

Religion and the Environment

John Muir, founder of the Sierra Club, The United States' first environmental group, his essay, *Man's Place in the Universe* from *A Thousand-Mile Walk to the Gulf* (1916)

Why should man value himself as more than a small part of the one great unit of creation? And what creature of all that the Lord has taken the pains to make is not essential to the completeness of that unit - the cosmos? The universe would be incomplete without man; but it would also be incomplete without the smallest transmicroscopic creature that dwells beyond our conceitful eyes and knowledge.

From the dust of the earth, from the common elementary fund, the Creator has made Homo sapiens. From the same material he has made every other creature, however noxious and insignificant to us. They are earth-born companions and our fellow mortals. The fearfully good, the orthodox, of this laborious patch-work of modern civilization cry "Heresy" on every one whose sympathies reach a single hair's breadth beyond the boundary epidermis of our own species. Not content with taking all of earth, they also claim the celestial country as the only ones who possess the kind of souls for which that imponderable empire was planned.

This star, our own good earth, made many a successful journey around the heavens ere man was made, and whole kingdoms of creatures enjoyed existence and returned to dust ere man appeared to claim them. After human beings have also played their part in Creation's plan, they too may disappear without any general burning or extraordinary commotion whatever.

Source this document by writing a **SENTENCE OF SOURCING** and a **SENTENCE OF ANALYSIS** explaining the relevance of one of the following:

Historical Situation—**I**ntended **A**udience—**P**oint of View—**P**urpose—**wh**Y the sourcing affects your use of the document.