

Climate Science Denial and Game Changers for Survival

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Global Research, June 01, 2018

[The Georgia Straight](#) 29 May 2018

Region: [Canada](#)

Theme: [Law and Justice](#), [Oil and Energy](#)

*Nobody in the mainstream media ever asks **Prime Minister Justin Trudeau** or **Finance Minister Bill Morneau** if they're perpetrating an unprecedented crime on future generations.*

Even after the Liberal government announced its intention to pay a Texas oil company \$4.5 billion for its Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion project, coverage focused on the financial aspects of the deal, not its moral component.

So these are the typical issues addressed:

How much would Canadian taxpayers pay to complete construction?

Are there really buyers in Asia for the 890,000 barrels per day of expensively produced, energy-intensive diluted bitumen that will arrive in Burnaby from Alberta?

What does this mean for the people who work on the project?

How will Indigenous people react?

The most uncomfortable questions about greenhouse gases are almost never broached.

But what if, in fact, Trudeau, Morneau, and politicians like them around the world are committing a crime of immense proportions on the young and those yet to be born?

What if this can be demonstrated through the relationship between additional greenhouse gas emissions and more powerful and deadly hurricanes, longer and more devastating forest fire seasons, and unimaginable flooding of seaside and riverside cities around the world?

Would the mainstream media become an accessory to the crime through its acquiescence?

These are some of the issues raised in an extraordinary new book, *Unprecedented Crime: Climate Science Denial and Game Changers for Survival*, by B.C. authors Peter D. Carter and Elizabeth Woodworth.

"The global climate change emergency deserves and requires a rapid global emergency response," Carter and Woodworth declare.

What's more, they maintain that it would be criminally negligent to do otherwise. And they

point out that information about the threat has been publicly available for nearly four decades.

“During the last ten UN climate conferences, the large GHG-polluting national governments not only committed the crime of omission by failing to protect their citizens from climate disruption: they blocked and delayed action needed to save vulnerable non-polluting nations from CO₂-induced havoc already underway,” they write.

Carter is founder of the Climate Emergency Institute and was an expert reviewer of the Intergovernmental Panel of on Climate Change’s fifth and most frightening assessment in 2014. Woodworth is a retired B.C. government medical librarian.

They document the shocking rise in carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, which surpassed 410 parts per million in the spring of 2017.

“This trend in atmospheric CO₂ concentration increase is on course with the worst case IPCC 2014 scenario...which leads to a best estimate warming from atmospheric GHGs of 4.3 °C by 2100,” Carter and Woodworth write. “However, the IPCC says it could be as high as 7.8 °C by 2100 when including uncertainties such as amplifying feedbacks. Large feedback emissions are certain at 3 °C.”

As well, they keep readers up to date on record sea-surface temperatures, the rapid decline in Arctic ice in the summer, and the disturbing impacts of deforestation on the Earth’s capacity to retain carbon.

Do politicians have blood on their hands?

The first half of the book is called “Crimes Against Life and Humanity”, laying out the legal case for state-corporate crime in willfully blocking actions to curb greenhouse gas emissions, which would save millions of lives.

In one chapter, the authors focus on media collusion, noting that not a single question about climate change was asked in six hours of 2016 presidential debates.

They also write:

“Big Carbon could never have been able to continue its polluting ways—long after the scientific community had reached consensus about the connection between fossil-fuel emissions, global warming, and climate change—without the assistance of the media.”

It’s all so familiar to climate-conscious Canadians who’ve paid close attention to national TV network and newspaper coverage of the bailout of Kinder Morgan.

And in *Unprecedented Crime*, the case is developed in a clear, logical way that not only appeals to people with a great deal of expertise about climate change, but also to average readers who may not grasp the magnitude of the challenge facing humanity.

“We have established that the decades-long blocking and lying about the scientific evidence on the dangers of human-caused global warming has been deliberate,” Carter and Woodworth write. “So the question arises, how many people have been, or will be, hurt or killed by climate change?”

The answer, according to a DARA International report, was 400,000 deaths each year, with that expected to rise to 600,000 by 2030 as a result of climate change.

The report notes that another 400,000 to five million per year could die annually from the health consequences of burning fossil fuels.

The importance of the “normalcy bias”

Deep in *Unprecedented Crime*, Carter and Woodworth delve into the “normalcy bias”.

This “belief that things will always, ultimately, return to normal” is common among those entering a disaster.

This has been reflected in Canadian media coverage of recent B.C. floods, which were described as a once-in-a-100-year or once-in-a-200-year event.

It was on display in the reports on last year’s forest fires in B.C., which shattered the record for hectares consumed. Again, this was treated as utterly extraordinary, and not something we may see again in our lifetimes, let alone every two or three years.

The forest-fire cycle has started earlier than normal this year, with evacuation orders and alerts being issued in the Southern Interior of B.C.

People in the Gulf states and the Caribbean are being warned to prepare for another brutal hurricane season.

This normalcy bias, insist Carter and Woodworth, “is obstructing our view of the gathering climate disaster”.

What’s most galling is that this unprecedented crime of jacking up fossil-fuel production is occurring when alternatives are at hand.

Seven chapters in Part II of the book, “Game Changers for Survival”, outline in detail what can be done to wean the world off fossil fuels.

The authors rely heavily on the [Stanford Solutions Project](#), which has laid out a road map for making renewable energy a reality for everyone.

Carter and Woodworth favour carbon pricing over cap-and-trade of greenhouse gas emissions, describing the latter as “a subterfuge designed to promote fossil fuel viability”.

There’s also an intriguing section on a public-trust lawsuit, *Juliana v. United States et al.*, which is being advanced by climate scientist **James Hansen** on behalf of his granddaughter.

Hansen wrote the foreword for the book, stating that it makes “an overwhelming case that the public, especially young people, are victims of ‘Unprecedented Crime’.”

“Fortunately, Carter and Woodworth do much more than expose the crimes against humanity—they also present actions that people can take to alleviate the consequences for today’s public and for future generations,” Hansen adds.

To that end, there’s a breathtaking array of technological solutions to the climate crisis outlined in the book.

They include a detailed explanation how improvements in battery technology is making it far easier to store renewable electricity.

And, of course, *Unprecedented Crime* documents phenomenal progress in the development of solar, wind, and geothermal energy.

The authors close by declaring that high-emitting national governments “are continuing to sacrifice our survival—and the survival of all future generations—for fossil fuel corporate profit that includes untold oil for military operations subsidized with our money”.

They say it’s time for ordinary people who love their children to demand a stop to this and embrace the solutions outlined in the book.

Are Trudeau and Morneau listening?

If not, they might one day find themselves before a court of law explaining their actions in front of a judge.

That’s one obvious takeaway from *Unprecedented Crime*, and one that’s particularly timely in light of the Kinder Morgan bailout.



Title: Unprecedented Crime: Climate Science Denial and Game Changers for Survival

Author: Peter D. Carter and Elizabeth Woodworth

ISBN: 978-0-9986947-3-3

Price: \$27.95

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