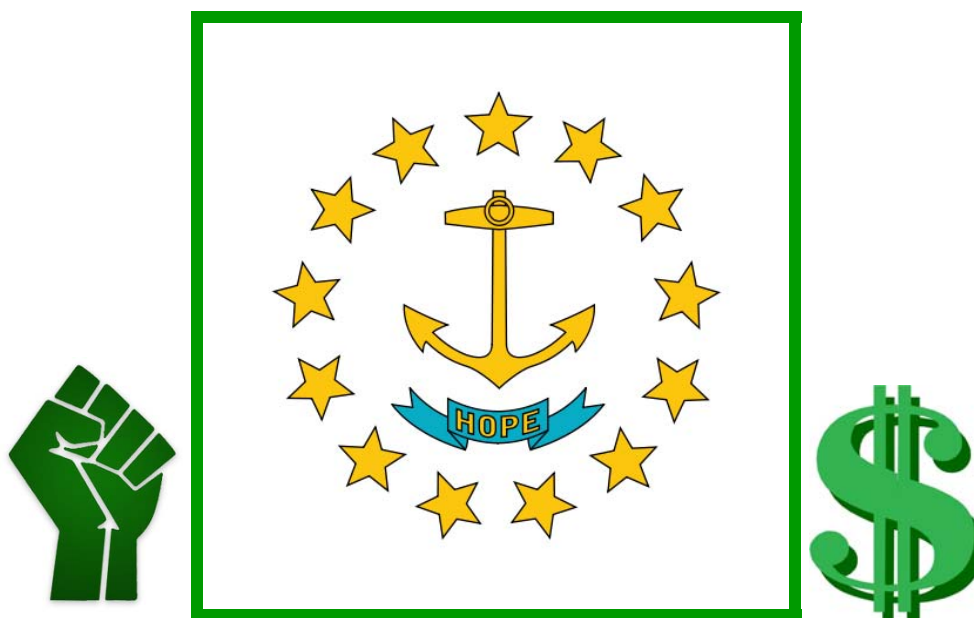


# From Climate Justice to Green Business:

A Rhode Island Case Study of Current Trends in  
the Environmental Movement



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## Executive Summary

The environmental movement has come under criticism as of late for its lack of an inspirational and articulate vision as well as its failure to forge true alliances across diverse populations. Add to this the widespread support throughout the country for capitalism as a mode of building a “green” economy in spite of the easy arithmetic embodied in the famous I=PAT equation, and a further critique might arise. An economic system which requires growth—or increased per capita consumption (“Affluence” in the I=PAT equation)—to survive will always be at odds with environmental and social justice, and it is hoped that an active sector of the environmental movement contains a new critique of current societal structures. To determine whether environmental activism is evolving to confront affluence, I ask the following question: *To what extent does the environmental movement address material consumption and how is the movement changing into the twenty-first century?*

To answer this question I examine trends in the environmental movement in the United States and Rhode Island from 1872 to the present. I begin by contextualizing the question with a history of the environmental movement, taking particular note of the distinctions between anti-consumerism and green consumerism as well as different strands of radical environmentalism. To determine the current status of the movement I compile and chronologize by date of establishment lists of all the environmental organizations both in state and at Brown, color coded by area of focus. From this timeline, I discover that on a state-wide level there is a recent focus on religious environmentalism, climate justice, and local food, while at Brown sustainable design, energy, and green investment dominate environmental activism.

In a media review of articles in the Providence Journal over the past twenty-four years I find that media coverage of local food, religion and the environment, and green business has increased over the past couple of years, while coverage of voluntary simplicity and anti-consumerism has fluctuated. Both a keyword search of organizations’ mission statements as well as analysis of answers to a questionnaire about consumption categorize groups as either focusing on reducing consumption or urging consumers to choose alternative, “greener” products. Using these classification schemes as well as the results of the media review, I examine organizations focusing on either anti-consumerism or green consumerism in consideration of when they were founded to determine which trend currently predominates. The result is a tie of sorts, suggesting the complementarity of these trends.

Overall, I conclude that increased diversity in the movement, better communication between mainstream and non-traditional environmental interests, and the development of a new framework for environmental and social critique are desirable. I suggest a new emphasis on *social ecology*—a philosophy characterized by local/alternative economies, non-hierarchical and cooperative organizational structures, and a bottom-up approach to action—as a framework which can be creatively adapted for current needs. The models presented by environmental spirituality, climate justice, and local food movements for addressing values formation, a critique of social and environmental inequalities, and local, community-based sufficiency should be adopted by the larger environmental movement to combat environmental classism and reposition environmentalism as a struggle pertaining to daily life. Lastly, this project has affirmed my belief that the environmental movement should more actively educate the public about the environmental benefits of self-sufficiency and the negative impacts of increased per capita consumption for the sake of capitalist profit accumulation.

## Acknowledgements

When I began the process of deciding what to write my thesis about I had absolutely no idea of where I would end up. It has been a very interesting (dare-I-say fun) process, and I am extremely pleased with the final product.

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## Introduction: The Death of Environmentalism?

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From its roots in the sixties spirit of dissent and political engagement, the environmental movement has grown to encompass a variety of mainstream and radical approaches to combating degradation of the environment. However, despite a myriad of successes in environmental protection over the years, the movement has come under criticism by many for what they perceive as recent stagnation. Journalist Mark Dowie sums up this view with the assertion that the environmental movement “is courting irrelevance as unwieldy, unimaginative, overfed organizations, with plush headquarters in Washington and New York, rely on tired old tactics, such as politely lobbying the federal government, that long ago ceased being effective.”<sup>1</sup> Others such as Jeffrey St. Clair and Brian Tokar offer similar sentiments, decrying the corporatization and temperance of environmental activism.<sup>2,3</sup> In their controversial 2005 paper “The Death of Environmentalism: Global warming politics in a post-environmental world,” Michael Shellenberger and Ted Nordhaus lay out their argument for the current state of the environmental movement and its consequent failures. The framing of the term “environment” by mainstream ENGO’s separates humans from the problems being discussed and implies a certain amount of externality; “it makes it seem as if the problem is ‘out there’ and we need to ‘fix it’” as

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<sup>1</sup> Dowie, Mark. (2006, April 20). My view: support grass-roots environmentalists. *The Chronicle of Philanthropy*. Retrieved from

[http://www.precaution.org/lib/06/dowie\\_support\\_gr\\_environmentalists.060416.htm](http://www.precaution.org/lib/06/dowie_support_gr_environmentalists.060416.htm)

<sup>2</sup> St. Clair, Jeffrey. (2007, February 3/4). The Withering of the American Environmental Movement: The Thrill is Gone. *Counterpunch*. Retrieved from <http://www.counterpunch.org/stclair02032007.html>

<sup>3</sup> Tokar, Brian. (1997). Questioning Official Environmentalism. *Z Magazine*, 10(4). Retrieved from <http://www.zmag.org/zmag/viewArticle/12688>

opposed to understanding the reality of our intimate relationship with our surroundings.<sup>4</sup> Shellenberger and Nordhaus discuss the tendency “to believe that we environmentalists search for ‘root causes’ not ‘symptoms,’” and refute this fallacy as a shallow comprehension of what are in actuality root causes.<sup>5</sup> Shellenberger and Nordhaus see in the environmental movement a reliance upon a legislative-focused approach seeking “technical policy fixes” in lieu of the advancement of an articulate vision and values set.<sup>6</sup> They themselves claim to have “challenged old ways of thinking about the problem”<sup>7</sup> by “building a coalition of environmental, labor, business, and community allies who share a common vision for the future and common set of values.”<sup>8</sup> But what is the “common vision” for which Shellenberger and Nordhaus and this coalition, the Apollo Alliance, are advocating?

Van Jones, a supporter of the Apollo Alliance and founder of the green economy focused organization Green For All, calls Shellenberger and Nordhaus’ vision the “third wave of environmentalism,” in contrast with the first wave of conservation and the second wave of conservation plus regulation. “This third wave calls for something exciting and new: Conservation, plus regulating the bad, plus investing in the good. Conserve, yes. Regulate, yes—and do that fairly and equitably. But also invest in those things that will affirmatively heal our bodies and restore our planet. Invest in solar, bio-diesel, permaculture, organic agriculture, and high-performance buildings. The third wave

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<sup>4</sup> Shellenberger, Michael and Nordhaus, Ted (2004). *The death of environmentalism: global warming politics in a post-environmental world*. Oakland, CA: The Breakthrough Institute. p. 12

<sup>5</sup> Shellenberger and Nordhaus, 2004, p. 14

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 6, 11

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 28

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 26

promises to solve old problems while creating new wealth and new jobs.”<sup>9</sup> While Jones promises this “new, clean and green economy” to be a “social-uplift strategy,” is it really addressing the root problems behind the environmental and social injustices it is said to solve? The root causes of environmental problems are often expressed by the  $I=PAT$  equation developed in the 1970’s by Barry Commoner, Paul Erlich, and John Holdren. Here  $P$  (population),  $A$  (affluence), and  $T$  (extractive technology) represent the elements which lead to environmental degradation, while  $I$  represents the overall environmental impact.<sup>10</sup> The third wave as exemplified by the Apollo Alliance and Green For All may be said to address the  $T$  term of this equation through a shift towards green technologies. While the proposed shift toward greater collaboration and inclusion in achieving a green economy is a new direction for the movement, this does not appear to be much more than the “technical policy fixes” criticized by Shellenberger and Nordhaus. “Green” consumerism of innovative technologies as promoted by the third wave does not adequately address what is causing environmental problems: affluence, or per-capita consumption.

According to the University of Michigan’s Center for Sustainable Systems, the United States’ use of raw material (non-fossil fuel or food) rose 5.1 times more than population from 1900-2000, illustrating that population growth is not the sole indicator of consumption patterns.<sup>11</sup> Total material consumption including fuels and other materials in

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<sup>9</sup> Jones, Van. (2005, Summer). Two Crises, One Solution. *Yes! Magazine*. Retrieved from <http://www.yesmagazine.org/article.asp?ID=1262>

<sup>10</sup> Commoner, Barry, Corr, Michael, & Stampler, Paul J. (1971). The Causes of Pollution. *Environment*, 13 (3). p. 3

<sup>11</sup> University of Michigan Center for Sustainable Systems. (2008). *U.S. Material Use Factsheet*. Retrieved March 21, 2009, from [http://css.snre.umich.edu/css\\_doc/CSS05-18.pdf](http://css.snre.umich.edu/css_doc/CSS05-18.pdf)



the United States rose 57% from 1970-2000 to a total of 6.5 billion tons.<sup>12</sup> In addition to the increased consumption of the United States, economic growth in developing countries and those in transition to capitalism has created “over 1 billion new consumers...with an aggregate spending capacity, in purchasing power parity terms, to match that of the U.S.”<sup>13</sup> Again, we should not simply equate an increase in consumption with an increase in population; “in India, for example, they [new consumers] accounted for less than one-eighth of the year 2000 population but two-fifths of the country’s purchasing power.”<sup>14</sup> Even if this richest 12.5% of India’s population became “green” consumers, environmental and social injustices would remain amongst the other 87.5% of people. Van Jones mentions this problem, calling it “eco-apartheid...[where] ecological haves could get more and more and have-nots could get less and less.”<sup>15</sup> However, his recommendation to marginalized populations of demanding inclusion into the market in the form of green jobs is a short-sighted solution. This is not to say that green products and technologies are not preferable to unsustainable products and technologies—it is the focus upon consumption of such “environmentally-friendly” products as the solution to environmental issues which is here critiqued. As written by Sharon Beder in her book *Global Spin: the Corporate Assault on the Environment*, green consumerism “reduces people to consumers [whose] power to influence society is reduced to their purchasing power, [and] does not deal with issues such as economic growth on a finite planet, the power of transnational corporations, and the way

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<sup>12</sup> University of Michigan Center for Sustainable Systems, 2008

<sup>13</sup> Myers, Norman and Kent, Jennifer (2003). New consumers: The influence of affluence on the environment. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 100 (8). p. 4963

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Jones, 2005

power is structured in our society.”<sup>16</sup> In contrast, members of the anti-consumerism movement seek to address these problems resulting from our society’s affluence by reducing overall consumption.

In consideration of Shellenberger and Nordhaus’s critique of mainstream environmentalism’s current ineffectiveness, Van Jones’ discussion of the green economy as a third wave of environmentalism, and the criticisms of Sharon Beder and the anti-consumerism movement towards green capitalism, the environmental movement could be said to be facing an identity crisis. This paper seeks to answer the question, *To what extent does the environmental movement address material consumption and how is the movement changing into the twenty-first century?* What lessons can be taken from anti-consumerism by the broader environmental movement to address root societal causes of environmental degradation? Are new alliances being formed, as recommended by Shellenberger and Nordhaus? Does green consumerism or anti-consumerism dominate recent environmental trends? Through a Rhode Island case study of environmental organizations, the scope of the movement and the direction in which it is headed will be ascertained. Overall, it is hoped that the conclusions drawn from this research will connect old and new members of the environmental movement and inspire the involvement of new allies. By determining current trends of the movement, both new and longstanding, a comprehensive critique and vision for future directions and evolution of a third wave environmentalism can be established.

An overview of this paper is as follows:

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<sup>16</sup> Beder, Sharon. (1997). *Global Spin: The Corporate Assault on Environmentalism*. UK: Green Books. pp. 176-80

Chapter 1 provides a short history of the general environmental movement as well as the origins and current scope of anti-consumerism.

Chapter 2 details methodology.

Chapter 3 presents a case study of Rhode Island environmental organizations.

Chapter 4 offers an analysis of findings and recommendations for the future direction of the movement.

Chapter 5 concludes the paper.

## Chapter One: Background

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### *Birth of the movement and the Big Green*

Wilderness protection has been a subject in the American environmental mind since the late nineteenth century, championed by figures such as John Muir, who founded the Sierra Club in 1892, and George Bird Grinnel, the Audubon Society's 1887 founder. Despite the existence of these and other conservationist organizations which were founded during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, widespread public concern for the state of the environment did not arise until the 1960's. Riding on the rebellious attitudes and new approaches to political activism prevailing throughout the decade, the old-guard conservationist organizations gathered support while another facet of environmentalism was developed: pollution consciousness, or "a dawning awareness of the dangers of a full array of human technologies to human health and safety."<sup>17</sup> With this new anthropocentric framing of environmental concern came a plethora of new organizations and innovative tactics. Groups focused on the preservation of the country's wild places had formerly acted in defensive reaction to exploitation of the environment by the government and commercial interests.<sup>18</sup> Such groups include the Sierra Club and the Audubon Society, originating in the late 1800's as mentioned above, as well as the National Parks and Conservation Association (1919), the Izaak Walton League (1922), the Wilderness Society (1935), the National Wildlife Federation (1936), Defenders of Wildlife (1947), the Nature Conservancy (1951), and the World Wildlife Fund (1961). In the early 1960's, anticipation

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<sup>17</sup> Sale, Kirkpatrick. (1993). *The Green Revolution: The American Environmental Movement 1962-1992*. NY: Hill and Wang. p. 18

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14

of legislation supporting a wilderness bill and perception of a politically active public prompted these groups to form alliances amongst each other and non-environmental organizations and to seek widespread support through media publicity. These efforts for public involvement in the issue were successful, as “by 1962 Congress was getting more mail on the wilderness bill than on any other piece of legislation,”<sup>19</sup> and the Wilderness Act was approved in 1964. Thus, with this new law came a proactive victory for preservationists, protecting wilderness before it became explicitly endangered. A second example of tactics taking advantage of this newfound popular backing of environmental issues was the Sierra Club’s campaign opposing the Bureau of Reclamation’s proposal to dam the Colorado River and flood the Grand Canyon. Approaches to this battle included “a series of full-page newspaper ads against the projects...complete with coupons and instructions on how to write the appropriate congressmen, a new device at the time...pamphlets and bumper stickers...a stunning Sierra Club picture book, *Time and the River Flowing*...[and] two full-color movies.”<sup>20</sup> This increase in public awareness of the unique natural places in danger, coupled with suggestions of how citizens could exert their delegate pressure to have an impact on the issue, was a tactic Sierra Club Executive Director David Brower referred to as “the ‘place no one knew’ strategy—there is nobody to protect a place nobody knows.”<sup>21</sup> Response to this promotion of the issue was widespread, resulting in government abandonment of the scheme in 1968. With these and other victories conservation groups began to establish themselves as a legitimate environmental movement.

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<sup>19</sup> Sale, 1993, p. 15

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 17

<sup>21</sup> Sierra Club. (2008). *Sierra Club History: Origins and Early Outings*. Retrieved April 28, 2009, from <http://www.sierraclub.org/history/origins/chapter7.asp>

Human-centered awareness of how our destructive influence upon the world could affect our own health was injected into the movement by the publication of *Silent Spring* by biologist Rachel Carson in 1962. Considered by some to be “the basic book of America’s environmental revolution,”<sup>22</sup> Carson’s scientific treatise of the dangers of DDT and other pesticides upon the natural world, humans, and future generations tied together people and the environment, enhancing the scope of environmentalism. Increasing attention to the dangers of technology arose from public anxiety of nuclear weapons testing and books such as Barry Commoner’s *Science and Society* and *The Closing Circle*. While some inclusion of this new pollution concern was found in the agendas of established environmental groups, new organizations emerged with a more specified focus upon the issue.

Environmental Defense Fund and the National Resources Defense Council were two such organizations which constructed yet another approach to environmentalism: litigation. Developing defenses with the help of employees in the fields of both science and law they “proved that such tactics as lawsuits and injunctions (or the threat of them) were often more effective in a litigious society than letter-writing or lobbying...[and] advanced the concept of environmental *rights*, a similarly attractive idea in a legalistic society.”<sup>23</sup> Building upon this model, legal action was to become an important strategy used by the environmental movement for years to come.

The apex of 1960’s radical energy and environmental concern was the establishment of the first Earth Day on April 22, 1970. Inspired by a senator’s call to action for a “nationwide ‘teach-in’ on college campuses, following the model for the antiwar

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<sup>22</sup> Shabecoff, Philip. (2003). *A Fierce Green Fire: The American Environmental Movement*. Washington: Island Press. p. 18

<sup>23</sup> Sale, 1993, p. 21

teach-ins earlier in the decade,” Earth Day brought together radicals with links to a variety of causes.<sup>24</sup> This nation-wide event was a largely grassroots occasion, with the established conservation groups playing a very minimal role.<sup>25</sup> However, the old guard soon benefited from this new interest in the environment when the public saw conservation organizations as a place to channel their energies. From an approximate mid-1960’s total membership of 400,000 amongst the top five largest environmental organizations (Audubon Society, Izaak Walton League, National Wildlife Federation, Sierra Club and Wilderness Society),<sup>26</sup> the next two decades saw an almost four-fold increase in total membership, with 1970 total membership at 842,100<sup>27</sup> and 1980 total membership at 1,485,000.<sup>28</sup> Campaign success rates were also high, with success in impacting the creation of such monumental environmental legislations as the Water Quality Act (1965), the Endangered Species Act (1973), the Superfund/Comprehensive Environment Response Act (1980), the 1963, 1965, 1967, 1970 and 1977 amendments of the Clean Air Act, and the foundation of the Environmental Protection Agency in 1970. These victories set the tone for the movement and provided the foundation for the next two decades of environmental concern in America.

The nine well-established conservation organizations along with the litigation focused NRDC and EDF and a couple other groups formed in response to the growing pollution concern created the backbone of environmental action and became known as the “Big Green,” centered around Washington politics. Kirkpatrick Sale describes these

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<sup>24</sup>Sale, 1993, p. 25

<sup>25</sup> Shabecoff, 2003, pp. 109-10

<sup>26</sup> Sale, 1993, p. 23

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 33

organizations' tactics as "ranging from effective constituency pressure, vote-producing, and committee testimony on the one hand to wining-dining, old-boy network favors, and back-room trading on the other."<sup>29</sup> The particular focus of each group varied from raising public awareness through research and education, to political lobbying, to battles fought in the court system. In order to remain competitive on a political scene dominated by special-interest groups, these Big Green organizations "gradually built highly professional staffs of lawyers, lobbyists, scientists, economists, organizers, fundraisers, publicists, and political operatives."<sup>30</sup> Thus, from the spirit of opposition on which the movement was founded, environmentalism shifted to a policy game, "emphasiz[ing] practical gains rather than affirmation of ideologies."<sup>31</sup> Though they were largely successful in what they did attempt to achieve within the system, some in the movement felt betrayed by the reformist nature of the Big Green and began to look towards more radical avenues of change.

### ***Radical environmentalism***

Emerging in reaction to the corporatization of the Big Green and the 1980's "Reagan Reaction" against the environmental successes of the previous decades were a new group of organizations with a radically different approach to tactics. The most well-known of these organizations were Greenpeace, founded in 1979, and Earth First!, which first emerged in 1980. Formed under the Quaker principle of "bearing witness," or taking responsible action in the face of observed injustice, Greenpeace's first action was the sailing of activists to a former wildlife refuge in Alaska that was scheduled to undergo

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<sup>29</sup>Sale, 1993, p. 34

<sup>30</sup> Shabecoff, 2003, p. 113

<sup>31</sup> Sale, 1993, p. 35



nuclear testing.<sup>32</sup> This nonviolent direct action set the precedent for the organization's future modus operandi, occupations and sit-ins with an often theatrical bent. Although originally a volunteer group of concerned citizens, by the middle of the 1980's Greenpeace had become corporatized, "settling into large buildings, large staffs, and large budgets...install[ing] new administrators, all of them managerial types such as lawyers, corporate executives, or bureaucrats, and all at six-figure salaries."<sup>33</sup> Earth First!, however was "designedly formless, without national staff, bylaws, formal incorporation, or even membership" and took a more militant approach to their tactics, "including guerrilla theater, media stunts, civil disobedience, and, unofficially, 'ecotage' (also called 'monkey wrenching'): sabotaging bulldozers and road-building equipment on public lands, pulling up survey stakes, cutting down billboards, destroying traps, and, famously, 'spiking' trees at random to prevent their being cut and milled."<sup>34</sup> Other radical environmental organizations employing a spectrum of tactics included the Sea Shepherd Society (1977), the Rainforest Action Network (1985), and the Earth and Animal Liberation Fronts (ALF 1979, ELF early 1990's). While some were openly more aggressive than others, what all these groups shared tactically was a dedication to actions in confrontation rather than in concert with the dominant political system. But were these organizations really "radical" in their philosophy?

In his book *Radical Environmentalism: Philosophy and Tactics*, Peter List gives four meanings for the term "radical environmentalism." two of which strongly apply to the

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<sup>32</sup> Greenpeace. (2009). *History*. Retrieved, April 28, 2009, from <http://www.greenpeace.org/usa/about/history>

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 54

<sup>34</sup> Sale, 1993, p. 66

organizations influential in the environmental movement mentioned above. These definitions are as follows:

a) a wilderness fundamentalism which is backed up by deep ecology and biocentrism and makes wilderness and wild species the focus of no-compromise political action [and] b) a strong *activist* orientation which de-emphasizes ecophilosophy in favor of unconventional direct action tactics such as environmental civil disobedience, monkeywrenching, and ecotage; it too is aimed at the preservation and restoration of wilderness and wild species.<sup>35</sup>

Greenpeace and Earth First! are good examples of groups defined by these understandings of radical environmentalism. Greenpeace's first action against nuclear testing in Alaska shows the group's affinity towards acts of civil disobedience in the name of the earth. The group's 1976 "Declaration of Independence" illustrates the group's philosophical leanings, exclaiming that "ecology teaches us that mankind is not the center of life on this planet,"<sup>36</sup> a biocentric notion, and demanding that "*short-term economics* must be replaced with actions based on the need for conservation and preservation of the entire global ecosystem."<sup>37</sup> Thus Greenpeace combines aspects of both definitions of radical environmentalism; while the organization has an earth-centered philosophical understanding it is dedicated to action in protection of wilderness. Similarly, while "Earth First! founders enthusiastically embraced the biocentric norms of deep ecology," they were more concerned with fighting the battle than talking about their philosophy.<sup>38</sup> As expounded by Dave Forman, one of the founding members of the group, "Action is the key. Action is more important than philosophical hairsplitting or endless refining of dogma (for which radicals are so well known). Let our actions set the finer points of our

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<sup>35</sup> List, Peter. (1993). *Radical environmentalism: philosophy and tactics*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company. p.2

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 134

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 136

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9

philosophy.”<sup>39</sup> These two emblematic organizations thus represent a tactics/action-based conception of radical environmentalism; this is the definition that should be taken throughout this paper whenever discussion of radical environmental groups arises (see Table 1 for a summary of the various definitions of radical environmentalism). It should be noted that while the approaches of these organizations in expressing environmental concern are more combative than those of the Big Green mainstream environmental groups they are not really challenging the dominant social paradigm. As explained by List, Earth First!’s “biocentric commitment to wilderness over other political issues, such as racism, poverty, militarism, and sexism, was thought to be a mistake by more traditional political radicals...naïvely assume[ing] that real change in our behavior toward wild nature could occur without revolutionizing capitalist economic systems and social structures.”<sup>40</sup> Further, “some commentators within the mainstream of the movement have asserted that the radicals help by making the traditional organizations seem so moderate.”<sup>41</sup> However, there exists another subset of environmental organizations which deserve mention that are radical in world view, if not in tactics—those adhering to the philosophy of social ecology.

Peter List’s third characterization of radical environmentalism describes “a social and political philosophy which emphasizes anarchism and bioregionalism, as refined by ecological notions, and which advocates strong, nonviolent environmental tactics plus a new form of ecological living.”<sup>42</sup> Such a definition certainly encompasses social ecology, “whose goal is the restructuring of society along lines that will serve the ecological health of the planet...[seeking] to reorient economics, institutions, and political relationships to

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<sup>39</sup> List, 1993, p. 189

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., pp. 6-7

<sup>41</sup> Shabecoff, 2003, p. 115

<sup>42</sup> List, 1993, p. 2

create a lifestyle that is harmonious for both nature and humans.”<sup>43</sup> Such a lifestyle is characterized by “decentralized economies with more local self-reliance and benign technologies, combined with direct, participatory democracy.”<sup>44</sup> Bioregionalism is a model for the type of society imagined under social ecology, where political, ecological, and cultural boundaries are all united in regional self-reliance. Organizations such as the E.F. Schumacher Society (1980), Planet Drum (1973), the Institute for Social Ecology (1981), and the U.S. Greens (1984) have been dedicated to pursuing such a vision through primarily educational tactics. For example, Planet Drum “was established in San Francisco in the 1970’s to be an active center for publications, speakers, performances, and workshops on this new philosophy...[having since] become the effective networking core of the movement.”<sup>45</sup> The first North American Bioregional Congress convened in 1984, bringing together minds from across the country dedicated to the principles of bioregionalism. The ecovillage movement, characterized by “human-scale full-featured settlement in which human activities are harmlessly integrated into the natural world in a way that is supportive of healthy human development and can be successfully continued into the indefinite future,”<sup>46</sup> can be seen to complementary to bioregionalism and social ecology. Two other movements should be discussed in relation to social ecology, ecofeminism and environmental justice.

Socialist ecofeminism argues that “environmental problems are rooted in the rise of capitalist patriarchy and the ideology that the Earth and nature can be exploited for human

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<sup>43</sup> Shabecoff, 2003, p. 116

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Sale, 1993, p. 68

<sup>46</sup> Gilman, Robert (1991, Summer). The Eco-village Challenge. *In Context*. Retrieved from <http://www.context.org/ICLIB/IC29/Gilman1.htm>

progress through technology.”<sup>47</sup> This philosophy, in addition to socialist ecofeminism’s efforts towards “some form of an egalitarian socialist state, in addition to resocializing men and women into nonsexist, nonracist, nonviolent, anti-imperialist forms of life” share social ecology’s interest in the restructuring of social, natural, political, and economic relationships.<sup>48</sup> In her article entitled “Ecofeminism & Feminist theory, Carolyn Merchant connects ecofeminism not only to social ecological principles, but also to environmental justice, a movement that emerged in the late 1970’s/early 1980’s to address the connections between environmental and social injustices, particularly as related to racism and classism .

Women frequently spearhead local actions against spraying and power plant siting and organize others to demand toxic cleanups. When coupled with an environmental ethic that values rather than degrades nature, such actions have the potential both for raising women’s consciousness of their own oppression and for the liberation of nature from the polluting effects of industrialization. For example, many lower-middle-class women who became politicized through protests over toxic chemical wastes at Love Canal in New York simultaneously became feminists when their activism spilled over into their home lives.<sup>49</sup>

The principles of environmental justice, as drafted by the People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit in 1991 call for “the fundamental right to political, economic, cultural and environmental self-determination of all peoples” and design of the built environment “in balance with nature, honoring the cultural integrity of all our communities, and providing fair access for all to the full range of resources.”<sup>50</sup> While the environmental justice movement is not necessarily calling for the abolishment of social hierarchy and the dismantling of capitalism as sought by social ecology, these principles do fit with the vision of society articulated by a social ecological philosophy.

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<sup>47</sup> Merchant, Carolyn. (1993). Ecofeminism and feminist theory. In List, Peter (Ed.), *Radical environmentalism: philosophy and tactics* (pp. 49-55). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company. p. 51

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., p. 54

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., p. 51.

<sup>50</sup> People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit. (1991). *Principles of Environmental Justice*. Retrieved April 28, 2009, from <http://www.ejrc.cau.edu/princej.html>

Because the tactics of social ecology, bioregionalism, ecofeminism, and environmental justice are not as aggressive, these organizations are not often associated with the radical sect of the environmental movement. Their investment in social change and attempts to get at the root of the environmental crisis should be considered radical, however, and they will be examined in this paper under the heading of “social ecologist” groups.

<b>Table 1: Radical Environmentalism vs. Social Ecology</b>		
<b>RADICAL ENVIRONMENTALISM</b>	Definition A: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wilderness fundamentalism</li> <li>• Backed by biocentric philosophy, deep ecology</li> <li>• “No compromise” action in defense of wilderness</li> </ul>	Examples:  Earth First!  Greenpeace
	Definition B: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong activist orientation</li> <li>• Philosophy secondary to action</li> <li>• Direct action (environmental civil disobedience, monkeywrenching, ecotage)</li> </ul>	
<b>SOCIAL ECOLOGY</b>	List: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Philosophy influenced by anarchism and bioregionalism</li> <li>• Nonviolent environmental tactics</li> </ul>	Examples:  Planet Drum  Institute for Social Ecology  E.F. Schumacher Society  People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit
	Social Ecology (traditional understanding): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restructuring of society along lines that will serve the ecological health of the planet</li> <li>• Decentralized economies, more local self-reliance and benign technologies, direct and participatory democracy</li> </ul>	
	Socialist Ecofeminism: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental problems are rooted in the rise of capitalist</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Egalitarian socialist state</li> <li>• Resocialization of men and women into nonsexist, nonracist, nonviolent, anti-imperialist forms of life”</li> </ul>	
	<p>Environmental Justice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Political, economic, cultural and environmental self-determination of all peoples</li> <li>• Design of the built environment in balance with nature, honoring the cultural integrity of all our communities, and providing fair access for all to the full range of resources</li> </ul>	

### *I=PAT*

In another attempt to compare mainstream, radical, and social ecologist divisions in the environmental movement we can look to the *I=PAT* equation. This equation states that human impact on the environment (*I*), measured as “resource depletion or waste accumulation,” is equal to the product of population (*P*), affluence (*A*), per capita consumption, and technology (*T*), “the processes used to obtain resources and transform them into useful goods and wastes.”<sup>51</sup> This equation was formulated during the 1970’s through a debate between three professors named Barry Commoner, Paul Erlich, and John Holdren. Erlich and Holdren argued that overpopulation, the *P* term in the equation, was the source of environmental destruction as well as many social problems, leading to eventual catastrophe, summed up in the former’s 1968 book *The Population Bomb*.<sup>52</sup> Erlich

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<sup>51</sup> Santa-Barbara Family Foundation. (2003). *The IPAT Equation*. Retrieved December 18, 2008, from <http://www.sustainablescale.org/ConceptualFramework/UnderstandingScale/MeasuringScale/TheIPATEquation.aspx>

<sup>52</sup> Shabecoff, 2003, p. 89

founded the grassroots organization Zero Population Growth in the same year his book was published, emphasizing education and advocating for policy to reduce birth rates worldwide. Also focusing upon the  $P$  term in the  $I=PAT$  equation was the Club of Rome, a 1972 group who published a statistical analysis entitled *Limits to Growth*, arguing that humans were fast approaching the earth's carrying capacity. In contrast with these emphases upon population, Barry Commoner argued that "it was destructive, inappropriate technology, not excess population or affluence, that was chiefly responsible for the pollution that most threatened the earth's biological systems."<sup>53</sup> According to Commoner, the resolution to environmental problems "was not 'barbaric' measures to limit population growth or to set levels of permissible pollution and then regulate industry to try to make it meet those limits. What was required was to change technology so that it did not pollute and break the cycle of life. This could only happen, he contended, if the production system were taken out of the hands of private corporations and turned over to social governance."<sup>54</sup> Commoner's discussion of the necessity of economic reform is similarly critical of existing power structures as the ideas of social ecology. However, it will be seen that the focus of social ecologists in relation to the  $I=PAT$  equation is not the  $T$  term as was Commoner's focus, but is instead affluence, in contrast with mainstream and radical environmentalism who deal mostly with the impact term itself. As Murray Bookchin expressed in his article entitled *What is Social Ecology?*,

Unless we realize that the present market society, structured around the brutally competitive imperative of 'grow or die,' is a thoroughly impersonal, self-operating mechanism, we will falsely tend to blame other phenomena — technology as such or population growth as such — for environmental problems. We will ignore their

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<sup>53</sup> Shabecoff, 2003, p. 91

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 92



root causes, such as trade for profit, industrial expansion, and the identification of progress with corporate self-interest.<sup>55</sup>

This “grow or die” mentality decried by Bookchin is another way of describing the pursuit of affluence. To examine the direct environmental impact of affluence, the concept of an ecological footprint was developed by William Rees and Mathis Wackernagel in 1996. The ecological footprint is a measure calculated using “official statistics tracking consumption...[translated] into the amount of biologically productive land and water area required to produce the resources consumed and to assimilate the wastes generated on an annual basis”<sup>56</sup> In 2005 a group called Redefining Progress carried out a global ecological footprint analysis suggesting that “at present rates of consumption we would need 1.39 Earths to insure that future generations are at least as well off as we are now,” while countries with the largest negative impact on the global footprint were those with more urban areas and high fossil fuel use.<sup>57</sup> Herman Daly also confronted the impact of affluence in his paper “Economics in a Full World,” arguing that “humankind must make the transition to a *sustainable* economy—one that takes heed of the inherent biological limits of the global ecosystem so that it can continue to operate long into the future.”<sup>58</sup> If we do not begin to live with an understanding of the limitations of a finite planet, says Daly, environmental and economic disaster will ensue. His suggestions for sustainable societal changes include a reduction in material appetite and better product efficiency.

Improvement of this idea of eco-efficiency, or the “focus on maintaining or increasing the value of economic output while simultaneously decreasing the impact of economic activity

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<sup>55</sup> Bookchin, Murray. (1984). *What is Social Ecology?* Retrieved on April 8, 2009, from [http://dwardmac.pitzer.edu/Anarchist\\_Archives/bookchin/socecol.html#NOTES](http://dwardmac.pitzer.edu/Anarchist_Archives/bookchin/socecol.html#NOTES)

<sup>56</sup> Venetoulis, Jason and Talberth, John. (2006). *Ecological Footprint of Nations 2005 Update*. Retrieved from <http://www.rprogress.org/publications/2006/Footprint%20of%20Nations%202005.pdf>. p. 3

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 2-3

<sup>58</sup> Daly, Herman. (2005). Economics in a full world. *Scientific American*, 293(3), pp. 100-107. p. 100

upon ecological systems,”<sup>59</sup> is central to another recent paper relevant to a discussion of affluence, Michael Braungart, William McDonough, and Andrew Bollinger’s “Cradle-to-cradle design: creating healthy emissions—a strategy for eco-effective product and system design.”

Braungart, McDonough, and Bollinger argue that we must look past traditional notions of eco-efficiency which focus on “reduction and minimization” and do not take into consideration the necessity of a reconfiguration of material flows towards a strategy of eco-effectiveness, “which deal[s] directly with the question of maintaining or upgrading the quality and productivity of material resources.”<sup>60</sup> Materials are reconceptualized as either biological or technical nutrients and used accordingly—biological nutrients “consumed,” or cycled back into the natural environment and technical nutrients reused in a manner which increases the materials’ value. This idea of cradle-to-cradle design does not call for the reduction of product consumption but in fact encourages it, arguing that consumption can actually improve the natural environment.<sup>61</sup> However, several problems exist with this idea of “upcycling” for unlimited consumption. First, if the integrity of technical nutrients was in fact maintained and these materials reused in lieu of additional resource extraction, this admits the finite amount of the material and subsequently the impossibility of truly unlimited consumption. If there is enough material to make five televisions which are distributed evenly amongst five families, desire for a sixth television cannot be satisfied, although one family could have a second, television if one of the other families returned

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<sup>59</sup> Braungart, Michael, McDonough, William, & Bollinger, Andrew. (2007). Cradle-to-cradle design: creating healthy emissions—a strategy for eco-effective product and system design. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 15(13-14), pp. 1337-1348. p. 1337

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., p. 1338-1339

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., p. 1338

theirs to the upcycling system. Regarding biological nutrients, while “the successful interdependence and regenerative productivity of natural systems” dictates that “all outputs from one process become inputs in another,”<sup>62</sup> too much input can outbalance the system. A familiar example of this is the case of human-induced climate change, which is caused by too much carbon input into the carbon cycle. One example of biological nutrients given in the article is that of a textile that “can be used as garden mulch after its useful life as an upholstery fabric.”<sup>63</sup> However, if the garden mulch is not being used towards the regrowth of the natural resources used to create the original textile this may not truly be a cyclical system. There is also the problem of eco-apartheid inherent in a system in which new technologies are introduced without consideration of economic hierarchies. As Herman Daly, who most likely would support eco-effective products, discusses, product improvements must be accompanied by a restructuring of economic understandings.<sup>64</sup> Thus, while eco-effectiveness should definitely be pursued, it should be accompanied by a reduction in appetite and a separation of happiness from the pursuit of wealth<sup>65</sup>, as exemplified by the anti-consumerism movement.

### ***The Rise of the Anti-Consumerism Movement***

Simple living is not a new idea and indeed has been emphasized by a range of groups, from the utopian ideals of Brook Farm in the 1840’s, to Gandhi’s movement of resistance and self-reliance in the Indian struggle for independence, to the minimalism of the back-to-the-land movement of the 1960’s and 1970’s. However, it was not until the

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<sup>62</sup> Braungart, McDonough, & Bollinger, 2007, p. 1342

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., p. 1343

<sup>64</sup> Daly, 2005, p. 105

<sup>65</sup> See Revkin, Andrew. (2005, October 4). A new measure of well-being from a happy little kingdom. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/10/04/science/04happ.html>

1980's that the reduction of consumption gained momentum as an environmentally-focused movement in the United States. Inspired by Duane Elgin's 1981 book *Voluntary Simplicity: Toward a Way of Life That is Outwardly Simple, Inwardly Rich*, the voluntary simplicity movement encouraged "questioning the standard definitions that equate success with money and prestige and the accumulation of things...[and] returning to the good life."<sup>66</sup> Elgin argued that the United States was entering a period of decline which could be combated through the practice of voluntarily reducing one's level of consumption. As written by Elgin, "Voluntary simplicity responds to many of the critical problems of our era: environmental degradation, bureaucratic complexity, world hunger, a loss of social purpose and social cohesion, a dehumanizing economy, and many more...by coping simultaneously with scores of interrelated problems, this way of life provides a multifaceted approach that could not be achieved by addressing these problems on a one-by-one basis. This is not to say that a path of conscious simplicity is a cure-all for society's ills; rather, it represents a constructive beginning—an important first step toward their eventual resolution."<sup>67</sup> Voluntary simplicity is an approach to improving society by changing one's personal behaviors. Throughout the 1990's a significant number of people did in fact follow this call to change their consumptive habits; according to one study, 28% of Americans (60 million) were found to have "voluntarily reduced their income and their consumption in conscious pursuit of new personal or household priorities" between 1990

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<sup>66</sup> Maniates, Michael. (2002). In Search of Consumptive Resistance: the Voluntary Simplicity Movement. In T. Princen, M. Maniates, and Ken Conca (Eds.), *Confronting Consumption* (pp. 199-235). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press. p. 200

<sup>67</sup> Elgin, Duane. (1981). *Voluntary Simplicity: Toward a Way of Life That is Outwardly Simple, Inwardly Rich*. NY: William Morrow and Company, Inc. p. 124

and 1995 while another 1998 report stated that 20% of the US population had “permanently chosen to live on significantly less.”<sup>68</sup>

Specific models of anti-consumer living sprung up towards the latter half of the decade, including “freeganism” and the Freecycle Network, bolstered by the distributional advantages of increased internet usage in the United States. Freecycle is an organization founded in Arizona in 2003, connecting people who have usable items they no longer need with people desirous of such items. A similar service called FreeMarketRI was founded in Rhode Island in 2005 by the Rhode Island Resource Recovery Corporation; unfortunately this program is currently suspended. Media attention to voluntary simplicity and the problem of affluence became common throughout the late 1990’s, with major newspapers running articles on frugal living and the U.S. Public Broadcasting System showing two films about consumerism, *Affluenza* and *Escape from Affluenza*.<sup>69</sup> A more radical use of media to fight against the media industry, *Adbusters* magazine was first published in 1989 with an explicitly anti-consumerist message and the endorsement of theatrical tactics similar to those employed by Greenpeace.<sup>70</sup> *Adbusters* “tackles the consumption problem from a popular culture angle, attempting to ‘uncool’ advertising hype and reclaim at least some small slice of public media channels for use by the people rather than by corporate interests” through what is called “culture jamming,” a variety of “guerilla visual tactics” such as parody ads and the sponsorship of events such as Buy Nothing Day and TV Turnoff Week.<sup>71</sup> Similar creative tactics are employed by a man named Reverend Billy.

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<sup>68</sup> Maniates, 2002, pp. 200-1

<sup>69</sup> Maniates, 2002, p. 201

<sup>70</sup> Bordwell, Marilyn. (2002). Jamming Culture: Adbusters’ Hip Media Campaign against Consumerism. In T. Princen, M. Maniates, and Ken Conca (Eds.), *Confronting Consumption* (pp. 237-253). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press. pp. 242-3

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 246-7

Since 1996, Billy and his Stop Shopping gospel choir have preached on the dangers of consumerism, corporatization, and gentrification in places such as Starbucks and public street corners. From these varied organizations comes a clear message about affluence, “Consumerism is overwhelming our lives.”<sup>72</sup>

A quick note should be made on the difference between the anti-consumerism movement as described above and recent efforts towards “green consumerism.” Adherents to the ideals of voluntary simplicity can be divided into three categories including “downshifTERS, who reduce their consumption and income without deeply altering their way of living; strong simplifiers, who significantly restructure their lives; and holistic simplifiers, whose consistent rejection of consumerism flows from a coherent philosophy.”<sup>73</sup> Though varied in level of change to one’s life, voluntary simplicity has an explicit emphasis upon the *reduction* of consumption. Similarly, freegans “are people who employ alternative strategies for living based on limited participation in the conventional economy and minimal consumption of resources...embrac[ing] community, generosity, social concern, freedom, cooperation, and sharing in opposition to a society based on materialism, moral apathy, competition, conformity, and greed.”<sup>74</sup> Further,

Freeganism is a total boycott of an economic system where the profit motive has eclipsed ethical considerations and where massively complex systems of productions ensure that all the products we buy will have detrimental impacts most of which we may never even consider. Thus, instead of avoiding the purchase of products from one bad company only to support another, [freegans] avoid buying anything to the greatest degree [they] are able.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Reverend Billy and the Church of Stop Shopping. (2008). *About Us-Statement of Belief*. Retrieved December 19, 2008, from <http://www.revilly.com/about-us>

<sup>73</sup> Maniates, 2002, p. 200

<sup>74</sup> Wetlands Activism Collective. (2008). *What is a freegan?*. Retrieved December 19, 2008 from <http://freegan.info/>

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

This is in stark contrast with the ideas of green consumerism, which tells consumers to buy products deemed ecologically friendly. As explained by Julia Hailes, co-author of the 1988 book *Green Consumer Guide*, “Green consumerism creates a balance between the expectations of consumer behaviour and businesses' profit motives.”<sup>76</sup> Through the consumption of fair trade, organic, and other “ethical” products, the consumer is “using people power for positive change” as well as helping businesses by increasing competition.<sup>77</sup> While reducing consumption through increased efficiency or lowering one’s ecological footprint is often seen as a goal of this “green” trend, it is really dealing more with the technology term of the  $I=PAT$  equation than the affluence term. The idea that one can improve environmental conditions through his or her purchasing power reinforces ideas of environmental classism and works within the current system rather than challenging it as do ideals of anti-consumerism. For the purposes of this paper “anti-consumerism” references an attempt towards the goal of reduced consumption, not alternative forms of consumerism.

Table 2: Anti-consumerism vs. green consumerism	
Anti-consumerism	Voluntary simplicity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Downshiffters: <b>reduce consumption</b> and income without deeply altering their way of living</li> <li>• Strong simplifiers: significantly <b>restructure</b> their lives</li> <li>• Holistic simplifiers: <b>rejection of consumerism</b> flows from a coherent philosophy</li> </ul>
	Freegans <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Alternative</b> strategies for living based on <b>limited participation in the conventional economy</b> and <b>minimal consumption of resources</b></li> <li>• <b>Total boycott</b> of current economic system</li> <li>• <b>Avoid buying anything</b> to the greatest degree possible</li> </ul>

<sup>76</sup> Hailes, Julia. (1998). *Understanding the Green Consumer*. Retrieved December 19, 2008 from <http://www.gdrc.org/uem/green-consumer.html>

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

Green consumerism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Balance</b> between the <b>expectations of consumer behavior and businesses' profit motives</b></li> <li>• <b>Consumption</b> of fair trade, organic, and other <b>“ethical” products</b></li> <li>• Uses <b>people power</b> for positive change</li> <li>• Helps <b>businesses</b> by <b>increasing competition</b></li> </ul>
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*The Environmental Movement in the Twenty-First Century: Future Directions?*

With the turn of the millennium there has been a surge of grassroots environmental organizations in response to climate change and its associated problems. These include campus initiatives such as Campus Climate Challenge, Sierra Student Coalition, and the Student Environmental Action Coalition as well as groups combining environmental justice and climate activism such as Rising Tide North America, Mountain Justice, and Root Force. These organizations join the continuing efforts of the Big Green and existing radical environmental groups. In this study I seek to determine whether these new organizations are diverging from the widespread influence of the mainstream and radical environmentalism and if there has been an influence of the anti-consumerism movement upon these grassroots efforts. I will do this by profiling the environmental organizations currently existing in Rhode Island and reviewing media coverage of environmental trends in the state. It is hoped that this analysis will provide an understanding of the evolution of the movement and its future directions into the twenty-first century.



## Chapter Two: Methodology

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To answer the question, *to what extent does the environmental movement address material consumption and how is the movement changing into the twenty-first century?* I examined 108 environmental non-governmental organizations in Rhode Island. I used information from their mission statements and websites to create a classification based on when they were founded, their focus of action, and whether or not consumerism or reducing consumption was one of their stated goals. I used a similar approach in listing and classifying environmental groups at Brown (n=23). A more extensive profile was developed for RI chapters of the Big Ten (n=4), organizations founded within the past five years (n=11), and those which were found to have an emphasis on lowering consumption (n=9). Representatives from these groups were given a questionnaire/interview to fill out the profile. Additionally, a media review of coverage of anti-consumerism and other environmental trends in the Providence Journal from December 25, 1983 until present was carried out. For a summary of methods, see Table 3.

### *Listing of Rhode Island Organizations*

I compiled a list of Rhode Island's environmental organizations primarily from two sources. The Environmental Council of Rhode Island maintains a list of all its member organizations (n=65), "represent[ing] more than 45,000 voices who believe that collective, coordinated efforts are most effective for building sound environmental policies and

managing resources.”<sup>78</sup> Similarly, the Apeiron Institute for Sustainable Living publishes an online “Sustainable Rhode Island Directory,” which includes a list (n=91) of environmental organizations in the state, last updated on March 20, 2009. Much overlap exists between these two lists, but together they create a wide-ranging inventory of the environmental movement in Rhode Island. After a preliminary investigation of each organization, for-profit organizations were eliminated from the list, as well as those which do not have offices in Rhode Island or were no longer able to be contacted with the provided information. Additional organizations not found on either the ECRI or Apeiron lists were recommended by people or websites of the environmental community and subsequently added to my inventory. Realizing that the fluid nature of social movements makes it impossible to compile a list that encompasses all presently active organizations, the final list used in my study can be found in Appendix 1.

### ***Coding of organizations by year and primary focus of action***

To determine the year in which each organization was founded and their mission statements I visited the websites of the groups. If the needed information was not found online I then emailed and/or contacted the organizations by phone. I was able to determine the foundation year of all but nine groups, and the mission statements of all but five groups. Using the dates of foundation, I created a chronology of all the groups from the oldest to the most recently established. From the mission statements I color-coded the organizations according to their primary focus of action. The categories I used in coding the groups were Animal Rights, Biodiversity, Climate Justice, Conservation, Education, Energy,

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<sup>78</sup> Environmental Council of Rhode Island. (2008). *Our Members*. Retrieved March 22, 2009, from <http://www.environmentcouncilri.org/members.html>

Environmental Justice, Health, Land Trust, Law, NIMBY, Policy, Radical, Religious, Sustainable Agriculture, Sustainable Development, Transportation, Urban Greenspace, Waste Reduction, and Watershed Protection. Many of the groups could have fit into more than one category; in these cases I used information about the organizations specific campaigns to determine the best category.

***Keyword search: “reducing consumption”***

To determine whether organizations include reducing consumption as part of their mission and goals, I did a keyword search using consumption-related terms and root words of all the groups’ mission statements. The terms/root words searched for were “consum-,” “waste,” “reduc-,” “simpl-,” and “energy conservation.” When a word was found, the context of the word was read to determine whether it was relevant to the study. Those organizations which were found to include these terms in their mission statements in the context of reducing consumption were compiled into a list for further examination (Appendix 3).

***Interviews and further profiling of organizations***

I interviewed twenty environmental leaders to further understand the state of the movement from those who are directly involved. I first interviewed Greg Gerritt, a man who has been active in the environmental movement of Rhode Island for over fifteen years. Greg is the founder of Rhode Island’s Buy Nothing Day coat exchange as well a member of the Green Party, the Environmental Council of Rhode Island, Groundwork Providence, the Environmental Justice League of Rhode Island, and Prosperity for Rhode Island. He can thus be seen as a keystone member of the environmental community of the state and an

invaluable resource for questions regarding anti-consumerism and the state of the movement. I asked Greg the following questions:

- **What is the current scope of the environmental movement in Rhode Island?**
- **Are there trends in where you see results and where you don't see results?**
- **Is the majority of focus in the state on climate change?**
- **Is there a lot of grassroots (vs. corporate) activism in RI?**
- **Do you see any other people connecting multiple issues, social justice and environmental justice?**
- **Are there a lot of newer organizations springing up?**
- **Do you see organizations in Rhode Island dealing with consumption/anti-consumerism?**
- **Are people receptive to the message of anti-consumerism?**

In addition to interviewing Greg, I also asked questions of representatives from the four Big Ten organizations that have chapters in the state, groups founded from 2004-present, and groups that were coded as addressing consumption.<sup>79</sup> I emailed a questionnaire to the primary contact listed on each group's website; one respondent preferred to answer over the phone, so I conducted a phone interview. The questions I asked each of these organizations are as follows:

- **To what extent does your organization address consumption?**
- **If your organization does address consumption, what strategies/tactics do you employ in related campaigns?**
- **Can you name 1-3 RI organizations dealing with consumption?**
- ***[Additional question asked of the RI chapters of the Big Ten]* Do the RI chapter's mission, tactics, and/or issues differ from those of the national chapter?**

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<sup>79</sup> The groups questioned include Apeiron Institute for Environmental Living, Aquidneck Land Trust, Audubon Society of RI, Blackstone River Watershed Council, Environmental Justice League of RI, Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island Environmental Stewardship Task Force, Farm Fresh RI, Freecycle, New Dawn Earth Center, NWF RI- ECRI, Ocean State Earth First!, People's Power & Light, Recycling for RI Education, Rhode Island Jewish Environmental Alliance, Rhode Island Rivers Council, RI Interfaith Power and Light, Rising Tide North America, Sierra Club of RI, The Dunn Foundation, and The Nature Conservancy.

With the information provided by respondents and that found on the organizations' websites, I further profiled these groups to determine whether they could be classified as Big Green/corporate, social ecology, or radical. The classifying criteria were:

- **Volunteer or paid staff?**
- **Leadership Structure**
- **Organizational Structure**
- **Evidence of focus on green consumption/anti-consumption/social ecology?**

### ***Media Review***

To further examine recent trends in environmentalism, I conducted a media review of the Providence Journal from December 25, 1983 until the present. The ProQuest Newspapers Database was used for this search, and the time period for my search was limited by the restrictions of the available archives of this database. In accordance with my findings of trends in RI environmental organizations over the past 5 years, I decided to examine the prevalence of articles related to local food, climate justice, and religious environmentalism. I also decided to look at articles with mention of anti-consumerism, voluntary simplicity, and green business. After a process of trial and error regarding which search terms would provide results with the highest level of relevance, I came up with the following terms: for anti-consumerism, "*anti-consumerism*" and "*excess consumerism*," for climate justice, "*climate justice*" and "*climate change*" AND "*environmental justice*," for religious environmentalism, "*religion*" AND "*environmentalism*," "*religion*" AND "*consumerism*," and "*religion*" AND "*climate change*," for local food, "*local food movement*," "*eating local*," and "*local food*" AND "*environment*," for voluntary simplicity, "*voluntary simplicity*," and for green business, "*green business*." I skimmed the articles generated by each of these search queries to determine relevance to my search, and made

note of how many articles per year contained the search terms. Occasionally an article generated by a particular search term also contained another search term for the same trend; in these occasions I made sure not to double-count the particular article.

### ***Profile of Brown Organizations***

To compile a list of environmental organizations at Brown (n=23), I first visited the *Student Organizations at Brown* website, <http://mygroups.brown.edu>, and read through the listing of groups to determine which officially-recognized organizations have an environmental focus. I also found organizations through the environmental studies department website, the website of the “Brown is Green” initiative, recent articles in the *Brown Daily Herald*, and personal knowledge. As I did with the RI environmental groups, I organized the list of Brown groups by date of establishment and color coded them based on focus of action. My categories for focus of action included some different terms to reflect the different issues present on campus.<sup>80</sup> I applied the same keyword search to these organizations’ mission statements as previously employed with RI organizations. However, as many Brown organizations were found to focus on reducing one’s ecological footprint through sustainable design and green investment rather than reducing consumption interpretation of keyword search results had to be carried out differently. I only coded organizations as focusing on reducing consumption if they explicitly mentioned the reduction of waste; groups with a focus on energy efficiency were highlighted in a different color.

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<sup>80</sup> The categories used in coding the Brown groups were Cooperative, Outdoor Recreation, Education, Health, Environmental Thought, Energy, Waste Reduction, Food, Sustainable Design, Radical, Animal Rights, and Green Investment.

<b>Table 3: Summary of Methods</b>	
Listing of organizations	List taken from ECRI & Apeiron Institute websites, for-profit/governmental/non-active groups removed, others added by referral
Coding of organizations	Arranged by year of establishment and coded by focus of action
Mission of reducing consumption?	Mission statements coded for terms: “consum-,” “waste,” “reduce-,” “simpl-,” and “energy conservation”
Interviews/questionnaires	Greg Gerritt, representatives of Big Ten, new organizations (2004-present), those with focus on reducing consumption, information from questionnaires used for organizational profile
Media Review	Search of the Providence Journal from 12/25/83-3/23/09 to examine media coverage of selected environmental trends including anti-consumerism, green business climate justice, religious environmentalism, local food, and voluntary simplicity
Profiling of Brown organizations	List found on Brown mygroups website as well as through research; organizations arranged by year of establishment, coded by focus of action and reducing waste vs. energy efficiency

## Chapter Three: Results

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### *Classification of organizations by year and primary focus of action*

The color-coded and chronologized list of Rhode Island organizations can be found in Appendix 2. Overall, trends in Rhode Island environmental organizations appear to correlate with the history of the environmental movement as summarized in Chapter One. Four of the six organizations founded prior to 1960 are conservation organizations, including the Audubon Society, one of the Big Ten, and the Appalachian Mountain Club, a regional conservation society. The one law-focused organization, the Conservation Law Foundation, was founded in 1966, around the same time as the national Environmental Defense Fund (1967) and Natural Resources Defense Council (1970). Four organizations were classified as being policy-focused, and these were founded in 1970 and 1972, around the time of the first Earth Day and passage of monumental legislation such as the Clean Air Act. The passage of the Clean Water Act in 1972 could have influenced the two watershed protection organizations which were also founded during this time. The first group focused on alternative energy, the Rhode Island Solar Energy Association, was founded in 1975, just two years after the 1973 oil crisis. Defenders of Animals, an animal rights group, was founded in 1978, not long after the 1975 publication of Peter Singer's book, *Animal Liberation*, and the foundation of the Animal Liberation Front in 1976. Organizations with urban concerns such as urban greenspace, environmental justice, and environmental health were largely founded between 1981-1991. Nationwide, the environmental justice movement was sparked in 1978 with Lois Gibbs and the Love Canal disaster, while principles of environmental justice were coined at the First National People of Color



Environmental Justice Summit in 1991. The 1990's saw a variety of new issues being confronted in Rhode Island, such as waste reduction (Recycling for Rhode Island Education, 1991), transportation (Rhode Island Greenways Alliance, 1992), biodiversity (Butterfly Society of Rhode Island and Rhode Island Natural History Survey, both 1994), and sustainable development (Grow Smart RI, 1997 and RI Rural Development Council, 1998). These issues were seen nation- and world-wide with the 1990's recycling movement, 1990 oil price shock, and 1992 United Nations Earth Summit leading to both the Convention on Biological Diversity and Agenda 21 program on sustainable development. 1990 was also the year that the first organization I identified as having a focus on reducing consumption was founded; this will be discussed in more depth in the following section.

The beginning of this decade, 1999-2009, saw the establishment of primarily traditionally-focused environmental groups—land trusts, conservation, education, biodiversity, watershed councils—and two urban-focused groups. However, starting in 2004, some interesting new trends have arisen. Farm Fresh Rhode Island, whose mission is “is growing a local food system that values the environment, health and quality of life of RI farmers and eaters,”<sup>81</sup> was founded in 2004. Local food has been a focus of the environmental movement since the 1960's with efforts such as organic farming, the cooperative movement, and Community Supported Agriculture. However, it was not until recently that it became a more widespread movement, influenced by books such as *Fast Food Nation* (2001) and *The Omnivore's Dilemma* (2006), the Slow Food Movement, and the coining of the term “locavore” in 2005 (later to be called word of the year by the New

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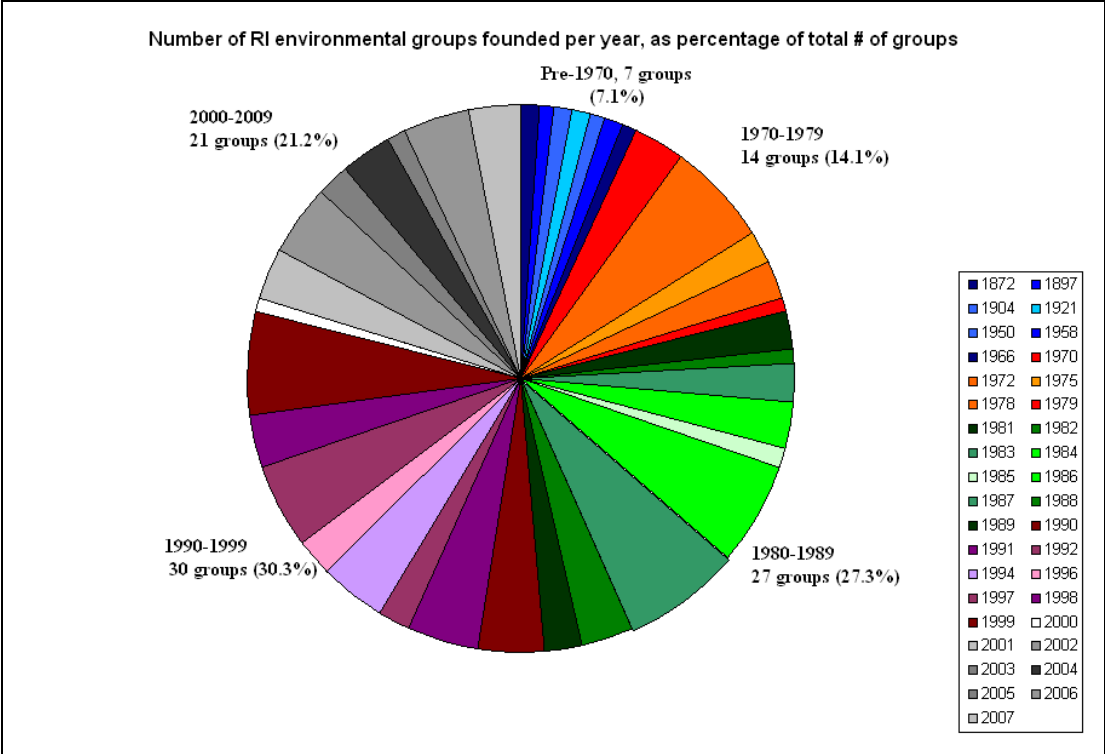
<sup>81</sup> Farm Fresh Rhode Island. (2009). *About Farm Fresh Rhode Island*. Retrieved April 8, 2009, from <http://www.farmfreshri.org/about/about.php>

Oxford American Dictionary).<sup>82</sup> Freecycle Providence, a local chapter of an organization focused on waste reduction through an organized gift economy, and Ocean State Earth First! were two groups with radical philosophies also founded in 2004. In 2006 and 2007 four religious groups with an environmental focus were established, the first of such groups seen on my chronology indicating either the newness of religious environmentalism as a trend or the dissolution of previous groups focused on the issue. The groups span denominations, from the Catholic New Dawn Earth Center, Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island Environmental Stewardship Task Force, and Rhode Island Jewish Environmental Alliance to the broad-ranging Rhode Island Interfaith Power and Light. The trend of religious environmental concern will be discussed in the next chapter. Additionally, four of the nine groups seen to focus on reducing consumption were founded during the past five years.

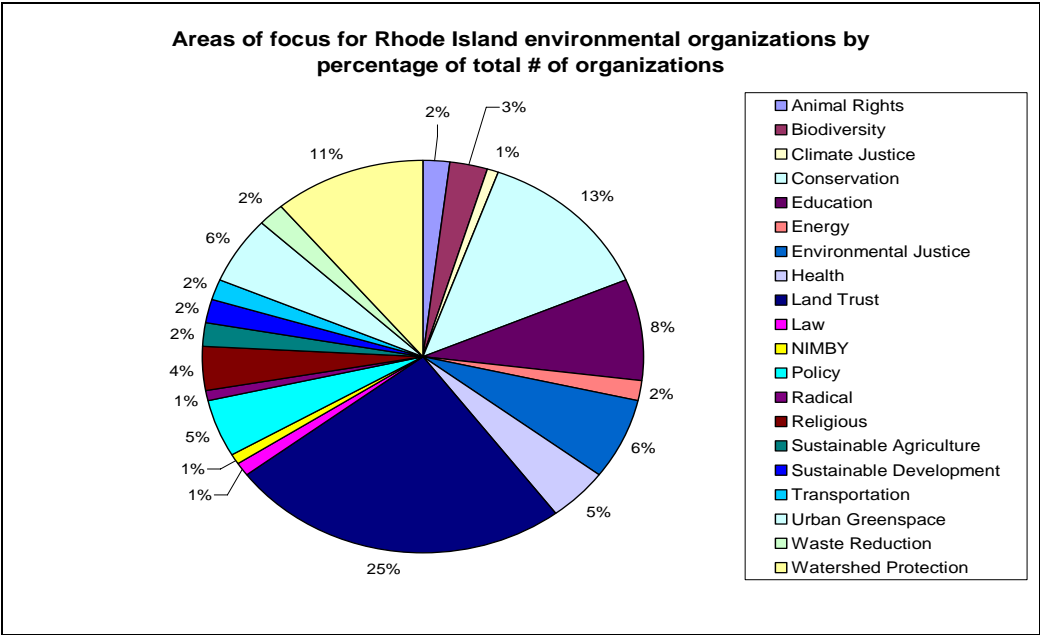
The decade in which the most environmental organizations were founded was 1990-1999 (30 organizations, 30.3% of total # of organizations), with 1980-1989 following close behind (27 organizations, 27.3% of total). The decade from 2000-2009 saw 21 organizations established (21.2% of total), 1970-1979 had 14 new groups (14.1%), and prior to 1970, 7 groups existed in the state (7.1%). Out of a total 108 environmental organizations in the state, 25% of organizations are land trusts, 13% focus on conservation, 12% focus on urban issues (6% each for urban greenspace and environmental justice), 11% focus on watershed protection, and 8% focus on education, while organizations focusing on health and policy each represent 5% of the groups. Nine groups (8% of total), were found to focus on reducing consumption.

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<sup>82</sup> Oxford University Press. (2007, November 12). *Oxford Word Of The Year: Locavore*. Retrieved from <http://blog.oup.com/2007/11/locavore/>



**Figure 1:** Number of Rhode Island environmental groups founded per year, as a percentage of the total # of groups (total=99). I was unable to find dates of establishment for 9 groups in my study.



**Figure 2:** Breakdown of areas of focus for Rhode Island environmental organization by percentage of total # of organizations (total=108).

## ***Keyword Search***

I identified nine organizations whose mission statements mentioned reducing consumption as a focus of the group, as per the five terms/root words I chose as indicators (“consum-,” “waste,” “reduc-,” “simpl-,” and “energy conservation”). Some of the mission statements which contained these words were not related to *reducing* consumption. For example, the mission statement of the RI Chapter of the Weston A. Price Foundation contained the following sentence: “Dr. Price's research demonstrated that humans achieve perfect physical form and perfect health generation after generation only when they **consume** nutrient-dense whole foods and the vital fat-soluble activators found exclusively in animal fats.” While “consum-” is found in this sentence, the organization is seeking to change consumption patterns rather than lowering overall consumption. I ignored such groups for which the context of the found words made them inappropriate for inclusion. Appendix 3 lists all the groups whose mission statements contained each of the keywords. Those which are relevant to my study are highlighted in green. Special mention should be made of the Dunn Foundation. While the mission statement of this organization did not contain any of the keywords, one of the news headlines on the front page of its website read,

Is Too Much Stuff at Fault? Too Much Stuff - everyone is talking about it - As consumer consumption drives the American economy, we are also the victims of a glut of advertising which makes us feel lousy about ourselves, litters up our cities, towns and countryside with advertising on just about everything, and intentionally makes us feel we need to buy stuff.”<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Dunn Foundation. (2007). *Is too much stuff at fault?* Retrieved March 23, 2009, from <http://www.dunnfoundation.org/>

The organization's mission statement discusses combating "visual pollution – obtrusive signage, visual clutter, excessive pavement and street widening, overhead utilities and poles, incongruous architecture, billboards, strip commercial zones and urban blight." Considering the anti-consumerist nature of these words in the mission statement and the article found on its website, I decided to include this organization in my list of groups focusing on reducing consumption.

Nine organizations were found to address consumption: Apeiron Institute, Aquidneck Land Trust, Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island Environmental Stewardship Task Force, Freecycle, New Dawn Earth Center, People's Power and Light, Recycling for RI Education, Rising Tide North America, and the Dunn Foundation. Of these, Rising Tide North America's mission statement contained four of the five keywords, Aquidneck Land Trust and People's Power and Light both contained three keywords, two keywords were found in the mission statements of Freecycle, New Dawn Earth Center, and Recycling for Rhode Island Education, and Apeiron Institute and Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island Environmental Stewardship Task Force each contained only one keyword. As discussed above, the Dunn Foundation did not contain any of the keywords in its mission statement, but it was included due to anti-consumerist language on its website. All of these organizations were founded in the past 20 years, clustered around two separate periods in time. Aquidneck Land Trust (1990), Recycling for RI Education (1991), and the Apeiron Institute (1994) were all founded in the early 1990's, while Freecycle (2004), New Dawn Earth Center (2006), Rising Tide North America (2006), and the Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island Environmental Task Force (2007) were founded in the past five years.

I gave a questionnaire (see page 35) via email or phone to representatives from these nine organizations which were found to focus on reducing consumption. The questionnaire deals with their philosophy and practice; the results of this investigation are discussed in the following sections.

### *Interview with Greg Gerritt*<sup>84</sup>

My conversation with Greg Gerritt provided much insight into the current state of the environmental movement in Rhode Island. Greg has been an active environmentalist since 1967 when he started doing endangered species work and organized his high school for the first Earth Day. He has been a Green Party candidate for mayor of Providence, as well as being involved with the Environmental Council of Rhode Island, Groundwork Providence, the Environmental Justice League of RI, Prosperity for RI, and the Buy Nothing Day coat exchange. When asked about the current scope of the environmental movement in Rhode Island, Greg replied, “The environmental movement is active. Whether it’s actually effective or not remains to be seen.” He identified the core of the Environmental Council of Rhode Island and the organization of the movement as the policy-focused groups such as Save the Bay and the Sierra Club, saying that one of the benefits of working in such a small state is that “everybody is in communication.” Energy and global warming were identified by Greg as the area of focus that is seeing results right now. As for whether the majority of focus in the state was towards climate change, Greg assured that there was such a variety of issues to focus on that a majority of focus could not exist, though perhaps there was a plurality. Policy groups were said to place a lot of emphasis upon climate change. “Look at the policy side—just looking at policy, there are

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<sup>84</sup> All of the quotes in this section are from an interview with Greg Gerritt occurring on February 24, 2009.

three major issues, one is energy and global warming, another is water, and the third is probably trash. There is also always a movement for protecting land.” Looking at the organizational trends in Appendix 2, policy groups only make up 5% of the environmental groups in the state, but Greg’s discussion of water and land protection is definitely seen in the 27 land trusts (25% of groups), 14 conservation groups (13%), and 12 organizations focused on watershed protection (11%), which together make up almost half of the organizations in the state. Greg argued that the conception of “grassroots” was all semantics. He did, however, express disdain for the “Potomac Fever” of larger, corporate environmental groups acting on a national scale. “There are environmental groups that are much closer to the corporate agenda than others. Most people in the movement don’t consider those environmental groups!” So, we agreed that the national chapter of the Sierra Club was short-sighted, the local Rhode Island chapter was certainly “grassroots.”

Greg said that he found himself to be one of the only people who “really connects all the issues,” which he attributed to his political identification as a Green. The relatively new (2007) Environmental Justice League of Rhode Island (of which he is a founding member) was discussed as being a group that works to connect the issues of social and environmental justice. Other than the Environmental Justice League, Greg was not aware of many recently formed organizations. He mentioned that land trusts and watershed groups are started on a pretty regular basis. Indeed, looking at the chronology, from 1999-present six land trusts have been established and three watershed groups have formed, representing a little over a third of the groups started during this time period. Each decade since 1970 has seen 2-4 watershed groups formed. It should be noted, however, that land trust creation appears to have slowed down from its peak in 1980’s (12 new land trusts) and

1990's (10 new land trusts), as there have been no new land trusts created in the past six years. The other new trend in environmentalism discussed by Greg was the local food movement, which he described as being "almost foolproof" in its success due to connections between locally grown food and reduction of greenhouse gases and pesticide use, and an overall increase in the perceived healthiness of such food. Greg looked positively upon this movement, saying, "That's the future...the local economy."

As to anti-consumerism, he cited the growth of the Buy Nothing Day coat exchange as evidence of increased awareness of over consumption. This event was started in 1996 as a useful protest in conjunction with Adbusters magazine's Buy Nothing Day call to action. The objective of the national event is to protest consumerism by not buying anything on "Black Friday," the day after Thanksgiving and the unofficial start of the holiday shopping season. In Rhode Island, Greg organized a coat exchange which would go further than simply urging people not to shop by asking those with old coats they no longer needed to bring them so people who are in need of a coat could receive one for free. In the publicity surrounding the coat exchange Greg said it was made "very clear that we are looking at the nature of consumption in America, that we're looking at global warming, deforestation, and what that means and why it happens and how that's driven by consumption." Beyond the environmental impacts, the event is a comment on affluence, "dealing with issues of poverty—how in the richest country in the world are there people who don't have enough warm clothes to get through the winter?" In this way the event is "both a serious political protest and something for the community." Despite not being an official organization with any sort of non-profit status the coat exchange has grown every year since its inception 12 years ago. There are currently five different sites throughout the state and several thousand



coats exchanged. Ending the interview, Greg maintained a positive attitude towards the future of anti-consumerism, asserting, “More and more people are beginning to realize that an economy built strictly on consumption is an economy that is never going to work.”

### *Questionnaire Results and Profiling of Organizations*

Eleven of twenty organizations responded to my questionnaire. Two of those that didn't respond, Freecycle and Ocean State Earth First!, are decentralized organizations without formal leadership for which arbitrary representatives were selected based on information on the respective organizations websites, lowering the likelihood of response. Additionally, during the process of seeking contact information for the Rhode Island Jewish Environmental Alliance it was determined that this organization is no longer in existence. I decided to include the organization in my chronology despite its current inactivity since its formation in 2006 is supportive of the trend of religious environmentalism of the past five years. However, I did not profile the organization any further. Only two of the eleven respondents professed not having any focus upon consumption, the Environmental Council of Rhode Island and the Rhode Island Rivers Council. The other nine organizations all claimed to address consumption, though the extent to which consumption was dealt with varied widely over the spectrum of green consumerism to anti-consumerism. For example, the respondent from Farm Fresh Rhode Island wrote that they “**promote** the consumption of locally grown food,”<sup>85</sup> while the Blackstone River Watershed Council was said to “deal with the **consequences of irresponsible consumption** by constantly organizing cleanups of the river and its

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<sup>85</sup> Griffin, Sheri. (2009, March 17). Email correspondence.

banks.”<sup>86</sup> I coded all the responses according to whether they exemplified green consumerism or anti-consumerism; these can be found in the table in Appendix 4. Of all the organizations questioned, the three local offices of the Big Ten who responded to my questionnaire were the least focused on changing consumption patterns. ECRI claimed not to address consumption, as previously mentioned, while the center of focus around consumption for the Audubon Society and the Nature Conservancy was “greening” their offices and education centers. It should here be noted that while my original thesis question sought to examine material consumption, I have since expanded my focus to also look at energy consumption, due to its direct relevance to climate change and the growing number of organizations seeking to address energy and climate issues. I was intentionally vague in my questionnaire, as I was also interested in discovering how “consumption” was interpreted by different organizations. Four of the respondents discussed energy consumption, four of the respondents discussed material consumption, one organization talked about both energy and material consumption, one organization mentioned water consumption, and one organization discussed land consumption. Education and outreach were the most widespread tactics, with five groups responding with terms such as educate, mentor, encourage, remind, advocate, and outreach. As to other Rhode Island organizations which address consumption, a variety of responses were provided including Apeiron Institute (3 times), Audubon Society of RI, Buy Nothing Day Winter Coat Exchange, Clean Water Action, Coalition for Water Security, Conservation Law Foundation, Environmental Council of RI (2 times), Environment RI, Grow Smart RI, People’s Power and Light, Prosperity for Rhode Island, Rhode Island Land Trust Council, RI Interfaith Power and

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<sup>86</sup> Clemente, Alice. (2009, March 23) Email correspondence.

Light, and the Sierra Club. It is interesting to note that of these fourteen groups, only four (Apeiron Institute, Buy Nothing Day Winter Coat Exchange, People’s Power and Light, and RI Interfaith Power and Light) were identified in my research as focusing on reducing consumption based on language in their mission statements. Also, while the Environmental Council of Rhode Island was mentioned twice, the respondent to my questionnaire from ECRI said that they “hardly address consumption.”<sup>87</sup> Additionally, only one of the groups mentioned, RI Interfaith Power and Light, was founded in the past five years.

Using the information from the questionnaires and information from their websites, I further profiled these nineteen organizations according to their organizational structure. For the questions regarding evidence of green consumption, anti-consumption, and social ecology, I either used questionnaire responses or information from the mission statements or “About Us” sections of the websites for organizations that had not responded. The chart profiling these organizations can be seen in Appendix 4. Many interesting organizational patterns can be found in this chart. Thirteen of the nineteen groups have paid staff, however, all of the volunteer-run organizations were founded in the past five years. Similarly, five of the total groups had no formal leadership and three had a decentralized organizational structure—all of which were founded in the past five years. Five groups were found to contain elements of social ecology: Farm Fresh RI (2004), Freecycle (2004), Ocean State Earth First! (2004), Rising Tide North America (2006), and People’s Power and Light (2002). These are all relatively new groups, People’s Power and Light being the only one not founded within the last five years. Farm Fresh RI was the only recent group found to be promoting green consumerism. As for the Big Ten, the results of their

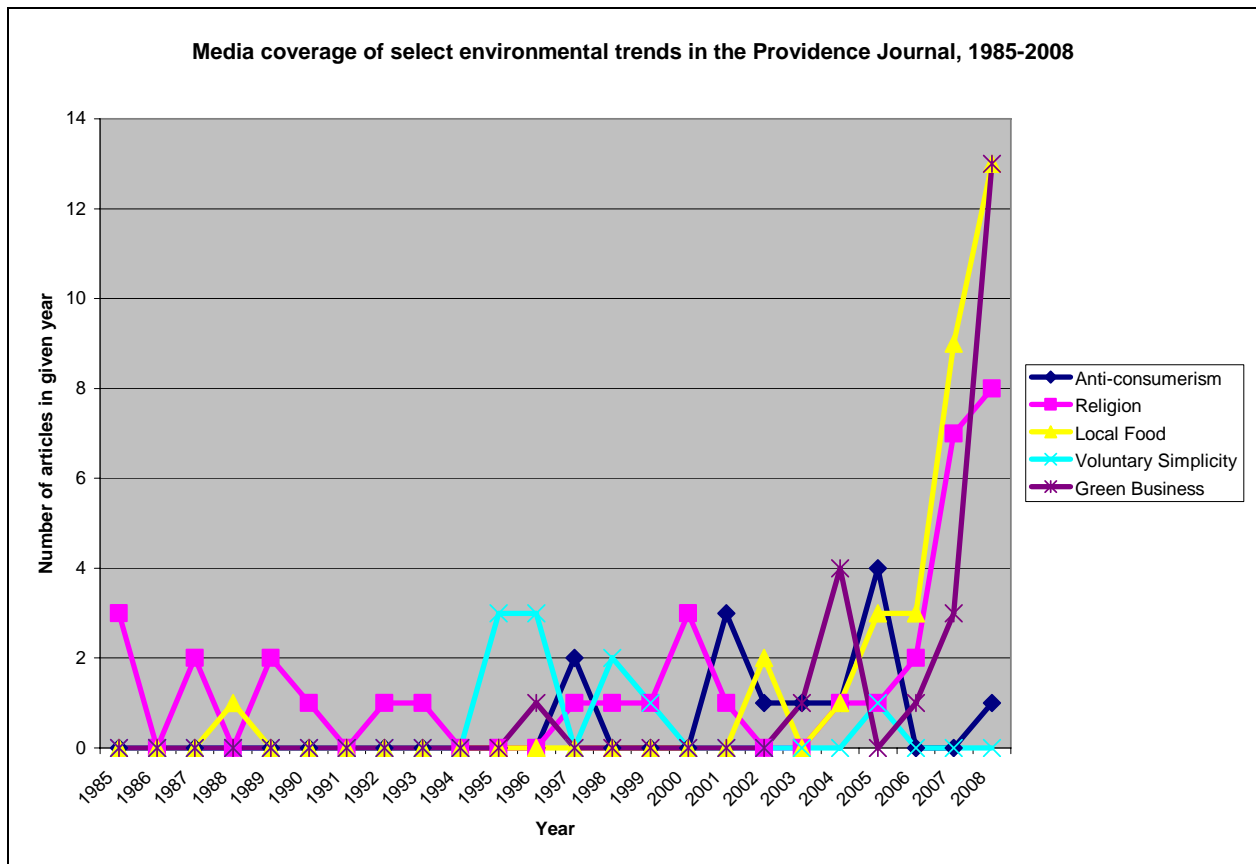
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<sup>87</sup> Gerritt, Greg. (2009, March 12). Email correspondence.

organizational profiling were overall predictable: they all have paid staff, an executive director and board of directors, are non-profits, and do not have a strong focus on consumption. Overall this organizational profile seems to suggest that there is a trend towards inclusion of social ecology principles amongst newly arising environmental groups.

### ***Media Review***

The trend in Providence Journal coverage of the six chosen environmental foci (anti-consumerism, religious environmentalism, local food, voluntary simplicity, green business, and climate justice) showed many interesting patterns. After determining the annual number of articles resulting from each search term (Appendix 5), I plotted this information on a graph to compare coverage of each subject over the past twenty-four years (Figure 3). One exception is climate justice, which was not included on the graph as only two articles were found with the relevant search terms, one in 2007 and one in 2009. I did not include data from the first three months of 2009 on the graph due to the incomplete nature of the year. It should, however, be noted that between January 1, 2009 and March 23, 2009 there were two articles containing the search terms for local food and one article containing the search terms for green business. None of the other search terms were found in the first three months of this year.



**Figure 3: Annual prevalence of articles covering select environmental trends in the Providence Journal, 1985-2008.**

Examining the patterns of each environmental trend over the years, religious concern for the environment was the only trend present in the media from 1985-1994 besides one article about local foods in 1988. During this time period, the average number of articles discussing religion and the environment was one per year, with an annual variation of 0-3. In the years 1994-1996 there were no articles about religious environmentalism, and 1997, 1998, and 1999 each only saw one article. Approximately the same time period (1995-1999) saw a rise in the number of articles referencing voluntary simplicity (three articles both in 1995 and 1996, two in 1998, and one in 1999) and anti-consumerism (two articles in 1997, coincidentally the one year in this time period where there were no articles referencing voluntary simplicity, hinting at the complementarity of

the concepts). Looking back at the history of the environmental movement, the mid-1990's were a time of increased public interest in voluntary simplicity and escaping "affluenza," which appears to be represented on the graph. After 1999 voluntary simplicity was only mentioned in the newspaper one more time, in 2005. Anti-consumerism remained out of the media from 1998 through 2000, while "religion and the environment" reached a local peak of three articles in 2000, dropping back down to one article in 2001 and no articles in 2002. Over the twenty-four year period of the study, anti-consumerism had the largest amount of coverage during the five-year period of 2001-2005. During this period a total of 10 articles addressed anti-consumerism, with a yearly peak of four articles during 2005. During anti-consumerism's highest year of coverage, green business plummeted from four articles (in 2004) to zero. However, from 2005 to 2008, mention of green business steadily rose from zero articles to thirteen articles. A similar trajectory was seen by local food, which, after its initial 2002 two article peak, rose from zero to thirteen articles over the course of six years: zero articles in 2003, one article in 2004, two articles each in 2005 and 2006, nine articles in 2007, and thirteen articles in 2008. Media coverage about "religion and the environment" also experienced a media boom in this decade, with zero articles in 2003, one article each in 2004 and 2005, two articles in 2006, seven articles in 2007, and five articles in 2008. Anti-consumerism was mentioned in only one article in 2008. It is yet to be foreseen whether the trend of increasing media coverage of local food, green business, and, to a lesser extent, religious environmentalism will continue through 2009. However, as previously mentioned, two articles on local food and one on green business have already been published in the first quarter of this year, which holds promise for greater coverage in the remaining months. Investigation of media coverage is relevant to a

study of the environmental movement as the popular media is an important avenue for communication of issues between organizations, citizens, and the government, highlighting which issues are drawing the attention of significant numbers of people and/or those with political influence. Overall, the results of the media review corresponded with data regarding the establishment of new organizations addressing local food, religious environmentalism, and climate justice since 2004. Green business has also seen a lot of coverage in the media, reflecting recent trends towards buying and producing “green,” but anti-consumerism has not completely disappeared from mention, and the peak of coverage of this movement was within the last five years, so hope remains for a future resurgence of popular concern regarding consumption trends.

### ***Profile of Brown Organizations***

My investigation of student groups at Brown found 23 organizations focused on the environment. The majority of these groups (n=14) were founded in the past five years, suggesting the fluidity of student organizing. Older organizations were of a more traditional focus, including two residential/dining cooperative organizations, two groups focused on outdoor recreation, one education initiative, and one group related to environmental health. Newer organizations were dominated by issues such as energy, sustainable design, green investment, and local food. The trend of local food interest on campus correlates with the establishment of the RI local food movement—Farm Fresh RI was in fact founded by two Brown graduates. However, it is interesting to note that there is a larger focus on sustainable design and green business/investment at Brown than in the general RI environmental movement, as reflected in the number of related organizations as a percentage of the total number of groups. Only four organizations were found to encourage

less material consumption (highlighted in pink): the two cooperatives, the Eco-Reps, and the recent Beyond the Bottle initiative. Eleven groups (highlighted in green) focus on the idea of eco-efficiency and sustainable consumption.

1970	Cooperative	Brown Association for Cooperative Housing
1983	Cooperative	Environmental House (West House)
1986	Outdoor Recreation	Outdoor Leadership Training, Brown (BOLT)
1990	Education	Brown is Green Initiative (B.I.G.)
pre-2001	Outdoor Recreation	Outing Club, Brown (BOC)
2001	Health	Breeze Against Wheeze
2004	Environmental Thought	Watershed
2004	Waste Reduction	Eco Reps
2005	Outdoor Recreation	Brown Boobies (Student Bird Club)
2005	Food	Sustainable Food Initiative
2006	Sustainable Design	Engineers Without Borders Chapter, Brown (EWB)
2006	Energy	EmPower
2006	Radical	Students for a Democratic Society
2007	Animal Rights	Animal Rights Club, Brown (BARC)
2007	Food	Real Food Challenge
2008	Sustainable Design	Emerging Green Leaders
2008	Sustainable Design	Progress Initiative, Brown (BPI)
2008	Energy	Project 2020
2009	Green Investment	Socially Responsible Investment Fund, Brown
2009	Waste Reduction	Beyond the Bottle
	Green Investment	Sustainability Consulting and Investment Partnership
	Outdoor Recreation	Wilderness Medicine
	Animal Rights	Students for the Humane Treatment of Homeless Animals, Brown



## Chapter Four: Analysis and Recommendations

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In consideration of my original thesis question, *To what extent does the environmental movement address material consumption and how is the movement changing into the twenty-first century?*, my results can be sorted into three different categories, “Scope of the movement,” “New trends,” and “Anti-consumerism vs. green business.” I offer a variety of recommendations for each of these categories at the end of each section. A table summarizing key points and recommendations can be found at the end of this chapter.

### *Scope of the movement*

Overall, the number of groups and variety of environmental issues addressed in the state of Rhode Island is astounding. For a state with a land area of only 1,044.93 square miles and a population of 1,057,832, to have over one hundred environmental groups is quite impressive. Taking into consideration the fact that I divided these groups into about twenty different categories of focus with more subdivisions possible, the complexity of the movement becomes even clearer. There has been an almost equal number of new groups established during each of the past three decades, which only accounts for those that are still active today. The groups examined in this paper were mostly located in the directories of the Environmental Council of Rhode Island and the Apeiron Institute, along with those which I discovered through word of mouth, recommendations, and research. Thus, there are definitely even more environmental groups in the state which were not examined in this research. Considering these shortcomings of my investigation, how do my findings of the overall scope of the environmentalism in Rhode Island relate to Shellenberger and

Nordhaus' criticism of a stagnant movement dominated by old tactics and lacking in meaningful alliances?

My examination of representatives of the Big Ten in Rhode Island both confirmed and refuted Shellenberger and Nordhaus' claims that

the institutions that define what environmentalism means boast large professional staffs and receive tens of millions of dollars every year from foundations and individuals. Given these rewards, it's no surprise that most environmental leaders neither craft nor support proposals that could be tagged 'non-environmental.' Doing otherwise would do more than threaten their status; it would undermine their brand<sup>88</sup>

The organizational structures of the Environmental Council of Rhode Island (the RI representative of the National Wildlife Federation), the Audubon Society of Rhode Island, and the RI chapters of the Sierra Club and the Nature Conservancy are common amongst the Big Ten, with paid staff and an executive director and governing board. These organizations do not tend to challenge the status quo, mostly advocating for energy efficiency and office greening rather than arguing against consumerism. They all serve as education and/or policy-oriented organizations focused on issues such as land conservation and climate change. However, as expressed by Greg Gerritt in our interview, they largely maintain a more grassroots approach than their national counterparts. Indeed, while the Audubon Society "cooperates on federal issues with the National Audubon Society when asked,"<sup>89</sup> it is technically independent of the national organization. A similar story exists for the Environmental Council of Rhode Island, about which Greg Gerritt said, "ECRI is completely independent. We sort of coordinate with NWF when we can, but we do what we want on issues we wish to work on. We are RI focused, though we pay attention to

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<sup>88</sup> Shellenberger and Nordhaus, 2004, p. 11

<sup>89</sup> Marks, Eugenia. (2009, March 11). Email correspondence.

national issues.”<sup>90</sup> As an umbrella organization attempting to connect the varied environmental organizations of Rhode Island, ECRI also diverges from the typical agenda of the Big Green. Thus, while these local chapters do remain within a mainstream environmentalist framework, I would argue that they do diverge from the professional “brand” by tailoring their focus to the state’s needs in terms of issues and overall tactics. I did not find evidence that the other organizations associated with the Big Green agenda (see page 14) have a viable presence in RI.

Beyond the Big Four, I identified several new trends of environmentalism which challenge claims by Shellenberger and Nordhaus that “environmentalists ask not what we can do for non-environmental constituencies but what non-environmental constituencies can do for environmentalists.”<sup>91</sup> Indeed, religious environmentalism, climate justice, and the local food movement all bring together people with a variety of interests and degrees of traditional involvement with environmental issues; these trends will be discussed in the next section. I would also like to give a bit of focus to the increase in values of social ecology amongst new environmental groups. In my organizational profile of groups formed in the past five years and those focusing on reducing consumption, I identified five organizations with ideals that fit under the heading of social ecology: Farm Fresh Rhode Island, Freecycle, Ocean State Earth First!, Rising Tide North America, and People’s Power and Light. Local and alternative economies, non-hierarchical or cooperative organization, and community-based action are characteristics professed by these groups, certainly a challenge to a more professional, top-down status quo. The inclusion of Ocean State Earth First! under the heading of social ecology is of particular interest considering its

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<sup>90</sup> Gerritt, Greg. (2009, March 12). Email correspondence.

<sup>91</sup> Shellenberger and Nordhaus, 2004, p. 9

history as a radical organization focused on wilderness defense. However, in recent years there have been efforts to incorporate a deeper social critique into the group's philosophy.

In a Lughnasadh (August) 2008 issue of the *Earth First Journal*, Liam Sionnach wrote,

EF! would do best to reimagine what becoming powerful might feel like. It would benefit us to experience our power intimately embodied in spaces where capitalism is being called into question. This means we would not continue to exist as a mere protest movement but rather as criminals experimenting with ways to survive. We would notice that a similar fabric runs throughout society, connecting us not solely to other predominately white social movements but also to many people who survive without compromise in this world on fire. We are not individuals acting on our moral impulses; we are a social force becoming aware of its power.<sup>92</sup>

Here we see a call beyond the direct actions traditionally associated with Earth First! and a desire for solidarity with marginalized populations. It should be noted that the author is not looking for Earth First! to distance itself from radical tactics; later in the piece he discussed “stealing products and destroying green capitalist manifestations—for example, looting Whole Foods or destroying hybrid cars.”<sup>93</sup> However, it is the inclusion of a critique of social hierarchy and the injustice of capitalism that illustrates a new direction for Earth First!, and perhaps the overall environmental movement.

Where Shellenberger and Nordhaus' critique holds true is the lamentation that “the environmental movement...is too divided to get the job done.”<sup>94</sup> As mentioned in the opening paragraph of this section, there were many groups missing from the ECRI and Apeiron Institute lists and even my expanded list was sure to miss some organizations. The groups which were missing from ECRI and the Apeiron Institute's lists were newly established groups and more urban, environmental justice focused groups. I looked to the

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<sup>92</sup> Sionnach, Liam. (2008, Lughnasadh). *Earth First Means Social War: Becoming an Anti-Capitalist Ecological Social Force*. *Earth! First Journal*. Retrieved from <http://www.earthfirstjournal.org/article.php?id=388>

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> Shellenberger and Nordhaus, 2004, p. 11

Providence Plan website to find groups with a community-based urban environmental focus, adding Direct Action for Rights and Equality (DARE), the Elmwood Foundation, Greater Camp Concerned Citizens, Stop Wasting Abandoned Properties, West Broadway Neighborhood Association, and West Elmwood Housing Development Corporation. The focus of these groups is largely providing for the basic survival needs—predominantly housing—and support of largely underprivileged community members, far from the center of thought for many mainstream environmental groups. As quoted in *Diversity and the future of the U.S. Environmental Movement*, “study results presented in *Toward a New Ecological Majority* indicate that, of the nation’s Ecological Base (10 percent of the population and 15 percent of the electorate), 89 percent of members are white, 82 percent are older than 35, 78 percent have attended at least some college and 26 percent earn more than \$80,000 year.”<sup>95</sup> These statistics put a numerical reality to the marginalization of minorities, young people, and the poor within the environmental movement. None of the 23 Brown environmental organizations discussed in my study were included on the ECRI or Apeiron Institute lists, though a recent visit to the Apeiron directory of environmental groups found a recently-added college organization, URI’s Student Action for Sustainability.<sup>96</sup> Similarly, Greg Gerritt, a longstanding member of the environmental community of Rhode Island was not aware of many new environmental organizations other than Farm Fresh RI and the Environmental Justice League of RI, the latter of which he was a founder. If the movement is to have any sort of impact in enacting change, it is critical that new ideas and approaches to problems as well as underrepresented viewpoints are

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<sup>95</sup> Enderle, Emily. (2007). Framing the discussion. In Enderle, Emily (Ed.), *Diversity and the future of the U.S. environmental movement* (pp. 5-12). New Haven, CT: Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies.

<sup>96</sup> Apeiron directory (<http://directory.sustainableri.org/search.cfm?status=browse&categoryid=143>)

incorporated to address both new and more traditional issues. As discussed in *Diversifying the American Environmental Movement*,

Diversity can also improve the effectiveness of the movement and organizations. A diverse workforce may provide more creative approaches, enhance innovation and problem-solving, and produce higher quality ideas. It brings a broader base of experiences, perspectives, and knowledge to help with organizational strategies, problems, and activities. Diversity also builds broader networks and taps new resources. Diversifying will improve the quality of staff, expand our connections to funding sources, and increase our effectiveness in working with communities and organizations of color.<sup>97</sup>

To this end, I recommend that ECRI and Apeiron seek out young people and other new and largely unseen faces of environmentalism in the state to advise them on member organizations and directions that the movement should take. Specific attention should be made to inclusion of groups with a non-traditional focus, such as urban environmental groups and more radical/social ecology oriented organizations. While there will always be differences in the philosophy and tactics of radical/social ecology focused and mainstream organizations, change at the root of the problem is inherent in the word radical and thus much progress could be gained from paying attention to the critiques offered by such groups. How to diversify the movement is an interesting challenge. Simply appointing a young person of color to be on the board of ECRI or consulting underrepresented populations about their opinions regarding mainstream environmental issues would not be a display of inclusion; rather, a display of tokenism. Established environmental groups should instead make efforts to act in solidarity with non-traditional environmental efforts. As author Adrienne Maree Brown writes in her critique of Shellenberger and Nordhaus' paper, "We feel it is imperative to connect the different survival struggles we are engaged

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<sup>97</sup> Bonta, Marcelo and Jordan, Charles. (2007). Diversifying the American environmental movement. In Enderle, Emily (Ed.), *Diversity and the future of the U.S. environmental movement* (pp. 13-34). New Haven, CT: Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies.

in if we truly hope to sustain a viable movement for change. You will not die if you try to link hands with us in this struggle, if you try to meet us halfway...environmentalism needs to become something that the masses can integrate in how we live our lives.”<sup>98</sup>

Refashioning environmentalism as an element of daily life rather than a special interest group is a strategy that could both include more people and reestablish a sense of values in the movement.

### *New trends*

There are three trends which stand out as being indicative of the current direction of the environmental movement: climate justice, local food, and religious environmentalism. The media review revealed concern for the environment by religious groups somewhat regularly during the whole period of study (1985-present). Most of the related articles found between 1985 and 1999 were about religion and consumerism. This makes sense when considering the many religious leaders who have spoken against the trappings of modern society, advocating for a simpler lifestyle. In regards to industrialization, Gandhi wrote, “India's destiny lies not along the bloody way of the West, of which she shows signs of tiredness, but along the bloodless way of peace that comes from a simple and godly life.”<sup>99</sup> As expressed in the article, “Simplicity as a Jewish Path,” by Moti Rieber and Betsy Teutsch, “Rabbinic literature expresses notable reservations about materialism, as in Pirkei Avot, where Hillel teaches that ‘the more possessions, the more worry’ and Ben

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<sup>98</sup> Brown, Adrienne Maree. (2005, March 15). Dramatizing the “death” of environmentalism doesn’t help urban people of color, or anyone else. *Grist*. Retrieved on April 28, 2009, from <http://www.grist.org/article/brown8>

<sup>99</sup> Global Varnasrama Educational Social and Cultural Organization. (2008, November 7). Gandhi on simple living-high thinking: from VILLAGE SWARAJ. Retrieved April 7, 2009, from [http://www.glovesco.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&catid=34:static&id=79:gandhi-on-simple-living-high-thinking](http://www.glovesco.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&catid=34:static&id=79:gandhi-on-simple-living-high-thinking)

Zoma teaches, ‘Who is rich? The one content with his or her portion.’”<sup>100</sup> Roman Catholic St. Francis de Assisi, the patron saint of animals and ecology, was known to promote simple living, and in October of 2007 Pope Benedict commented that “consumerism menaces both families and society.”<sup>101</sup> However, in 2006 media coverage of religion and the environment began an upward trend beyond anything that had been seen throughout the past 20 years, bolstered by a new search term, “religion” AND “climate change,” which was found in a total of eleven articles from 2006-2008. This rapid increase in religious concern for the environment corresponds with my chronology of Rhode Island environmental groups, as the four religious environmental groups in the state were founded in 2006 and 2007. Two of these groups, Interfaith Power and Light and the Environmental Stewardship Task Force of the Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island, have an explicit focus on mitigating climate change. Indeed, religious attention to climate change has been prevalent throughout the United States and the world in recent years. In 2006 the “Evangelical Climate Initiative” was signed by over 86 Evangelical Christian leaders and PBS aired a Bill Moyers documentary called “Is God Green,” while the first Interfaith Climate Summit was held in Sweden in 2008. This new religious context for environmental concern suggests that Shellenberger and Nordhaus’ desire for a coherent set of values in the movement might not be far off. In *The Death of Environmentalism* they hint at the power of religion in values creation by asserting that “Environmentalists need to tap into the creative worlds of myth-making, even religion, not to better sell narrow and technical policy

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<sup>100</sup> Rieber, Moti and Teutsch, Betsy. (2002/2003 Winter). Simplicity as a Jewish Path. *Reconstructionist Today*, 10 (2). Retrieved from <http://www2.jrf.org/rt/article.php?id=102>

<sup>101</sup> Moore, Malcom. (2007, January 6). Pope denounces 'false illusions' of advertisers. *The Telegraph*. Retrieved from <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/1538738/Pope-denounces-false-illusions-of-advertisers.html>



proposals but rather to figure out who we are and who we need to be.”<sup>102</sup> As stated by an attendee of the 2008 Rhode Island Interfaith Power and Light sponsored seminar entitled *Greening Your Congregation*, “For me, the difference is that whereas when I think secularly I think of doing the right thing on a more academic level—I’m aware of some of the science, good sense tells me that resources aren’t going to last forever—but when I think of it spiritually... it just deepens it all. It actually gives it a much firmer, broader foundation.”<sup>103</sup> If more and more people join the movement with such a “deepened,” “firmer,” and “broader,” if not more spiritual, perspective, perhaps a unified vision for environmentalism can be created.

Climate change is the driving force behind another new trend observed in my research, climate justice. Only one Rhode Island group (Rising Tide North America) explicitly described itself under this heading and the media review uncovered two related articles in the past three years. However, despite a small presence in this state, climate justice is growing and important movement that can be said to address Van Jones’ criticism of “eco-apartheid” while developing a richer definition of environmental justice. Climate justice was first discussed in 2000, when an alternative summit was held in The Hague during official United Nations climate negotiations to discuss “the human rights violations and environmental devastation wrought by the fossil fuel industry” and how community activists were “starting to take the climate issue into their own hands.”<sup>104</sup> Since this initial conference a number of grassroots groups around the country have formed to confront

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<sup>102</sup> Shellenberger and Nordhaus, 2004, p. 34

<sup>103</sup> Donohue, Emily. (2008, January 17). Saving God’s green earth. *The Rhode Island Catholic*. Retrieved from <http://thericatholic.com/stories/761.html>

<sup>104</sup> Karliner, Joshua. (2000, November 21). Climate Justice Summit Provides Alternative Vision. *CorpWatch*. Retrieved from <http://www.corpwatch.org/article.php?id=977>

climate injustice, including the Environmental Justice and Climate Change Initiative, Climate Justice Chicago, and Rising Tide North America. Climate justice goes beyond environmental justice and mainstream efforts to mitigate climate change, “dedicated to reversing global warming through a radical change in both the perception and definition of the problem, and prescriptions for action.”<sup>105</sup> As written in Climate Justice Chicago’s mission statement, “Mere modification of current unsustainable systems and choices - through shopping, inadequate emission treaty targets and agreements, or more technology - will not solve the problem, either short or long term. We will not be able to consume or techno-fix our way out of our global warming problems. We will have to methodically plan and implement a new way of living on this Planet that is climate safe and based on sustainability and local self-reliance.”<sup>106</sup> Here we see language similar to that of social ecology, and while members of the climate justice movement would agree with Van Jones in his arguments about the short-sightedness of previous waves of environmentalism, their calls to action require a deeper societal change than simply “Green jobs for all.”

Shellenberger and Nordhaus’ call for more coordination between environmentalism and other interests may soon be answered by the climate justice movement. The Environmental Justice and Climate Change Initiative, for example, calls itself “a diverse coalition of U.S. environmental justice, religious, climate justice, policy and advocacy networks.”<sup>107</sup>

However, as is evidenced by the research presented in this paper, communication between potential partners in climate justice could be improved. The environmental justice

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<sup>105</sup> Climate Justice Chicago. (2007). *Who is CJC*. Retrieved April 7, 2009, from <http://www.climatejusticechicago.org/Who%20We%20Are.htm>

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

<sup>107</sup> Environmental Justice and Climate Change Initiative. (2008). *About Us*. Retrieved April 7, 2009, from <http://www.ejcc.org/about/>

organizations in the state appear to be primarily focused on local toxics issues, while organizations addressing climate change fail to bring a thorough environmental justice analysis into related issues such as public transit and energy costs. For example, one of the RI Sierra Club's stated issues is "clean, affordable transportation choices," and they have organized the New Public Transit Alliance (NuPTA), "a coalition of public health advocates, environmentalists, community organizations, business groups and transit riders, that has come together to strengthen our public transit system."<sup>108</sup> Of the 18 people signing onto NuPTA's platform statement, 14 were representatives of mainstream environmental and health related organizations while only four were representatives of bus drivers or potential riders, illustrating a lack of true solidarity with the people most likely to use public transit. Perhaps the newer organizations with a bent towards social ecology can bridge the gap between these two concerns; some, such as Freecycle with its creation of a gift economy and Farm Fresh RI, which accepts WIC and food stamps at farmers' markets, are already reaching out to marginalized populations. However, a structural analysis of the problems creating social and environmental injustices is needed, and it is hoped that this niche will be filled by a group such as Rising Tide North America or a new, more social ecology focused Earth First!.

The third new environmental trend that I observed was the growth of a local food movement in the state. This trend was especially visible in the media review, as coverage in the Providence Journal rose from three articles in 2006 to nine articles in 2007 to thirteen articles in 2008. Farm Fresh Rhode Island, founded in 2004, is the only organization

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<sup>108</sup> New Public Transit Alliance. (2008). *Public Transit Solutions for Rhode Island*. Retrieved April 30, 2009, from <http://rhodeisland.sierraclub.org/NuPTA%20Platform.pdf>

specifically focusing on the broad spectrum of the local food movement. However, the power of this one organization should not be underestimated, as in five years it has succeeded in connecting local farmers, consumers, restaurants, schools, students, and many others through farmers' markets, food forums and festivals, educational campaigns and newsletters. As described in the previous chapter, the local food movement is another nationwide trend fueled by popular books, concern for health, critiques of fast food, and increasing awareness of personal contributions to climate change. The movement has had much symbolic political success as of late, represented by figures such as Michelle Obama and Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack publicly planting gardens on the White House lawn and in front of the department of agriculture. However, are "such actions...precursors to major changes in the way the federal government oversees the nation's food supply and farms, changes that could significantly bolster demand for fresh, local and organic products...diversified, regional food networks?" If the success and breadth of the movement in Rhode Island is any indication, local food can and will become a norm throughout the nation. The key, however, is not to rely upon top-down policies for the movement's success, but to do as Farm Fresh Rhode Island has done and directly organize local food in the communities in which it is grown and consumed.

Looking to the three new environmental trends observed in Rhode Island, several recommendations can be given to members of the movement. The first recommendation is to create stronger connections between secular and religious environmentalism and to follow the model of environmental spirituality in "figuring out who we are and who we need to be." This does not mean that all environmentalists should go through an eco-conversion. However, establishing for ourselves how we relate to the natural world would

definitely strengthen the movement and lead to more effective communication. Improved communication is central to my second recommendation: climate justice should serve to unite environmental justice and mainstream environmental issues by proposing a deeper societal critique, perhaps one influenced by social ecology, than those previously offered, looking beyond green jobs to community self-sufficiency. This recommendation relates to my previous proposal of increased solidarity with the environmental justice movement and integration of environmentalism with daily life. Local, community-based action is the third recommendation; instead of looking to improved regulation of destructive industries we should create alternative systems altogether. This is a tactic of direct action through behavior modeling, as exemplified by the local food movement.

#### ***Anti-consumerism vs. green business***

As my research question looked to determine the extent to which the environmental movement currently addresses material (and energy) consumption, mention should be made of the trends I discovered regarding anti-consumerism and green business. Using three different metrics including a keyword search of organizations' mission statements, a questionnaire, and a media review I was able to determine the state of both anti-consumerism and green business in the media as well as in regards to the number of organizations focusing on reducing consumption or promoting purchase of green products. Overall I found a stalemate between the two trends. While green business dominated over anti-consumerism in the media over the past three years, on an organizational level there have been more groups focused on anti-consumerism (n=6/11) established in the past five years than those focused on green business (n=2/11). Brown organizations prove an exception to this trend, with a recent focus on green design, sustainable investment, and

energy issues. Nine of the fourteen organizations founded in the past five years at Brown had a focus on green consumption, while only three recently established groups had an explicit stance against consumption. The larger focus upon green business by Brown's younger demographic than amongst the general R.I. environmental movement could potentially be related to the marketing of these ideas in the popular media as "trendy" and "hip."<sup>109</sup> This framing of the environment as a consumer interest reinforces a sense of elitism and environmental classism, attitudes which serve to further marginalize underrepresented groups in the movement. A shift towards more sustainable technologies is important to address the fact that "humans will always need food to nourish them, clothes to cover them, physical shelters to protect them and a transportation infrastructure to move them."<sup>110</sup> It can be seen of the organizations in Rhode Island promoting green consumption that they themselves do not directly profit from said products and are simply offering information and education about sustainable options for supplying basic needs. The Rhode Island Solar Energy Association promotes (but doesn't itself sell) the use of solar energy, Rhode Island Vegan Awareness and Defenders of Animals are looking to protect animals, Toxics Action Center and the Weston A. Price Foundation are interested in human health, Farm Fresh RI is dedicated to the local economy, and Grow Smart RI is seeking to combat suburban sprawl. In contrast with corporate greenwashing, these organizations are not trying to improve their sales through marketing schemes calling for consumers to help the environment by buying a particular product. While it could be argued that electricity (RI

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<sup>109</sup> See Bergan, Shaine. (2008, March 26). Is being green trendy? Students respond. *The Daily Wildcat*. Retrieved from <http://media.wildcat.arizona.edu/media/storage/paper997/news/2008/03/26/GreenIssue/Is.Being.Green.Trendy.Students.Respond-3284019.shtml>; Revkin, Andrew. (2007, April 29). Carbon-neutral is hip, but is it green? *The New York Times*. Retrieved from

[http://www.nytimes.com/2007/04/29/weekinreview/29revkin.html?\\_r=1&scp=1&sq=green%20hip&st=cse](http://www.nytimes.com/2007/04/29/weekinreview/29revkin.html?_r=1&scp=1&sq=green%20hip&st=cse); Wilson, Eric. (2007, December 13). A world consumed by guilt. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/12/13/fashion/13green.html?scp=2&sq=green%20fashion&st=cse>

<sup>110</sup> Braungart, McDonough, and Bollinger, 2007, p. 1340

Solar Energy Association) is not absolutely necessary, shelter (Grow Smart RI), food (Rhode Island Vegan Awareness, Defenders of Wildlife, Weston A. Price Foundation, Farm Fresh RI), and health (Toxics Action Center) are all essential for human survival. In consideration of earlier recommendations for increased connection between environmental activism and everyday struggles and the desire to address classism in the movement it is recommended that the environmental movement serves as a means for empowerment of how to procure basic needs in a sustainable and self-sufficient manner. Tactics of education and outreach as currently employed by the organizations discussed above should be expanded upon to encompass actions such as providing information about why a vegan diet may be better for the environment or teaching a workshop on how to build a solar oven. The goal should be a shift towards cooperation and mutual aid rather than capitalist expansion in order to address the inequalities of consumption produced by our current economic power structures. Thus, environmental organizations should also be critical of unnecessary products marketed as being green, and green jobs which are simply “sustainable” wage-labor. Anti-consumerism and green consumerism should become obsolete terms, as our conceptions of affluence and consumption shift from accumulation of wealth and exploitation of resources to the sustainable and equitable fulfillment of everyday needs.

**Table 5: Summary of findings and recommendations**

Table 5: Summary of findings and recommendations		
	Key findings	Recommendations
<b>Scope of the movement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many organizations with varied foci</li> <li>• Local chapters of Big Ten maintain traditional issues and tactics, but are somewhat autonomous with regional focus</li> <li>• New environmental trends bring together people with a variety of interests and degrees of traditional involvement with environmental issues</li> <li>• Social ecology of new groups               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Local/alternative economies</li> <li>○ Non-hierarchical/cooperative structure</li> <li>○ Community-based action</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Lack of cohesion and communication</li> <li>• Lack of diversity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ECRI and Apeiron should seek out young people and other underrepresented faces of environmentalism for advice regarding member organizations and directions that the movement should take</li> <li>• Mainstream environmentalism should act in solidarity with non-traditional environmental interests (avoid tokenism)</li> <li>• Environmentalism should be refashioned as an element of daily life rather than a special interest group</li> </ul>
<b>New trends</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Religious environmentalism               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ New trend centered around climate change</li> <li>○ Provides movement with “a much firmer, broader foundation,” potential for articulation of values</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create stronger connections between secular and religious environmentalism</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate justice               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Small presence in RI, but growing nationwide</li> <li>○ Deeper critique than either EJ or climate activism</li> <li>○ Potential for communication and connection of varied populations</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate justice should provide a societal critique uniting EJ and climate activism</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local food               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ One organization in RI with a lot of influence</li> <li>○ A lot of buzz in Washington surrounding it—will it bear fruit?</li> <li>○ Good model for bottom-up activism</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lessons from local food movement in local, community-based direct action in creating alternative systems (behavior modeling) should be adopted by larger environmental movement</li> </ul>



	<b>Key Findings</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
<b>Anti-consumerism vs. green consumerism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neither anti-consumerism or green business is dominating (Brown is the exception)</li> <li>• RI organizations promoting green consumerism are not themselves receiving a profit; instead they are providing sustainable options for supplying basic needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address environmental classism: environmental organizations to serve as a means for empowerment of how to procure basic needs in a sustainable and self-sufficient manner (education and outreach)</li> <li>• Should be criticism of unnecessary products marketed as being green, and green jobs which are simply “sustainable” wage-labor</li> </ul>

## Chapter Five: Conclusion

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Throughout this study I investigated the question: *To what extent does the environmental movement address material consumption and how is the movement changing into the twenty-first century?* I used media searches, interviews, and website investigation to study environmental advocacy groups in the state of Rhode Island as well as at Brown. Beginning with the idea of the need for a rebirth of environmentalism, the key ideas examined throughout my paper include the fallibility of green consumerism as a “third wave” of environmentalism, an investigation of affluence as the root cause of environmental and social problems, support for behavior modeling as an organizational tactic, and a critique of the overall shortcomings of the movement. Green consumerism, supported by a new generation of “third-wave” environmentalists, is shortsighted in its disregard for the problems with affluence and infinite growth on a finite planet as described by ecological footprint analyses and concepts such as “eco-apartheid.” Reducing a person’s ability to influence change to his or her consumer purchasing power, green capitalism reinforces environmental classism and elitism. The lack of diversity in the movement was supported by my findings of non-inclusion of many urban-focused and newly-formed environmental groups within the dominant organizing framework of the state. Solidarity between traditional and non-traditional environmental interests needs to occur as environmentalism becomes embedded in our everyday struggles for existence. My research provides a comprehensive chronology and coding by focus of action for currently active organizations, from which I have discerned several new trends: religious spirituality, climate justice, and local food. These three new trends present necessary models for the

environmental movement: articulation of values, a deeper critique of the connections between social and environmental injustices, and local, community-based self sufficiency. I also found a definite shift towards inclusion of values of social ecology in recently formed organizations, including efforts towards local, alternative economies, cooperative and non-hierarchical group structures, and community-based action. It has been recommended that these models are adopted by the broader environmental movement and that better communication takes place between new and old sectors of the movement. Environmental organizations should model sustainable behavior through education and advocacy of options for procuring basic needs in a way that does not reinforce the destructive environmental and social impacts of capitalism.

I began this research in an attempt to determine the accuracy of my perceptions of the environmental movement as having become a professional special interest group disconnected from its original principles and ideals. While the movement did not prove to be as corporatized as I had predicted, I did find a troubling lack of challenge to the status quo and structural racism and classism. The small, but growing, efforts towards a more inclusive movement through community action is encouraging, however. I remain committed to radical tactics of behavior modeling and the direct creation of alternative systems and find hope in a bottom-up resistance to challenges both within and outside of the movement. It is my hope that this research will enrich the participation of people who have been members of the environmental movement for decades as well as those who are just entering it. Only through a thorough understanding of the historical context of the movement can its current directions be fully appreciated. As with any social movement, many failings exist within environmentalism, particularly as related to internal and external

communication. However, I believe that this can be ameliorated with a careful reevaluation of the overall vision for change. Social ecology has provided a good template for societal transformation with its emphasis on local, self-directed and non-hierarchical communities—now it is up to us as members of today’s environmental movement to creatively adapt its philosophies and tactics to our current needs.

## Appendices

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### *Appendix 1: List of RI environmental groups*

American Lung Association  
Apeiron Institute for Environmental Living  
Appalachian Mountain Club  
Aquidneck Land Trust  
Audubon Society of RI  
Barrington Land Conservation Trust  
Blackstone River Watershed Council  
Block Island Conservancy  
Block Island Land Trust  
Buckeye Brook Coalition  
Butterfly Society of Rhode Island  
CES  
Childhood Lead Action Project  
Citywide Green  
Clean Water Action  
Conanicut Island Land Trust  
Concerned Airport Neighborhoods  
Conservation Law Foundation  
Coventry Land Trust  
Cumberland Land Trust  
DARE  
Defenders of Animals  
East Greenwich Land Trust  
Ecology Action for RI  
ECRI Education Fund  
Elmwood Foundation  
Environment Rhode Island  
Environmental Justice League of RI  
Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island  
Environmental Stewardship Task Force  
Farm Fresh RI  
Freecycle  
Friends of India Point Park  
Friends of the National Wildlife Refuges of Rhode Island  
Friends of the Pawtuxet  
Greater Camp Concerned Citizens  
Greenways Alliance of Rhode Island  
Groundwork Providence Inc.  
Grow Smart RI  
Land Conservancy of North Kingstown  
Lincoln Municipal Land Trust  
Little Compton Agricultural Conservancy Trust  
Narragansett Bay Estuary Program  
Narrow River Land Trust, Inc.  
Narrow River Preservation Association  
New Dawn Earth Center  
New England Trackers  
Norman Bird Sanctuary  
North Providence Environment Commission  
Notable Works Publication and Distribution Inc.  
National Wildlife Federation RI-Environmental Council RI  
Ocean State Action  
Ocean State Earth First  
Ocean View Foundation  
Pawtuxet River Authority & Watershed Council  
People's Power & Light  
Providence Neighborhood Planting Program  
Prudence Conservancy  
Raytheon Employees Wildlife Habitat Committee  
Recycling for RI Education  
Rhode Island Chapter of Surfrider Foundation  
Rhode Island Chapter of the Weston A. Price Foundation  
Rhode Island Forest Conservators Organization  
Rhode Island Jewish Environmental Alliance  
Rhode Island Natural History Survey  
Rhode Island Resource Conservation & Development Area Council  
Rhode Island Rivers Council  
Rhode Island Vegan Awareness

RI Association of Conservation  
Commissioners  
RI Association of Railroad Passengers  
RI Environmental Education Association  
RI Interfaith Power and Light  
RI Land Trust Council  
RI Mobile Sportfishermen  
RI Rural Development Council  
RI Saltwater Anglers Association  
RI Solar Energy Association  
RI Tree Council  
RI Wild Plant Society  
Rising Tide North America  
Roger Williams Park Zoo  
Rose Island Lighthouse Foundation  
Sakonnet Preservation Association  
Save The Bay  
Sierra Club of RI  
Smithfield Land Trust  
South County Conservancy  
South Kingstown Land Trust  
Southern New England Forest Consortium,  
Inc.  
Southern RI Conservation District  
Southside Community Land Trust  
The Committee for the Great Salt Pond  
The Dunn Foundation  
The Mill Cove Conservancy  
The Nature Conservancy  
The Ocean Project  
The Salt Ponds Coalition  
The Saugatucket River Heritage Corridor  
Coalition  
The Watch Hill Conservancy  
Tiverton Land Trust  
Town of Foster Land Trust  
Toxics Action Center  
Toxics Information Project  
Warren Land Conservation Trust  
West Broadway Neighborhood Association  
West Elmwood Housing Development  
Corporation  
West Greenwich Land Trust  
Westerly Land Trust  
Westerly Municipal Land Trust  
Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association

Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council

*Appendix 2: Color-coded and chronologized list of RI environmental groups*

[Names of organizations coded as focusing on reducing consumption are highlighted in pink, and those which deal with alternative, or “green” consumption are highlighted in light green.]

1872	Conservation	Roger Williams Park Zoo
1897	Conservation	Audubon Society of RI
1904	Health	American Lung Association
1921	Conservation	Appalachian Mountain Club
1950	Education	Norman Bird Sanctuary
1958	Conservation	RI Mobile Sportfishermen
1966	Law	Conservation Law Foundation
1970	Policy	Environment Rhode Island
1970	Watershed Protection	Narrow River Preservation Association
1970	Policy	Save The Bay
1972	Land Trust	Block Island Conservancy
1972	Policy	Clean Water Action
1972	Policy	National Wildlife Federation RI- Environmental Council of RI
1972	Watershed Protection	Pawtuxet River Authority & Watershed Council
1972	Conservation	Rhode Island Resource Conservation & Development Area Council
1972	Land Trust	Sakonnet Preservation Association
1975	Environmental Justice	Elmwood Foundation
1975	Energy	RI Solar Energy Association
1978	Education	Center for Environmental Studies
1978	Animal Rights	Defenders of Animals
1979	Land Trust	Barrington Land Conservation Trust
1981	Land Trust	Narrow River Land Trust, Inc.
1981	Sustainable Agriculture	Southside Community Land Trust
1982	Environmental Justice	Groundwork Providence Inc.
1983	Land Trust	South Kingstown Land Trust
1983	Urban greenspace	West Broadway Neighborhood Association
1984	Land Trust	Conanicut Island Land Trust
1984	Land Trust	Rose Island Lighthouse Foundation
1984	Watershed Protection	Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association
1985	Conservation	Southern New England Forest Consortium, Inc.
1986	Land Trust	Block Island Land Trust
1986	Environmental Justice	Direct Action for Rights and Equality
1986	Land Trust	Little Compton Agricultural Conservancy Trust
1986	Watershed Protection	Narragansett Bay Estuary Program
1986	Watershed Protection	The Salt Ponds Coalition
1986	Environmental Justice	West Elmwood Housing Development Corporation
1987	Land Trust	East Greenwich Land Trust
1987	Land Trust	Prudence Conservancy
1987	Conservation/biodiversity	RI Wild Plant Society
1987	Watershed Protection	The Committee for the Great Salt Pond
1987	Health/EJ	Toxics Action Center
1987	Land Trust	Warren Land Conservation Trust
1987	Land Trust	Westerly Land Trust

1988	Land Trust	Land Conservancy of North Kingstown
1988	Environmental Justice	Ocean State Action
1988	Urban greenspace	Providence Neighborhood Planting Program
1989	Land Trust	Cumberland Land Trust
1989	Conservation/biodiversity	The Nature Conservancy
1990	Land Trust	Aquidneck Land Trust
1990	Environmental Justice	Greater Camp Concerned Citizens
1990	Conservation	Rhode Island Forest Conservators Organization
1990	Land Trust	Town of Foster Land Trust
1991	Watershed Protection	Friends of the Pawtuxet
1991	Education	ECRI Education Fund
1991	Waste reduction	Recycling for RI Education
1991	Urban greenspace	RI Tree Council
1992	Health	Childhood Lead Action Project
1992	Transportation	Greenways Alliance of Rhode Island
1994	Education	Apeiron Institute for Environmental Living
1994	Biodiversity	Butterfly Society of Rhode Island
1994	Biodiversity	Rhode Island Natural History Survey
1994	Watershed Protection	Saugatucket River Heritage Corridor Coalition
1996	Land Trust	Lincoln Municipal Land Trust
1996	Land Trust	South County Conservancy
1997	Sustainable development	Grow Smart RI
1997	Urban greenspace	North Providence Environment Commission
1997	Education	The Ocean Project
1997	Land Trust	Tiverton Land Trust
1997	Land Trust	West Greenwich Land Trust
1998	Conservation	Rhode Island Chapter of Surfrider Foundation
1998	Sustainable development	RI Rural Development Council
1998	Watershed Protection	Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council
1999	Land Trust	Coventry Land Trust
1999	Education	Ocean View Foundation
1999	Land Trust	RI Land Trust Council
1999	Conservation	RI Saltwater Anglers Association
1999	Land Trust	Smithfield Land Trust
1999	Land Trust	The Watch Hill Conservancy
2000	Urban greenspace	Friends of India Point Park
2001	Biodiversity	Raytheon Employees Wildlife Habitat Committee
2001	Land Trust	The Mill Cove Conservancy
2002	Watershed Protection	Buckeye Brook Coalition
2002	Conservation	RI Association of Conservation Commissioners
2002	Energy	People's Power and Light
2002	Health	Toxics Information Project
2003	Education	New England Trackers
2003	Land Trust	Westerly Municipal Land Trust
2004	Sustainable Agriculture	Farm Fresh RI
2004	Waste reduction	Freecycle
2004	Radical	Ocean State Earth First
2005	Watershed Protection	Blackstone River Watershed Council
2006	Religious	New Dawn Earth Center



2006	Religious	Rhode Island Jewish Environmental Alliance
2006	Watershed Protection	Rhode Island Rivers Council
2006	Climate justice	Rising Tide North America
2007	Environmental Justice	Environmental Justice League of RI
2007	Religious	Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island Environmental Stewardship Task Force
2007	Religious/Energy	RI Interfaith Power and Light
	Urban greenspace	Citywide Green
	NIMBY	Concerned Airport Neighborhoods
	Conservation	Friends of the National Wildlife Refuges of Rhode Island
	Health	Rhode Island Chapter of the Weston A. Price Foundation
	Animal Rights	Rhode Island Vegan Awareness
	Transportation	RI Association of Railroad Passengers
	Education	RI Environmental Education Association
	Policy	Sierra Club of RI
	Conservation	Southern RI Conservation District
	Education	The Dunn Foundation

*Appendix 3: Results of Keyword Coding of Mission Statements*

1) CONSUM\*

- **Aquidneck Land Trust**
- **New Dawn Earth Center**
- **People's Power and Light**
- Weston A. Price Foundation
- **Rising Tide North America**
- Toxics Information Project

2) WASTE

- **Aquidneck Land Trust**
- CES
- **Freecycle**
- **Recycling for RI Education**
- Toxics Action Center

3) REDUC\*

- **Aquidneck Land Trust**
- **Freecycle**
- Grow Smart RI
- North Providence Environmental Commission
- **People's Power and Light**
- **Recycling for RI Education**
- RIVA
- **Rising Tide North America**
- Southern New England Forest Consortium, Inc.
- Toxics Action Center
- Toxics Information Project
- Coventry Land Trust
- Tiverton Land Trust

4) SIMPL\*

- Butterfly Society
- **New Dawn Earth Center**
- Ocean State Earth First!
- People's Power & Light
- **Rising Tide North America**
- The Dunn Foundation

5) [ENERGY] CONSERVATION

- **Apeiron Institute**
- **Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island Environmental Stewardship Task Force**
- **People's Power and Light**
- **Rising Tide North America**

FINAL LIST OF ORGS. DEALING WITH  
REDUCING CONSUMPTION

- Apeiron Institute
- Aquidneck Land Trust
- Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island Environmental Stewardship Task Force
- Freecycle
- New Dawn Earth Center
- People's Power and Light
- Recycling for RI Education
- Rising Tide North America
- The Dunn Foundation (*see Chapter 3 for explanation of inclusion*)

*Appendix 4: Organizational profile of groups founded in the past five years, local representatives of the Big Ten, and those focusing on reducing consumption*

Organization Name	Volunteer or paid staff?	Leadership Structure	Organizational Structure	Green Consumption/Anti-Consumerism/Social Ecology?
Farm Fresh RI	Paid Staff	ED and BofDs	non-profit 501c3	"promote the consumption of locally grown food"
Freecycle	Volunteer	No leadership	decentralized	"build a worldwide gifting movement that reduces waste, saves precious resources & eases the burden on our landfills while enabling our members to benefit from the strength of a larger community"
Ocean State Earth First!	Volunteer	No leadership	decentralized	"does not accept a human-centered worldview of 'nature for people's sake.' Instead, we believe that life exists for its own sake, that industrial civilization and its philosophy are anti-Earth, anti-woman and anti-liberty. Our structure is non-hierarchical, and we reject highly paid "professional staff" and formal leadership.
Blackstone River Watershed Council	Volunteer	BofDs	non-profit 501c3	"deal with the consequences of irresponsible consumption by constantly organizing cleanups of the river and its banks"

<b>New Dawn Earth Center</b>	Paid Staff	Director	religious non-profit	N/A
<b>Rhode Island Jewish Environmental Alliance</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Rhode Island Rivers Council</b>	Paid Staff	15 member council	government appointed	N/A
<b>Rising Tide North America</b>	Volunteer	No leadership	decentralized	"committed to <b>Earth-centered, community-based solutions</b> to the climate crisis that foster <b>local autonomy and self-sufficiency</b> "
<b>Environmental Justice League of RI</b>	Paid Staff	BofDs	non-profit 501c3	"EJ doesn't explicitly talk about consumption, though we do want to <b>reduce amount of waste--</b> landfills and incinerators will go in low-income communities"

<b>Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island Environmental Stewardship Task Force</b>	Volunteer	No leadership	religious task force	"completed an electrical audit at Christ Church and replaced our lighting with energy efficient lights with the assistance of RISE and National Grid. We have already realized a <b>13% savings in electrical consumption...</b> looking to <b>educate our parishioners so that we can increase that percentage</b> and hopefully our parishioners will do the same at home."
<b>RI Interfaith Power and Light</b>	Volunteer	No leadership	non-profit 501c3	"address <b>energy consumption</b> directly. <b>Efficient use of energy -- avoiding waste</b> of energy -- is our key area of activity. "
<b>Audubon Society of RI</b>	Paid Staff	ED and BofDs	non-profit 501c3	"address consumption of energy by encouraging people/ members to <b>buy green energy</b> , by reminding them of <b>conservation both of electricity and fuels</b> "
<b>NWF RI- ECRI</b>	Paid Staff	BofDs	non-profit 501c3	N/A
<b>Sierra Club of RI</b>	Paid Staff	ED and executive committee	non-profit 501c3	"Rhode Island has a chance to <b>re-energize its economy</b> , create new <b>green jobs</b> , and restore its quality of life through reducing its dependence on the stale, dirty energy sources of the past and <b>invest in the efficient use of imported resources and new, clean energy.</b> "

<b>The Nature Conservancy</b>	Paid Staff	ED and board of trustees	non-profit 501c3	"follows 'Green Office Practices' such as: <b>scanning and emailing rather than printing</b> ; using <b>both sides of the page</b> when printing is necessary; <b>reusing</b> office supplies rather than buying new; <b>recycling</b> all acceptable paper, plastic, and glass, <b>purchasing organic, fair trade coffee from a local business</b> "
<b>Aquidneck Land Trust</b>	Paid Staff	ED and BofDs	non-profit 501c3	"addresses consumption on an almost daily basis by working to <b>conserve</b> strategic parcels of land...the <b>over-consumption</b> of open space on Aquidneck Island has resulted in numerous problems"
<b>Recycling for RI Education</b>	Paid Staff	N/A	non-profit 501c3	"encourage preservation of the environment by diverting clean non-toxic <b>reusable excess inventory</b> from the business community to educators and community organizations"
<b>Apeiron Institute for Environmental Living</b>	Paid Staff	ED and BofDs	non-profit 501c3	"model sustainability in all its activities through efforts such as <b>conservation, recycling</b> , and use of environmentally sound technologies."
<b>Freecycle</b>	See Above	See Above	See Above	See Above
<b>New Dawn Earth Center</b>	See Above	See Above	See Above	See Above
<b>Rising Tide North America</b>	See Above	See Above	See Above	See Above

<b>Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island Environmental Stewardship Task Force</b>	See Above	See Above	See Above	See Above
<b>People's Power &amp; Light</b>	Paid Staff	ED and BofDs	non-profit energy consumers' alliance	"education of our members and the public about <b>energy conservation</b> (and <b>efficiency as a way to conserve</b> ) "
<b>The Dunn Foundation</b>	Paid Staff	ED	non-profit 501c3	"developing awareness of how we, as inhabitants and stewards of our communities, have affected community character and scenic areas in a damaging way through <b>visual pollution</b> "

*Appendix 5: Results of media review for each search term*

<b>Anti-consumerism</b>		<b>Climate justice</b>		<b>Religion AND environmentalism</b>		<b>Local food movement</b>		<b>Voluntary simplicity</b>		<b>Green business</b>	
1997	2	2007	1	1999	1	2007	1	1995	3	1996	1
2001	1			2004	1	2008	3	1996	3	2003	1
		<b>Climate change AND environmental justice</b>									
2002	1			2005	1	2009	1	1998	2	2004	4
		2009	1	2006	1			1999	1	2006	1
				2007	2	<b>Eating local</b>		2005	1	2007	3
<b>Excess consumerism</b>						2002	2			2008	13
				<b>Religion AND consumerism</b>							
2001	2					2005	1			2009	1
2003	1			1985	3	2008	1				
2004	1			1987	2						
						<b>Local food AND environment</b>					
2005	4			1989	2						
2008	1			1990	1	1988	1				
				1993	1	2004	1				
				1997	1	2005	2				
				1998	1	2006	3				
				1999	3	2007	8				
				2000	3	2008	10				
						2009	2				
				<b>Religion AND climate change</b>							
				1992	1						
				2001	1						
				2006	1						
				2007	5						
				2008	5						



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