



## On Narrative and Green Cultural Criminology

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### Abstract

This paper calls for a *green cultural criminology* that is more attuned to *narrative* and a *narrative criminology* that does not limit itself to non-fictional stories of *offenders*. This paper argues that (1) narratives or stories can reveal how we have instigated or sustained harmful action with respect to the environment and can portray a world suffering from the failure to effect desistance from harmful action; and (2) narratives or stories can, may and possess the potential to shape future action (or can stimulate thought regarding future action) with respect to the natural world, its ecosystems and the biosphere as a whole. A wide range of fictional stories is offered as examples and illustrations, and the benefits of a literary bend to the overall criminological endeavor are considered.

### Keywords

Environmental crime and harm; green criminology; green cultural criminology; narratives; narrative criminology; stories.

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## Introduction

In the 'Introduction' to their recently published edited volume, *Narrative Criminology: Understanding Stories of Crime*, Presser and Sandberg (2015: 1) assert:

Narratives are central to human existence. By constructing our lives as stories, we forge connections among experiences, actions, and aspirations. We know ourselves as *one* over time—one consistent moral actor or one unified group of moral actors—however numerous or varied the cultural story elements that we access and integrate into our self-stories.<sup>1</sup>

As they proceed to explain, '[c]riminologists have made ample use of offenders' narratives, mainly, albeit not exclusively, as vehicles for data on the factors that promote criminal behavior' (2015: 1). But, they assert, '[t]he idea that narratives or stories themselves shape future action has not been exploited for the sake of understanding criminal behavior' (2015: 1). Building on their previous work (see, for example, Presser 2009, 2010, 2012; Sandberg 2010, 2013), they propose a narrative criminology—'an inquiry based on the view of stories as instigating, sustaining, or effecting desistance from harmful action' (2015: 1). Presser and Sandberg (2015: 11) argue that:

narrative criminology can add something to the two established criminological traditions closest to [their] project: constitutive criminology and cultural criminology. Both observe that mainstream, positivistic criminology has neglected the cultural significance of what is called crime. Both thus promise a provocative engagement with the narrative criminological project of explaining harm.

The proposition set forth in the present paper is that narrative criminology can add something to *green cultural criminology* and vice versa. More specifically—and in dialogue with Presser, Sandberg and others working in the emerging vein of narrative criminology, as well as those who have explored the role of and possibilities for narratives and stories in criminology<sup>2</sup> without specific reference to the narrative criminological endeavor (see, for example, Agnew 2006; Green, South and Smith 2006; Maruna 2001; Wilson 2014; Youngs and Canter 2014)—this paper argues that:

1. Narratives or stories can reveal how we have instigated or sustained harmful action with respect to the environment, and can portray a world suffering from the failure to effect desistance from harmful action. Drawing inspiration from Cronon (1992: 1368), who suggests that '[w]e narrate the triumphs and failures of our pasts [and] tell stories to explore the alternative choices that might lead to feared or hoped-for futures', this paper suggests that we explore stories about what environmental harms are occurring or might transpire—a project somewhat akin to Wilson's (2014: 111) notion of 'crime in literature'.<sup>3</sup>
2. Narratives or stories can, may and possess the potential to shape future action (or can stimulate thought regarding future action) with respect to the natural world, its ecosystems and the biosphere as a whole. If, as Cronon (1992: 1369) contends, we tell 'stories to remind ourselves who we are, how we got to be that person, and what we want to become ... we use our histories to remember ourselves, just as we use our prophecies as tools for exploring what we do or do not wish to become [footnote omitted]', this paper proposes that we contemplate stories about our capacity for changing our attitudes, behaviors, patterns and practices with respect to the environment, as well as what might go wrong in the process.

Two questions pertaining to the scope of narrative criminology animate and help orient my argument. First, as Sandberg and colleagues (2014: 282) explain, '[n]arrative criminology emphasises how stories promote harmful action (Presser 2009) and has typically studied the stories of offenders'. But why focus on the stories of *offenders*? If, as Presser (2009: 189) describes, 'narrative applies to both perpetrators and bystanders; it can explain passive tolerance of harmful action' (Presser 2009: 189), why has narrative criminology concentrated on the *perpetrators*? Should we not look at us as both perpetrators of *and* as bystanders to environmental harm?

Second, why has narrative criminology limited itself to *non-fiction* which, with few exceptions (see, for example, Colvin 2015; Keeton 2015), has been its ambit? Presser and Sandberg (2015: 14) ask: 'for narrative criminology, the fictive character of offenders' narratives poses no problem. The story may be developed and told for strategic purposes, or the storyteller may truly believe it; the narrative criminological proposition is that either way, the story is consequential for the teller and others. But do we go too far in our focus on the fictive?' This paper asks: does narrative criminology go *far enough* in its focus on the fictive?

Before beginning, a few words about *green cultural criminology*, which has already started to investigate narratives of environmental crime and harm, are in order.

### **Narrative in green cultural criminology**

*Green cultural criminology* seeks to bring together green criminology and cultural criminology, and to identify points of overlap. For present purposes, if *cultural criminology* is, as Ferrell (1999: 396), explains, 'an emergent array of perspectives linked by sensitivities to image, meaning, and representation in the study of crime and crime control', then *green cultural criminology* might be conceptualized as an emergent array of perspectives linked by sensitivities to image, meaning, and representation in the study of *green* or *environmental* crime and *environmental* crime control. Accordingly, *green cultural criminology* (1) considers the way(s) in which environmental crime, harm and disaster are constructed, represented and envisioned by the news media and in popular cultural forms; (2) dedicates increased attention to patterns of consumption, constructed consumerism, commodification of nature and related market processes; and (3) devotes heightened concern to the contestation of space, transgression, and resistance, in order to analyze the ways in which environmental harms are opposed in/on the streets and in day-to-day living (Brisman 2015, in press b; Brisman and South 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2017a, 2017b, in press; Brisman, McClanahan and South 2014; see also Brisman 2014a, in press a; McClanahan 2014; Schally 2014). The first of these is most relevant to this paper's inquiry.

To be fair, *green cultural criminology* has already made some attempts to explore how 'stories thematize the points of connection between personal and collective experience, desire and effort' (or lack thereof) with respect to environmental harm (Presser 2009: 178-179).<sup>4</sup> This has included:

1. Exploring children's stories about climate change and environmental harm to reveal how some stories 'emphasize individual actions', but 'pay scant attention to the role of national, state and local government' and thus 'serve as a form of "neoliberal moral shaping", to tweak [Jörg] Wiegratz's term—or function as part of a "cultural programme", to adopt another of his idioms, sending a message to our kids that such governmental entities cannot, will not, and should not act to reduce greenhouse gas emissions' (Brisman 2013: 277-78 (quoting Wiegratz 2010: 124)).
2. Identifying the disturbing pattern in children's literature of individualizing environmental degradation (for example, attributing global warming only to personal transportation choices) and excluding any reference to the role of corporate entities or the state, a practice that rehearses the neoliberal logic that it is the duty,

responsibility and province of *individuals* (if there is a duty or responsibility at all) to protect and preserve nature—the natural environment—our planet and its ecosystems (Brisman and South 2017b). Many of such stories place the onus on youth and absolve adults of responsibility for the future of the biosphere: they ask the next generation to instruct the present generation about how to consider and act in the interest of future generations. Such processes of ‘adulthoodification’ (Hayward 2012, 2013) discharge adults of their intergenerational responsibility, while working in tandem with processes of ‘infantilisation’—another Hayward (2012, 2013) concept—and self-absorption to augment the risks and threats that jeopardise the existence and quality of life for future generations.

3. Highlighting commonalities and differences in post-apocalyptic or dystopian novels in their depictions of the relationship between environment and conflict for the purpose of emphasizing ‘what is at stake and warn us of what is to come if we do not change our ecocidal tendencies’ and underscoring the need for “‘alternative stories’ (Richardson 1995: 213)—ones that present an imagined future of a healthier Earth and a better world for humanity on *this planet*’ (Brisman 2015: 303).

But these endeavors have been undertaken in the absence of dialogue with—indeed, without acknowledgment of—narrative criminology. This paper seeks to rectify this. I turn now to my two key arguments based on Presser and Sandberg’s points (above) about the relationship of stories to harmful action.

### **Revealing harmful action, shaping future action**

As stated in the Introduction, stories can expose how we have caused environmental degradation, despoliation and destruction—what we might call ‘environmental crime in literature’. Stories can also serve to influence and inspire better relationships with nature by demonstrating how and why we might engage in more environmentally-friendly behaviors and the dangers of desisting from those patterns and practices that threaten the long-term prospects of humans, nonhumans, animals and the biosphere. While the hope is that investigations of stories might be conducted for these reasons, irrespective of their relationship to existing or emerging criminological paradigms, such endeavors extend the range of both narrative criminology and green cultural criminology. At the same time, such inquiries might help avoid Aspden and Hayward’s (2015: 245) concern that narrative criminology ‘deteriorate into a poststructural language game concerned only with stories about reality and not reality itself’.

#### **1) Narratives or stories can reveal how we have instigated or sustained harmful action with respect to the environment, as well as portray a world suffering from the failure to effect desistance from harmful action.**

According to Sandberg (2010: 448), ‘[w]hether true or false, the multitude of stories people tell reflect, and help us understand, the complex nature of values, identities, cultures, and communities’ (see also 2010: 455). Allhoff and Buciak (2013: 232) assert that ‘[f]ictional work can be seen as a mirror of society, its fears and hopes’, what I might call ‘narrative as reflection’. But sometimes the mirror gets cruddy. What we need is some non-toxic, ecologically-friendly surface cleaner. As Delgado (1989: 2440) observes, ‘[s]tories humanize us. They emphasize our differences in ways that can ultimately bring us closer together. They allow us to see how the world looks from behind someone else’s spectacles. They challenge us to wipe off our own lenses and ask, “Could I have been overlooking something all along?”’ Unlike other types of crime and harm, when it comes to the environment, we do not often know that (a) harm has occurred—it is not visible—and, if (a) harm has occurred, whether it is part of the cost of doing business and/or rises to the level of ‘crime’ (see, for example, Brisman 2008, 2014b; South and Brisman 2013;

White 2013; White and Heckenberg 2014). In addition, it may not be apparent who the victims are and who or what is responsible.

This is especially true in the case of climate change. As Shiva (2008: 121) reminds us, '[c]limate change is not a linear phenomenon that creates warming everywhere, or more rain or less rain. It is nonlinear, and it is better to talk of climate chaos than climate change or global warming'. Literary fiction, however, can present climate change as a linear phenomenon—as a whole picture (when it is hard to conjure)—and accomplish effectively what the film *The Day After Tomorrow* (2004) did achieve, albeit with more detail and nuance.

Here, we can distinguish between (1) stories that serve as *metaphors* for our current ecocidal tendencies; and (2) those cautionary tales that depict worlds different from our own and without certain material comforts, all as a result of our anthropocentric myopia.

With respect to the former, consider *Solar*, the 2010 novel by Ian McEwan, which Jones (2010) refers to as a story about 'ageing, decay and decline'. Cowley (2010) describes Michael Beard, the protagonist, the central character but by no means a good guy, as follows:

Beard, who we are encouraged to believe won a Nobel prize in physics as a young man for something called the Beard-Einstein Conflation, is a short, fat, balding, much-married man of immense bodily appetites and scant self-discipline. He rapaciously consumes food, women and drink, with little regard for the consequences. He's a resolute short-termist, fearful of commitment and of becoming a father, living for the here and now. His behaviour is a local example of the more general problem of human over-consumption: just as Beard devours everything around him, so we are devouring our world, with its finite resources and fragile ecosystems.

*Solar*, through Beard, then, really is a 'parable of human rapacity: we take what we can, when we can' (Cowley 2010). Or, as Jones (2010) explains, '[t]hrough a combination of incontinence and inertia, Beard—gluttonous, avaricious, lustful, slothful, proud, envious, angry—abuses his spherical body for the sake of instant gratification in a manner that all too obviously echoes the way his species abuses the planet... . Beard, like the human race, must reap what he has sown'. Or, as Kakutani (2010) observes, '[t]his self-deluding scientist will come to embody just about everything that has brought about the climate-change crisis in the first place: greed, heedlessness and a willful refusal to think about consequences or the future'. Or, as Kirn (2010) writes, Beard is 'endowed by his creator with precisely the vices—apathy, slothfulness, gluttony and hypocrisy—that afflict the society the book condemns, threatening to cook the human race in the heat-trapping gases of its own arrogance'.

Given that McEwan's message seems to be that 'short-term self-interest will always defeat any altruistic attempt to take the long view' (Jones 2010), it is no wonder so many Americans—'moralists on steroids', to use Shivani's (2010) phrase—panned the novel (see, for example, Cowley 2010; Kakutani 2010; Kirsch 2010; see Shivani for a discussion; see Nicholson (2010) for an example of lukewarm reception of *Solar* by a non-American). Cowley, in his review of *Solar*, criticizes McEwan on the grounds that '[w]hat is absent from *Solar*, ultimately are other minds'—the story is narrated entirely from Beard's perspective—'the sense that people other than Beard are present, equally alive, with something to contribute'. Cowley, however, entirely misses the point. In fact, the absence of other perspectives is McEwan's realist genius: when it comes to the environment, we often act as if no one else is present.<sup>5</sup> 'A fictional character can exhibit only so much awareness of his own thematic utility', writes Kirn (2010), so Beard lacks self-awareness; but we, the readers, can see him for what he is: a metaphor for our collective selves.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, just as McEwan 'make[s] the reader fear impending doom'—'We know that disaster is never far away, and yet when it arrives, it's still a surprise, never precisely the disaster we were expecting'

(Nicholson 2010)—so too with climate change: We may be warming (pardon the pun) to the idea that our climate is changing due to human activities in ways that will bring about disaster(s). But such disasters will still surprise.

In his *Poetics*, written in the fourth century BCE, Aristotle pointed out that literature ‘shows us “not something that has happened, but the kind of thing that might happen”’ (in Carrabine 2010: 22). *Solar* may serve as a challenge to the first part of Aristotle’s claim or, at least, McEwan’s novel may be showing us something that *is happening*. Cautionary tales of ‘the kind of thing that might happen’—of ‘plausible futures’ (Jonas 1999) that depict worlds different than our own, and the emotional and physical ‘distress people feel when a valued environment suffers harmful change’ (Johnson 2012: 978)—include Octavia Butler’s *Parable* series (*Parable of the Sower* (1993) and *Parable of the Talents* (1998)), James Howard Kunstler’s *World Made By Hand* (2008), and Margaret Atwood’s dystopian MaddAddam trilogy (*Oryx and Crake* (2003); *The Year of the Flood* (2009); *MaddAddam* (2013)). Butler’s *Parable* Series—which envisions the socioeconomic and political collapse of twenty-first century America due to poor environmental stewardship, corporate greed, and the growing gap between the wealthy and the poor—is a particularly good example, as evidenced, in part, by Tucker’s (2014) observations. Tucker (2014) writes:

The brilliant Octavia Butler—the late, great science fiction writer—saw this coming. In her apocalyptic 1993 novel ‘Parable of the Sower’, the United States has come apart, torn asunder by the pressures generated by the devastation of climate change. And because she understood her nation so well, her novel features characters who still don’t believe that human beings have influenced the weather—though their lives have been wrecked by environmental degradation.

When I read the novel some years ago, I saw it merely as great entertainment. Now, unhappily, I believe it to be prophecy.<sup>7</sup>

Recounting the legal struggles faced by same-sex partners, Associate Justice Anthony Kennedy of the Supreme Court of the United States wrote in *Obergefell v. Hodges*, the 2015 case that held that states cannot keep same-sex couples from marrying and must recognize their unions: “‘The nature of injustice is that we may not always see it in our own times”’ (Chappell 2015, quoting Kennedy). Narratives and stories about environmental harm can help us see these injustices as they unfold in the *present* as well as what they may bring about: *further* and *future injustices*.

## **2) Narratives or stories can, may and possess the potential to shape future action (or can stimulate thought regarding future action) with respect to the natural world, its ecosystems and the biosphere as a whole.**

According to Presser (2010: 434), narrative has value, in part because of ‘its ability to tell us about the past, present, *and* future [emphasis in original]’. Elsewhere, she and Sandberg (2015: 287) assert: ‘[n]arrative criminology contests the popular notion that stories only rationalize past action. Boldly, it professes that stories also *inspire* action [emphasis in original]’.<sup>8</sup> The idea that stories can tell us about the future and inspire future action has both negative and positive dimensions.

With respect to the former, stories can help ‘shape the way we see the world, our place in it and the possibilities and limits of human agency’ (Hulme 2014: 21).<sup>9</sup> Here, narratives serve not to illuminate harm to the Earth or to reveal a future world destroyed by human apathy, carelessness and self-interest. Instead, narratives serve as warnings of *other ways* in which our efforts to deal with problems may be forestalled. For example, some suggest that we need not change our ecocidal ways because we will come up with a technological fix (see Brisman 2015 for an analysis). Putting aside the question of whether we can actually create such ‘technologies of hubris’, to borrow Sheila Jasanoff’s words (quoted in Hulme 2014: 133),<sup>10</sup> stories can

demonstrate that even if we do create such technology—or technologies—all matters of human vice and imperfection could thwart its implementation.<sup>11</sup>

Consider, again, McEwan's *Solar*. Towards the end of the book, Beard is in the New Mexico desert, about to test a device that would allow humanity to replace its need for fossil fuels with a solar-powered technology for splitting water into oxygen and hydrogen gas, which would create cheap, unlimited hydrogen-based energy—a technology designed to create cheap renewable energy through a process of artificial photosynthesis. Antrim (2010) observes 'that even our most illustrious figures can't resist dark urges: to lie, to cheat, to steal', while Kirn (2010) describes that 'Beard is only moments away from throwing the switch on the magical machine that may stave off the world's destruction, [when] all the fates and furies he's aroused during his life of cautionary carelessness rush in exactly on schedule'. Or, as Hulme (2014: 1-2) explains:

Beard's excessive and self-indulgent past behaviour catches up on him. His sins and misdemeanours lead to tragicomic denouement as his cuckolded adversary takes a sledgehammer to the salvation technology, leaving nothing but wrecked machinery. Beard's dream of a techno-fix for climate change is crushed amid spiralling debts and the chaos of torn human relationships.

Butler, author of the *Parable* series, claimed in an interview that 'we tend to do the right thing when we get scared' (quoted in Marriott 2000). Assuming, arguendo, that Butler is correct, even if we do 'the right thing'—if by, 'right thing', we mean develop new technology to provide plentiful, non-fossil-fuel-based energy—there is no guarantee that 'the right thing will unfold'. As Jones (2010) remarks wryly, '[t]he best intentions, the noblest ideals, the grandest plans rapidly founder [sic] on the ordinary frailties of human nature'.

McEwan's synecdochal use of Beard for all of humanity demonstrates Presser's point that stories can offer us a glimpse of a possible negative future. Whereas Beard does *not* become wiser and saner (see Shivani 2010 for a discussion), stories such as *The Peaceable Forest: India's Tale of Kindness to Animals* (Ely 2012) and *Just a Dream* (Van Allsburg 1990) demonstrate the capacity for humans to change—and change for the better. In the former, a hunter who kills for food and fun learns that cruelty has consequences and that compassion has rewards. Visions of futures in which he is the *hunted*, not the *hunter*, lead to his transformation. In the latter story, Young Walter litters and refuses to sort trash for recycling, until he dreams of an overcrowded and polluted future which terrifies him into taking care of the Earth. Both examples here are of children's books, and elsewhere (Brisman 2013; see also Brisman and South 2015, in press a, c) I have commented on the odd dynamic in which children's stories tend to encourage responsible environmental stewardship without any mention of adult accountability. But placed in contrast to *Solar*, these stories demonstrate human capacity for change. While humans are not always successful at 'delivering the world as it should be', stories such as *The Peaceable Forest* and *Just a Dream*—especially when considered in contrast to *Solar*—can 'conjure up the world as it can be and not the world we know' (Luhrman 2014: A27).

### **(Towards a) Conclusion**

This paper has argued for a *green cultural criminology* that is more attuned to *narrative* and a *narrative criminology* that does not limit itself to non-fictional stories of and by *offenders*. To further underscore this point—and to work towards a conclusion—it may be helpful to consider a prescription for criminology inconsistent with both narrative and green cultural criminologies.

In 'Beyond Adolescence-Limited Criminology: Choosing Our Future—The American Society of Criminology 2010 Sutherland Address', Frank Cullen (2010: 300) explained:

In a real sense, [Travis] Hirschi established the normative standards for what would constitute quality research. First, secure a fairly large sample of adolescents that can be surveyed using a paper-and-pencil instrument during the school day. Second, develop multiple measures and/or multiple-item measures of theoretical variables. It is really good if this can be done on a new theory that has, to date, been under-researched. Third, include a defensible (based on previous research) set of items purporting to measure self-reported participation in delinquency. Fourth, conduct an analysis that reveals which theory is or is not supported. Fifth, claim victory for one theory (as Hirschi did) or call for further research (as most of us do). If these norms are obeyed, the chances for publication—perhaps in a first-tier journal—are high.

This approach strikes me as rather prosaic and self-serving. It also seems to share an allegiance with Carl Klockars' (1980: 93, quoted in Young 1986: 29) dismissive statement that "Imagination is one thing, criminology another". Rather, I prefer the much more rewarding and potentially more fruitful directive of Richard Ericson and Kevin Carriere (1994: 108): "the only viable academic responsibility is to encourage people to let their minds wander, to travel intellectually across the boundaries and frontiers and perhaps never to return to them" (quoted in Young 1998: 26).

While Ericson and Carriere may offer sage advice applicable across the academic disciplines, it is particularly salient when considering the appropriateness of adding a literary bend to the criminological endeavor, in general, and the green cultural criminological one, in particular—especially in an era when the value of reading and teaching fiction has come under scrutiny (see Krauthammer 2015). To quote the German philosopher Nicholas Rescher (2000, in Stemrich 2007: 225), "[t]he world of fiction—unlike that of natural reality—is not axiologically neutral: it can present us with a through and through *humanistic* domain, teaching us lessons for the conduct of human life in a way that other more factually oriented disciplines cannot". In other words—and in the present context—I suggest that examining narratives in some of the ways I have outlined above can assist us in fulfilling the Marcusian instruction to analyze society "in the light of its used, unused or abused capabilities [for] improving the human condition" (Marcuse 1964: x, quoted in Falasca-Zamponi 2011: 3).

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<sup>1</sup> Others have made similar statements about the centrality of narratives and stories. Shadd Maruna, whose 2001 book, *Making Good: How Ex-Convicts Reform and Rebuild Their Lives*, arguably serves as the intellectual precursor to narrative criminology, has stated that 'the human being is fundamentally a storytelling creature—or "homo narrativus" (Ferrand and Weil 2001)', a perspective that resonates with Joyce Carol Oates' contention that 'our species is a storytelling species' (quoted in Williams 2014: 9). Colvin (2015: 213) suggests that we engage with stories 'to escape isolation and feel part of a human community of experience', while O'Connor (2015: 175), the 'community of uptake' that develops with and from reactions to stories which, in turn, can 'influence and promote not only changed storylines, but also changed lives [footnote omitted]'. Cronon (1992: 1375) reminds us that 'narrative is among our most powerful ways of encountering the world, judging our actions within it, and learning to care about its many meanings' and Kathleen Dean Moore maintains that we explore our place in the world by telling stories about it: '[s]ometimes they're scientific stories. Sometimes they're philosophical stories. Sometimes they're songs or movies. Sometimes they're fables or morality tales. We need to tell new stories to describe who we are in relation to the land, to honor what's been lost, to help us understand our kinships, to affirm what we care about, to explore the difference between right and wrong, moral and immoral' (quoted in DeMocker 2012: 9-10).

<sup>2</sup> Following Presser (2010: 432), Presser and Sandberg (2015: 16n.1) and Sandberg and Tutenges (2015: 158, citing Polletta et al. 2011), I use the terms 'narrative' and 'story' interchangeably, while acknowledging their position that 'story' may have a more temporally-specific/temporally-contained connotation. Despite my willingness to follow



narrative criminological convention, my general preference is to employ 'narrative' when describing an effort to recount a sequence of events based on fact and to select 'story' when referring to tale originating elsewhere (or when fidelity to fact, chronology and order may occur less or be less essential—or even desirable). My children, for example, do not say, 'Daddy, tell me a narrative'. Rather, they state, 'Daddy, tell me a *story*', and I add that my younger daughter, Adelaide Fanucchi, informed me when she was four-years-old that 'stories that begin "once upon a time" are not true'. At some juncture, then, narrative criminology will need to contemplate the continued efficacy of transposing 'narrative' with 'story'. Already, there is some appreciation of difference. Sandberg and Tutenges (2015: 153) assert that '[a] *narrative* can emphasize either content or form, and it can consider either the whole *story* or parts of it (Lieblich et al. 1998) [emphasis added]'. O'Connor (2015: 174) asks whether a 'story is merely a sequence of events and narrative is the *shaping* of events', while stressing that 'the positioning of the teller is crucial [in narratives and stories], both toward the material told and toward her or his audience'. In fleshing out a distinction between 'narrative' and 'story', narrative criminologists might consider how other social sciences have engaged with the terms. For example, the environmental historian, William Cronon, uses them interchangeably, while admitting that 'a technical distinction that can be made between them. For some literary critics and philosophers of history, "story" is a limited genre, whereas narrative (or *narratio*) is the much more encompassing part of classical rhetoric that organizes all representations of time into a configured sequence of completed actions' (1992: 1349 n.5).

- <sup>3</sup> According to Wilson (2014: 111), '[j]ust as there are two main components to the law and literature movement—first, the study of *law in literature* (concerned with artistic representations of legal issues), and second the idea of *law as literature* (concerned with the rhetorical analysis of legal texts)—the field of criminology and literature can take two comparable foci: *crime in literature* and *crime as literature*'.
- <sup>4</sup> Consider Ruggiero (2002: 106), who explores the allegories of/in *Moby Dick*, and who suggests that when '[r]e-reading *Moby Dick* one finds a wealth of illuminating points and controversial issues that would be of enormous interest to scholars drawing a research and discussion agenda in the field of environmental criminology'. Thus, while Ruggiero's concern is in examining 'the images the novel conveys of acceptable and unacceptable economic practices' (2002: 97), rather than exploring the more obvious or straightforward representations that have intrigued green cultural criminology, one could argue that this piece—as well as his 2003 book, *Crime in Literature: Sociology of Deviance and Fiction*—are very much precursors to green cultural criminology.
- <sup>5</sup> While I leave for another day a discussion of whether narrative criminology, if it is to examine fiction, should also contemplate how fiction is received critically, I would agree with Logan (2014: SR5), who cautions, '[t]here is prose that does us no great harm, and that may even, in small doses, prove medicinal, the way snake oil cured everything by curing nothing. But to live continually in the natter of ill-written and ill-spoken prose is to become deaf to what language can do'.
- <sup>6</sup> In a related vein, Colvin (2015: 224) notes that in engaging with literary narratives, we '*identify* with the character in his or her context of action ... in such a way that we ... see the narrated fictional content as a rather grand metaphor for our own real or possible life-circumstances [emphasis in original]' (quoting Hagberg 2010: 126). While Lakoff (1991: 95) reminds us that 'Metaphors can kill' (quoted in Garot 2010: 203), the metaphor offered by McEwan in the form of Beard certainly demonstrates that we can kill ourselves and the biosphere through our own rapacity.
- <sup>7</sup> For some, Butler's prophecy is a prediction come true: the fanatical autocrat, Andrew Steele Jarret, in *The Parable of the Talents* (1988), bears an eerily strong resemblance to the 45th President of the United States, Donald J Trump. See, for example, <https://rhystranter.com/2016/07/21/did-octavia-butler-predict-a-trump-presidency/> and <http://www.openculture.com/2016/07/octavia-butlers-1998-dystopian-novel-features-a-fascistic-presidential-candidate-who-promises-to-make-america-great-again.html>.
- <sup>8</sup> See also Sandberg (2010: 452), who writes '[n]arratives are important not because they are true records of what happened, but because they influence behavior in the future', and Miller, Carbone-Lopez and Gunderman (2015: 70), who explain that 'narratives may also shape and guide future behavior, because people tend to behave in ways that agree with the self-stories they have created about themselves (McAdams 1985)'.
- <sup>9</sup> See Pellow (2004: 514), who stresses the role of agency—'the power of populations confronting environmental inequalities to shape the outcomes of these conflicts'—in the context of environmental (in)justice and (in)equality. As Pellow suggests, 'marginal groups can sometimes create openings in the political process to mitigate environmental inequality. Through resistance they can shape environmental inequalities' (2004: 514).
- <sup>10</sup> According to Hulme (2014: 133), "'technologies of humility" [refer to] attitudes and habits that recognise the limits of human knowledge, the complexity of socio-technical systems and the primacy of moral considerations in governing human actions and behaviours. To these humble dispositions she [Sheila Jasanoff] counterposes the "technologies of hubris"—beliefs and convictions that it is through advances in science and technology that human problems will be solved'.
- <sup>11</sup> According to Bonneuil (2015: 17), '[s]tories matter for the Earth. Indeed, the stories that the elites of industrial modernity have told themselves—about nature as external and purposeless, about the world as resource, about human exemptionalism, about progress and freedom as an escape from nature's determinations and limits, about technology as quasi-autonomous prime mover—have served as the cultural origins and conditions of the Anthropocene (Merchant 1980; Descola 2013; Bonneuil and Fressoz 2015). In the same way the kind of stories we tell ourselves today about the Anthropocene can shape the kind of geohistorical future we will inhabit'.

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