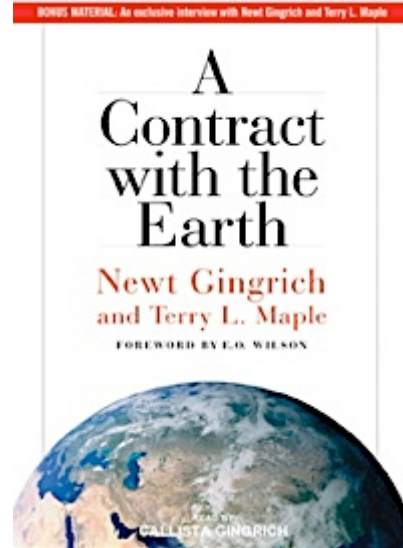




Written by [Daniel Sayani](#) on February 15, 2011

## Newt's Contract with the Earth: Pseudo-Science, Big Government

Most Americans remember Newt Gingrich as being the former Speaker of the House who led America into the glories of conservative victory, and who guided the Republican Party to electoral success in its 1994 "Revolution," which resulted in the economic boon of the Internet era of the late 1990s and early 2000s. Most do not associate Newt, however, with his true record, which speaks volumes about his underlying ideology and motivations. This ideology is especially evident in his 2007 book *A Contract with the Earth*, which he coauthored with environmentalist Terry Maple.



Gingrich's environmentalism, as is the case with environmentalism in general, is not specifically focused on finding ways to conserve resources and reduce pollution. It is a nuanced, underhanded, and sublimated means of imposing a broader and more ominous set of political reforms. Environmentalism serves as a gateway into the rise of the regulatory state, a more centralized government, higher taxation, increased government spending and deficits, the defeat of the free market, the erosion of national sovereignty, and ultimately the imposition of a global government.

These alarming truths have been most evident in the political thought of Newt Gingrich. His book serves as a window into the dark recesses of his "eco-consciousness," corroborating his big-government tendencies of which constitutionalists have long warned. Cato Institute Senior Fellow Michael D. Tanne, who has [written extensively](#) on how Gingrich has led the Republican Party down its failed path of big-government programs and out-of-control spending, observes the following about him :

Anyone who seriously believes that Gingrich is a small-government conservative in the mold of Barry Goldwater and Ronald Reagan, should look at the new Contract with America-style manifesto that Newt has proposed as the basis for Republicans to campaign on. Gingrich would expand No Child Left Behind to create national teacher competency standards, and he does not actually call for any specific spending cuts. What he proposes is budget legislation that would lead to a balanced budget in seven years. Perhaps balancing the budget takes so long because he wants to spend so much more on a national energy policy. Gingrich proposes an array of subsidies to every conceivable energy interest group and project from ethanol to hydrogen-powered cars. Of course, there's nothing in Gingrich's manifesto about reforming entitlement programs. That's hardly surprising; Gingrich supported the Medicare prescription drug benefits.

It is within this context of fiscal liberality that Gingrich's environmentalism finds a logical dwelling place, and many believe that it is these beliefs which resulted in his dismal, single-digit performance in the 2010 and 2011 CPAC straw polls.



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Like his big-government manifesto, his treatise on environmentalism is merely another declaration of unconstitutional policies and ineffective, wasteful mechanisms to implement such proposals, including the continuation of unconstitutional federal agencies such as the Department of Energy, the strengthening of the United Nations and other global government enforcement bodies, and even the suggestion that the military ought to be used to enforce environmental policies, a picture Gingrich vividly paints in his book.

*A Contract with the Earth* differs from other stereotypically-liberal environmentalist treatises only in that it does offer some challenges to the left on the issues of regulation, global warming, and free enterprise. Gingrich does express some disdain for what he calls liberals' failed reliance on legislation and litigation in environmental protection; he argues in favor of taxpayer-funded rewards to business, rather than government punitive regulations, as means by which an environmentalist agenda can be implemented. He seems to support measures such as tax incentives, rather than policies which curtail free enterprise, such as binding emissions limits. He calls for public-private partnerships in advancing the environmentalist agenda, and does not call for reducing the size of government, instead advocating making big government somehow more "efficient": "...[O]ur government, at all levels, must be modernized to successfully partner, let alone compete, with the private sector," (p.196).

Indeed, Newt calls for all sorts of increased government spending and big government programs throughout his treatise:

- He calls for completely new federal environmental programs, citing the unconstitutional National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) as examples: "The U.S. government operates endowments for the humanities and the arts...Perhaps, it is time we consider a new endowment for conservation and the environment," pp. 115-116.
- He contradicts his previous claim that private enterprise is an effective mechanism by which environmental policies can be advanced, and argues that only government can remedy environmental ills: "...the type of arduous research that produces real breakthroughs can only be funded by astute governments," p. 167.
- Newt believes that the earth requires a "government takeover," thus denying evidence by free market environmentalist scholars such as [Terry L. Anderson](#) that private ownership has proven to be an economically and historically superior means to environmental stewardship than big government: "Government, at all levels, should be a facilitator for entrepreneurial, private-sector innovations and the formation of private-public environmental partnerships," p. 13.
- Gingrich claims that income should be redistributed on the local level to "simulate" compliance to environmental regulations among business: "Local governments operate much closer to the origin of environmental problems, and they have begun to provide tax incentives and large cash rewards for environmental compliance...While the motivation is driven by the application of tax dollars, the effect is rewarding rather than punitive," p. 194.

Gingrich also believes that liberal academia must be the recipient of federal taxpayer funds, even to be used for the controversial and often debunked theory that there is anthropogenic global warming:

"In spite of the demonstrated liberal leanings in academia, we have nothing but respect for the nation's scientists. They represent America's best hope to protect the environment. We support a dramatic increase in science and technology research and development because we desperately need to understand global climate change and other environmental phenomena," p. 201.

Unfortunately, the same liberal academicians for whom Gingrich urges taxpayer funding have been



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crucial in perpetuating the anthropogenic global climate change hoax, as well as the fraudulent, scandalous, and politicized pseudo-science. Gingrich, for instance, never once mentions the infamous "hockey-stick graph" scandal in his book, nor does he acknowledge any of the many scientific views which challenge the premise that there exists an endangering anthropogenic global warming. According to astronomers Willie Soon and Sallie Bailunas, [Professor Michael E. Mann](#), who created the hockey-stick model, invented the anthropogenic global warming hoax by relying on flawed interpretations of data in order to argue that global temperatures are positively correlated with industrialization. Mann thus perpetuated one of the great politicizations of science ever to occur in the 20th century.

Rather than acknowledging these inconvenient truths, Newt instead marches lockstep to the beat of the environmentalist drum, advocating his belief that anthropogenic global warming is gospel truth:

“We agree that there is plenty of evidence that global climate change is occurring...While humanity is certainly causing its fair share of the change, scientists are still not able to precisely pinpoint the extent of the change, or the margin of error in their estimates,” p. 200.

His book is riddled with even more phony science; he invents the psychiatric diagnosis of “Nature Deficit Disorder” (NDD), relying on the unsubstantiated claims of journalist Richard Louv, who lacks any training in either mental health or medicine. Neither the American Psychiatric Association, nor any other learned societies recognize NDD as a valid diagnosis, and is there is no push to have NDD recognized as a valid diagnosis in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM-V). Louv relies on the unsubstantiated “Biophilia Hypothesis” of Edward O Wilson, who authored the foreword to Gingrich’s book. (Wilson is also a “Secular Humanist Laureate” of the [International Academy of Humanists](#), along with figures such as Fabian Socialist and George Soros mentor Karl Popper). He claims that a lack of environmentalism equates to unsubstantiated psychosocial ills, and this is yet another instance where Newt succumbs to falsehood:

“...our children, according to Louv, run the risk of acquiring ‘nature deficit disorder,’ a malady that he describes as a contributing factor to a recognized mental health construct, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, or ADHD. Nature deficit disorder, not yet acknowledged by scientists or clinicians, is a working hypothesis that Louv believes helps to explain the onset of ADHD, and he proposes that exposure to nature should be offered as a therapy for children who have difficulty attending to stimuli and learning in conventional classrooms. His call for research in this domain is compelling,” p. 182.

This hypothesis, which claims that humans have an instinctual connection with the environment, is related to so-called “Gaia Philosophy,” named after the pagan Greek goddess of the earth, which argues that the biosphere cosmically becomes “at one” with those who inhabit it. Many scientists have attacked this approach as being teleological and deductive, as opposed to empirical, as it sees the earth as one being, not differing at all from pagan earth-worship. Gingrich himself seems to fall into this line of thinking, essentially adopting such pagan beliefs himself, viewing environmentalism as a “global religion of peace”:

“Far from becoming a new source of global discord, environmentalism, which binds nations to a common concern, will be the best thing that’s ever happened to international relations,” pp. 149-150.

In brief, *A Contract with the Earth* differs little from other mainstream, liberal presentations of



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environmental policy. Gingrich does not once challenge the faulty theoretical assumptions upon which much of the modern environmentalist movement relies, and instead, falls into the trap of accepting such assumptions without question. He approaches the question of environmental stewardship from the perspective of one who deductively relies on the following flawed assumptions:

- That government spending and the Leviathan apparatus of centralized, big government provide the best solutions for pressing concerns and problems faced by society (in Newt's case, this includes energy, the environment, education, health care, and other issues).
- That anthropogenic global warming is gospel truth and has the status of an unquestioned scientific law, despite the scientific evidence to the contrary and the controversy created in the scientific community on the matter.
- That the teleological views of ancient Greek and Celtic paganism regarding earth-worship and the goddess Gaia constitute a legitimate basis upon which environmental problems must be tackled.
- And that inductive reasoning and objectivity matter little in the debate on environmental woes, and that resorting to any falsehood to advocate environmentalism is a proper avenue to be taken, even if it involves relying on invented diagnoses.

Anyone who values such timeless principles as monotheism, objectivity, limited government, and free-market concepts must be advised that *A Contract with the Earth* offers little more than the same ideas heard among any host of environmentalist liberals, and should not expect to hear anything other than what they can already hear from a host of other big-government ideologues.

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