



Introduction

The conversation around climate change has become increasingly polarized and ultimately ineffective. As scientists continue to publish data and activists constantly preach solutions, many people are aware that climate change exists but do not participate in the necessary conversation to stop it. Understanding that the majority of Americans identify as religious, we use faith-driven texts to target the moral ideologies and decision-making process of liberals, moderates and conservatives. In doing so, we connect the religious community to environmentalism, inspiring the call to take action and create change.

Research Questions

- 1) What values do those who oppose climate change use to make decisions?
- 2) How can we use religious rhetoric to target those values in a way that promotes constructive climate dialogue?

Methods

Through our research, we used Jonathan Haidt's moral foundation theory to better understand decision-making process of liberals, moderates and conservatives. In order to target the moral foundations of each political ideology, we used the Bible, *Laudato Si* and other religious texts to find excerpts that resonate with environmentalism and each party's basic principles. From here, we created arguments that are geared towards each political ideology that support humankind's responsibility to Earth and thus, the responsibility that the people have to stop climate change.

Figure 1: The Six Americas Audience Segments

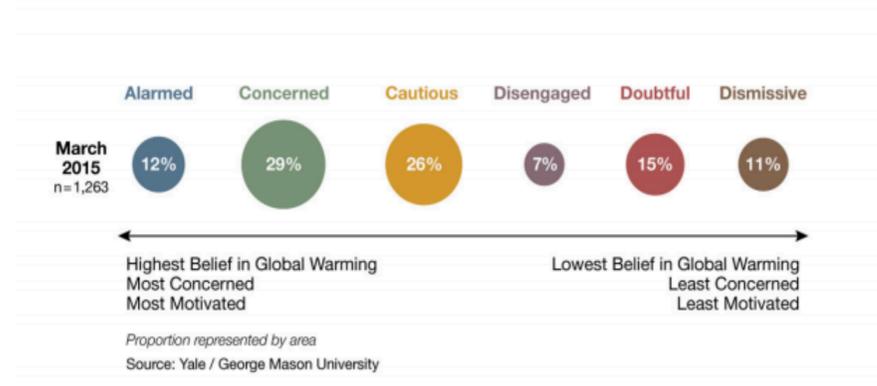


Figure 1. An infographic that depicts the Six Americas, a breakdown of the varied American perception and interests concerning climate change.

Results: Liberal

These results provide ideas of Catholic thought that can be geared toward environmental consciousness in accordance to a liberal or moderate ideology

Care	Liberty	Fairness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Care for harmed groups (poor, sick, etc.) Do unto others as you would want others to do unto you 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All beings have access to free will and opportunity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate for social justice Resource equality Offering charity to those suffering inequality

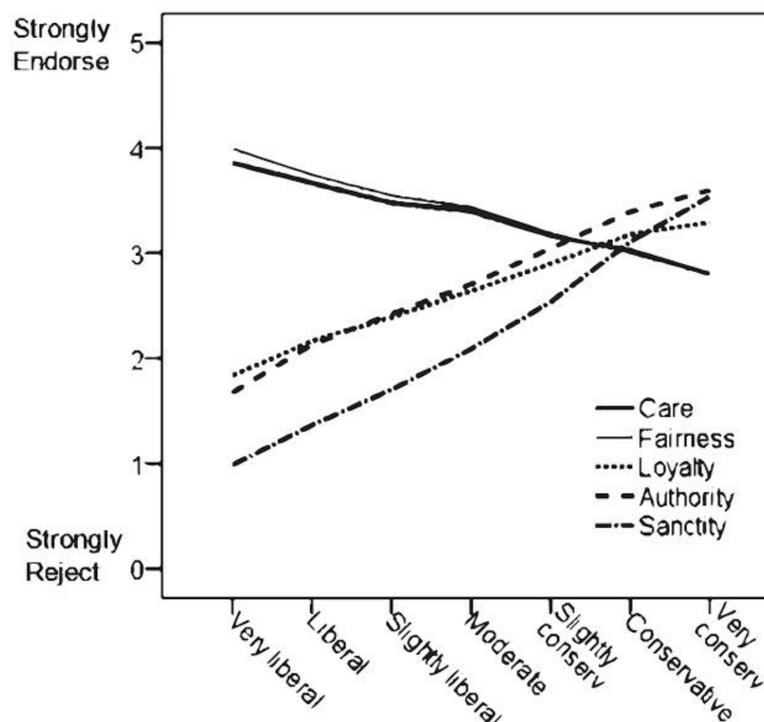


Figure 2. A graph provided by Haidt that depicts the Moral Foundation Theory and the central principles to each political ideology.

Results: Conservatives

These results provide ideas of Catholic thought that can be geared toward environmental consciousness in accordance to a conservative ideology

Authority	Sanctity	Loyalty
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pope Francis and his acceptance of climate change St. Francis and Thomas Aquinas discuss the value of nature 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> God's sacredness present in creation Man duty to cultivate and keep nature 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Religion as a team sport Devotion to God's will to protect nature

Discussion

Genesis 1:28 states, "be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on earth." Many people will use this verse as a counter argument when faced with the task of placing the Earth's sanctity over human desires. We realize that this can be a barrier in communicating the importance of climate change and necessity to take action. In addressing counterarguments similar to this, we suggest taking advice from Fred Van Dyke, who says that "the world is to be understood as intrinsically valuable" and that human need is never to "usurp needs of other elements of creation." Rather, one is to understand and nurture the proper function of all creation in its entirety by serving all instead of all serving one.

Recommendations

In prescribing these methods to address climate change amongst a diverse audience, we also advise using Haidt's model on decision making and balance of logic and emotion. Haidt's model highlights the value of appealing to intuition, referred to as the elephant, rather than logic, otherwise known as the rider. When following our prescribed communication strategies, or creating new ones, we suggest focusing on emotional appeal and moral instincts before referencing science and hard facts.



Figure 3. A photo of Pope Francis exiting St. Peter's Square at the Vatican.

References

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