

From...**The New York Times.**

Her Plan for Putting the World Back Together? Trees.

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By The New York Times

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Diana Beresford-Kroeger’s connection to trees stems from an ancient Irish prophecy she heard in childhood. And she thinks trees are crucial in addressing climate change.



Diana Beresford-Kroeger spoke at a Times climate event in San Francisco. Credit... Digital Dumpling LLC. She is a botanist, a medical biochemist and a climate visionary.

She was also raised learning about ancient Irish ecological knowledge and reverence for forests. Before the Times reporter Cara Buckley wrote an article about her, Diana Beresford-Kroeger told Ms. Buckley, “What you must do is lean against a tree before you write the piece.” And Ms. Buckley did.

Ms. Beresford-Kroeger has dedicated much of her life to preserving the planet and revealing the countless ways in which plants and trees support human health and souls. Her connection with the natural world is based on her vast scientific understanding of it and her deep spiritual connection with forests. One of her champions included biodiversity pioneer E.O. Wilson, who died last year.

She is also known for being fictionalized in Richard Powers's Pulitzer-winning book "The Overstory." Ms. Beresford-Kroeger spoke with Ms. Buckley in conversation at a Times climate event in October, joining virtually from Ontario, where she lives. She spoke with gusto about our spiritual connection to trees, about why we should preserve old forests at all costs and plant more, and about the prophecy she learned as an orphan in Ireland, which she says shaped her life and spurred her environmental work. Watch the full conversation.

The following are edited excerpts from the conversation.

Cara Buckley: I want to start with your personal story, the foundation of all the great work you've done. Can you tell us where you grew up and what were your first encounters with the plant world?

Diana Beresford-Kroeger: Well, I was born in England. I'm Anglo-Irish. I'm an aristocratic mongrel on my mother's side and my father's side. And then I went to school in Ireland, and my family were killed when I was about 11, in a car crash, and I was made an orphan.

My castle family home is the castle of Ross. My mother's family brought me under Brehon laws. These are old, old Celtic laws. And everybody listening to me right now: These are the laws that your forefathers knew and understood about the environment. So I was brought in a three-year wardship and tutored in these laws and in these medicines and in the ancient script.

I was told I would be the last child from the Brehon world, from the ancient world of Ireland. And I was told to bring the message of the ancient world into you. And the time is now. I was told at the time now that the world would be in very bad shape. It would be heating up, and there would be a lot of floods. And the ancient wisdoms — not necessarily the knowledge — but the ancient wisdoms of the Celtic world were important to discuss with all of you now. And actually it gives me the creeps a little bit, too. Because I'm here. I've done it, and I've written all these books, and it has happened.

Read the rest of the interview at:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/03/climate/trees-climate-diana-beresford-kroeger.html?action=click&module=Well&pgtype=Homepage§ion=Explore%20Times%20Events>