

Religion

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Stoll, Mark R. **Inherit the holy mountain: religion and the rise of American**

environmentalism. Oxford, 2015. 406p bibl index afp ISBN 9780190230869, \$39.95.

Those interested in, unaware of, or skeptical about the relevance of religions in the historical development of nature conservation and environmentalism in the US will find this extraordinary book a must read. Stoll (history and environmental studies, Texas Tech) considers the religious roots of the environmental movement. He provides a panoramic survey, bringing to the discussion a wealth of detailed information, insights, and revelations about this generally neglected subject. His primary thesis is that childhood religious experience can be an important influence in adulthood—even when participation in a religious organization has lapsed—and that religion's teachings about conservation and environmentalism have generated significant advances in the movement. Without discounting other factors, the author looks at the influence of a succession of denominational cultures, from Calvinists to Presbyterians to (in more recent decades) African American Baptists, Catholics, and Jews. He concludes with a consideration of what the lessons of the past portend for the future of these interrelated phenomena. Each chapter is illustrated with apt examples of visions of nature by landscape painters and photographers. The 58-page bibliography provides a most valuable resource for further exploration. This book will be of interest in numerous disciplines, including art history, conservation and environmental studies, and religion.

--L. E. Sponsel, *emeritus, University of Hawai'i*

Summing Up: Highly recommended. Lower-division undergraduates through faculty and professionals; general readers.