

4-Volume Set

Religion and the Environment

CRITICAL CONCEPTS IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Edited and with a new introduction by **Roger Gottlieb**, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, USA

In the last two decades a new form of religiously motivated-social action and a virtually new field of academic study—each based in recognition of the connections between religion and humanity's treatment of the environment—have developed. Interactions between religion and environmental concern have been manifest in the explosive growth of ecotheological writings, institutional commitment by organized religions, and environmental activism explicitly oriented to religious ideals. Clergy throughout the world in virtually every denomination have received word from leaders of their religion that the environment—no less than sexuality, poverty, or war and peace—is now a basic and compelling religious matter.

Out of this confrontation have been born vital new theologies based in the recovery of marginalized elements of tradition, profound criticisms of the past, and ecologically-oriented visions of God, the Sacred, the Earth, and human beings. Theologians from every religious tradition—along with dozens of non-denominational spiritual writers—have confronted world religions' past attitudes towards nature. In the realm of institutional commitment, public statements and actions by organized religions have grown dramatically. In the context of political action, throughout the U.S. and the world religiously oriented groups take part in environmentally-oriented political action: from lobbying and consciousness-raising to activist demonstrations and civil disobedience.

This collection serves as a comprehensive introduction, overview, and in-depth account of these exciting new developments. The four volumes cover virtually every aspect of the field—from theological change and institutional commitment to innovation in liturgy, from new ecumenical connections among different religions and between religion, science and environmental movements, from religious participation in environmental politics to an account of the global social and political contexts in which religious environmentalism has unfolded.

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