

This Crazy Time: Living Our Environmental Challenge

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ADVANCE PRAISE FOR

THIS CRAZY TIME

by TZEPORAH BERMAN

with MARK LEIREN-YOUNG

"If you've ever uttered the word 'can't,' you need to pick up *This Crazy Time*. Tzeporah Berman's inspirational journey from accidental logging activist to international climate champ will show you how a fearless dreamer can help safeguard millions of acres of old-growth forests and tackle the biggest challenge of our time: climate change. You'll walk away with an honorary MBA in changing the world. How will you put yours to use?" Adria Vasil, author of the *Ecoholic* series

"In *This Crazy Time*, Tzeporah Berman brings the inflated rhetoric of the environmental debate down to earth and puts a passionate and empathetic human face on the defining global challenge of our time. Her journey from the front lines of logging blockades to the hot seats of corporate boardrooms is told with remarkable intimacy and rare self-reflection, tracing the central arc of the environmental movement as a whole over the past twenty years. In times growing crazier with each day's weather, we need her thoughtful leadership more than ever." Chris Turner, author of *The Leap* and *The Geography of Hope*

"Over the past twenty years the environmental debate has been loud, raucous and increasingly prominent. And Tzeporah Berman has been right there in the thick of it. Berman is a key leader and, in this book, a thoughtful interpreter of significant events. Let her be your guide to some of the most exciting, and important, moments in recent Canadian history." Rick Smith, executive director of Environmental Defence; co-author of *Slow Death by Rubber Duck*

"Tzeporah Berman is a modern environmental hero, and this fascinating book shares her exciting history, and the even more exciting thinking that it's given rise to. If we get out of our ecological woes, she'll be a big reason." Bill McKibben, author of *Eaarth* and founder of 350.org

"Tzeporah's inspiring and humorous story about her development as an environmental activist has significance far beyond the successful struggle against old-growth clear-cutting. If governments remain unwilling to enact effective climate policies, the obvious next step is for civil actions that engage the public while slowing or preventing investments that facilitate fossil fuel combustion (coal plants, oil pipelines, freeways). Who better to lead that charge?" Mark Jaccard, member of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and author of *Hot Air: Meeting Canada's Climate*

Change Challenge

"Our global environmental crisis is going critical. It's easy to lose hope. Tzeporah Berman is one of the few people with the insight, experience and guts to show us a way forward that actually might work. *This Crazy Time* seamlessly blends hard-won practical tips on how to build a mass movement for change with deeply moving stories of Berman's own successes and failures in the high-stakes world of international environmental campaigning. It shows how each of us—by working with others and marrying courage with political and business smarts—can change the world, for real and for good. This is a fabulous book. It will give you goose-bumps, make you laugh and leave you in tears. And you won't put it down till the last page." Thomas Homer-Dixon, author of *The Upside of Down*

"Tzeporah Berman's true-life exploits make a great read. From Paris Hilton to rock concerts in forest blockades, she manages to share a very personal take on the state of our planet with the highs and lows of life as one of our strongest eco-campaigners." Elizabeth May, Green Party Member of Parliament "Tzeporah Berman is a Canadian environmental hero and national treasure. In *This Crazy Time* she takes us on a very personal and fascinating journey through her life as an environmental activist. Berman provides us with gripping front-line accounts of her involvement in saving Clayoquot Sound, and her campaigns with ForestEthics, PowerUp Canada and Greenpeace International. Throughout her journey we learn how she constantly struggles to balance family life with her role as an environmental activist. Tzeporah Berman has a profound understanding of the environment. At times besieged by critics from both within and outside of the environmental movement, she manages to remain focused on her primary objective: the introduction of environmental policy that preserves natural habitat and biodiversity, while recognizing the need for economic stability. *This Crazy Time* is a must-read for those on any side of a particular environmental issue. Tzeporah Berman emphasizes the power of dialogue and the importance of compromise for reaching lasting solutions to environmental problems. And she leaves the reader with a sense of optimism that each and every one of us can make a difference." Andrew Weaver, Professor and Canada Research Chair in Climate Modelling and Analysis; author of *Keeping our Cool: Canada in a Warming World*

"You can call Tzeporah Berman a crazy, tree-hugging, jailbird, eco-terrorist. But in today's world it's just about the only honest job around. Save a vital rainforest, or clear-cut its giant redwoods into newsprint, packaging and toilet paper. Are we kidding? Our tragedy is that we aren't all chained to a tree." William Marsden, author of *Fools Rule: Inside the Failed Politics of Climate Change*

"If you've ever wondered how ordinary people become the extraordinary people who change the world, read this book. Here is a memoir that will convince you Canada's forests are a global treasure, but more importantly, reminds each and every one of us that we have the power to act on our beliefs. Fast-paced, frank and often surprisingly funny, *This Crazy Time* is a primer for a more impassioned world." J.B. MacKinnon, co-author of *The 100-Mile Diet*

"Tzeporah Berman has risked life and liberty in what is ultimately the greatest cause: the future of this planet. Sad, alarming, witty and bold, *This Crazy Time* takes us inside the war against those who are so recklessly and ruthlessly destroying the earth while most of us sleep." Ronald Wright, author of *A Short History of Progress*

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Optimism is the only moral choice. It's an option, first of all, it's not a given. If you run out of hope at the end of the day, you always have the choice of getting up in the morning and putting it on again, like a sweater. You have to keep trying to find hope. I think it's immoral to do otherwise, because the minute you say, "I can't do a thing about it. This world is going to hell in a handbasket and it's beyond me to change it." The minute you say that, you're essentially saying, "I'm gonna stop trying...." If you give up hope and stop trying to fix what's wrong, you're handing to your children—and mine and everybody else's—a worse world than the one you found. And I can't live with that.

BARBARA KINGSOLVER,

INTERVIEWED ON *WRITERS AND COMPANY*, CBC RADIO
CONTENTS

[Cover](#)

[Title Page](#)

[Copyright](#)

[Epigraph](#)

[Preface](#)

[Introduction](#)

PART I: BLOCKADES

1. Canada Has Rainforests? Awakening as an

Environmentalist

2. The Black Hole: Setting Up Camp in Clayoquot Sound

3. Surfing

the Backlash: Going to Jail

4. The Moral High Ground: Working with First Nations

PART II: BOYCOTTS

5. The Waterbed Effect: Beginning the Markets Campaign

6.

Getting Out of Dodge: Learning How to Campaign

7. Redefining Protection Politics:

Transforming the Mid-Coast Timber Supply Area into the Great Bear Rainforest

PART III:

BOARDROOMS

8. Dancing with the Enemy: Learning to See People, Not Positions

9. Hard on the Issues, Soft on the People: Creating Forest Ethics

10. Every Sixty Seconds:

Saving Canada's Boreal Forest

11. Victoria's Dirty Secret: Moving from Lumber to

Lingerie

12. Green Is the New Black: Campaigning in Tinseltown

PART IV: CLIMATE

RECKONING

13. The Atmosphere Doesn't Negotiate: Changing My Focus to the Key

Challenge of Our Age

14. Canada's Mordor: Visiting the Alberta Tar Sands

15.

The Suicide Pact: Attending the Copenhagen Climate Conference

16. Shades of Green:

Searching for Radical Pragmatism

17. Living Green: Reconciling the Big Stuff with Our Daily

Lives

18. Back in the Mother Ship: Returning to Greenpeace International

[Conclusion: The Pointy End](#)

[Acknowledgements](#)

[Image Permissions](#)

[Notes](#)

[Recommended Websites](#)

[Recommended Reading](#)

[About the Authors](#)

PREFACE

THE STORIES IN THIS BOOK represent moments and events that were important for me, but they are part of complex and multi-faceted campaigns that I can only begin to describe here. I specifically want to recognize the importance of indigenous leadership in this work and make clear that while I can and do discuss my direct engagement with First Nations and try to understand and incorporate human rights and sovereignty issues, I know that I have not done justice to their courageous and critical initiatives. Although I've tried to tell my tale with every attempt at accuracy and have benefited from the contributions of essential colleagues in creating this record, errors of fact, omissions and mistakes in the book are mine.

Social change doesn't happen because of the work of just one individual. We often want to believe that it does because we seem hardwired to the notion of heroes, and it seems simpler to visit our hopes, disappointments or accolades on one person. While an individual can make a huge impact, societal change is brought about because society moves, and that movement forward takes the work of many people, in so many ways, visible and not. Success, clarity and game-changing

moments in the campaigns I describe resulted from the efforts of numerous individuals and organizations. I recognize many of them in the acknowledgements, but there are thousands more who contributed to this work. I dedicate this book to them and to all of you who are helping to achieve a cleaner, saner and safer world.

Tzeporah Berman

Amsterdam

June 2011

INTRODUCTION

First they ignore you, then they ridicule you, then they fight you, then you win.

MAHATMA GANDHI, PARAPHRASING LABOUR ORGANIZER

NICOLAS KLEIN'S SPEECH TO GARMENT MANUFACTURERS, 1918

“**CAN YOU COME HOME SOON?**” my son asks as we sit talking into our computers on different sides of the world. Then, before I can answer, he adds, “Have you saved the polar bears yet?”

Sitting at a cast-iron table at a café on the edge of an Amsterdam canal, I'm wondering about this crazy time we live in and what it's going to take to create a world where a child doesn't grow up worried about the fate of the polar bears, let alone his own fate.

I've just finished my first week of work at Greenpeace International as the co-director of the global climate and energy programme. Every day I'm inspired and humbled by the knowledge, commitment and diversity of experience crammed into the perpetually buzzing four-storey building on the outskirts of Amsterdam. I'm excited by the opportunity to share an office with more than a hundred brilliant, passionate people working at all hours, in many languages, determined to overcome cultural differences, time differences and enormous odds to patch together environmental strategies with thousands of others who are working in similar offices and other organizations around the world. I am also afraid of suffocating in the red tape of an organization this big, overwhelmed by the scale of the problems we face and, after nineteen years of professional activism, I still have moments of wondering when my life will go back to normal. But this is the new normal for many of us in the twenty-first century.

I'm supposed to be en route to Bangkok to meet with Greenpeace staff from across Asia, but protests against the Thai government closed most of the city, so we moved the meeting to Hong Kong. Then the flight to Hong Kong was grounded, so now I have a stolen day to try to wrap my head around the recent changes in my life, the scale of the problems we're facing and my new job trying to “save the polar bears.”

Thousands of miles away, on an isolated island off the west coast of Canada, Quinn waits for my response. I look at his eager face on the screen and find myself second-guessing the decision to shortly take my kids from their home that's a few hundred yards up the hill from their six-room school on an organic farm to this crazy, vibrating city that never seems to sleep.

As I spend my days and nights at the office, I worry that I don't have what it takes to do this new job—to help coordinate hundreds of climate and energy campaigners and organizers from dozens of countries, whose aim is nothing less than an energy revolution. Our mission isn't “just” to stop global warming, it's to protect what's left of the world's pristine places and ensure what's known as

“climate justice”: fair agreements over energy use between developed and developing countries.

The most amazing, inspiring and frustrating thing isn't that we can't address these issues, it's that we can and don't. The experts keep telling us we have a way through this, that we have the technology to change the way we deal with our energy needs. The Princeton professors Stephen Pacala and Robert Socolow wrote in *Science* in 2004: “Humanity already possesses the fundamental scientific, technical and industrial know-how to solve the carbon and climate problem. We are not dealing with a failure of technology, a failure of industry, a failure of human ability. We are dealing with a failure of social and political will.”¹

That's why, even with this big a mission and the blizzard of e-mails and calls every day from people in India, China, Brazil, Australia, Canada and the United States, most of the time I think I'm clear on what needs to happen. We don't need to be rocket scientists, we don't need to build a new widget—we need to find ways to organize, to demand that our elected officials and major corporations put in place the policies and laws that will regulate pollution, reduce our dependence on fossil fuels and stimulate the use of existing clean technologies. After years of doing this work, I can usually draw on some lesson, experience or campaign and focus on making a decision, giving advice or designing a plan.

Then, out of nowhere, there are moments when I feel as if I'm twenty again and making it up as I go along, almost paralyzed by the scale of the change required and by the realization that I'm suddenly helping to direct the climate campaign of one of the largest environmental organizations in the world. My lowest points come when I think about the impact this responsibility will have on my boys, how much travelling I'll have to do, how much time we'll be apart.

“How many days left before you come home, Mommy?” asks Forrest, when we start our nightly talk on Skype. Forrest is twelve.

Then Quinn, who is eight, takes over the computer. “Forrest cried for an hour yesterday, but he told me not to tell you.”

As I picture Forrest crying, I'm less concerned about whether I can mediate the internal dispute over Greenpeace's position on energy from biomass, or whether we can launch a legal challenge against a new coal plant in the Czech Republic than I am that I can't crawl under the covers and read him a bedtime story in which everyone lives happily ever after.

But this is the moment when change finally has a chance. Today, “green is the new black,” and everyone from Paris Hilton to Bill Gates wants to do what they can to fight climate change. Every business from Coca-Cola to Walmart to your corner store is trying to figure out how to capture the socially conscious market, but not necessarily how to reduce their ecological footprint. Yet we are living in a world where everybody at least claims to want to do something to help—whether by recycling more or consuming less. Individuals, corporations and governments are all more open than they've ever been to exploring solutions, and investment in clean technologies is at an all-time high.

In 2009 Europe developed more renewable energy than energy from coal, oil or nuclear power. After decades of receiving blank looks or shameless laughter from politicians and corporate leaders whom I have lobbied on environmental issues, I knew the message had finally sunk in when US President Barack Obama declared, “Our future on this planet depends on our willingness to address the challenge posed by carbon pollution.”² Then Jiang Bing, head of China's National Energy Administration, announced Beijing's plans to spend 5 trillion yuan, or about US\$738 billion, over the next decade to develop cleaner sources of energy.³

We've come a long way from the days of solar panels and windmills being the pipe dream of some West Coast hippies. Tipping points are moments when opinions and decisions shift quickly and dramatically—when new concepts, theories or ideas spread like wildfire. Tipping points create political space and opportunity for change.⁴ The changing market for clean energy and world leaders' recognition of the need to address environmental challenges has created a tipping point that truly gives us an opportunity to re-envision the world.

That's why I returned to Greenpeace International, after leaving the organization a decade ago. I took this position in a city halfway around the world from our home on Cortes Island knowing it would mean less baking, less gardening, less Lego, fewer games of Go Fish and Battleship, fewer bedtime stories and more heartbreaking calls like these.

When I look at my children, I am frequently haunted by the words of experts like Dr. James Hansen, who recently stepped down as NASA's top climate scientist, who warns that the earth's climate is reaching a stage beyond which climate change will spiral out of control. We are already seeing a rise in violent storms, droughts in some parts of the world and floods in others leading to escalating food costs, water scarcity, ocean acidification and economic instability.⁵

The number that should be haunting every parent and inspiring every choice we make—not just in the shopping mall, but in the voting booth—is 350. That's the parts per million of carbon dioxide that scientists say our atmosphere can safely process. We're currently at almost 390 parts per million. Study after terrifying study has shown that if we don't get that level back down to 350, we will be unable to avoid apocalyptic consequences such as the floods in Sri Lanka that recently displaced a million people or the devastating fires in Russia. This is a crazy time we are living in. We simply can't afford to keep spewing junk into our atmosphere, where it is building up and smothering the planet. Yet for decades we have been burning our way through oil and coal and treating our atmosphere like an ashtray. Now, according to the United Nations, the economic implications, including the impact on water, food and human dislocation, make climate change the greatest challenge humanity has ever faced.⁶

Dr. Hansen wrote in 2010 (which, by the way, tied 2005 as the hottest year since humanity started keeping stats on the planet's temperature in 1880),⁷ "The predominant moral issue of the twenty-first century, almost surely, will be climate change, comparable to Nazism faced by Churchill in the twentieth century and slavery faced by Lincoln in the nineteenth century. Our fossil fuel addiction, if unabated, threatens our children and grandchildren, and most species on the planet."⁸

The situation is serious enough that in 2007 the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, the keepers of the global "Doomsday Clock,"⁹ moved the hands two minutes closer to midnight because of the dangers posed by climate change.¹⁰

The US general Wesley Clark warns that "energy security is crucial to national security."¹¹ We know this from watching wars fought over oil, or from experiencing how vulnerable our society is when energy prices skyrocket and millions of people simply can't afford to get from A to B, or the price of staples like rice and flour rises dramatically.

And the organization Christian Aid is predicting that by 2050 more than one billion people will be forced out of their homes by climate change, creating an unprecedented number of global refugees.¹²

If peak oil, security issues and clearly fragile economic systems that depend on finite resources aren't enough to get your attention, we also now know that fossil fuel use has been linked to everything from mercury poisoning, to asthma, to changing patterns of infections and

insect-borne diseases, and skyrocketing mortality rates due to heat waves, reduced water and threatened food security. The medical journal *The Lancet's* Health Commission in 2009 warned: "Climate change is the biggest global health threat of the twenty-first century."¹³

Michael McGeehin, director of the Division of Environmental Hazards and Health Effects at the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in the United States, agrees. "Heat waves are a public health disaster. They kill, and they kill the most vulnerable members of our society. The fact that climate change is going to increase the number and intensity of heat waves is something we need to prepare for."¹⁴ Even Jeroen van der Veer, the chief executive of Royal Dutch Shell, has given speeches saying, "Regardless of which route we choose, the world's current predicament limits our maneuvering room. We are experiencing a step-change in the growth rate of energy demand due to population growth and economic development, and Shell estimates that after 2015 supplies of easy-to-access oil and gas will no longer keep up with demand."¹⁵ Of course, the CEO of Shell is not therefore seriously advocating that we transform our energy systems to depend on renewable energy instead of fossil fuels. In fact, Shell and most of the other major oil and gas companies seem hell-bent on literally going to the ends of the earth (strip-mining for oil in the Canadian tar sands or deep-water drilling in the fragile Arctic) to get at what's left. My point is that regardless of your opinion of the solution or your impetus for change, there is a growing recognition from all corners of society that we need to change how society functions and fuels itself, and something's gotta give.

I'm not interested in spending time convincing anyone that global warming is happening. I am invested in convincing you that we need to make major changes in our lives and the laws and policies that govern our societies in order to reduce our dependence on dirty energy and protect the earth's living systems. Even the most devout climate change deniers know our consumerist lifestyle is unsustainable because it's based on dirty, dangerous and finite resources, such as coal and oil, instead of on those that we know are renewable, like sun and wind.

It doesn't take a climate scientist to realize there isn't enough oil left for everyone in India and China to live like North Americans. Regardless of whether you accept the science behind climate change, or the clear health risks, there are other economic and national security reasons that should worry you.

The need to ensure access and equity in emerging economies should be a pretty strong motivator. The carbon footprint of the poorest one billion people is around 3 percent of the world's total footprint, yet climate change affects these communities the most.¹⁶ The past one hundred years have been a frenzy of development and pollution. We've benefited in many ways, but now we're starting to live the repercussions. It's as if we've thrown a massive party in our parents' house and have to clean up the mess in the living room before Mom and Dad get home—except in this case it's our grandchildren's house that we've trashed.

From a big-picture perspective, the solutions seem clear, and we are already seeing them emerge in many places around the world.¹⁷ We need to dramatically reduce our dependence on finite resources and dirty fossil fuels. We need to rebuild our society so we're not dependent on food that was farmed on one continent, processed at the other end of the planet and then shipped to the consumer. We need to move to a sustainable economy driven by renewable resources, in which the value of clean air, clean water and biodiversity are taken into account when we make economic and political calculations.

And what's the worst thing that happens if we act to change the way industrial society is fuelled and then it turns out that NASA, the CEO of Shell, a four-star general, the United Nations and pretty much every scientist and government on the planet were wrong about climate change? We end up with renewable energy systems, more local food production, cleaner air, cleaner water, more

vibrant communities, fewer species going extinct, fewer people dying of cancer and respiratory diseases, millions of new clean energy jobs and increased global security.

My favourite cartoon about climate change is by Joel Pett from *USA Today*. It shows the audience at a symposium looking at a PowerPoint list of objectives: “energy independence, preserve rainforests, sustainability, green jobs, livable cities, renewables, clean water, air and healthy children.” Meanwhile, at the back of the room, one cranky guy asks, “What if it’s a big hoax and we create a better world for nothing?”

So this isn’t a book to convince you of the dangers of climate change. There are many excellent books out there (pretty exhaustively referenced here if you want to access them) that will do that and scare your socks off.¹⁸ This is a book that will, I hope, help you to get off your butt so you can kick some—starting with your nearest politician’s. So, in the following chapters I will share with you—in the belief that stories are and always have been helpful signposts and guides from which we can find direction for ourselves too—some stories of why and how I have engaged with these issues, what has worked and what hasn’t. Hopefully, in the process I will give you some ideas of how you too can engage—at whatever level you choose—in some of the defining issues of our age.

SITTING IN THIS CAFÉ, I am acutely aware that I am living a “before and after” moment—one of those moments in our personal and collective history when things change so dramatically that we define our lives in terms of “before” and “after.” In history we describe eras as either BC and AD, or BCE and CE. In my personal history, the birth of my children divides my life into chapters. I frequently find myself referring to “before Forrest” or “after Quinn.”

As an environmental activist, I’ve had several moments that changed what I do, how I do it and why. In the summer of 1993 I was twenty-four and sitting in an overcrowded courtroom in Victoria, British Columbia, anticipating the judge’s verdict on the Clayoquot Sound demonstrations. Forty-four people were sitting on the benches, waiting to be sentenced, expecting that sentence to be community service hours for the crime of blockading the logging trucks in Canada’s old-growth temperate rainforests, sometimes for barely ten minutes. Teenagers, moms, grandmas—a lot of grandmas—took part. We realized something strange was going on when dozens of uniformed sheriffs filed in and lined the walls.

Once the sheriffs entered, the judge started his sentencing. He would state a name, the person would stand, and he would decree the number of days the defendant was to serve in prison. As he said each name, a sheriff would handcuff the prisoner and take him or her out the back door. Everyone started crying. One young mother turned to me and said, “Oh my God, what am I going to do? Take care of my daughter.”

As I sat there, stunned, and watched this scene play out, my lawyer came over and said, “The Crown is arguing for a jail sentence of six years for you.”

Six years?

The government saw me as one of the leaders of the protests, and they were determined to make an example out of me.

I went outside the courthouse to catch my breath. Another lawyer I’d never met came over to me, still wearing his ceremonial robes, and said, “I just caught the tail end of that. Do you know what was happening in the courtroom next to you?”

I didn’t. I was trying to handle both my own shock and the chaos of sudden responsibility for these

people, their belongings and their kids.

He told me that next door a man who was arrested with a sawed-off shotgun, who'd confessed that he'd been walking around Victoria looking for young girls to kill, had been given no jail time. But in our courtroom, professors, tradespeople and grandmothers advocating for peace and public dialogue were being handcuffed and taken to prison.

I called my friend and fellow organizer, Valerie Langer, who was back in Tofino, a small town on the edge of the remote rainforests of Clayoquot Sound. "They're all going to jail. They're sending them all to jail. All the grandmothers, all the mothers."

As I babbled in shock, Valerie managed to make a horrific day even worse when she said, "The logging started again today."

Greenpeace Canada had just run a poll, and the stats showed that 86 percent of Canadians didn't support the logging of Clayoquot Sound.¹⁹ We'd managed to get our message out: this old-growth rainforest on the west coast of Vancouver Island, one of the few intact temperate rainforests on our planet, mattered, and this logging shouldn't be allowed to happen. And now some of the leaders of our community were going to jail for trying to stop it.

Democracy was not working. Protesting was not working. Public awareness and outrage were simply not enough. We needed a new strategy. We had to find out who was buying all this wood, and stop them. That moment changed the way we fought for the forests. The "markets campaign" was born.

Not long after that event and its outcome, I joined Greenpeace International for the first time to learn everything I could about how to run an environmental campaign. I trained with the best campaigners in the world, and for the next ten years, worked to apply what I had learned to try to save Canada's ancient forests and help transform the marketplace so manufacturers and consumers would demand ecologically responsible wood and paper products. Along the way I helped create ForestEthics, another independent non-profit environmental organization, to do this work.

Over the past two decades, it's been an intense journey. I've fought some of the largest corporations anywhere and challenged heads of state on national television. I've chased Canada's leaders around the world as they tried to sell environmental disaster as economic progress. I've mingled with movie stars and rock stars and supermodels—something I'd never imagined happening to me—discussing the importance of going green. I've been vilified by some corporations, courted to share a stage with others and helped colleagues from many organizations pull together to negotiate "the world's biggest forest protection deal,"²⁰ the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement, which has been described as a historic success story by some and a dangerous sellout by others.

Until about three or four years ago I thought I had figured out a pretty effective means to make positive change. We were making some headway on persuading companies to produce greener products, and governments around the world to protect more ancient forests. Of course, I was concerned about global warming, but it wasn't what I directly worked on. And then the reports started crossing my desk showing how much of the forests I had devoted my life to protecting were now being devastated by beetle infestations or fires—direct results of a warming climate.

In 2007 I was invited to the United Nations international climate negotiations in Bali to talk about the impacts of global warming on our forests and the impact logging was having on global warming. The conference brought together thirty thousand people from every country in the

world. I delivered my speech, and then went to the opening of the climate negotiations. That's where the secretary-general of the United Nations, Ban Ki-moon, said something that spun my world around: "The situation is so desperately serious that any delay could push us past the tipping point, beyond which the ecological, financial and human costs would increase dramatically. We are at a crossroad. One path leads to a comprehensive climate change agreement, the other to oblivion. The choice is clear."

I was sitting there, taking notes, and I turned to the woman next to me and asked, "Did he just say 'oblivion'?"

It wasn't long ago that if, as an environmentalist, and especially as a woman, I used the word "crisis," I was called "hysterical." I've been called an "enemy of the state," an "eco-terrorist" and "a whacked-out nature worshipper who prays to the moon" for saying things that were nowhere near as extreme as what the secretary-general of the United Nations had just said. Oblivion?

Then something amazing happened. The woman beside me from the Congo Basin started keening—moaning and crying and rocking back and forth. There she was, in the middle of the negotiations for the international climate agreement, and then I got it: hers was the only sane response. In that moment I broke through my own denial about the threats posed by runaway climate change. I realized that it wasn't good enough for me to just read the scientific studies and the news reports—like that famous 2006 issue of *TIME* magazine that warned us to "Be Worried. Be Very Worried"—and depend on others to address our society's fossil-fuel addiction. I realized that even though I spent every day working on environmental issues, I had limited myself to working on forest issues. Yes, global warming was now affecting our forests, our water, our economy and even a stable climate, but someone else would deal with that. Wouldn't they?

Regardless of who we are, the realities of the climate era require us all to rethink how we spend our time and how we can engage in the energy debate. I realized I needed to stop relying on others to fix the problem and be willing to alter the issues I work on and how I work.

My shift to energy policy meant I wouldn't be focusing directly on the forest conservation work that had been so dear to my heart, and it is vital to do everything we can to protect what's left of our intact forests and to ensure that we create more ecologically responsible practices within the managed landscape; but for me, in that moment, the urgency of the impact of the carbon load in our atmosphere was moving me to start again on a long road of research, discovery and engagement. I began attending every scientific presentation on the impacts of global warming that I could. I immersed myself in the science, learning about both the physical effects of climate change and the moral implications. Every night in Bali, I would go back to my hotel room and cry. Then I would write a blog post, go to bed, get up and start again. In the blog posts I tried to share what I felt, express the urgency and move beyond keening for all we'd lost, and were continuing to lose, toward exploring what the hell we were supposed to do about it all.

I went to a panel on renewable energy. RSA Insurance Group, the largest insurance company in the world and based in the UK, said, "In one day, a small area of North Africa receives enough solar energy to feed human needs for energy for a year." In one day. Yet an hour later at the mayors' panel, the mayor of a town in Nairobi said, "We now have over a million people living in Nairobi slums, directly because of climate impacts today." Solutions are at hand but are not being applied, and the impact of our inaction is very real.

It will take all of us, doing what we can in our own lives, in our schools and at work, to make the changes we need to see in the world. There is no single action or silver bullet that will do the job. In fact, it will take a veritable ecosystem of activities, supporting each other, stronger as a result of our diversity, to make a shift as big as we need. The question for me at the time—and the question

that should be on all our minds—is what’s my role? What should I be doing at this critical moment in our history? Where or how, in whatever way, large or small, at home, in the office, in government, in our communities, can we help make a difference at this crucial juncture? That day in Bali I realized it was not okay for me to rely on others to try to save us from global warming, because fighting for forests without taking on climate change was like repainting the *Titanic* after hitting the iceberg.

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WE ALL FACE CHALLENGES, big and small, on a daily basis—personal ones like illnesses and paying the bills; societal ones like the downturn in the economy that sees our hard-won savings diminish or vanish, or our nation’s military policies that consume millions of dollars. Today we can’t open a newspaper or turn on the TV without being bombarded with stories of melting glaciers, species extinction and toxic chemicals everywhere. But no matter how scary it sounds, for many of us the floods and firestorms are still happening somewhere else, to people we’ve never met, and they’re just another image on TV. So what if the weather seems weirder and we all keep hearing that everything from tofu to tuna to water to the bottles we drink it out of are toxic?

When I was nursing Forrest the newspapers reported that if human breast milk had to be approved by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) it wouldn’t be, because it’s too polluted. We live so disconnected from nature and natural systems that it’s almost impossible to believe or process this information warning us of impacts that are often invisible and seem unreal. We hear the news that 80 percent of the Amazon rainforest will be gone in forty years. We read the stories that say the majority of the earth’s species are now under threat. Then we walk away from our computer to fill our kids’ lunch boxes and take out the trash—and maybe the recycling and the compost, so we can do *something*—and live our regularly scheduled lives.

But our regularly scheduled lives are about to be interrupted, and we’ve got to act while we still have a chance to save those forests and animals so we can tell our children we did more than just pack their sandwiches in reusable containers. Change happens when there is enough of a public outcry, or the effects of a problem are so evident that decision makers are forced to act.

The 1987 Montreal protocol, which globally banned the harmful chemicals that were creating the hole in the ozone layer, happened in part because of successful global environmental campaigns, but it also passed because people were burning to death. Rates of skin cancer were skyrocketing, and in some countries like Australia parents were being warned to keep their children indoors. We could see the impacts in our daily lives.

This time we can’t wait until we see the effects. In 2011, scientists discovered that the 2010 drought in the Amazon caused the death of billions of trees, and the forest that has long been considered the lungs of the planet may stop absorbing greenhouse gases and actually start creating them.[21](#)

The impacts we’re already experiencing—from droughts in the Amazon and the Congo Basin to vulnerable islands in the South Pacific like Tebua Tarawa and Abanuea disappearing under sea rise—are the result of carbon trapped in our atmosphere twenty years ago. There’s a time delay between the pollution we spew into the air and the impact it has on the earth. By the time many of us in the so-called developed world start seriously experiencing the effects of runaway climate change, it will be too late to stop it. So when the UN secretary-general declares the planet’s current economic model a “global suicide pact,” how do we figure out what we should be doing?[22](#)

CHANGE IS DIFFICULT, often painful, and so are real-world solutions, because they require compromises and co-operation. We don’t want oil spills, but we also don’t want wind farms. We

don't want any logging, even though we still need wood for many things that we use every day. There are days I find myself under attack by the people whose values I share, and envying their moral high ground of "no."

I began to realize that it is simply not good enough to be clear about what you are against, you need to know what you support.

I can stand on a blockade or sit in a tree and say not one tree should fall and it's wrong to log—and as I do that we'll lose an acre of Canadian forest every sixty seconds. Or I can say that I value the protection of wilderness and I recognize that people have to work, and we need to redefine work and redefine industry in order to make it viable and protect nature, so what is the best way to do that?

Over the past few years, in negotiating with companies to make deals that have required compromise and often compassion on both sides, I've found that activists with little experience on the ground often attack the agreements. For myself, I always feel most comfortable taking a stance on an issue after I've immersed myself in the area under threat, whether walking through clear-cuts, visiting the tar sands or spending time in the boreal forest. I'm lucky to have had such opportunities. The quality of dialogue that comes through speaking from experience cannot be manufactured, as we all know. Once I've gained this experience, I realize that the path forward is almost always murky and never black and white. The tricky part is finding a way to advocate for the radical change necessary, while addressing the complexity of the problems and the economic and social impact, without compromising ecological values. Not an easy dance.

Throughout this journey, I've repeatedly tried to figure out how we, as a society, actually create social change and what we can and should do now and tomorrow. By offering some of my own battle stories, I hope to help throw light on your own journey.

Today we each have the responsibility and the capacity—as individuals, as groups, as members of organizations and our community—to hold the people in power to account, to expose them and to help make social change. Political careers can be destroyed with the click of a cellphone camera. A multi-million-dollar corporate ad campaign can be derailed with a YouTube video.

We have more tools and more communications opportunities as individuals than our governments had even two decades ago. On one of my first campaigns in the early nineties I was given a cellphone. It was as heavy as a brick and so big that it had its own briefcase. When I started this work, it was frequently about how many bodies you could get around your kitchen table. Today you can be sitting at your kitchen table and connecting to thousands, or hundreds of thousands, of people—and half the time I can't even find my cellphone because it's so damn small.

When I started getting involved in environmental issues, especially when we were fighting the big battles for the last of the old-growth forests, environmentalism was the purview of those with a soft spot for bears and big trees. Today's threats are no longer strictly *environmental* issues; they are economic issues, health issues, human rights issues. As I listen to my new colleagues at Greenpeace Africa talk about the hundreds of thousands of people dying from droughts and famines due to climate change, due to the pollution we have spewed into the atmosphere over the past hundred years or so, I realize that they are right—these issues are the moral challenge of our age.

That's why I had to take a leap off our cozy, quiet island (population 950), where everyone leaves the door unlocked and keys in the car and waves to every driver and cyclist and pedestrian on the street, and start a new life in this intense international hub in Amsterdam.

That's why I've written this book—because, regardless of our day-to-day responsibilities, we can all find ways to engage. If any of us feel we still have time on our hands at this critical moment in history, then we really are not doing enough. Becoming a martyr will result in your being ineffective (and unbearable), but you should give these challenges all you've got, before it's too late. I didn't always feel compelled to act, but the sense of urgency and opportunity has persuaded me to try. You don't have to commit your life and career to fighting these issues, but each of us can dedicate some ingenuity, some resources, some time. And we have to, because today we're all responsible not only for what we do but for what we don't do.

Our actions need to be commensurate with the true scale of today's challenges and today's opportunities. To "save the polar bears," as Quinn puts it, we ultimately have to shift development politics to ensure that countries like China, India and Brazil leap over the mistakes we made in North America and Europe, essentially bypassing the fossil-fuel era, while persuading developed countries to put a price on pollution that will stem the advance of new dirty energy infrastructure—like pipelines from the Canadian tar sands designed to keep the United States hooked on dirty oil. More often than not a cleaner and more sustainable path is possible if we can get greed out of the way and push our politicians to have some chutzpah.

For many politicians, all too often everything comes down to money and votes. We have the ability to control both. If we want politicians to act before the impact is so big that it's killing all of us, we need to show them they have the social licence to do the right thing and also that there will be political ramifications for not acting.

So as I sit at the café, canal boats drifting by, bicycles whizzing past me, I look at Quinn on my computer screen and tell him the only thing I can.

"No, honey. We haven't saved the polar bears yet, but we're working on it." *

From one of the world's most controversial campaigners, **This Crazy Time** is the **No Logo** of the NEW environmental movement, an essential must-read that combines Bill Bryson's personable style and humour with Naomi Klein's hard-hitting activism and research.

Passionate, profound, inspiring and funny, Berman is inspiring people from all walks of life to get off the sidelines and fight the good fight--and win. This unique book--part manifesto from a leader, part humorous activist memoir from a soccer mom--offers a wryly honest, behind the scenes, ultimately uplifting look at the state of the planet. For almost 20 years, Tzeporah Berman has been one of our most influential environmentalists. A founder of ForestEthics and PowerUp Canada, she was instrumental in shaping the tactics and concerns of the modern environmental movement.

In her early 20s she faced nearly one thousand criminal charges and 6 years in prison for her role organizing blockades in Canada's rainforest. With ForestEthics she took on Victoria's Secret with a photo of a chainsaw-wielding lingerie model, convincing the catalogue manufacturer to stop using paper made from old-growth forests. She then transformed her tactics and sat down with CEOs and political leaders to reshape their policies and practices. She participated in saving over 12 million acres of endangered forests, including Canada's Great Bear Rainforest, and has campaigned against the development of Canada's oil sands. In her new role at Greenpeace International she

is fighting the problem of our time: climate change, including researching the impacts of the Gulf Oil Spill and protesting oil drilling in the Arctic. As a concerned mother, her book is an impassioned plea for a better world.

This Crazy Time Living Our Environmental Challenge - Get PDF. THIS CRAZY TIME: LIVING OUR ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGE. Vintage Canada. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Paperback. 384 pages. and Wall Street's Wildest Con By Guy Lawson This Crazy Time - In "How to Wreck the Environment," a 1968 essay published while he was a He monitored the carbon-dioxide problem the whole time, with increasing alarm.. There was a brown velvet love seat in the living room of James and Anniek... He has published four books of photography, including his latest, This Crazy Time Living Our Environmental Challenge - For an embattled CEO running a company on life support, being the. (Isaacson never considered writing such a book.) "Adam was probably the best salesman of all time," a former WeWork executive told me. "Adam later said, 'I'm crazy but Masa is crazier,'" a former WeWork executive recalled. This Crazy Time (eBook) - He told the couple's friends that Austin was "crazy. The U.S. Supreme Court has never heard a case on the issue, but Austin's lawyers say Science.lu : Why science and YouTube are the - RTL Today - She is the former co-director of Greenpeace International's Climate and Energy Program and Co-founder of ForestEthics. She is the author of This Crazy Time: Living Our Environmental Challenge. <https://www.joelsolomon.org/the-book> This Crazy Time Living Our Environmental Challenge - Stand.earth Uber s1 analysis - Earth and Environmental Sciences department focuses the origin, evolution, and. Beach-goers wear the Salt Life brand and proudly display our stickers. We keep prices low by selling directly to you and not taking crazy margins. Unaccustomed Earth " Guardian book club The author explains how months or years can Tzeporah Berman - Speakers " GLOBE Forum 2018 - Women in Biz Network and Wall Street's Wildest Con By Guy Lawson This Crazy Time: Living Our Environmental Challenge By Tzeporah Berman and Mark Leiren-Young The Watch By: Joydeep Roy-Bhattacharya woman-reading-book [PDF] This Crazy Time: Living Our Environmental Challenge - Mrs I Am Affirmations - Products in 2019 Mad campers challenge - This crazy time : living our environmental challenge, Tzeporah Berman with Mark Leiren-Young. 030739980X (electronic bk.), Toronto Public Library.

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