

The Ridiculousness Of The Religion Of Recycling

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By Amy Alkon

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I try not to waste resources, and to conserve where I can, but some attempts at energy and resource saving are not savings at all; for example, the government ban on incandescent light bulbs. (I just bought 136 of them from WhatsWatt.com.)

Kate Coe made a comment on Facebook that reminded me of an old column by John Tierney about the absurdity of the recycling mania. Kate's comment:

Why is reducing consumption supposed to be a good thing? People get paid to make things, sell things, repair things, recycle things. I buy more old stuff than new, but that's merely a function of taste than any position on consumption. I like employment for myself and others.

Tierney [writes](#) in a 1996 NYT column:

Yes, a lot of trees have been cut down to make today's newspaper. But even more trees will probably be planted in their place. America's supply of timber has been increasing for decades, and the nation's forests have three times more wood today than in 1920. 'We're not running out of wood, so why do we worry so much about recycling paper?' asks Jerry Taylor, the director of natural resource studies at the Cato Institute. "Paper is an agricultural product, made from trees grown specifically for paper production. Acting to conserve trees by recycling paper is like acting to conserve cornstalks by cutting back on corn consumption.

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