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"Restoring Eden in the Amish Anthropocene"

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Since Eugene Stoermer and Paul Crutzen popularized the concept the "Anthropocene" in 2000, scholars from many disciplines have taken up and adapted the term to better account for multiple worldviews and environmentalist strategies. However, such attempts have not solved the problems that motivated the creation of the analytic in the first place: convincing lay individuals to actively respond to anthropogenic environmental change. Climate change denial persists, even within the rural and agricultural communities most affected by these environmental changes. These same communities do not always welcome regulatory and technological interventions aiming to limit environmental impact, and climate change, environmentalism, and the Anthropocene are often perceived as distant and empty intellectualisms.

Through an ethnographic account about an uncanny technology, this article explores a conceptual meeting ground between sacred and secular worldviews in efforts that address the Anthropocene. In 2013 an unlikely agricultural group—the Amish—adopted an electromagnetic water device known as the Talya Water System. Studying the use of this water system, this article explores how this conservative Christian community incorporated different worldviews and stresses the importance of taking sacred timelines seriously when considering the Anthropocene. In highlighting an "Amish Anthropocene" located within a fundamentalist Christian timeline, I argue that the Amish embrace of the Talya Water System was achieved through its alignment with their religious worldviews. I propose this alignment as one strategy that may be adopted to make environmental change more meaningful across disparate communities. (Text from author's abstract)

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