempt Organizations." Internal Revenue Service. <http://www.irs.gov/charities/charitable/article/0,,id=163395,00.html>.

regarded as attempting to influence legislation if it contacts, or urges the public to contact, members or employees of a legislative body for the purpose of proposing, supporting, or opposing legislation, or if the organization advocates the adoption or rejection of legislation. Organizations may, however, involve themselves in issues of public policy without the activity being considered as lobbying. For example, organizations may conduct educational meetings, prepare and distribute educational materials, or otherwise consider public policy issues in an educational manner without jeopardizing their tax-exempt status.¹⁹⁴

The code states that tax-exempt organizations and churches cannot promote a single candidate. This fact is common knowledge. However, it is legal to have campaigns educate voters on what they are supporting. As long as their materials do not vie for one side or another, the organizations are simply making voters aware. Encouraging individuals to write to their local representative is protected under law, while telling them what to write is illegal for an organization with tax-exempt status. Education is prevalent throughout the religious environmental movement in generalities. People are educated on how their religious texts relate to care for the environment. Organizations should not fear going a step further and educating their audience on more specific problems in their own areas. If the group is concerned about their tax-exempt status, they should talk to another organization that is knowledgeable of the legal ways to educate people on how to act in their area. If there is still concern, they should feel comfortable contacting their local representative on whether or not their specific idea would put them at risk.

¹⁹⁴ "Lobbying." Internal Revenue Service. <http://www.irs.gov/charities/article/0,,id=163392,00.html>.

Conclusion

I hope this work aids the effort already in place by religious environmentalists by helping to bridge the gap of communication on strategy. The strategic consensus described in this last chapter will apply to any religious environmental organization. I urge readers to consider its recommendations and refer to the contents of this thesis whenever necessary.

Bibliography

- Abdul-Matin, Ibrahim. Interview by author. Tape recording. New York, NY, November 13, 2009.
- Allen, Jack. Interview by author. Phone interview. Boston, MA, January 14, 2010.
- "Amazon Fund." Amazon Fund. <http://www.amazonfund.org/> (accessed May 18, 2010).
- Brooks, Richard O, and Thomas M Hoban. *Green Justice: The Environment And The Courts, Second Edition*. 2 ed. Oxford: Westview Press, 1996.
- Bryan, William Jennings. "Is The Bible True?." The Inspiration of the Bible. academic.brooklyn.cuny.edu/history/dfg/amrl/bryan.htm (accessed May 17, 2010).
- Calhoun-Brown, Alison. *Religion and Politics in the United States*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2006.
- "Campaign Finance." California Secretary of State. <http://cal-access.sos.ca.gov/Campaign/Committees/Detail.aspx?id=1221947&view=expenditures&session=2007> (accessed May 18, 2010).
- "Clean Air Online - Canada- United States Air Quality Agreement." Environnement Canada - Environment Canada. http://www.ec.gc.ca/cleanair-airpur/Canada_US_Air_Quality_Agreement-WS83930AC3-1_En.htm (accessed May 18, 2010).
- Ellingsen, Mark. *When Did Jesus Become Republican?: Rescuing Our Country and Our Values from the Right : Strategies for a Post-Bush America*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007.
- Furlani, Catherine. Interview by author. Tape recording. Newark, NJ, November 12, 2009.
- Franklin Kury, *Pennsylvania's Environmental Rights Amendment*. Pennsylvania Land Trust Association, 2005. http://conserveland.org/pp/ppenviro_amend. (accessed March 6, 2010)
- "From underwater, Maldives sends warning on climate change - CNN.com." CNN.com - Breaking News, U.S., World, Weather, Entertainment & Video News. <http://www.cnn.com/2009/WORLD/asiapcf/10/17/maldives.underwater.meeting/> (accessed May 18, 2010).
- "Glen Canyon Institute." Glen Canyon Institute. <http://www.glencanyon.org/> (accessed May 18, 2010).
- Harvey, Paul. *Freedom's Coming: Religious Culture and the Shaping of the South from the Civil War through the Civil Rights Era*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2005.
- Heltzel, Peter. Interview by author. Tape recording. New York, NY, November 14, 2009.
- Heltzel, Peter. *Jesus and Justice: Evangelicals, Race, and American Politics*. New Haven: Yale UP, 2009.

- Holt, Douglas. *The Consumer Society Reader*. New York: New Press, 2000.
- Houck, Davis W., and David E. Dixon. *Rhetoric, Religion and the Civil Rights Movement, 1954-1965*. Waco: Baylor UP, 2006.
- Humes, Edward. *Monkey Girl: Evolution, Education, Religion, and the Battle for America's Soul*. New York: Harper Perennial, 2008.
- "I Have A Dream Speech ." Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. speeches.
<http://www.mlkonline.net/dream.html> (accessed May 18, 2010).
- Ingebretsen, Rich. Interview by author. Phone interview. Boston, MA, January 11, 2010.
- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), *Climate Change 2007: Synthesis Report. Summary for Policymakers*. Geneva:2007.
- It's Not Gay; Former Homosexuals Tell a Story Few Have Heard "VHS Video"*. Film. Directed by American Family Association. Tupelo: American Family Assoc., 2000.
- Jersild, Paul T., and Dale A. Johnson. *Moral Issues and Christian Response*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971.
- Jewett, Robert, and Ole Wangerin. *Mission and Menace: Four Centuries of American Religious Zeal*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2008.
- Jowit, Juliette. " World's top firms cause \$2.2tn of environmental damage ." The Guardian.
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2010/feb/18/worlds-top-firms-environmental-damage> (accessed May 18, 2010).
- "Letter from a Birmingham Jail." African Studies Center, University of Pennsylvania.
http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Articles_Gen/Letter_Birmingham.html (accessed May 18, 2010).
- Lewy, Guenter. *Why America Needs Religion: Secular Modernity and Its Discontents*. Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans, 1996
- Linder, Doug . "William Jennings Bryan." UMKC School of Law.
<http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/scopes/bryanw.htm> (accessed May 18, 2010).
- "Lobbying." Internal Revenue Service. <http://www.irs.gov/charities/article/0,,id=163392,00.html> (accessed May 18, 2010).
- Marzouk, Evonne. Interview by author. Phone interview. Boston, MA, February 2, 2010.
- Matzke, Nick. "Of Pandas and People." National Center for Science Education - Defending the Teaching of Evolution in Public Schools.. <http://ncse.com/creationism/analysis/critique-pandas-people> (accessed May 18, 2010).
- McDaniel, Eric L.. *Politics in the Pews: The Political Mobilization of Black Churches (The Politics of Race and Ethnicity)*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2008.
- Misleh, Dan. Interview by author. Phone interview. Boston, MA, January 11, 2010.

"Kitzmiller v. Dover: Day 11, PM: Michael Behe." Exploring the Creation/Evolution Controversy. <http://www.talkorigins.org/faqs/dover/day11pm.html#day11pm132> (accessed May 18, 2010).

Nelkin, Dorthy. *The Creation Controversy, Science or Scripture in the Schools*. Canada: W. Norton&Co,1982.

Nelsen, Anne Kusener, and Hart M. Nelsen. *Black Church in the Sixties*. Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1982.

Noll, Mark A.. *God and Race in American Politics: A Short History*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010.

"NRB." NRB: Christian Communicators Impacting the World. http://nrb.org/about/our_mission/ (accessed May 18, 2010).

Perkins, Ed. Interview by author. Phone interview. Boston, MA, January 16, 2010.

Phillips, Jenny. Interview by author. Phone interview. Boston, MA, January 19, 2010.

"Preserving and Cherishing the Earth: An Appeal for Joint Commitment in Science and Religion." Forum on Religion and Ecology. fore.research.yale.edu/publications/statements/preserve.html (accessed May 18, 2010).

"Preserving the Divine Institution of Marriage." Preserving the Divine Institution of Marriage. <http://www.preservingmarriage.org/> (accessed May 18, 2010).

"Religion and Politics." Fairness & Accuracy In Reporting . <http://www.fair.org/index.php?page=2692> (accessed May 18, 2010).

Rose, Or., and Jo Kaiser and Margie Klein. *Righteous Indignation: A Jewish Call for Justice*. Woodstock: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2007.

Schubert, Frank, and Jeff Flint. "Passing Prop 8." *Politics Magazine*, February 2009.

"Scopes Trial - Day 7 ." UMKC School of Law. <http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/scopes/day7.htm> (accessed May 18, 2010).

Selby, Gary S.. *Martin Luther King and the Rhetoric of Freedom: The Exodus Narrative in America's Struggle for Civil Rights (Studies in Rhetoric and Religion)*. Waco: Baylor University Press, 2008.

Seger, Linda. *Jesus Rode a Donkey: Why Republicans Don't Have the Corner on Christ*. Avon: Adams Media Corporation, 2006.

Shanks, Niall. *God, the Devil, and Darwin: A Critique of Intelligent Design Theory*. New York: Oxford University Press, USA, 2007.

Shriver, George H., and Bill Leonard. *Encyclopedia of Religious Controversies in the United States*. New York: Greenwood Press, 1997.

Sider, Ronald J., and Diane Knippers. *Toward an Evangelical Public Policy: Political Strategies for the Health of the Nation*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 2005.

Singham, Mano. *God vs. Darwin: The War between Evolution and Creationism in the Classroom*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield Education, 2009.

"Stretch Building Code ." Law and the Environment.

<http://www.lawandenvironment.com/tags/stretch-building-code/> (accessed May 18, 2010).

Suarez, Ray. *The Holy Vote: The Politics of Faith in America*. Brattleboro: Harper Paperbacks, 2007.

Tarrow, Sidney. *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics (Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics)*. 2 ed. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

Taylor, Mark Lewis. *Religion, Politics, and the Christian Right: Post-9/11 Powers in American Empire (Facets)*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 2005.

Taylor, Mark Lewis. *Social Movements: Identity, Culture, and the State*. New York: Oxford University Press, USA, 2002.

"Tennessee Anti-evolution Statute - UMKC School of Law." UMKC School of Law.

<http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/scopes/tennstat.htm> (accessed May 18, 2010).

"The Civil Rights Movement and Television." The Museum of Broadcast Communications.

<http://www.museum.tv/eotvsection.php?entrycode=civilrights> (accessed May 18, 2010).

"The Lynching of Emmett Till ." The History of Jim Crow.

http://www.jimcrowhistory.org/resources/lessonplans/hs_es_emmett_till.htm (accessed May 18, 2010).

"The Restriction of Political Campaign Intervention by Section 501(c)(3) Tax-Exempt Organizations." Internal Revenue Service.

<http://www.irs.gov/charities/charitable/article/0,,id=163395,00.html> (accessed May 18, 2010).

Vinz, Warren L. *Pulpit Politics: Faces of American Protestant Nationalism in the Twentieth Century*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997.

Webb, George. *The Evolution Controversy in America*. Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 2002.

"Who Is AFA?." American Family Association. <http://www.afa.net> (accessed May 18, 2010).

"Welcome to the President's Office." Welcome to the President's Office.

<http://www.presidencymaldives.gov.mv/4/> (accessed May 18, 2010).

Wyman, Sally. Interview by author. Tape recording. Boston, MA, January 21, 2010.

Appendix A: Interviewees

Peter Heltzel, author of *Jesus and Justice*, New York, NY - Evangelical Protestant.

Dr. Jack Allen, Director of the Nehemiah Center for Church Planting, Houston, TX - Southern Baptist

Sally Wyman, active member of Hancock Environmental Action Team, Lexington, MA – United Church of Christ

Rev. Ed Perkins, teacher of class *Caring for Creation* sponsored by West Michigan Environmental Action Council, Grand Rapids, MI - Methodist

Rich Ingebretsen, President of Glenn Canyon Institute , Salt Lake City, UT – The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Kay Furlani, member of New Jersey Catholic Coalition for Environmental Justice, Newark, NJ – Roman Catholic

Dan Misleh, Executive Director of Catholic Coalition on Climate Change, Washington, D.C. – Roman Catholic

Evonne Marzouk, founder and Executive Director of Canfei Nasharim, Washington, D.C. - Judaism

Ibrahim Abdul-Matin, author of blog *Brooklyn Bedouins*, New York, NY - Islam

Rev. Jenny Phillips, President of Creation Change, Seattle, WA – Interfaith

Appendix B: Interview Questions

1. What is the mission of your organization/congregation in effecting the current environmental crisis?
2. What environmental issues have your organization/congregation sought to change/impact?
3. What are the strategies your organization/congregation uses to make these changes?
4. How were your strategies effective or ineffective? What were the positive and negative results?
5. What would you have done differently and what would you have done the same?
6. What are the benefits and what are the draw backs of a faith based environmental activism versus secular environmental activism?

Appendix C: *Is the Bible True?* By William Jennings Bryan

Is the Bible true? That is the great issue in the world today, surpassing in importance all national and international questions. The Bible is either true or false it is either the Word of God or the work of man. If the Bible is false, it is the greatest impostor that the world has ever known.

As there can be no civilization without morals, and as morals rest upon religion, and religion upon God, the question whether the Bible is true or false is the supreme issue among men. As the Bible is the only book known to the Christian world whose authority depends upon inspiration, the degradation of the Bible leaves the Christian world without a standard of morals other than that upon which men can agree. As men's reasons do not lead them to the same conclusion, and as greed and self-interest often overthrow the reason, the fixing of any moral standard by agreement is impossible. If the Bible is overthrown, Christ ceases to be a Divine character, and His words, instead of being binding upon the conscience, can be followed or discarded according to the individual's convenience may dictate.

If, on the contrary, the Bible is true - infallible because divinely inspired, then all the books that man has written are as far below the Bible in importance as man is below God in wisdom. The only ground upon which infallibility or inerrancy can be predicated is that the Book is inspired. Man uninspired cannot describe with absolute accuracy even that which has already happened.

The Bible not only gives us history, and that, too, written in many cases long after the events transpired, but it gives us prophecy which was fulfilled centuries later. The language of the Bible cannot be explained by environment, for environment, in most instances, was entirely antagonistic. It cannot be explained by genius of the writers, for they were largely among the unlettered. The Bible could not have lived because of favoritism shown to it, because it has been more bitterly attacked than any other book ever written. The attacks upon it probably outnumbered the attacks made upon all other books combined, because it condemns man in his face, charges him with being a sinner in need of a Saviour, indicts him as no other book does, holds up before him the highest standard ever conceived, and threatens him as he is threatened nowhere else.

And yet the Book stands and its circulation increases. How shall we account for its vitality, its indestructibility? By its inspiration and by that alone. Those who accept the Bible as true, inerrant, and infallible believe that the original autograph manuscripts which, through copies, are reproduced in the Old and New Testaments, were true, and true because divinely inspired -- "holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter I :21). Because they were moved by the Holy Spirit, they spoke with accuracy and with the truth of God Himself.

Orthodox Christians believe in plenary inspiration: that is, that all of the Bible was given by inspiration. They believe in verbal inspiration; that is, that the words used in the original manuscripts were the actual words of God as spoken by holy men of God "as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." They accept the Bible as true and divinely inspired, beginning with belief in God as Creator of all things, continuing Ruler of the universe which He made, and Heavenly Father to all His children. They believe that God is a personal God, who loves, and is interested

in, all His creatures. They believe that He revealed His will unto men, and they accept the testimony *of* the writers of the Bible when they declare that the holy Ghost spoke through them or through those whom they quote.

The real conflict to-day is between those, on the one hand, who believe in God, in the Bible as the Word of God, and in Christ as the Son of God, and those, on the other hand, who believe in God but who believe that the Bible is inspired only in part - differing among themselves as to how much of it is inspired and as to what passages are inspired. The latter set up standards of their own, and there are nearly as many different standards as there are believers in partial inspiration. When they deny the infallibility of the Bible, they set up a standard that they regard either as infallible or as more trustworthy than the Bible itself. They really transfer the presumption of infallibility from the Bible to themselves, for either they say, "I believe this part of the Bible to be untrue because my own reason or my own judgment tells me that it is untrue;" or they say, "I believe it untrue because So-and-So, in whose judgment I have confidence, tells me it is untrue." Whether one trusts in his own judgment as to the truthfulness of a passage, or trusts the judgment of someone else who denies the truthfulness of a passage, he is, in fact, trusting his own judgment because if he does not rely on his own judgment in rejecting the passage it is his own judgment that substitutes the authority of the individual selected by him for the authority of the Bible.

It need hardly be added that such a rejection of the Bible, however the objector tries to limit it, is equivalent to a total rejection of the Bible as an authority, because an authority which is subject to be overruled on any point on any subject by anybody who cares to take the responsibility of overruling it, ceases to be of real value.

A sophomore in a Georgia college informed me, at the conclusion of an address in Atlanta, that in order to reconcile Darwinism and Christianity, he only had to disregard *Genesis*. Only *Genesis*! And yet there are three verses in the first chapter of *Genesis* that mean more to man than all the books of human origin: the first verse, which gives the most reasonable account of creation ever advanced; the twenty-fourth verse, which gives the only law governing the continuity of life on earth; and the twenty-sixth which gives the only explanation of man's presence here.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹⁵ Bryan, William Jennings. "Is The Bible True?." The Inspiration of the Bible. academic.brooklyn.cuny.edu/history/dfg/amrl/bryan.htm.

Appendix D: National Opinion Research Center Abortion Survey Data

This study is provided as part of Strategy on Abortion, by Robert Drinan.¹⁹⁶

	Yes	No	Don't Know
If the woman's own health is seriously endangered by the pregnancy	71	26	3
If she became pregnant as a result of rape	56	38	6
If there is a strong chance of a serious defect in the baby	55	41	4
If the family has a very low income and cannot afford any more children	21	77	2
If she is not married and does not want to marry the man	18	80	2
If she is married and does not want any more children	15	83	2

Appendix E: Open Letter to the American Religious Community

Preserving and Cherishing the Earth: An Appeal for Joint Commitment in Science and Religion from the Global Moscow Forum to the National Religious Partnership for the Environment, January 1990

The Earth is the birthplace of our species and, so far as we know, our only home. When our numbers were small and our technology feeble, we were powerless to influence the environment of our world. But today, suddenly, almost without anyone noticing, our numbers have become immense; and our technology has achieved vast, even awesome, powers. Intentionally, or inadvertently, we are now able to make devastating changes in the global environment-an environment to which we and all the other beings with which we share the Earth are meticulously and exquisitely adapted.

We are now threatened by self-inflicted, swiftly moving environmental alterations about whose long-term biological and ecological consequences we are still painfully ignorant-depletion of the protective ozone layer; a global warming unprecedented in the last 150 millennia; the obliteration of an acre of forest every second; the rapid-fire extinction of species; and the prospect of a global nuclear war which would put at risk most of the population of the Earth. There may well be other such dangers of which, in our ignorance, we are still unaware.

¹⁹⁶ Jersild, Paul T., and Dale A. Johnson. *Moral Issues and Christian Response*, (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston), 1971.

Individually and cumulatively they represent a trap being set for the human species, a trap we are setting for ourselves. However principled and lofty (or naive and shortsighted) the justifications may have been for the activities that brought forth these dangers, separately and together they now imperil our species and many others. We are close to committing-many would argue we are already committing-what in religious language is sometimes called Crimes against Creation.

By their very nature these assaults on the environment were not caused by one political group or any one generation. Intrinsicly, they are transnational, transgenerational, and transideological. So are all conceivable solutions. To escape these traps requires a perspective that embraces the peoples of the planet and all the generations yet to come.

Problems of such magnitude, and solutions demanding so broad a perspective must be recognized from the outset as having a religious as well as a scientific dimension. Mindful of our common responsibility, we scientists-many of us long engaged in combating the environmental crisis-urgently appeal to the world religious community to commit, in word and deed, and as boldly as is required, to preserve the environment of the Earth.

Some of the short-term mitigations of these dangers-such as greater energy efficiency, rapid banning of chlorofluorocarbons or modest reductions in the nuclear arsenals-are comparatively easy and at some level are already underway. But other, more far-reaching, more long-term, more effective approaches will encounter widespread inertia, denial, and resistance. In this category are conversion from fossil fuels to a nonpolluting energy economy, a continuing swift reversal of the nuclear arms race, and a voluntary halt to world population growth-without which many of the other approaches to preserve the environment will be nullified.

As on issues of peace, human rights, and social justice, religious institutions can here too be a strong force encouraging national and international initiatives in both the private and public sectors, and in the diverse worlds of commerce, education, culture, and mass communication.

The environmental crisis requires radical changes not only in public policy, but in individual behavior. The historical record makes clear that religious teaching, example, and leadership are powerfully able to influence personal conduct and commitment.

As scientists, many of us have had profound experiences of awe and reverence before the universe. We understand that what is regarded as sacred is more likely to be treated with care and respect. Our planetary home should be so regarded. Efforts to safeguard and cherish the environment need to be infused with a vision of the sacred. At the same time, a much wider and deeper understanding of science and technology is needed. If we do not understand the problem, it is unlikely we will be able to fix it. Thus, there is a vital role for religion and science.

We know that the well-being of our planetary environment is already a source of profound concern in your councils and congregations. We hope this Appeal will encourage a spirit of common cause and joint action to help preserve the Earth.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁷ "Preserving and Cherishing the Earth: An Appeal for Joint Commitment in Science and Religion." Forum on Religion and Ecology. fore.research.yale.edu/publications/statements/preserve.html.