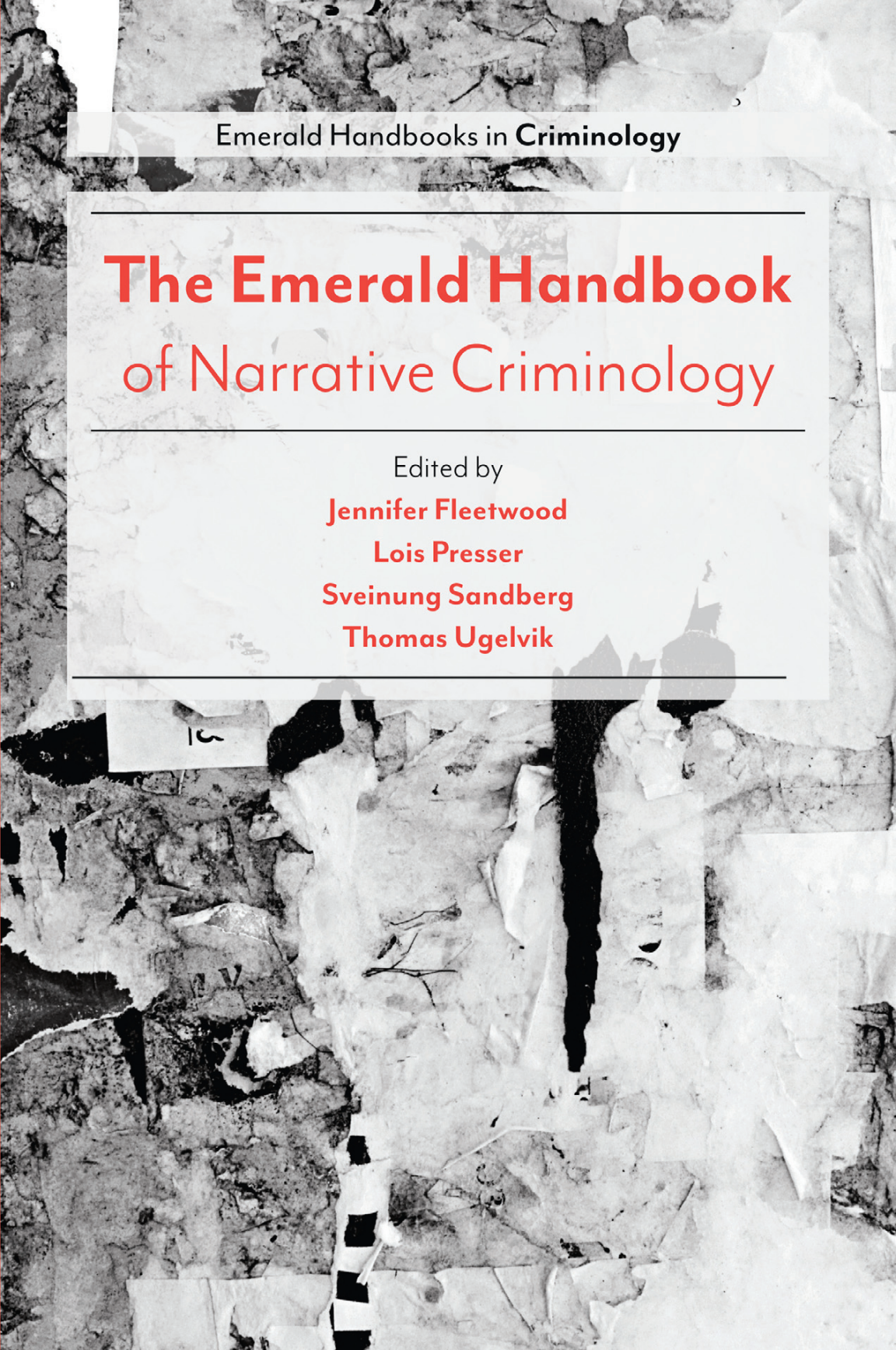
Emerald Handbooks in Criminology
The Emerald Handbook
of Narrative Criminology
Edited by
Jennifer Fleetwood
Lois Presser
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THE EMERALD HANDBOOK OF NARRATIVE CRIMINOLOGY

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THE EMERALD HANDBOOK OF NARRATIVE CRIMINOLOGY

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Chapter abstracts

(Please note, these abstracts do not appear in the printed book. They accompany chapters in the online version at https://www.emerald.com/insight/publication/doi/10.1108/9781787690059)

Chapter 2: Narrative Ethnography under Pressure: Researching Storytelling on the Street
Sébastien Tutenges

Based on fieldwork among Muslim drug dealers in Norway, this chapter presents a narrative ethnographic framework for the study of storytelling. Whereas traditional narrative research considers stories mainly for their internal structure and meaning, narrative ethnography widens the focus to examine stories as they are being performed on specific social occasions. This widened focus requires sustained ethnographic attention to an array of situational factors, most notably the cultural context from which narratives emerge; the locations in which narratives are performed or not performed; the expressive means used during narrative performances; the sequence of actions that make up the scenario of performances; and the impact performances have on the narrators and their audiences. One of the advantages of narrative ethnography is that it allows for consideration of storytelling practices as they evolve and change across time and space. Another is that it facilitates embodied engagement and understandings of other people's situation. The chapter suggests that narrative criminologists may benefit from studying storytelling with all of their senses – not just hearing or reading words, but actively sensing narrative performances with their entire bodies. By mobilizing all senses, and attending to both verbal and nonverbal stimuli, the narrative researcher may develop an embodied 'feel' for the stories people are telling.

Chapter 3: Storied Justice: The Narrative Strategies of US Federal Prosecutors
Anna Offit

This chapter demonstrates the value of ethnographic research to the study of the relationship between legal narrative and professional identity. It focuses on the ethical and professional judgements embedded in American federal prosecutors' creation and critiques of opening and closing statements. Drawing on ethnographic research, I argue that these statements revolve around the concept of 'justice', which prosecutors articulate, affirm and contest through the narratives of honesty and impartiality. More broadly, these conceptions of justice inform how federal prosecutors understand their identities and roles as professional legal actors. Ethnography's unique value lies in furnishing data pertaining to how trial narratives are fashioned and refined through 'workshopping' before these narratives are shared with jurors. The chapter thus highlights processes of narrative reflexivity and story composition.

Chapter 4: Narrative Convictions, Conviction Narratives: The Prospects of Convict Criminology
Rod Earle

Drawing inspiration from C Wright Mills exhortation to sociologists to locate themselves and their experiences in the 'trends of their epoch', I consider how first-hand experience of imprisonment can help criminology account for the growing trend towards the use of imprisonment in many Western democracies. Using interviews with a small group of British criminologists who have experience of imprisonment, I explore the connections between personal stories and collective narratives. Drawing reflexively from my own imprisonment, my subsequent professional trajectory and experiences of prison research, I consider the difficulties and potential of crafting a collective criminological project from disparate and profoundly personal experiences of imprisonment. The chapter combines methodological reflections on the use of autoethnography, autobiography and vignettes as a means to an end: establishing collective narratives from personal stories. I argue that the task of connecting these narratives to the 'trends of the epoch' that manifest in expanding prison populations is difficult but developing some momentum in convict criminology.

Chapter 5: Reflections after 'Socrates Light': Eliciting and Countering Narratives of Youth Justice Officials
Olga Petintseva

In their daily practice, criminal justice professionals tell stories about their 'clientele' and these narratives legitimise their roles and decision-making. My research underscores how narratives of crime inform the practice of youth justice. The research presented in this chapter is based on court case file analysis and interviews with youth justice practitioners, concentrating on how they 'theorise' the causes of crime of migrant youth and which interventions they deem appropriate.

Chapter 6: Stories that Are Skyscraper Tall: The Place of 'Tall Tales' in Narrative Criminology
Carmen Wickramagamage and Jody Miller

Narrative criminology has made stories respectable again, despite criminology's long-professed ties to a model of positive science. Given the field's continued scepticism about the 'truthfulness' of stories, narrative scholars have grappled carefully with the place and utility of lies for understanding the social worlds and individual identities of crime-involved populations. In this chapter, we draw from a study of women's pathways to incarceration in Sri Lanka, analysing the case of one study participant who shared with us many 'tall tales' about their life. In comparing Daya's account with those of other participants, we explore the complex relations among 'truth,' 'fiction' and 'lies,' and their implications for narrative criminology. We offer specific cautions about the place of verisimilitude and plausibility in narrative criminologists' efforts to make sense of offender narratives.

Chapter 7: By Terrorists' Own Telling: Using Autobiography for Narrative Criminological Research
Simon Copeland

As more and more people decide to commit their lives to print, autobiographies constitute a significant resource to explore stories of harm, violence and crime. Published autobiography, however, presents a unique form of storytelling, unavoidably entailing the accumulation and (re)telling of a mass of stories; about oneself, others, contexts and cultures. Relatedly, paratexts – or the elements that surround the central text, such as covers, introductions and prologues – demonstrate how these texts are both individually and collectively shaped. Taking the co-constructed nature of all narratives, including self-narratives, as its starting point, this chapter seeks to demonstrate how terrorists who

have authored autobiographies understand the world and their actions within it. In doing so, this chapter provides a practical demonstration of how insight derived from literary criticism can profitably be brought to bear in systematically breaking down and analysing an autobiography – that of a notable American jihadist, Omar Hammami – including its paratextual elements. In particular, I argue that considerations of genre, the inclusion of different types of events and stories collected from others all provide valuable strategies for the 'doing' of narrative criminology using autobiographies.

Chapter 8: Stories of Environmental Crime, Harm and Protection: Narrative Criminology and Green Cultural Criminology
Avi Brisman

This chapter draws on previous work calling for a narrative criminology sensitive to fictional stories about how we have instigated or sustained harmful action with respect to the environment. It begins by offering some defining features of narrative criminology, before turning to two examples of narrative criminological work focused on environmental crime and/or harm. One analyzes a corporate (offender's) website; the other examines attorneys' stories of environmental wrongdoing. Together, they depict a cultural narrative in the US of the causes, consequences, punishments (or lack thereof) and corporate representations of environmental harm. Next, this chapter turns to a discussion of examples of depictions or representations of environmental harm and protection in the literature. Here, the focus is on fictional works that are explicitly environmental – where the subject, plot and message centre on one or more environmental issues, such as a particular harm, its cause or causes and possible responses thereto. Finally, this chapter considers 'allegories of environmental harm,' examining literature that is less overtly environmental. As an illustration, it suggests an interpretation of the American children's story, Muncus Agruncus: A Bad Little Mouse (Watson, 1976), as a cautionary tale of Western hubris in the face of environmental catastrophe – with the goal of demonstrating how green criminologists have attempted to identify environmental lessons and messages in works with ostensibly other or broader messages. Overall, the intent is to acknowledge both that cultural narratives (and our interpretation of them) change and to demonstrate (the importance of)

human agency to transform those narratives (and our interpretation thereof).

Chapter 9: The Stories in Images: The Value of the Visual for Narrative Criminology
Heith Copes, Andy Hochstetler and Jared Ragland

Our aim is to highlight the value in using photographs and visuals for narrative criminology. We do this by showing how people draw from and create visual symbols to communicate personal narratives and by showing how we as researchers can use these images in interviews to elicit richer responses. Specifically, we illustrate the value of images for narrative criminology by telling the story of Chico, a 50-year-old, Hispanic man who has used meth for nearly three decades. In response to his marginalisation, Chico presents himself in two primary ways: as a rebellious, antiauthority menace to outsiders and as a caring, generous friend to insiders. He displays these identities through visual symbols (on his home, property and body) and through his stories and actions. Additionally, we use photographs taken of him and his home during interviews to elicit his personal narratives (i.e. photo-elicitation interviews). We argue that scholars have much to gain by examining the use of images to stimulate interviews and open necessary interdiscursivity of qualitative criminology.

Chapter 10: Reading Pictures: Piranesi and Carceral Landscapes
Eamonn Carrabine

Giambattista Piranesi's disturbing images of fantasy prisons set out in his Carceri d'Invenzione have had a profound impact on cultural sensibilities. The chapter explores Piranesi's distinctive visual language and situates it in an eighteenth-century penchant for ruins and what they might signify. The macabre fantasy structures bear little relation to actually existing prison buildings, but they do herald a new aesthetic combining both terror and beauty to sublime effect. The chapter examines the relationships between narrative and visual methods by considering that scholarship in art history which has sought to address the relationships between ‘word’ and ‘image’.

Chapter 11: The Tales Things Tell: Narrative Analysis, Materiality and my Wife's Old Nazi Rifle
Thomas Ugelvik

This chapter explores the intersections between narrative criminology and material culture studies using a single object – my wife's old Nazi rifle – as an example. It describes the various connections between the stories we tell and the things that surround us, including the stories objects represent, the stories they may prompt us to tell, the stories we tell using objects as props and the stories our material objects tell us about their owners or users. An object will always tell stories about past, present and future use. This is true of all objects, not just old Nazi rifles, but some things will carry more narrative potential than others. Finally, I ask whether some narratively loaded objects may anticipate or perhaps even precipitate certain actions. Is it true that some objects sometimes ask us to put them to use?

Chapter 12: Excavating Victim Stories: Making Sense of Agency, Suffering and Redemption
Elizabeth A. Cook and Sandra Walklate

The potential for a 'narrative turn' in victimology carries with it all kinds of possibilities and problems in adding nuanced understandings smoothed out and sometimes erased from the vision of victimhood provided by criminal victimisation data. In this chapter, we explore the methodological and theoretical questions posed by such a narrative turn by presenting the case of June: a mother bereaved by gun violence that unfolded in Manchester two decades ago. Excavated using in-depth biographical interviewing, June told the story of the loss of her son, the role of faith in dealing with the aftermath of violence and eventually, how this story became a source for change for the community in which it was read and heard. June's story provided an impetus for establishing a grassroots antiviolence organisation and continued to be the driver for that same group long after the issue it was formed to address had become less problematic. As a story it served different purposes for the individual concerned, for the group they were a part of and for the wider community in which the group emerged. However, this particular story also raises questions for victimology in its understanding of the role of voice in policy and concerning the nature of evidence for both policy and the discipline itself. This chapter considers what lessons narrative victimology might learn from narrative criminology, the overlaps that the stories of victims and offenders might share and what the implications these might have for understanding what it means to be harmed.

Chapter 13: Narrative Victimology: Speaker, Audience, Timing
Kristen Lee Hourigan

By considering the stories of crime victims, this chapter demonstrates the fluid and contextual nature of narrative. It draws upon research that investigates narratives of individuals who have lost loved ones to homicide (co-victims) by pairing intensive interviews with concurrent participant observation in a wide array of settings in which co-victims share their stories, such as fundraisers, memorials, self-help group meetings, advocacy events and celebratory gatherings. It highlights the benefit of two related methodological strategies for a narrative approach to victimology specifically and narrative criminology more generally: persistent observation of stories and prolonged engagement with storytellers. In doing so, it emphasises three key features of narrative that are especially useful in uncovering the nature, power and potential of crime victims' stories: speaker, audience and timing.

Chapter 14: Finding Victims in the Narratives of Men Imprisoned for Sex Offences
Alice Ievins

This chapter is based on an ethnographic study of an English medium-security prison housing men convicted of sex offences. It argues that victims haunted (Gordon, 2008) both the prison and the narratives of the men it held: they were ever-present in discourse, but depersonalised and lacking in agency. How prisoners described their victims said a great deal about how they sought to portray themselves, and the chapter makes this point by outlining three basic 'types' of story. In the first, the prisoner knew the victim well and deliberately sought to remember their suffering; at the same time, they themselves hoped not to be defined by their status as an offender. In the second, the victim was largely missing from the narrative, either because the prisoners barely remembered them or because the prisoners did not really consider them to be a victim. In the third type of story, the prisoners considered themselves to be the real victim, and considered the official victim as well as the criminal justice system to be responsible for their suffering. The chapter concludes by arguing victims were ghosts because the prison only allowed them to appear in certain ways. It suggests that narrative criminologists consider the relationship between narratives and justice, and that one way of doing

this is to think about what stories don't communicate as well as what they do.

Chapter 15: Narratives of Conviction and the Re-storying of 'Offenders'
Bernd Dollinger and Selina Heppchen

In our chapter we describe the analysis of categorisations as an important part of narrative criminology. Categorisations of people (as offenders, victims, witnesses, etc.) are a central component of the communicative construction and processing of crime. Categories are associated with assumptions about actions and personal characteristics. Therefore, categorisations play a prominent role in the question of whether and how someone should be dealt with or punished. Narratives essentially consist of categorisations as well as the representation of a temporal course of interactions and actions. Analysing categorisations can therefore provide decisive insights for narrative criminology. With the research method of 'Membership Categorisation Analysis', categorisations can be reconstructed in detail. We describe this potential by reconstructing how the defendant 'Dave' categorised himself in the context of his main trial and how he was categorised by others in order to justify a judgement against him. Our analysis shows that categorisations, which are socially impactful and often controversial, must be established by particular narrative manoeuvres.

Chapter 16: Police Narratives as Allegories that Shape Police Culture and Behaviour
Don L. Kurtz and Alayna Colburn

Narrative criminology has continued to expand as an important theoretical and methodological contribution to the study of crime and justice. However, the vast majority of narrative work focuses on the narrative development of those identified as criminal offenders, and little research has explored the narratives of those employed within the criminal justice system. This chapter examines the importance of police storytelling and the unique narratives vital to the cultural life and institution of policing. Police stories are an important part of the 'meaning-making structure' in policing and often convey particular power well beyond the limitations of formal organizational or agency

policy. Police stories frequently influence understandings of the nature of social problems; community change and decay; and even understandings of race, class, and gender. Police narratives and stories also offer some unique methodological challenges for narrative scholars. Analysis of police stories must focus on the underlying plot details while still analysing the themes or metaphors provided by the narrative. This may require specific attention to the role the story plays in police culture, training, and development of organizational cohesion. Furthermore, narrative researchers must explore the shared narratives distinctive to the profession, while still examining unique meanings that stories convey to different departments and even specialized units. Finally, access to police organizations and individual officers can represent unique challenge for narrative researchers. By examining police narratives, we gain unique insight into the production and maintenance of police authority and culture accomplished through the storytelling process.

Chapter 17: Revealing Criminal Narratives: The Narrative Roles Questionnaire and the Life as a Film Procedure
David Canter, Donna Youngs and David Rowlands

With the objective of encouraging the use of standard processes for exploring offenders' narratives two complementary procedures are discussed. One is a development of McAdams explorations with highly effective individuals, describing their life as if it were a book. This is a structured interview protocol that has been specifically produced for use with offenders, in which they describe their life as a film (LAAF). A number of studies with male and female incarcerated individuals as well as those without convictions have revealed important differences between people in how they give a free account of their past and future lives. This allows the differentiation of LAAF narratives and reveals the existence of dominant narrative forms in offenders' responses. These relate to those initially elaborated by Frye (1957) for fiction, namely tragedy, comedy, adventure and romance. The second method is the Narrative Role Questionnaire (NRQ) which elicits the inherent role that offenders saw themselves as playing during specific crimes. Completion of the NRQ by various samples reveals important differences between offences in the narratives that provide the agency for their criminal actions. The roles central to these narratives have also been found to embody distinct emotional components that maintain offending. Taken

together the NRQ and the LAAF provide a framework for examining offence narratives which enables the main narratives of relevance to criminality to be identified and their implications for theory and practice to be elaborated.

Chapter 18: Doing Dialogical Narrative Analysis: Implications for Narrative Criminology
Dan Jerome S. Barrera

Arthur W. Frank's dialogical narrative analysis (DNA) has been a recent addition to the plethora of methods in analysing stories. What makes this method unique from the rest is its concern for both the story's content and its effects. Stories are seen as selection/evaluation systems that do things for and on people. This chapter aims to provide the reader a heuristic guide in conducting DNA and emphasises learning through exemplars as the way of learning DNA. It provides an outline of DNA and reviews how researchers have applied it in different disciplines. Then, DNA will be applied in in the current 'war on drugs' in the Philippines. The stories of the policy actors – for and against the drug war – will be analysed to explore how stories affect policy choices and actions, call actors to assume different identities, associate/dissociate these actors and show how they hold their own in telling their stories. Finally, the potential of using DNA in criminology and criminal justice will be discussed.

Chapter 19: 'Protecting and Defending Mummy': Narrative Criminology and Psychosocial Criminology
Alfredo Verde and Nicolò Knechtlin

In recent years, two new approaches have bloomed in criminological thinking, narrative criminology and psychosocial criminology. Both have argued for a new consideration of offenders' narratives, which are investigated as a description of life events and choices, and of the decision to offend. An interview regarding the life and deviant career of an Italian football hooligan ('ultras') – a Bangladeshi–Italian boy trying to find his place in Italian society – will show how the two approaches can be combined in an analysis of the subject's often ambiguous narratives, in which both neutralisation techniques and defence mechanisms can be discerned. We will first describe the complex narrative strategies used. We will then try to explain how, through the

use of complex defences and neutralisations, the subject can feel simultaneously integrated into both the deviant group and general society. In this case, despite antinomies and ambiguity, integration is achieved by keeping at bay the sense of guilt related to aggression towards parental figures.

Chapter 20: The Story of Antisociality: Determining What Goes Unsaid in Dominant Narratives
Lois Presser

Stories govern the criminal justice system and consequently the millions of individuals under its control. In the US the harms experienced by those individuals, their families and their communities are massive. A prominent system-sustaining story is that antisocial persons, who are essentially different from the rest of us, get that way through negligent parenting. The story's moral oppositions rest on textual absences concerning crime, work, care, humanity and the mind of the scholar. In this chapter, first, I discern what goes unsaid via close analysis of the story of antisociality constructed by Gottfredson and Hirschi in their 1990 book A General Theory of Crime. Second, I offer a method for cataloguing what goes unsaid in stories that effect control, by (1) evaluating figurative language and other means of ambiguation; (2) assessing patterns of elaboration and explanation and (3) asking what and whose knowledge is missing. Rigorously deployed with a reflexive stance on one's position as to what should be said, the method can help uncover subtext, understatement and silencing.

Chapter 21: The Archived Criminal: Mandatory Prisoner Autobiography in China
Xiaoye Zhang and Xianliang Dong

Most offender narrative being studied has been in oral forms, produced in the reciprocal process of researcher-(ex) offender interviews. This chapter offers an introduction to a variation of offender narrative study within the prison and rehabilitation context: the narrative of written autobiography. Since the early 1940s, Chinese reform institutions have required written autobiographies from new admitters, provided with clear presubscripted guidelines of instructions as well as postcensorship. For this chapter, we trace back and analyse this model based on 28 prisoners' autobiographies in mainland China between

2007 and 2009, as well as archive documents in different historical periods. We have found that the mandatory offender autobiographies are highly functional writings with clear requirements that embody the existing power structure. We have also found considerable commonality with findings in Western contexts on the presence and problems of narrative compliance in rehabilitation. We argue that narrative criminology should further engage in understanding the practice of narrative censorship and co-authorship in criminal justice processes, as it takes on different forms in different historical–social contexts.

Chapter 22: Opposing Violent Extremism through Counternarratives: Four Forms of Narrative Resistance
Sveinung Sandberg and Jan C. Andersen

Following recent terrorist attacks in the US and Europe, Western Muslims have been criticised for not taking a firm stand against radical Islam and extremist organisations. Drawing on insights from narrative criminology, we challenge such assertions and reveal Muslims' narrative mobilisation against violent jihadism. Based on 90 qualitative interviews with young Muslims in Norway, we show how violent extremism is rejected in a multitude of ways. This narrative resistance includes criticising extremist jihadist organisations for false interpretations of Islam and using derogatory terms to describe them. It also includes less obvious forms of narrative resistance, such as humour and attempts to silence jihadist organisations by ignoring them. While narrative criminology has effectively analysed the stories that constitute harm, less attention has been paid to narratives that counter harm. We argue that stories that counter jihadi narratives are crucial to understand the narrative struggles of Muslim communities, whose outcomes can help determine why some individuals end up becoming religious extremists – while others do not. By distinguishing between factual, emotional and humorous counternarratives and describing silence as a form of resistance, we show resistance to extremism that is often concealed from the public and the state.

Chapter 23: Researching Sex Work: Doing Decolonial, Intersectional Narrative Analysis
Floretta Boonzaier

This chapter makes a case for a decolonial, intersectional approach to narrative criminology. It argues that in growing contexts of deepening inequalities, research approaches that humanise people on the margins and that explicitly centre questions of social justice are ever more urgent. This chapter explicates a decolonial, intersectional narrative analysis, working with the data generated in interviews with women sex workers on their experiences of violence outlining how a decolonial, intersectional, narrative analysis may be accomplished to analyse the intersections of power at material, representational and structural levels. The chapter illustrates the importance of an intersectional feminist lens for amplifying the complexity of women sex workers' experiences of gendered violence and for understanding the multiple forms of material, symbolic and institutionalised subordination they experience in increasingly unequal and oppressive contexts. It ends by considering the contributions decolonial, intersectional feminist work can offer narrative criminology, especially the emerging field of narrative victimology.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Jennifer Fleetwood, Lois Presser, Sveinung Sandberg and Thomas Ugelvik

Rosario Castellanos' (1962) *The Book of Lamentations* and Mario Vargas Llosas' (1981) *The War of the End of the World* tell epic stories of poor indigenous people fighting for their physical and spiritual lives. Both describe fictional characters, inhabiting the impoverished states of Chiapas in Mexico (Castellanos) and Bahia in Brazil (Llosas), who were inspired by real people and events to revolt. As in these books so in 'life': intertwined Catholic and local beliefs have been narrative resources in actual indigenous revolts against ethnic, class and colonial hierarchies. Narratives can also legitimise conquest, and not just rebellion, as Keeton (2015) shows in his analysis of the link between Old Testament narratives and the colonisation of the US. Biblical stories *move*: they are carried and passed on by people, traversing continents and oceans. Narratives also travel in time, enduring thousands of years, continuously changing and intermingling with other stories.

Narratives undergird power as well as resistance. They have created some of the darkest moments in human history. The Third Reich built its legitimacy on epic stories of valour and glory adapted from a mythical northern European past. Narratives can also challenge harms; tales of native people's resistance were crucial for the renowned Zapatista uprising of 1994. These events, motivated by stories, are rewritten in the present, acquiring new emphases and significance. Stories move in and out of 'reality'. Some have an historical point of reference, others do not; it is their 'storiness' (Hogan, 2003, p. 203) that gives them their unique power. Power to defend the established order and do harm, but also power to change society and better the conditions under which people live. The capacity of stories to explain, guide, and arouse is at the heart of narrative criminology. Put simply, stories shape our social world; they inspire us to do or resist harms. With careful and close attention, they can tell us a great deal.

Hence this volume. For ease, we have organised it by moment in the process of research – collecting versus analysing stories. Around this somewhat arbitrary binary is a profusion of discoveries as to what narrative criminology – indeed,

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criminology – can do and be. This chapter introduces the volume and addresses three key questions. First: where have we been? What research has been done to date in narrative criminology? What have we learnt? Second: what are this Handbook's specific contributions to the field? Third: what are some important future directions in narrative criminology? What has narrative criminology yet to grasp, hone or pay attention to? What good could it do in the world?

Looking Back

Stories connect the present with the past and future, and so too are the present and future of narrative criminology closely connected to its past in any recognisable account. Where did narrative criminology come from? Several origin stories have been told (Maruna, 2015; Presser & Sandberg, 2015a, Sandberg & Ugelvik, 2016a). Linkages to mid-century American sociology are often highlighted. Sykes and Matza's (1957) description of how delinquents use 'techniques of neutralisation' to make their offending behaviour morally justifiable is said to be an important inspiration, as is Mills' (1940) elucidation of 'vocabularies of motive'. Similarly, Scott and Lyman's (1968) study of how people's accounts of their own actions bridge the gap between action and expectation is said to be another core text. These works related socially structured discourse to individual action. Labelling theories, as well as theories of gendered action, would emphasise identity mechanisms driving that relationship. For example, narrative criminology owes a profound debt to Becker's demonstration in *Outsiders* (1963) that deviance is not an attribute of any act but rather the meanings attached to it. Building on insights from symbolic interactionism and especially Goffman, Katz (1988) showed that crimes are an acting out of certain narrative scripts and thus actions in general are shaped by their storytelling potential.

Maruna's (2001) *Making Good*, which set out the close connections between desistance from crime and narrative reconfigurations of self-image, was a rigorous take on the idea that behaviour reversals are founded on stories. Outside criminology, myriad studies have theorised specific mass harms (e.g. violent attacks on abortion clinics, criminal executions, war, terrorism) in narrative terms. In psychology, anthropology, political science, medicine, geography and still other nonliterary disciplines, the narrative turn had already taken place. Hence an alternative origin story might be that, bolstered by the development of cultural, constitutive and psychosocial criminologies, the moment had finally come for narrative criminology.

When Presser coined the term 'narrative criminology' in her 2009 article in *Theoretical Criminology*, there existed a reservoir of evidence and theory to draw from. Her paper was a timely and productive intervention that drew together and summarised several coinciding developments in the social sciences. Looking back, one is tempted to say that it was like a spark in a fireworks factory. Narrative criminology was quickly adopted by a number of scholars internationally. Sandberg further developed the framework (Sandberg, 2010, 2013, 2016) when with colleagues he analysed the importance of stories for phenomena such as

terrorism, illegal drugs, drinking, violence and humour. Connections were made with visual criminology (Sandberg & Ugelvik, 2016b) and Bourdieusian criminology (Sandberg & Fleetwood, 2017, see also Fleetwood, 2014, 2016). Presser, for her part, developed narrative criminology further. Her book *Why We Harm* (2013) pivots from 'crime' in the narrow sense to encompass legal and routine harms. In *Inside Story* (2018) she explores why and how stories captivate audiences and drive mass harm.

As a criminological subdiscipline, narrative criminology reached maturity with the publication of the edited collection *Narrative Criminology: Understanding Stories of Crime* (Presser & Sandberg, 2015a). This volume includes a range of different studies with a variety of topics – prisoners' work on the self, drug users' use of narratives and the connection between bad trip stories and folk tales about magical creatures and dark forces. It also covers stories justifying mass atrocities and sex offences, and the relationship between cultural and narrative criminology. The anthology was followed by a special issue of the journal *Crime, Media, Culture* (Sandberg & Ugelvik, 2016a). This special issue covered issues such as forms of narrative, narrative habitus, boundary work, media narratives and the relationship between narrative and image.

Recent Developments

Narrative criminology is, formally speaking, only 10 years old, but it is already moving in new directions, especially around a deepening understanding of human experience and meaning making. The field is still expanding, with novel research topics, analytical perspectives and methodological options. Indeed, the last year or two has seen a rapid proliferation of narrative perspectives across various criminological areas.

Continuing narrative criminology's core interest in understanding violence, Henriksen and Bengtsson (2018) find that marginalised Danish youths describe violence as 'nothing special'; as an acceptable and even trivial part of their lives. Colvin and Pisoiu (2018) examine the narratives of members of present-day right-wing groups in Germany, finding that violence is neutralised through tropes such as pragmatic realpolitik (a way of 'getting results') and the mythical race of *Herrenmensch*. Looking at a very different group – serial killers – James and Gossett (2018) show how even people who have committed the most heinous of crimes are able to narratively reconstruct themselves as people with high moral standards. Raitanen, Sandberg, and Oksanen (2019) explore connections between the master narrative of school shootings and personal stories of being bullied. The same kind of micro–macro link is drawn in Banks and Albertson's (2018) study of violence committed by ex-service personnel. These authors locate such violence in both personal biographies and individual psyches, and the structural conditions of advanced capitalism. Lastly, Sandberg, Copes, and Pedersen (2019) expand the traditional focus on violent populations, to 'peaceful people', arguing that narrative analysis far exceeds approaches such as subcultural and neutralisation theory in understanding engagement in violence.

An emerging literature concerns the narrative dimensions of representations of *armed conflict and war*. Following Houge's (2016) study of perpetrators of mass violence in postconflict international tribunal proceedings, Rauschenbach (2018) studies the tension between 'judicial truth' and other kinds of truths in interviews with individuals accused by the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. Walklate (2019) shows how images of violence and atrocity play an important part in the political aftermath of such incidents, a point that is also made by Houge (2018) in her study of international criminal tribunals as sites that impact on societal understandings of mass violence, promoting a particular kind of story.

Another core interest in narrative criminology is *drug crime*. In research by Webb, Copes, and Hendricks (2019), people engaged in so-called microdosing of psychedelics talk about their drug use as rational and normal, narratively emphasising connections to conventional citizens who hold middle-class values. Rather similarly, Arnull and Ryder (2019) describe how young women normalise their alcohol and marihuana use by telling stories in which they are in control of their substance use and it is all just 'good fun'. Hammersvik's (2018) study of cannabis growers and dealers highlights camaraderie. His participants reconstruct their growing and selling of illegal drugs as a way of helping their friends. Narratives have also become important for scholars who wish to understand the absence of crimes and harm. One novel contribution here is Rowlands, Youngs, and Canter's (2019) exploration of the role of narrative identity change in substance misuse recovery.

Several recent papers offer *meta arguments* unpacking what narrative criminology is, what it can and should be, and how different analytical and methodological perspectives can be brought into and add to the original conceptualisation of narrative criminology. Wesely (2018) contends that, given that much narrative criminology research has been interview-based, narrative criminologists should look more closely at how interview dynamics and the narrative techniques both participants and interviewers deploy during interviews impact our analyses. Brisman (2019) shows how values that contribute to pollution and thus climate change are reproduced in stories for children. He contends that narrative criminology can very beneficially analyse fictional narratives and situates his ecology-focused work under the rubric of green cultural criminology. Presser and Sandberg (2019) have connected narrative criminology to critical criminology, arguing among other things that narrative criminology is rooted in a concern with harm, legal or illegal.

Walklate has, with her colleagues, developed narrative criminology in the direction of a narrative *victimology* (Walklate, Maher, McCulloch, Fitz-Gibbon, & Beavis, 2018), as have Pemberton, Mulder, and Aarten (2018), who claim great potential for the study of the multiple ways victimisation experience is embedded in life stories. Pemberton, Aarten, and Mulder (2018) highlight the need for victims to own their stories to avoid secondary victimisation. Together, these authors point to the potential for narrative approaches for understanding how victimisation is made sense of and told about, as well as how these narratives may (or may not) catalyse responses by the criminal justice system or policy makers.

Narratives of victimisation are both personally and existentially significant *and* motivators for political and social change. Analysis of both depends on a keen attentiveness to questions of power that infuse who can tell a victim narrative.

Narrative criminology was originally explicitly centred on the narratives of offenders. There is now a sizeable literature on the *narrative lives of professionals* working in the social control professions. Kurtz and Upton (2018) continue this recent development and reveal that a certain kind of masculine police culture is reproduced through the sharing of stories. Similarly, Petintseva examines the narratives of youth justice workers (2018) and Baker (2018) looks at how believable truths are constructed narratively in coroners' reports. Whilst criminology has long attended to the discursive qualities of law and criminal justice institutions, studying personal narratives opens up daily practice for analysis, and the ways that individuals draw on, reproduce and adapt narratives about crime and justice. Whilst studying the 'texts' of law is important, narrative criminology emphasises the importance of storytelling as a form of social action – the daily performance of stories in working lives.

Narrative criminologists have mainly, although not exclusively, used qualitative methods. Canter and Youngs (e.g. Canter & Youngs, 2012; Youngs & Canter, 2012a, 2012b) have done *quantitative research* on the narratives of offenders for some time. Their methodological example has provided notable inspiration, especially their commitment to standardised methodological approaches reflecting their psychological approach to studying offenders. Recently, using quantitative analysis, Goodlad, Ioannou, and Hunter (2018) have explored how offenders with personality disorders and psychopathy experience committing a crime. Ciesla, Ioannou, and Hammond (2019) surveyed female prisoners to examine their narrative and emotional experiences. Kruttschnitt and Kang (2019) studied persistent offenders' understanding of their past crimes using Canter and Young's narrative 'life as a film' method (see also Ioannou, Synnott, Lowe, & Tzani-Pepelasi, 2018). Through analysis of stock narratives, they draw out the significance of structural disadvantages in their analysis, for both experience and storytelling, attending to the intersections of race and gender in particular.

A literature has also flourished concerning how prisoners narratively come to terms with their sentence. Rather than examine how narratives contribute to crime and other harmful actions, these researchers address traditional questions from the field of *penology*, but from a narrative theory perspective, such as how prisoners use discursive resistance strategies to deal with confinement and related humiliations. Following Ugelvik's (2012, 2015) narrative studies of prison environments, Vannier (2018) highlights the importance of letter-writing for prisoners who have to endure the most extreme kinds of imprisonment, and also the analytical potential these letters have for researchers. Warr (2019) studies how prisoners sentenced to long periods of custody must undertake 'narrative labour' to manage the carceral identity imposed upon them, including their daily struggle to construct an acceptable narrative identity. Finally, Easterling, Feldmeyer, and Presser (2018) describe the narrative strategies of incarcerated mothers managing the identity threats that incarceration presents for them as mothers. These are, in effect, studies of narrative responses to what Sykes (1958) called 'the pains of

imprisonment'. Narrative criminologists are poised to revisit classic ideas from criminology, connecting them with the idea of stories' productive potential.

The above overview of publications in narrative criminology from the last 2 years gives a flavour of recent research in narrative criminology, updating previous reviews (Presser & Sandberg, 2015a, 2019; Sandberg & Ugelvik, 2016a). The study of narrative is inherently interdisciplinary, and it is hard to do justice to the array of interesting and creative ways narrative approaches have been deployed across varied disciplines and subfields. As well as expanding the methodological toolkit, the following chapters continue to broaden our understanding of the ways in which stories matter for understanding contemporary issues of harm, crime and justice.

Chapters of this Handbook

The book is structured along two broad methodological dimensions. The first part explores different ways of *collecting* stories, including ethnography, interviews, texts and images and objects. While authors address the particularities of each of these methods of collecting data to varying degrees, we want readers to get an idea of the many ways stories can be 'found'. For good reasons, narrative criminology has tended towards using interviews to generate narratives, and hopefully these chapters presenting alternative methodological approaches will inspire researchers to expand the pool of stories studied. Chapters also suggest innovative ways to work with interview data, suggesting ways to be more reflexive and systematic when using interview data. The second part of the book concerns ways of *analysing* stories. Previous work in narrative criminology has used a multitude of analytical approaches, but in this volume the tool box is expanded further to include membership categorisation analysis, psychoanalysis, dialogical analysis, 'life as a film' and counter narrative analysis.

Part I: Collecting Stories

Thus far narrative criminologists have been mostly concerned to draw linkages between harm and story, paying less attention to the 'places' where stories can be found. In this first part of the Handbook we highlight different ways of accessing stories, through ethnography, interviews, texts, images and objects.

Observations and Fieldwork

Ethnography is 'the study of people in naturally occurring settings or "fields" by methods of data collection which capture their social meanings and ordinary activities. It involves the researcher participating directly in the setting, if not also the activities, in order to collect data in a systematic matter' (Brewer, 2000, p. 172). Traditionally, ethnography involves one or a few researchers engaging with a small group for a relatively long period, with a high level of engagement and commitment, and with the aim of understanding the culture, perspective and organisation of that group. Lately, ethnography has expanded to include forms

such as autoethnography, netnography, multi-sited ethnography and narrative ethnography. This last is conceptualised as 'aimed at close scrutiny of social situations, their actors, and actions in relation to narratives' (Gubrium & Holstein, 2008, p. 250). The narrative ethnographer documents the vagaries of story construction within concrete social interactions.

Sébastien Tutenges, in Chapter 2, describes how to access, collect and process the stories of street-level offenders using ethnographic fieldwork. In what he describes as 'narrative ethnography under pressure' at a street drug scene, he details the advantages of being deeply embedded in the cultural context where narratives emerge, to get a better understanding of narrative performances and the impact they have. His rendering of narrative ethnography enables researchers to use all senses when studying storytelling and see how they evolve and change across time and space. Chapter 3 is similarly based on a traditional approach to ethnographic fieldwork. Here Anna Offit continues the argument for narrative ethnography in a study of American federal prosecutors. Participating in their daily work and ongoing discussions of trial opening and closing statements, she gains unique insight into how justice is continually negotiated in narratives. She demonstrates that generally stories are made and remade by narrators in collective story-making processes.

In Chapter 4 Rod Earle works from interviews with fellow convict criminologists but also explores the potential of narrative autoethnography. He argues that first-hand experience of imprisonment may be helpful to understand not only prison conditions but recent carceral expansions as well. He puts narrative criminology into dialogue with convict criminology, whose stories are potentially a form of activism – a means to take down the carceral regime. The chapter speaks to problems of making collective narratives – or counternarratives – out of personal narratives and demonstrates the advantages of combining different data when studying narrative. Narratives are not confined to one particular setting; they move back and forth from mainstream media, popular culture and social media, to individual, groups and communities – and they are increasingly transnational and global in scope.

Interviews

A classic definition of interviewing is 'a face-to-face verbal exchange, in which one person, the interviewer, attempts to elicit information of expression of opinion or belief from another person or persons' (Maccoby & Maccoby, 1954, p. 449). Against this commonly accepted formal definition, it has been said that we inhabit an 'interview society' (Atkinson & Silverman, 1997), in which interviewing is part of everyday life and a common way to seek and obtain information (data) or just a feel for what goes on in a particular locale. As chapters in this Handbook illustrate, interviewing has become so assimilated into ways of knowing, including but not limited to research, that it is seldom reflected upon. The chapters in this section address the interview situation pointedly.

Practitioners of 'justice work' tell stories about their charges and those stories have implications for practice. In Chapter 5, recognising that professional

stories reproduce racist treatment and subordination, Olga Pentintseva describes experimenting with discursive intervention during interviews with youth justice professionals in Belgium. The method, which she calls a 'light' form of Socratic dialogue, reminds us that we cannot treat narratives as simply 'there'. Pentintseva shaped the narratives overtly and with a transformative agenda, but she nonetheless reminds us that even passive 'collectors' of narrative data – minimally probing interviewers and archivists, for instance – can powerfully shape their data. Chapter 6 similarly explores and reflects upon the interview situation by asking what to do about 'tall tales' in interviews, when participants are obviously making up stories. Here Carmen Wickramagamage and Jody Miller offer a vantage on the sometimes messy world of interview research. They also reflect on the complex relations between 'truth,' 'fiction' and 'lies', showing that even tall tales can teach us a great deal about research participants and perhaps also researchers.

Many other chapters in this Handbook use interview data as well, illustrating the prominence of this approach in narrative criminology as in qualitative research generally. Close attention to narrative, however, invites new ways to scrutinise interviews, getting more out of them than reports about 'facts'. Chapters in the second part based on interviews include Canter, Youngs and Rowland's quantitative approach to interviewing, and Sandberg and Andersen's description of how interviews can benefit from being done collectively by research groups. Cook and Walklate, Ievins, Dollinger and Heppchen, Kurtz and Colburn, Verde and Knechtlin, and Boonzaier also all use narrative interviews in their contributions.

Texts

Document or textual analysis is often seen as a separate category in methodological literature, sometimes associated with discourse analysis. Yet, for the sake of narrative analysis there is little difference whether we have documents or other texts, interviews or ethnographic data. We are still searching for elements of narrative, characters, metaphors etc. There are many advantages to working with already finished texts, however. They can be easy to access; and in a society where many of us engage more with texts (e.g. on social media) than with 'real' people, and where most public policies are firmly anchored in texts, they are important sociological data. This section offers examples of rather different texts that can be relevant for narrative criminologists.

In Chapter 7 Simon Copeland uses the case of an American jihadist to argue that autobiographies are rare resources for doing narrative criminology. His is a detailed account of how and why to study autoethnographies. Drawing on literary criticism, Copeland shows how autobiographies, like narratives, are shaped both individually and collectively by genre. Chapter 8 by Avi Brisman starts from fiction, showcasing the value of narrative criminology for green criminology – or the study of environmental harm – and the sustenance given to harm-genic stories from works of fiction. Brisman also reports from web- and interview-based studies to illustrate the importance of stories for environmental harm. Texts in all forms, including news coverage (e.g. Barrera's chapter later in this volume), official documents (e.g. Xiaoye and Xianliang's chapter), criminological texts

(e.g. Presser's chapter), text messages, social media and webpages etc., are clearly of great value for anyone interested in stories. We have only seen the start of how such resources can be used.

Beyond the Text: Images and Objects

Ethnographies, interviews and texts are much-used troves of narrative data. In this final section on collecting stories we turn to novel sources. Narrative criminology takes as its point of departure that stories can be found everywhere, following Barthes' (1977, p. 79) famous observation which begins: 'The narratives of the world are numberless. Narrative is first and foremost a prodigious variety of genres, themselves distributed amongst different substances – as though any material were fit to receive man's stories.' The authors of this section's chapters likewise argue that we can find narratives in a variety of nontextual representations: photographs, art and objects, drawing on exciting synergies between narrative and art history, photography and material culture.

In Chapter 9 Heith Copes, Andy Hochstetler and Jared Ragland tell the story of Chico, a meth user, through visual and 'textual' means. As much as traditional (written and spoken) narratives, visual symbols on Chico's body, property and in his home reveal him to be both rebellious and caring. The authors argue that images also can be used to elicit oral storytelling and describe the process whereby they engage a dialogue with Chico around the photographs they have taken. These prompt him to reflect on his life and further expand on his self-story. Eamonn Carrabine (Chapter 10) likewise emphasises the visual by scrutinising Giovanni Battista Piranesi's images of fantasy prisons, and laying out in more theoretical detail the relationship between narrative and image. His chapter delves into the relationships between narrative criminology and visual methods through parallels to scholarship in art history, such as where 'word' and 'image' are related and juxtaposed.

Finally, in Chapter 11, Thomas Ugelvik pushes the boundaries of narrative criminology still further by finding stories in an object – in this case his wife's hunting rifle. Ugelvik lays out the possibilities and problematics. If objects narrate – if stories are already out there in the physical and not only cultural world – what autonomy is left for humans? The question gets to the core of studies in narrative criminology and social sciences in general. Combined, the three chapters compel the view that narrative criminologists ought not limit themselves to 'texts' – whether obtained from fieldwork, interviews or already existing writings – when exploring for the impact and importance of narrative. Note too that Ugelvik's chapter, like Earle's, draws upon personal biography in the analysis, thus expanding the pool of stories that researchers can study to include their own.

Part II: Analysing Stories

The second part of the book turns from how stories can be collected to how they can be analysed. Here new analytical approaches are introduced and the emphasis is mainly on what to do with data already collected. We start with approaches to victimhood and the role of the victim before we turn to approaches scrutinising

categorisations, roles and plots, the dialogical nature of narrative and narrative absences. Finally, while many if not most of the contributions in this volume consider asymmetric relations of power, we end with those chapters that most explicitly address such issues.

Studying the Victim

Like criminology in general, narrative criminology has tended to foreground harm-doers. Their stories are not the only ones relevant for understanding harm as storied. Alongside the burgeoning of victimology as an academic discipline, victim voices and characters are increasingly being studied within narrative criminology. In the first part of the analytical section, then, we position work that either directly or indirectly studies victim narratives.

In Chapter 12, Elizabeth A. Cook and Sandra Walklate ask what narrative victimology and narrative criminology can learn from one another. By exploring in great depth the narrative of a mother who lost her son to violent crime, they show that storytelling, long held to be essential for recovering from trauma (see Herman, 1997), is also parcel to political struggle and community engagement. Their chapter reveals the importance of religious storylines for 'narrative recovery' and explores the complexity of victim voices in policy. Kristen Lee Hourigan, in Chapter 13, extends narrative victimology with insights from narrative ethnography (see also chapters by Tutenges and Offit) with those who have lost loved ones to murder. Emphasising different elements of the storytelling process – speaker, audience, timing – Hourigan shows how important it is to appreciate narratives across different settings; victim narratives are contingent, deeply personal and sometimes public and political. Both of these chapters are firmly situated within the burgeoning perspective of narrative victimology, and those interested in this perspective should also read Boonzaier's chapter, the last one in the Handbook.

Alice Ievins (Chapter 14) moves the victim focus from voices of victims to representations of victims in offenders' stories, thereby blurring the lines between traditional 'victim' and 'offender' approaches. Noting that narrative can be a strategy for shame management, she demonstrates that crime victims haunt sex offenders' stories. In narrative terms, they are characters, perhaps the most important characters in their stories. The UK prisoners she interviewed often tried to challenge simple categorisations of 'victims' and 'prisoners' in their attempts to display penitence and reform. Some expressed remorse, some marginalised having hurt a victim and some denied offender status altogether. Finally, Ievins directs attention upward, asking what sorts of stories the state facilitates concerning victims and victimisation, thereby connecting to Xiaoye and Xianliang's chapter concerning Chinese prisoners that appears later in this book. Combined, they raise complex questions about who really creates the stories that are being told in institutional environments.

Categorisations, Plots and Roles

The next section of the book goes into greater depth on narrative analytical techniques and concepts. An almost endless supply stocks the narrative

criminologist's repertoire, and only imagination as well as each individual scholar's capability to orient herself within the narrative literature set the limits. As opposed to attempting an overview of possible narrative strategies, this section therefore provides examples of some fruitful ways to approach stories within the framework of narrative criminology.

In Chapter 15, Bernd Dollinger and Selina Heppchen demonstrate the value for narrative criminology of classic ethnomethodology and membership categorisation analysis. In-depth analysis of interviews with Dave, a youth charged with sex offences in Germany, allows them to show how he balances between the categories (or stories) of psychiatry or social work and law, with potential consequences for the verdict in his case. The work of categorising both Dave and the offences he allegedly has committed is partly done by the youth himself, but institutional interests and voices are also involved. Dollinger and Heppchen show how competing narratives constitute the reality of crime, which is an important insight for narrative criminology. In Chapter 16, Don L. Kurtz and Alayna Colburn continue the emphasis on institutions, exploring police narratives in the US and showing how important they are for police action. Here, narrative criminology takes on the harm of police activity as opposed to the harm of 'offenders'. A corrective to notions of police subculture, these authors show us that police narratives reflect broad, conventional themes – and they discuss the many links between police narratives and popular culture. The plots and metaphors they identify in police officers' stories are crucial to understand the culture behind police authority and engagements.

Chapter 17 is the only contribution in the Handbook that takes a quantitative approach. David Canter, Donna Youngs and David Rowland give an instructive overview of some of the methodological and analytical tools they have used over the years, focussing on the Narrative Role Questionnaire (NRQ) and Life As A Film (LAAF). Distinguishing between the professional, the revenger, the victim and the hero, this chapter outlines fruitful ways of analysing narrative roles and themes in stories. Using a systematic approach to interviewing and data collection, their work counters the usual criticism of narrative analysis as anecdotal and subjective. Great potential exists in further developing these quantitative approaches to data analysis in narrative criminology.

All three chapters in this section present new and important ways to expand narrative criminology, developing new theoretical perspectives and analytical models, taking up and reinvestigating classic ones – and not least, including new forms of data such as stories from the criminal justice 'system' and surveys. The emphasis on combining narrative criminology with other established traditions continues in the next section.

Narrative Dialogue, the Unconscious and Absences

Narratives are complex and ambiguous discursive formations. They contain multiple voices as well as impactful silences. And they are 'heard' in as many ways as there are interlocutors/audience members and readings. Researchers may discern a narrative 'on paper', equipped with a formal definition, but narratives

also exist as cognitive schemes in the minds of audiences. Thus, it may be necessary for narrative analysts to cross over to boldly interpretative perspectives, from identifying to reconstructing narratives. Chapters in this section move narrative criminology in this direction, emphasising narrative dialogue, the unconscious and narrative absences.

Chapter 18 starts out with a detailed description of socionarratology and dialogical narrative analysis (DNA), showing how it can be applied in a particular case study. Dan J. S. Barrera argues that media narratives have a close relationship with the ongoing drug war in the Philippines. He links apocalyptic narratives from leading politicians in media to an 'apocalyptic style of war on drugs'. It is not always an easy and direct relationship however and the dialogical and often ambiguous nature of stories makes narrative analysis difficult. Indeed, narrative analysis is an ongoing project, never finalised and full of contradictions. Alfredo Verde and Nicolò Knechtlin take this idea further in Chapter 19 by pointing out the many similarities between psychoanalysis and narrative criminology. The relevance of psychoanalysis for narrative criminology is demonstrated in an interview with an Italian football 'hooligan'. The justifications often studied by narrative criminologists, for example, are, like defence mechanisms, not entirely known to the subject. Offenders are multifaceted, stories are co-constructed to deal with inner and outer tensions and samples are often small. Illustratively, several of the chapters in this volume are based on a single case, as is theirs.

Stories speak – they put things 'out there' – but they also contain absences. Lois Presser contends in Chapter 20 that the narrative sustaining penal harm in the US and elsewhere leaves much consequential 'stuff' unsaid concerning proper living. She demonstrates *how* we might rigorously locate the 'not said' in stories, including but not limited to the impactful stories that criminologists tell. Her methods include coding for figurative devices and ambiguation. Her vantage is critical, connecting to notions of ideological control and the silencing of the subaltern. Combined, the chapters in this section call for further engagement with narrative traditions in the social sciences and elsewhere. They demonstrate the potential depth of narrative analysis in criminology.

Connecting Stories, Power and Social Inequalities

The final section of the book contains chapters that explicitly take on one of the greatest challenges of narrative criminology: taking power and social inequalities into account. Narratives do not exist in a vacuum. Many contributors to this volume raise similar concerns (e.g. Earle, Pentintseva, Brisman, Presser, Kurtz and Colburn, Dollinger and Heppchen), but the authors of these final chapters confront social hierarchy as a central issue. In rather different ways, they show a way forward for narrative criminology that includes challenging established truths and knowledge regimes – while also pointing to alternatives.

In Chapter 21 Zhang Xiaoye and Dong Xianliang study Chinese penal policy where by prisoners write autobiographical essay, as part of the admissions

process. These accounts are a great resource for narrative scholars and shed light on Chinese prison reforms and society. They raise the question: Who tells the story when the story is ordered by officials? The inmate's official story is moulded by the prison into a testament to reform. In this way, Xiaoye and Xianliang question previous research that assumes prisoners' stories function as counternarratives – and claim that inmates are engaged in a narrative combat they can never win. Their chapter shows that certain contemporary practices of autobiographical writing in China must be viewed in light of the Chinese literary tradition and the 'confession movement' initiated by the Communist party. Power relations surrounding literary genres and political environments shape texts.

Sandberg and Andersen conceive of opposition to harm-doing as a narrative accomplishment in Chapter 22. Their primary aim is not only to identify but also to challenge narrative consensus, in this case the established belief that Islam is a religion of war. Their study centres on narrative resistance to jihadist terrorism among young Norwegian Muslims. The chapter discloses the nature of such resistance – distinguished as factual, emotional and humorous counternarratives – and silencing as a narrative strategy for those that are narratively and otherwise largely excluded from the mainstream. Our final chapter by Floretta Boonzaier (Chapter 23) makes the case for a decolonial, intersectional approach to narrative criminology, drawing on interviews with women sex workers about their experiences of gendered violence in South Africa. Boonzaier illuminates the multiple and intersectional nature of the women's subjugation, focussing her analysis on convergences of power abuse at material, representational and structural levels. In their stories the women blur boundaries between 'types of crime' rather in contrast to criminology including narrative criminology has largely attended to factors/stories behind one crime. This blurring reflects the lived experience of intersecting forms of oppression.

Narrative criminology is intrinsically critical; it questions established truths and reveals power structures and hegemonies of consensus. Social justice lurks as an inspiration of most of the chapters in this Handbook. Closing with these three chapters highlights the critical and emancipatory potential of narrative criminology.

Future Directions

Stories connect the present, with the past and future. Reflecting upon the future directions of narrative criminology in the present also means telling a story with potential self-fulfilling implications. So what might the future hold for narrative criminology? Perhaps we can begin to think this through by telling another story.

In the spring of 2019, just as we were finishing work on this book, news circulated about a man who shot and killed 51 people and injured dozens more, as they prayed at a mosque in Christchurch, New Zealand. Chillingly, he live-streamed the attack on several social media platforms, carrying a gun inscribed

with the names of previous mass shooters who had come before. His manifesto has been subsequently banned; likewise, news media have agreed not to circulate his footage. Following Prime Minister Jacinda Arden's vow to never mention the shooter by name, most news media have followed suit. This event all too clearly exemplifies the narrative motivations of mass violence. Stills from the footage, recorded on body worn video, are uncannily like a first-person shooter video game. Inscribing the names of other mass shooters makes evident his intention to enact a similar plotline. At the same time, this incident also tells of the contemporary politics of silencing; a refusal to retell the killer's story or even to acknowledge him by name. It also points to the global circulation of narratives, and their importance, in a contemporary age.

Shortly after the attack, another video circulated online. The Black Power Gang, a biker gang, which takes inspiration from the Black Panthers, performed a Haka outside the mosque. A group of men, instantly recognisable as gang members, in matching leather jackets and bandanas, moved together to the sound of their shouts in Maori, telling a powerful story about nationhood, mourning and belonging. That story conveys grief and anger as well as solidarity and common feeling. Soon after, further videos circulated of Hakas by school children and even other gangs. Despite lasting only a couple of minutes each, these complex performances challenge contemporary and historic marginalisation. The performance calls to mind New Zealand's own violent, colonial history. Performed by a group of outlaws, it challenges who can deliver justice, or even what justice might be.

These events raise many potential questions for narrative criminology. The performance is surely embedded in stories and relies on stories to be understood. But can a dance or performance *be* a story? How can we analyse it narratively? Furthermore, what happens to 'the story of the dance' when it is performed by subsequent groups? Or when it continues its travel as a film clip to global mainstream media? Can it be part of a counternarrative opposing xenophobia, racism and religious extremism worldwide? And what happens when the story 'comes back'? Will it be at all recognisable for those that initially performed the dance? We do not have the answers, but we believe these are all crucial questions for narrative criminologists in an increasingly global world.

Travelling Stories

Narrative criminology is well placed to explore how stories of 'crime' travel across time and space, nationally and internationally. Crucially, the movement of stories ought not be considered organic agency is implicated. Thus, we see two key future directions in narrative criminology research as interconnected – global traffic in stories and the deployment of stories to advance, uphold or contest power relations and inequalities. Along with stories of divine will and folk heroism, stories of 'criminals', 'crime' and 'authorities' migrate with dramatic ramifications. Iconic tales of Wild West Sheriffs influence contemporary policing, and can be traced to earlier stories of the valiant soldiers of the King's Army. Stories of The Knights Templar defending Christian holy sites in the twelfth century reappeared in the

manifesto of a Norwegian mass murderer in 2011. In the same way, 'gangster narratives' have travelled a long way to today's popular culture through the idealisation of outlaws in the medieval period. The Robin Hood story still colours contemporary characterisations of tough men of honour fighting 'the system' – seen in contemporary Mexican *narcocorrido* or North American gangsta rap. More commonly, however, 'criminals' are portrayed as imposters and villains across contemporary societies.

Thus, rather than focussing on a single field or group of storytellers, we might examine the way narratives and their meanings circulate and may change their meaning in different contexts. For example, Fraser and Atkinson's (2014) parallel ethnography looks at how young people in Glasgow sought to narrate themselves as gang members on their social media pages, for example by 'friending' well-known criminals, posing with gang graffiti and so on. In the context of the street, gang membership was fluid. These pages, once read and documented by civilian intelligence analysts, could constitute evidence of being at risk of gang membership – a classification with potentially far-reaching consequences. Similarly, Lindegaard (2018) explores how young men navigate different contexts, schools, jobs and 'the street,' and different neighbourhoods in Cape Town, South Africa. Her emphasis is not on stories but could have been. The 'ghetto chameleons' drew upon – and were constrained by – embodied stories developed in one context and transplanted in another. These stories were the product not only of individual lives, neighbourhoods and particular institutions, but also political context, mainstream discourses and popular culture.

Crime discourses emanating from the US have been spectacularly mobile. Whereas 'three strikes' derives from baseball, America's alleged national pastime, it reappears as a trope for commonsense punishment in the US, the UK (Jones & Newburn, 2006) and farther afield. We might consider what specific ideas about crime and justice lend themselves to adaptation elsewhere. We should also wonder about the role of geopolitics in the unequal transnational transfer of ideas about crime and punishment (de Sousa Santos, 2006). Furthermore we might examine how different narrators story the same event. And, beyond that – how such narratives might anticipate, respond to or contest that of the other group. Storytelling always anticipates and responds to present or distant, real or imagined audiences.

To study stories' reworkings and routes demands multi-sited data collection. It also demands a sensitivity to varied forms for the same basic prototype: these are the forms covered in this Handbook – diverse texts, images and objects, grasped through ethnographic observation, interviews, archives and so forth. Studying how stories travel would move our narrative perspective even further away from a traditional focus on individuals (and their storytelling) to an emphasis on stories as points of interest and research units.

Harm, Power and Inequality

Narrative criminology is fundamentally committed to understanding issues of harm, power and inequality (Presser & Sandberg, 2019). Whatever topics,

concepts and methodologies steer their work, narrative criminologists should remain attentive to power. This will continue to mean studying harms done by the state as well as criminalised individuals and groups. It means more enquiries into those narratives that challenge harms.

We can very usefully attend to questions of power and inequality in the research process. We must attend to the 'narrative environment' (Gubrium & Holstein, 2008, p. 252) – and to which speakers are empowered to speak. Institutions (e.g. prisons, courts, schools) empower some narrators and not others. When we conduct research in these places, we inevitably become part of the power dynamics (Presser, 2005). These environments also shape the things that people feel free to say. We must attend to the ways that narrative conventions and patterns make available some kinds of realities whilst ruling out others. These issues surface in many of the Handbook chapters.

In addition to attending to power and inequality in the research process, we might also consider which individuals or groups our research stories make visible, or invisible. In order to extend criminology beyond the Global North, we should also be cognisant of criminology's geopolitical divisions (Aas, 2012). Indeed, there is a neat synergy between narrative criminology and 'southern' criminology since both question where a particular story (or theory) comes from, and whose purposes such a story might serve. Whilst criminologists question whether theories developed in the Anglophone north might effectively travel (Carrington, Hogg, & Sozzo, 2016; see also; Cain, 2000). Nonetheless, we still contend that narrative criminology may be more transposable than most criminological theories (Fleetwood, 2014).

Furthermore, narrative criminology is poised to take all kinds of 'stories' seriously, and has the potential to attend to historic 'silences'. We might direct our attentions to indigenous arts or crafts that tell stories about colonialism, violence and ongoing injustices (Cunneen, 2011). For narrative criminological theory to move beyond the Global North, we need to be better able to think about race, colonialism and postcoloniality, such as understanding that when stories move from the Global South to the Global North and vice versa their travels are deeply embedded in power structures and global inequalities.

Lastly, as narrative criminologists, we might consider if or when it is our duty not just to analyse narratives, but to try to change them. How might our work amplify the potential power of counternarratives that seek to confront or challenge harmful narratives? Not all of us undertake the kind of work that melds well with activism, but we might all ask – what role can we play in exposing or supporting particular narratives beyond the academy.

Conclusion

In compiling this edited volume, we have tried to reflect the 'state of the art' in narrative criminology. Whilst we draw on the work of some familiar names, we have especially tried to include early career scholars, and to aim for an international representation. The result is an extensive and varied selection of scholarship. The 23 chapters of this Handbook are empirically, geographically, topically

and thematically diverse. They share an interest in – and more thorough engagement with – methods than previous work within narrative criminology (but see Presser & Sandberg, 2015b). The chapters demonstrate that narrative criminology is not wedded to any one data source or form of analysis. There is a methodological openness towards any approach that can assist in explorations of how stories motivate, sustain or prevent harmful action. As one of the last disciplines to have its own 'narrative turn', criminology is able to draw on an already-established set of research tools. Whilst we cannot predict what future developments in methodology await, we can point to the fruitfulness of continuing to draw on this interdisciplinary scholarship on narrative.

The chapters in this Handbook expand the horizon of narrative criminology in many other ways too; most importantly, extending what we approach as 'story', and what or whom we think of as storytellers. In this volume, people, but also texts, objects and pictures, tell stories – and these stories are analysed in new ways, emphasising absences, dialogue, allegories, humour and elements of tall tales. The political dimension is more present than ever. Chapters explore intersectionality, narrative agency and narrative resistance in meetings with injustice and powerful hegemonic consensuses. All chapters work from the fundamental premise that 'crime' is constituted in and through stories. This is a simple idea, but as these chapters show, one that inspires creative, innovative and critical scholarship.

Like stories, academic perspectives travel, and live their own lives beyond the control of those that initially framed them. We thus encourage readers to do as the contributors in this book have done, and make narrative criminology 'their own'. This can help us move forward in directions we had not anticipated. Our hope is that narrative criminology can be a tool for critique and thus inspire counternarratives at the same time as it remains guided by the empirical data (stories), and committed to intellectual openness and integrity. Most of all, we hope that narrative criminology can inspire researchers to *do good work* – in academia and beyond. At the core of this is the difficult task of connecting intimate, narrative imaginaries to the vast horizons of a world out there.

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Chapter 9

The Stories in Images: The Value of the Visual for Narrative Criminology

Heith Copes, Andy Hochstetler and Jared Ragland

Narratives are situated at the centre of social identities. By telling stories, we narrate who we believe we are and how we want others to see us. Needless to say, investigators have focussed the study of narratives predominantly on the oral stories people tell. Most agree that the style of the story, the depictions of the major characters and larger moral tales both shape and are shaped by perceptions of self. These components of narratives also influence the interpretations imposed by listeners and analysts. Oral stories are certainly vital to narrative identity, but so too are visual stories. The symbols of recognisable stories within images that people create, use and distribute can be powerful tools for identity (Copes & Ragland, 2016). People can mobilise symbols of known cultural types (e.g. rebels, Christians, drug users) in images in similar ways that storytellers mobilise them through verbal archetypes. People use these acculturated symbolic understandings to visually portray and personify how they would like to be seen. Indeed, the communication extends beyond what is said and heard and includes what can be seen. Consider the profile pictures professors published on university web sites, with backgrounds of books that are designed to communicate their stoic, undifferentiated, professional personae.

Our aim here is to demonstrate the value of the visual for narrative criminology in two ways. First, we illustrate how narrative scholars can incorporate images created by others into their analyses. We do this by focussing on how one long-time methamphetamine user (Chico) creates narratives through the use of visual and artistic expressions. Through images on his body, in his yard and on his home, Chico uses art and symbols to construct his identities. Second, we show how investigators can use images during interviews to facilitate participant narratives. The inclusion of images created by participants (or photographs of images) can be a powerful tool in eliciting narrative responses. Ultimately, we illustrate the value of incorporating images and symbols into both narrative analyses and interview settings for narrative criminology.

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Narrative Criminology and Social Identity

Storytelling is the primary way that people construct personal identities (Gubrium & Holstein, 2000). The stories people tell are important for both explaining past behaviour (e.g. as retrospective excuses and justifications) and as possible guides for future behaviour (Presser & Sandberg, 2015). Those using a narrative criminology framework 'seek to explain crime and other harmful action as a function of the stories that actors and bystanders tell about themselves' (Presser, 2012, p. 5). Within this framework, stories are essential elements of culture that people use to interpret and justify behaviour. In addition, stories shape, inspire and uphold behaviour. Within this perspective, people are thought to act out cultural stories when committing acts of crime (Presser, 2009). Narrative criminology encompasses a variety of perspectives to study narratives and their importance for behaviour. Here we rely on a strain of narrative thought that focusses on the role of narratives in creating personal and social identities (Loseke, 2007).

According to Loseke (2007), narrative identity occurs at three levels: macro-level (cultural identities), meso-level (institutional and organisational identities) and micro-level (personal identities). Narratives at the macro-level shape cultural identities, which include 'the imagined characteristics of disembodied types of people that simplify a complex world and construct symbolic boundaries around types of social actors' (Loseke, 2007, p. 663). The groups created with cultural narratives are broad social classifications of abstract actors who represent generic social types. When referring to people who use drugs, cultural narratives reflect the larger cultural assumptions about these people. For instance, in the US terms such as junkies, crack moms, stoners and dope fiends reflect cultural narratives of people who use drugs. Such negative labels impart society's assumption that drug addiction is due to personal failure. Of course, there also are drug-related cultural identities that impart positive qualities to large numbers of people such as 'partier', 'wild child', 'motorhead', 'hippy', 'club kid' and 'outlaw'.

Narratives at the meso-level are those that produce organisational identities. Organisations that seek to bring about change in people's lives (e.g. drug courts, rehabilitation centres and hallway houses) create narratives of ideal clients or those thought to be at the highest chance of obtaining successful change. Those who work within the organisations then use these narratives when interacting with clients. Clients learn these organisational narratives (e.g. medical models vs criminal models of addiction) and this shapes how they manage their recovery. Organisational narratives can both aid or constrain people's attempts at change. For example, organisational narratives in prison rehabilitation groups tend to emphasise the importance of personal responsibility. This leads to staff forcing (through threats of kicking out of group) participants to forgo excuses of any kind for their crimes, which creates difficulties for those who wish to hold on to their accounts for why their crimes occurred (Fox, 1999).

Identity narratives at the micro-level are those that help shape personal identities. They are the specific ways that people construct personal

self-understandings and present themselves publically (Loseke, 2007). Personal narratives are created by taking abstract, depersonalised narratives (i.e. cultural and organisational narratives) and adding complexity and personal perspective to the narratives to make them specific to themselves (Sandberg, 2013). The details and specificity added to larger narratives allow people to create a coherent self that is unique yet connected to a more abstract group. These narratives then provide a formula for action in specific situations.

An important aspect of narrative identity is the formation of symbolic boundaries that make clear distinctions among types of people. Symbolic boundaries are 'conceptual distinctions made by social actors to categorise objects, people, practices, and even time and space' (Lamont & Molnár, 2002, p. 168). Symbolic boundaries allow people to create informal dichotomies of people and behaviours. When developing and maintaining symbolic boundaries, people rely on shared narratives or storylines to situate their actions and selves within larger structures. These pre-existing stories are referred to as formula stories (which exist at cultural and organisational levels) and are essential for the construction and representation of personal identities (Loseke, 2007). Formula stories refer to 'narratives of typical actors engaging in typical behaviours within typical plots leading to expectable moral evaluations' (Loseke, 2007, p. 664). These stories seldom provide adequate descriptions of the practical experiences or unique characteristics of embodied people. Rather, they tend to have high drama, one-dimensional characters and ignore real life complexity. By using formula stories as frameworks, actors link personal experiences and behaviours with culturally meaningful groups (ones that listeners understand) for effective communication. The out-groups remain vague, whilst personal stories are plotted with specifics. Symbols, images and other visuals can represent these cultural understandings.

Self-portrayal and storytelling extend beyond linguistics. Katz (1988), for example, observed that street offenders dress with intention to communicate stylistically that they can acquire material goods but have not done so through arduous labour. They might, for example, wear name-brand exercise gear, squeaky clean construction boots or Yeezys depending on local fashions and their subcultural adherence. Some dress to communicate they are ready for a fight by eschewing comfortable clothing in favour of more fight-ready wear. Images on T-shirts may be selected to impart that one is not to be trifled with by presenting brass knuckles, inflammatory images or name brands associated with badness. Such representations are present not only in dress but also in demeanour. Katz (1988) notes that in certain circles people affect the demeanour of heroin users in the interest of looking cool or cold. Gambetta (2011) argues that because criminals face the risk of apprehension but need like-minded associates, they have more or less subtle ways of communicating who they are and their capabilities in the stylistic images of self they present in dress, demeanour and language. Those who frequently engage in street crime are attuned to identifying the authentic and the inauthentic and often have an idea who they are dealing with before any risky conversation occurs. In short, visuals impart meaning and aid in narrative identities.

In the case study that follows we show how Chico[1] used images (on his home, property and body) to construct narrative identities: as antiauthority rebel and as a kind, empathetic and generous friend. Specifically, we show how he develops identities that are in opposition to those valued in conventional society. He desires to be feared but not repugnant, especially among those who are close to him. He exists in worlds that can be dangerous and where one's material conditions are precarious and unpredictable, places where a few friends can be critical for survival. Therefore, the capacity for loyalty and empathy and willingness to help friends is an important and essential mark of his character. Communicating this to those who are close to him is easily as important as being tough and dangerous. Thus, he also portrays himself as a wise and compassionate helper, an elder who has seen it all and who aids others who are on a similar path.

Contextualising Photographs and Interviews

The photo-ethnography began in the summer of 2015 and lasted for approximately 18 months. All photographs included here were taken by Jared Ragland.[2] Data collection consisted of formal interviews (with 52 participants), informal observations and photography (of 29 participants). All participants were actively using meth and were living in rural, north Alabama at the time of the interviews; however, some did stop using over of the course of the project.

Jared Ragland, a photojournalist, and Heith Copes, a sociologist and criminologist, engaged in what some call 'appointment ethnography' (Lindegaard, 2018). Jared and Heith did the field work. Andy Hochstetler, another sociologist, contributed to analysis, and served as a neutral set of eyes in interpreting images and text. We, the former two ethnographers, made plans to meet people in advance of showing up. Meetings were initially arranged through a trusted recruiter or through snowball sampling. Early in the project we relied more heavily on the initial recruiter to set up the appointments with participants. As familiarity in the area was established, we were able to set up our own meetings with participants. After the initial interview with a participant, we asked if they could refer others who may be interested in participating. Jared took photographs of participants (with their consent) and we asked some participants to send photographs that they themselves had taken. (Chico did not send additional photographs.)

Whilst we draw on insights gained from our experiences from the project as a whole, here we focus on one participant – Chico – to illustrate the value of using photographs and images for narrative criminology. He, more than any other participant, boldly used symbols and imagery to represent himself. Thus, he was an ideal participant to highlight the value of studying images for narrative criminology. Chico became a participant who opened his home to us and who helped recruit other people. During the project (and even at the time of the

[1]All names included are aliases. We gave participants the power to choose their own aliases to give them a sense of agency in the project (Burgess-Proctor, 2015).

[2]More photographs from the project can be found at https://jaredragland.com.

writing), we were able to see multiple sides of him and see the changing symbols he created and used.

Chico participated in two formal interviews and many casual conversations. The interviews with Chico took place in his home, but we also interacted with him at local restaurants and other public places. The initial interview we conducted occurred on the night we first met him at his home and focused on his life history using drugs. The second interview was a photo/image elicitation interview. Photo-elicitation is a qualitative interview technique where researchers solicit responses, reactions and insights from participants by using photographs or other images as stimuli (Collier, 1957; Collier & Collier, 1986; Harper, 2002). For this interview, we created a photograph interview kit consisting of nine photographs of Chico, his home and the symbols he created. We then showed digital copies of these images and asked him what they meant to him and why he created them. We also asked him about images that we did not photograph (e.g. tattoos on nonvisible parts of his body). We did give Chico digital copies of the images; however, he seemed indifferent towards them and it does not appear that he has displayed them publically.

The analysis presented here is similar to other analyses of narrative identity with the exception that we include an analysis of the physical images he created and that we provide photographs here to better illustrate the ways Chico presented himself through these images. Whilst it was not always possible to get photographs of his identity performances, we include several here that we believe are representative of two of these performances. We include photographs here as a means to provide context to the stories and to draw readers into Chico's worlds. Thus, the analysis is on the images that Chico creates and his accounts of them and his life, rather than on the photographs taken by Ragland.

Our use of photographs is consistent with documentary photography (Copes, Tchoula, Kim, & Ragland, 2018; Schonberg & Bourgois, 2002), but it does have limitations. A key one, also faced by those selecting passages of text, is that presentation demands that investigators select only a few photographs. They must do so using a combination of artistic criteria, generalisability and selecting images that best communicate the categories the authors witnessed and intended (Copes et al., 2018). There are great advantages to including images by comparison to only text. Even when presenting the words of participants exactly as spoken, scholarly work is often abstract and detached from those whose lives are being studied. The photographs not only give insights into the ways that Chico narratively defines himself, but they also aid in humanising him. Human communication and self-presentation, after all, rely heavily on their visual components.

We recognise that care must be taken when using these types of images in research. Decontextualized images may reinforce negative cultural stereotypes more than counter them (Becker, 2007). This is because photographs can prompt multiple meanings in the viewing process (Becker, 2007; Schwartz, 1989). As such, we cannot control how others interpret the images included here; however, we hope that readers will interpret the images within the context of the data presented and our intentions. A goal is to complicate criminology that tends to portray criminality as an essential, intractable, singular trait. Interacting with people

(including those who use drugs) in multiple parts of their lives reveals greater complexity and contradictions. We chose photographs that we think represent the experiences and beliefs of Chico and reflect the various ways that he tells his story.

Analysis of the symbols Chico created occurred later in the project. Our initial aim was to focus on the photographs that we took and that select participants sent to us. As the project progressed, we recognised the value in documenting the various images participants created, including art, the arrangement of home and yard and personal style. We began documenting images in the environment for later analysis. During the analysis of field notes and interview transcripts, we would look at the documented images to determine implicit and explicit meaning and consider how these images matched with the stories and narratives of the participants. We would also ask participants what the images meant and why they created them. In what follows, we illustrate Chico's narrative identities through our experiences with him, including direct quotes and photographs of the images he created.

Chico's Visual Narratives

Chico is a 50-year-old Hispanic man who has been using meth for nearly three decades. He lived in a trailer on property that his family owned on Sand Mountain, Alabama. The area is a sandstone plateau in northeast Alabama known for poverty, poultry processing plants, Pentecostal snake handlers, and methamphetamine use. Chico seldom worked – at least not at conventional workplaces. Rather, he cooked and sold methamphetamine and carried out various hustles for money to supplement a disability check he received. He was clear that these hustles do not usually involve 'serious crimes', albeit he openly acknowledged his capacity for violence against those he considers enemies. When asked how he supported his drug use he said, 'I am not robbing, I'm not stealing, I'm not killing. I could, and I may, but I'm not. I pray to the meth God and everything falls into place. It does'. His hustles involved scrapping metal, selling stuff on the internet and facilitating meth sells and taking a commission in either cash or drugs. Such activities often brought him in contact with legal authorities. In the time that we have known Chico, he has been to jail at least four times. For his most recent incarceration he served 1 year in state prison for marijuana possession.

Chico had frequent health problems, likely related to poverty, drug use and self-neglect. Most visible among these are his missing teeth, which has become synonymous with rural poverty and chronic meth use (Murakawa, 2011). Perhaps his most severe health issue (at least that he told us about) is being hepatitis C positive. Despite being aware of the treatment, he refused care. As he said, 'I got hepatitis C. They got a cure for it, fuck, I don't even want it. I am good'.

The people we interacted with during the project typically fell into one of two groups when discussing their meth use. One group was ashamed of their chronic use and their continuance caused them great anxiety and guilt. They hid their use as best as they could from family members and loved ones and often used alone so even their using partners did not know the full extent of what they consumed. They frequently made attempts at going clean, and although they fell short on this

goal, their desire was real, if intermittent. The other group celebrated meth and were unrepentant users. Meth was fun and exciting. It gave them a sense of experiential superiority. They often believed that meth was dangerous, but they had the grit to indulge and stay in control. Not all could manage their use, but this group believed they could. Chico fit squarely among this latter group. In fact, Chico used meth daily. When asked how often he used meth he said, 'I do dope every day. I get high every single day'. He was a strong supporter and advocate for using meth, even though he believed strongly that 'dope is mean. It's mean'. Selling, cooking and using meth shaped his daily routines. In fact, he had no reservations about smoking meth in front of us, even on the first day that we met him. In short, Chico was one of the unrepentant.

> *What we call Methamphetamine is a problem. We know that. I'm thankful for the problem – Thank you problem! My god is a meth god, you know what I'm saying? Fuck the other God, fuck him, we don't need him. We need this meth god, that's all we need.*

When asked if meth was his drug of choice, Chico said, 'Is it my first love? Not by far. Is it my last love? I hope so – as far as chemical go'.

By all measures, Chico is marginalised. In many regards he fits the stereotypical image of the rural meth user (Linnemann & Wall, 2013). It would be easy to portray him as someone who fits this narrative. But he, like all of us, is more complex than this simple caricature. He also sees himself as a friend to many, a caring son and hopeful father. He is resourceful when he needs to be. He has a quick wit that makes interacting with him fun and interesting. When looking at the benevolent and charismatic parts of him it is easy to see him as a sympathetic character being shaped by structural and cultural conditions. Although, he would rather portray his own life as being freely selected by him.

In response to this economic and social marginalisation, Chico presented two dominant identities: a rebellious, antiauthority menace to outsiders (see Image 9.1) and a caring, generous friend to insiders (see Image 9.2). He displayed these identities through visible symbols (on his home and his body) and through his stories and his actions. It is in these contexts that we seek to show how he frames his life and creates meaningful identities, through his personal storytelling and his use of images. Our aim is to (1) show how the symbols Chico creates can be used in narrative analyses and (2) illustrate the value of introducing these images (either the actual image or photographs of the images) into interviews to elicit narratives.

Meeting Chico

The value of the visual for Chico's presentation of self was apparent when we first met him. In fact, the images on his home and his body set the tone for the initial interview and highlighted core aspects of his identity – the menacing rebel and outlaw, yet caring friend. Several months into the project we (Copes and Ragland) decided to stay the night in one of the local towns. Doing so would allow us to be around to interact with people at night, when they were more likely

Image 9.1. Chico Stands in the Doorway of His Trailer, Sand Mountain, Marshall County, Ala. *Source:* Photo by Jared Ragland.

Image 9.2. Chico in His Yard, Sand Mountain, Marshall County, Ala. *Source:* Photo by Jared Ragland.

to use meth. We got a call from a participant late that evening to connect us with someone we should meet. The participant said this new person was a long-time user, dealer and manufacturer of meth. The description led us to believe that this person would be a good contact and source for the project. We got his address and headed out. After driving a considerable distance down winding roads and through swaths of farmland, we finally found the new participant's home. It was so remote that we lost cell phone coverage. His place was a house trailer set on hilly open land lined by pine trees. As we pulled in we noticed a swastika nailed to the telephone pole in the front yard. As the lights of our truck shined on the trailer a large swastika painted on one side and an anarchy symbol on the other became visible. A tattered American flag, flown upside down, and a Confederate flag were attached to a flag pole. Hanging from one of the pine trees lining the front yard was what looked to be a noose. There was a large hand painted sign facing the road. One side read: 'Not all are welcome'. The other side read: 'Don't get caught being stupid' (see Image 9.3).

As we got out of the car, a shirtless man holding a machete appeared in the doorway of the trailer. He jumped down over the makeshift stairs and began walking quickly towards us, yelling incoherently. After checking us out and verifying that we were alone he invited us into his home. Despite this display, Chico was open and available for questions and conversation for the remainder of the night. Such openness and helpfulness from him continued throughout the project.

Image 9.3. Chico Stands in His Yard, Sand Mountain, Marshall County, Ala. Nearby a Hand-painted Sign Reads, 'DON'T GET CAUGHT BEING STUPID'. *Source:* Photo by Jared Ragland.

This initial meeting highlighted the way Chico used symbols and imagery to present himself to the world. The shocking symbols on the trailer, the carrying of a machete and his exposed, tattooed torso all helped to tell his story (at least parts of his story that he intended to be the first impression). It was clear that the initial identity he presented to us, and anyone who approached, was that of a menacing figure. However, as we got to know Chico and he came to see us as friends, he revealed other sides of himself.

Chico the Menacing Rebel

Perhaps the main identity Chico performed was that of a man who has given up on society and who should be seen as a menacing rebel. This character was at war with authority and polite society. He was against government interference in the lives of people, especially concerning drug use. He was very much opposed to the police. As he said, 'First and foremost the police hate me and I hate them. I got no love for 'em'. He was resistant to authority of any kind, which is one reason that he did not want to get treated for his hepatitis C. He was critical of the correctional system, and believed that in its current state it was too oppressive and strikingly similar to indentured servitude. He actively attempted to complicate the lives of those in authority, especially police. One day when we came to Chico's house he advised us not to park in a certain area because it was covered in broken glass. When we asked why there was broken glass, he said that he did that so police would have to park and walk in the glass when they came to his house. He would also intentionally alter the height of the deck and stairs into his home with the hopes of having an officer trip when coming in the house.

One way that Chico visually showed his resistance to authority was by publicly displaying symbols designed to offend. This is best illustrated by the way he decorated his home and yard (see Image 9.4). He regularly decorated his trailer with racist, antigovernment and general antipeople symbols. On one visit, Chico was on the run from police and was rarely home – it was just too risky to be in his house. But that did not prevent him from adding a bit of extra artwork before leaving. He said this artwork was yet another way to annoy local police. The symbols '100% 24/7' were meant to convey that he is always real and clearly the inference is that his character is all outlaw, and that he would never back down from his beliefs. FTW is an acronym for 'Fuck the World'.

Chico also created signs to convey his menacing personae. The signs gave a clear message – you are not welcome. When asked about the 'Don't get caught being stupid' sign he said, 'When people pull up that's what they see so people will be more aware of themselves'. His response was ominous in that the meaning was clearly threatening but still ambiguous. Was it a reminder for his friends to avoid being caught? Was it a warning for strangers to not come to his home and get harmed doing something foolish? Did it pertain only to potential robbers or thieves or was it a threat to any who were not invited or who did something deemed offensive? During one conversation he referenced this sign. He pointed to a bat in the room and said:

Image 9.4. Chico's Trailer, Sand Mountain, Marshall County, Ala.
Source: Photo by Jared Ragland.

> *That bat's for everybody. If you're in my house and somebody's fuckin' with you, get the bat and handle it. At the same time, if you're fuckin' with somebody you might get the bat put on you. The bat is real. I had to use it on a few people. I will hit you with a bat if you get caught being stupid, I promise you will meet the bat.*

In this passage, he made a claim to the sincerity of the implicit threat and presented his menacing identity. In the same interview, he joked about the sign and how it might be interpreted when he said, 'that's how you know you're in the South'. He seldom gave clear answers to questions about what certain signs meant as he preferred to leave things vague, uncertain and difficult to predict. Such added mystique was part of the appeal of being dangerous. On one visit, we saw that he had stolen and displayed a Drug Free Zone sign on a tree (see Image 9.5). When asked to describe why he put it up he said, 'The police, man, they come to my house so many times this year it's unreal. Two in the morning, nine in morning, it didn't matter. Me and a buddy of mine went where the sign was at. I put that up for the police. Just to piss them off. And, maybe they won't bother me as much, but that didn't work [laughter]'. He found great humour in putting up this sign as he believed it mocked police and made ironic the notion that he could be controlled by a government statement.

Perhaps the most offensive yard displays were the noose and the effigy of a man hanging from his tree. During our first visit to Chico's home, we saw a noose hanging from one of the large pine trees that lined the property facing the road. It

Image 9.5. A 'DRUG FREE ZONE' Sign Is Posted to a Tree in Chico's Front Yard, Sand Mountain, Marshall County, Ala. *Source:* Photo by Jared Ragland.

disappeared for a time. Then one day it reappeared, but this time it included an effigy of a man, who he called 'hanging man' (see Image 9.6). We asked him about hanging man and told him that this was racist. He countered by saying:

> *It ain't no different than if you ride by someone's house and they got those lawn ornaments, black people fishing, Mexican man with sombrero, or a fat lady bending over. If I was a fat lady I might be offended. It's not against the law. You can hang anything you want in the tree.*

He would not accept that a hanging figure (with a brown bottle as face) was racist. Regardless, passers-by would not know the backstory to the effigy or know that he related it to representations of ethnic minorities found in conventional places. Whilst he was aware of the historic implications of a representation of a hanging person of colour, the offence was at least in part intentional.

Chico also used his body as a way to convey his antiauthority beliefs. Chico had numerous tattoos, many were memorials to loved ones, but not all. Image 9.6 shows many of his tattoos. His chest has two large Aryan style subjects; both are depictions of Viking warriors. The largest one is a portrait of a Viking with a large scar across his eye, perhaps Odin. The other is a warrior with sword and shield. The connotations of raiders and menacing figures were not lost on him, and the time he spent incarcerated means that he knew these images are associated with

Image 9.6. An Effigy Is Attached to a Noose in Chico's Front Yard, Sand Mountain, Marshall County, Ala. *Source:* Photo by Jared Ragland.

white pride by some even if they are common tattoo themes. On his arm was a large anarchy symbol. Image 9.7 shows his hands with the words 'Hell Fire' tattooed across his fingers. These words reflected both his willingness to fight (i.e. to bring hell to others) and his acceptance that he had experienced hell himself (i.e. hell fire was within him).

His unrepentant use and love for meth can be a shock for conventional others. The public expects people who use meth to be ashamed and guilt-ridden for their choices. This shock was part of the appeal for Chico. It likely was part of the decision to tattoo drug symbols on visible parts of his body. These include large images on his arms and hands. One theme of these tattoos is his fondness of drugs. On his left arm, in the midst of a numerous others, is a large marijuana leaf. A smaller marijuana leaf is on his right arm. He did say that he was not interested in getting any meth-related tattoos though.

Many of our earlier encounters with Chico included repeated attempts to shock us: from coming at us with a machete, to wearing a *dia de los muertos* mask (see Image 9.8) as he sat in his yard, to blatantly displaying and mentioning weapons in his home. He very much relished in the offence he caused to conventional sensibilities. Indeed, offending the conventional was a strong drive in much of his action and thought. He saw himself as a rebel and was intent on fighting the system and those who may condemn him, no matter how small the victory. His use of symbols on his home and body exemplified this identity narrative. It also was a recurrent theme in his verbally narrated story.

Image 9.7. Chico Holds a Propane Torch between Taking Hits of Meth and Smoking Marijuana Inside His Home on Sand Mountain, Marshall County, Ala. *Source:* Photo by Jared Ragland.

Image 9.8. Chico Wearing a Dia de los Muertos Masks, Sits in His Living Room Underneath a Swastika, Copy of the US Constitution and a Confederate Battle Flag. *Source:* Photo by Jared Ragland.

Chico the Friend

In addition to his menacing identity, Chico also presented himself as a good friend who sacrificed to help others. Chico saw himself as someone who would help friends in need and to look out for others. He said he was loyal and all in for those he considered friends. Such presentations of self were less visual than his menacing personae. Nevertheless, he did include a few visual representations of this part of his identity. On his skin, there were praying hands, several non-sexualized women and a few loved ones' names. On his arm he has 'Love Hurts' with the name of his ex-wife. Image 9.3 shows the name of his ex-wife with a rose over his chest.

The caring side of Chico was revealed to us one day when we visited him after his girlfriend left him. The details surrounding the event were complicated and we were given contradicting stories from him, his girlfriend and the man with whom she left. On this day Chico was sad and had been crying because not only had his girlfriend left him, but he believed she was a part of a plot to frame him for a crime. He carried around a letter that she wrote to him, and showed it to us as evidence that at least she cared for him at one time.

Women lived with Chico on two occasions over the time that we knew him. He recognised that there is much hassle that comes with painting shocking symbols on his trailer, and that this affects others. Neighbours heed warnings and are unavailable for help or even simple company to those residing with him. Police were suspicious of him and kept an eye on his place for suspicious activities. Thus, both times when women lived with him he painted over the antagonistic symbols so that the women would not have to deal with the consequences of them (see Image 9.9). As he described:

> *The police know what I do. I don't got to worry about nobody tellin' – they already know. They go by here pretty regular and slow roll. I did have a swastika painted on my trailer on the outside. I had a big anarchy symbol painted on this side. I just had covered it up a couple weeks ago. I got people in my house that I am concerned with and I don't want to see them get in no trouble. My little girlfriend ain't but 21. I don't want to see her get in no trouble, so I thought the law might stay away. They might take some of the folks off me, 'cause people would ride by here taking pictures and putting them on Facebook just amazed like, 'Oh a swastika and Hitler blah blah blah'. Y'all ain't Jewish by the way, are ya?*

Whilst this last sentence may sound ominous, he later explained that he did not subscribe to the racist ideology associated with Nazism. Rather, for him the symbols were merely used as displays to offend police and others in authority.

Chico was also generous with his belongings. He frequently let people down on their luck (either homeless or running from police) stay at his home. On one occasion he stayed with a friend who was on the run so he would not be by

Image 9.9. Chico and Alice Sit in the Front Yard of Chico's Trailer on Sand Mountain, Marshall County, Ala. *Source:* Photo by Jared Ragland.

himself – they were eventually both arrested. Another day when we were visiting him his cousin brought him a pickup truck load of alcohol that had been salvaged from a burned convenience store. He later told us that he gave almost all of it away. He even shared his meth, though not as frequently as other belongings. He repeatedly offered meth to us, which we always refused. His asking us if we wanted meth became a running joke – we interpreted it as his way of showing us that we were a part of his group through humour. On at least one occasion, Chico often asked us rhetorically, 'I'm not such a bad guy, right?'

The rebel image Chico displayed was primarily for outsiders, especially those in authority or those set to condemn him. The friend identity was more often presented for those closer to him and who spent time in his presence. Accordingly, it is the rebel identity that is more vigorously told through the visual. First impressions are important, and the intent was to look menacing. Whilst these two dimensions make up part of Chico's story, they certainly do not tell his whole story. There is much more to Chico.

Photo-elicitation and Narratives

Stories are the predominant way we construct personal identities, but images can be valuable tools to aid in eliciting narratives (Collier, 1957; Collier & Collier, 1986; Harper, 2002). Photo-elicitation interviews (PEIs) rely on selecting images that garner reactions, emotional responses and meanings that may not have been

accessible using verbal methods alone (Suchar, 1989).[3] This is because images have the power to bring forth memories, emotions and reactions that words alone cannot. Whether the images are provided by the researchers or by the participants, images can connect concepts in ways that verbal communication cannot because images can 'mine deeper shafts into a different part of human consciousness than do words-alone interviews' (Harper, 2002, p. 23).

By asking participants about the images they create, researchers can engage participants by focussing on aspects of their lives that they find important. One reason it is important to use images to elicit interviews is because decontextualised images (whether images created by participants or photographs taken by researchers) can be interpreted in numerous ways. We really cannot know what a person is thinking or attempting to accomplish with the images they create unless we ask (Ferrell, 2001). Further, what participants physically create may be subject to even wider interpretation. For him, the swastikas on his home were not symbols of racial hatred or white pride. Rather, they were merely ways to annoy those in authority.

Linguistic and visual methods are not mutually exclusive; incorporating images into the standard interview process enhances each. Photo-elicitation is used to acquire insights that cannot be tapped into when relying strictly on oral interview methods or by simply looking at an image created by participants. PEIs can act as a trigger to memory, provide meaning or clarity to a situation and can evoke an emotional, multi-layered response in participants (Gariglio, 2016; Schwartz, 1989). When we showed Chico photographs of his trailer over the years (Images 9.4, 9.5 and 9.9) he was brought back to the circumstances that led him to paint the offensive signs or paint over them. He recalled fondly of the time Alice (a young woman he truly liked) lived with him. But he also remembered perceived betrayals. Indeed, he pointed out that 'hanging man' was wearing the clothes of a friend who had crossed him in a love triangle. Thus, people may have more detailed and emotional responses when photographs or other visual stimuli are included in the interview. When we showed Chico a portrait of himself from 2 years prior (Image 9.2) he became quiet and contemplative, until he broke the silence by saying, 'I must have been high there!' In short, one of the strengths of PEIs that involve the images participants create is that they help participants tell their personal identity narratives.

Interestingly, images and selected photographs designed to reflect how a person lives also give a participant a chance to see how they look through others eyes. During the PEI we said that some viewers may see a mean, scary racist when they look at the photograph in Image 9.1. He said, 'They don't know me. I'm not a racist. Do you tell them that I'm Mexican?' But he continued, 'That person, sometimes I have to be him'. His implication was that at times it is necessary to be seen as a scary person so that others do not try to take advantage of him.

[3]Whilst we use the term photo-elicitation interview we also mean the verbal introduction of any image into the interview to elicit responses.

Whether narrative criminologists are interested in studying offenders, victims, criminal justice agents or particular events, the use of photo-elicitation techniques offers a powerful addition to the more standard data collection of semi-structured interviews. The use of photographs and other images enhances the retrieval of memories, helps participants to demarcate change over time (in self-identity, lifestyle or personal circumstances) and allows for the more active participation of the researched in the research process. Indeed, our PEI interview with Chico helped to bring to focus his multi-layered experiential reality of his life – in both narrative and visual form. Just as narrative researchers strive to capture the multilingual in offenders' accounts, visual ethnographers can capture the multifocal.

Conclusion

As the study of narratives becomes increasingly important for understanding how people make sense of the past and how narratives direct future behaviour, it is important to recognise that not all narratives are spoken. It is true that narrative identity is performed primarily through language and verbal stories, but much communication is not verbal. People are not just the writers of their life stories, they are also the artists of them. Anthropologists have traditionally incorporated presentations in space and place, including people's homes, into their analyses. Space does not just shape passive recipients, rather people create their surroundings to convey personal narratives. We should not ignore the importance of created environments, images and symbols in constructing personal identity narratives. Symbols put on people's homes, clothing and bodies can shed light on their identities without requiring verbal interactions. It is probably safe to assume that these images not only reflect culturally situated understandings and resources, but they also are purposive and often imbued with messages. Our aim here was to add to the methodological study of narrative criminology by illustrating the value of analysing images created by participants and the power of using images to elicit narratives during interviews. To do this, we focussed on the way people (specifically Chico) used visual imagery to tell their stories. Chico's stories give some insights into how narrative criminologists can use the symbols people present as a means to examine their narrative identities. Simply driving by Chico's home tells a story of who lives there. Passers-by see the story of a man who opposes conventional expectations of appropriate behaviour, but they do not get the whole story. Getting the full story requires knowing Chico and hearing his interpretation of the symbols and how they fit into his narrative identity. Interacting with him and applying a theoretical lens can show how his identities are shaped by his marginalisation and accompanying refusal to acknowledge state authority. They also show that some of his intentions in presentation are not worked out completely or intended for outsiders to completely understand; perhaps part of the fun is in the abstraction as in art generally.

Two of our observations will be familiar to cultural criminologists. One is that images are created and selected for presentation by both the subject and the

analyst (Ferrell, 2001; Hayward, 2010). Both have interpretations in mind during the stages of image production and presentation. The second is that outsiders can best interpret images with the help of those who originally produced them. Only by examining what producers say and by spending enough time with them to understand nuance can some of an images' meanings beyond the superficial be discerned. Only Chico knew some of the intentions of his projects before explaining them, and outsiders might not have expected some of the less obvious ones. He intended to play with and resist authority in much of his life and images, including by prodding authorities and the potentially judgemental wherever he could. He also intended to outrage and look dangerous to those who might threaten or bring trouble to him. He believed a strong intimidating front could prevent others from trying to take advantage of him. He resisted his circumstances by proudly proclaiming personal autonomy and how little he cared for the world and all conventional living in many images. At the same time, he indicated at times that his image production was partially a strategic ruse to keep those people he did not care about away and inconvenienced on the approach. Strangers seldom are benevolent for him, and do him little good. On our visits, his friends paid little attention to the menacing images around them, however. Chico wants others that know him to see that he is approachable, can be compassionate and will assist them; he also desires to be seen as a complex, person with a sense of humour by those that matter. Some intentions in his presentation were private, until someone asked and, of course, some may remain that way. Our aim here was to show the value of including images into the study of narratives, specifically narrative identity. It was not to make a determination whether Chico truly was a menacing figure or a caring friend. He probably is both depending on the situation. Rather, we simply described the ways that Chico variously presented himself through stories and artefacts (i.e. painting on home and signs).

People are autobiographical producers capable of improvising conversationally within frameworks and motifs shaped by cultures, structures and personal histories but with layers of dimension. We consider the past, present and future in deciding what aspects to present to which audiences. Whilst critics of photographs in analysis of those who use drugs or commit crime may loathe that photographs tend to be themed and therefore appear stereotypical at a glance, analysis and discussion on meaning with image producers is likely to reveal nuance, and judging by the current case a surprising amount of complex intention. We know that narrative criminology can gain much by including images in data collection and in analyses (as well as in the final products).

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Chapter 12

Excavating Victim Stories: Making Sense of Agency, Suffering and Redemption

Elizabeth A. Cook and Sandra Walklate

Introduction

Victims' stories have for some time been the essence of much victimological research, surfacing in the form of autobiographies, witness testimonies and photography, and every so often finding their way into policy and practice. With the rise of a formally organised victims' movement, stories of harm, suffering and injustices have steadily gained currency with the launch of policies such as victim impact statements, and victims' panels, charters and codes signalling a 'formalisation' of victims' voices in criminal justice policy internationally (McGarry & Walklate, 2015, p. 104). A number of high-profile victim lobby groups have now gained the attention of a curious public of onlookers, who have become increasingly invested in the private lives of these public figures and the 'public display of private affairs' (Bauman, 2000, p. 37). Thus victims' stories have consequences for those who tell, hear and read them and promise a rich insight into understanding victims' experiences, particularly in the aftermath of violence.

Despite the wealth of stories now broadcast across different platforms, they remain a relatively untapped resource across the competing positivist, radical and critical victimological traditions. Simultaneously, the priorities of positivist victimology have remained an enduring influence on measuring and documenting victimisation. This approach has focused on identifying patterns and typologies of victims through the use of criminal victimisation surveys and has been subjected to ongoing critique by critical victimologists for its tendency to overlook the lived realities of victims' experiences in favour of aggregated data on victimisation (see inter alia Walklate & Spencer, 2016). An emergent cultural victimology is now taking shape which aims to 'foreground[s] suffering, our exposure to it, how it is presented to us, and what sense we make of it' (McGarry & Walklate, 2015, p. 18). This turn to the 'cultural' in victimology, alongside the renewed public interest in victims, and the recent revival of interest in stories from cultural, psychosocial, feminist and visual criminologies, offers a timely opportunity for victimology to further develop a narrative approach to understanding victim experiences of all kinds.

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The narrative 'turn' in criminology has proliferated in recent years, emphasising the value of narrative texts for better understanding criminal behaviour, actions and motivations. However, despite this rising interest, a similar narrative 'turn' in victimology has only recently materialised shifting the focus from how moral transgressions are accomplished to how these moral transgressions are experienced by others (see, for example, Pemberton, Mulder, & Aarten, 2018a, 2018b; Walklate, Maher, McCulloch, Fitz-Gibbon, & Beavis, 2018). As Pemberton et al. (2018b, p. 2) highlight, while narrative criminology has endeavoured to answer 'why we harm', a narrative victimology is perhaps more keenly focused on 'what it is to be harmed'. The potential for a 'narrative turn' in victimology carries with it all kinds of possibilities and problems in adding detailed and nuanced understandings to the victim experience which are often smoothed out and sometimes erased from the vision of victimhood provided by criminal victimisation data. Using data from a case study, this chapter explores the implications of such an approach for victimology, with particular reference to the experience of lethal violence and its aftermath (McGarry & Walklate, 2015; Pemberton et al., 2018a, 2018b; Walklate et al., 2018).

The chapter falls into four parts. First we discuss the promise of a narrative turn for victimology and what the narrative approach might reveal about victims' experiences that criminal victimisation surveys and large-scale studies have previously neglected. Considering the constellation of practices employed in narrative research across the disciplines, the second part of this chapter presents an account of doing narrative research with victims to highlight the practicalities and ethics of listening to victims' stories. To illustrate the methodological and theoretical questions posed by such a narrative turn, the third part presents the story of June: a mother bereaved by the gun violence that unfolded in the community of inner-city Manchester nearly two decades ago. June's story intimately tells the loss of her son, the role of faith in dealing with the aftermath of this violence and the prospect of redemptive suffering. Here we consider the purposes this story served for her personal recovery in the aftermath of this violence and the wider political consequences of storytelling for victims in the public sphere. The final part considers the practical challenges of doing narrative research with victims. This focusses in particular on the ethics of misreading unfamiliar stories and the need to avoid academic provincialism when engaging with issues of faith, religion and suffering. In the conclusion we hope to give some sense of the experience of doing narrative research with victims and its ramifications for both narrative work and victimology more generally. However, first it will be of value to consider why the turn to narrative for victimology.

Why Narrative Victimology?

Victims' stories have maintained a long-standing presence in criminal justice policy and practice, gaining public, political and media sympathies particularly in the past 40 years. With a growing number of spectators, the sentiments of fear, danger and jeopardy relayed in stories of lethal violence hold not only personal consequence for victims but moral significance for a wider community of policy-makers,

criminal justice professionals and activists (Meyers, 2016). Victims' stories therefore promise a rich terrain of exploration, revealing valuable insights into experiences of harm, injustice as well as resilience and recovery. Such experiential understandings of violence were absent from early victimological work which for the most part displayed a preference for notions of victim precipitation (Wolfgang, 1958) and/or victim proneness (Hindelang, Gottfredson, & Garofalo, 1978), victim typologies (Von Hentig, 1948) and other such concepts. The discipline has long since come under critique for its focus on understanding lifestyle as a mediating factor contributing to exposure to personal violence and being too far removed from more contemporary concerns with the effects of such violence.

A nascent cultural victimology has emerged, taking particular note of the recent movement from 'victim narratives' to 'trauma narratives' which has become preoccupied with how experiences of violence are represented rather than how they are lived and embodied (McGarry & Walklate, 2015). The concept of narrative therefore has become of increasing interest in understanding who, how, where and why some stories are told and gain traction in the public (and policy) domain and others are not. Narrative focusses attention not on the measurable nature and extent of violence but upon how violence is experienced and lived from the point of view of the victim (qua Rock, 1998). Recognising the promise of narrative for victimology not only affords a space to challenge the theoretical assumptions associated with which 'variables' matter under such circumstances but also provides the space in which the voice of the victim can be heard in their own terms. In this space theoretical assumptions may not only be challenged, and refined, but can also be disrupted and transformed.

Victims' experiences of lethal violence, the focus of this discussion, are characterised by disorder and uncertainty and threaten to unsettle relationship upon which assumptions are based. As Crossley (2000, p. 528) summarises, traumatising experiences 'throw into relief our routine and taken-for-granted expectations, highlighting the way in which a lived sense of coherence, unity and meaning normally prevails'. However, the practice of storytelling in suffering provides an opportunity for coherence to experiences of violence which are unthinkable and unimaginable to those not party to such events. Narrative is therefore perhaps ever more important in stories of lethal violence as the act of narrativising experience lends a coherence and comprehensibility through which victims can make sense of traumatic events over time (Pemberton, 2015; Pemberton et al., 2018b). Continuing, Crossley (2000, p. 528) therefore highlights that 'the importance of narratives again comes into effect, as the individual attempts to "reconfigure" a sense of order, meaningfulness and coherent identity'. Narrative interviewing also afford victims a space to reassert control and agency over experiences which have been previously disempowering and isolating. A narrative victimology minimises the risk of, as Fraser (2004, p. 185) writes, 'hijacking' the stories of victims and encourages victims to regain a sense of control from powerlessness. More importantly, while narrative research provides the discursive space to discuss, if desired, the experience and effects of lethal violence upon victims, it also affords victims a means of drawing upon other aspects of their life stories that they themselves have deemed important.

The sentiments of pain, injustice and loss are, however, similar scripts in the narratives of offenders as a rapidly developing field of narrative criminology has demonstrated. Of course it is important to note that viewing victims and offenders in dichotomous terms has long been challenged within criminology more generally. The route into crime as a consequence of victimisation, that which Chesney-Lind and Pasko (2004) have called the 'the continuity of abuse' (running away from home because of abuse, being returned to home by caring professionals to experience more abuse etc.), has been well documented for both male and female offenders (see inter alia Hubbard & Pratt, 2002; Rumgay, 2004). Thus it would be surprising not to find within narrative criminology some evidences of stories documenting such 'hard lives' (Fleetwood & Sandberg, 2017). Similar connections may be seen in Maruna's (2001) *Making Good* which explores the importance of narrative for offenders in the desistance process and how such narratives help to make sense of the past and move towards redemption and recovery. However, the story unfolding below is one in which it is the mother of the victim of lethal violence whose pain and suffering is the focus of attention. In more conventional victimological terms she is a secondary victim, yet the voices of such victims, as intimated above, have become a powerful influence in the policy domain. Before this discussion is taken further it will be useful to say a few words on method.

Doing Narrative Research with Victims of Lethal Violence

To illustrate the methodological and theoretical questions posed by such a narrative turn for victimology, this chapter draws upon narrative interviews conducted with bereaved families of gun violence involved in a local grassroots campaign, Mothers Against Violence. Fifteen interviews were undertaken during the course of the research, varying between 45 minutes to over 3 hours in length. These interviews formed a part of a broadly ethnographic approach designed to foreground suffering, encourage cultural immersion (on the part of the researcher) and gain an understanding of the value and meaning that victims give to these experiences. Interviewees were asked to recount their lives as a stream of narration rather than a series of single experiences, and were typically engaged within an informal, conversational manner so not to stifle discussion. Interviews were audio-recorded with the consent of participants, transcribed first-hand by the researcher and accompanied by fieldwork reflections evaluating each exchange and noting any points for further analysis. In contrast to the rigid format of an interview schedule with prearranged questions, these narrative interviews were guided by a short aide-memoire which allowed for consistency as well as room for flexibility and development as the discussions progressed. As more was learnt about the everyday routines of Mothers Against Violence, interview questions were refined and developed.

This narrative interviewing technique aimed to elicit a 'whole which is more than the sum of its parts, an order or hidden agenda' in order to establish connections between experiences (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000, p. 34). The narrative interviews adopted in this research provided an understanding of the 'connection

among experiences, actions, and aspirations' and how experiences of lethal violence might inform people's engagement in Mothers Against Violence (Presser & Sandberg, 2015, p. 1). Open questions were used to begin the interview, such as: Could you begin by telling me your personal story? Beginning the interview with this more exploratory, open-ended question encouraged a natural flow of conversation where answers could be provided at the interviewee's own pace and tone. For example, a number of respondents avoided the terminology of 'victim' when describing their experiences and therefore a concerted effort was made to avoid this language during the interview. Questions were rephrased in the participant's own words and language and followed the order of events that the interviewee had initially identified as significant to them. Stories elicited from these open questions generally followed a chronological format beginning with early experiences, such as childhood and growing up, but typically came to revolve around the experience of violent bereavement in a coherent manner as they were told.

Further exploratory questions such as: Can you tell me about the story of your involvement in Mothers Against Violence? prompted interviewees to reflect on their experiences of violent bereavement in light of their involvement in Mothers Against Violence. Interviewees were prompted only for clarification in order to allow them to independently identify events of significance in their story and to avoid the risk of upsetting the flow of narration. The researcher made minimal use of prompts and, although against many first instincts, moments of silence were allowed for reflection and to provide more space for participants to explain and elaborate in their own time. Presser (2010, p. 436) pays particular attention to this strategy in her research with offenders noting that using minimal prompts allows for more 'spontaneous storytelling' before she moves to actively soliciting stories from participants.

This approach to narrative practice seems particularly significant for the purpose of developing a narrative victimology. Victims are routinely required to share their stories within the constraints of criminal justice institutions, through courts, in police interviews and in victim impact statements. Stauffer (2015, p. 111) explores this through her concept of 'ethical loneliness', highlighting the cruel irony that arises when 'an institution designed for hearing fails to listen'. However, opening up a discursive space in which victims could relay their stories in their own time and language provides an opportunity for harms to be confronted. Participants in the research with Mothers Against Violence could make their own choices over where the story begins and ends, what to conceal and how to gain control and ownership over what has happened.

Stories of lethal violence were recounted vividly and victims narrated detailed accounts attending closely to the details of the day, what they had been doing at the time they received the news of the event and their immediate responses to it. Participants narrated the events leading up to the moment that they heard the news, paying particular attention to their final moments with the victim often with remarkable detail. For those who had suffered in the aftermath of lethal violence, these stories represented a powerful means of animating experiences, marking out key events and humanising those involved to those who would listen. Intricate

details, such as the final conversations they shared with the victim and the ordinariness of the activities they were carrying out at the time, acted as aids to walk listeners through the story. These discursive strategies are used to give a sense of who that person is and to recognise the choices, sentiments and situations that have unfolded in this story of lethal violence. However, they also invite us to imagine ourselves in the situation of others. The following section presents the story of June as a means of realising the promise of stories in victimology for understanding how victims experience the moral transgressions of others and what influence they have upon victims' narratives.

June's Story

To read and recognise the story shared by June, the story must first be situated within the specific historical context of post-industrial Manchester and the discourses of gun and gang violence that emerged at the time. Despite a rich cultural history of migration, music and art, Moss Side and the neighbouring community of Hulme has for a long while struggled to detach itself from the label of gun violence that appeared during the 1980s and 1990s in Manchester. Amid tensions of unemployment, poverty, social exclusion, 'environmental degradation', police distrust and the eventual emergence of gangs, widespread fear and moral panic of the 'gang' problem during these decades fuelled media fictions about Moss Side and Hulme as dangerous, disorderly suburban 'problem' areas besieged by gang rivalries and turf wars (Fraser, 1996; Peck & Ward, 2002). Manchester's branding as 'Madchester', a city renowned for its vibrant music and nightlife, quickly dissipated and transformed into 'Gunchester', the nation's archetype problem area. In August 1999, at the height of gun and knife violence in Manchester, the community was witness to four shootings leading to the deaths of three young men. In the aftermath, dozens of women gathered together to discuss the impact of these events on the community. Mothers Against Violence was established shortly after with the aim of raising public awareness of gun and knife crime, promoting positive lifestyles for young people and campaigning for the end of violence. At the time of writing, Mothers Against Violence had been campaigning on these issues for two decades, becoming a rendezvous for a diversity of experiences, identities and histories within this community.

At the forefront of Mothers Against Violence is June, a charismatic matriarch who helped to found the charity following the loss of her son to gun violence. June is a reserved but quietly confident woman and a long-standing member of the organisation, sharing one of the most intimate relationships with Mothers Against Violence. Located in a leafy residential area, their offices can be found in a local community centre: the building is worn, well lived in and host to a number of other community and social care services often found bustling around together. On the day of our meeting, I[1] found June in her office, a small but cosy room lined

[1]This chapter is based upon data collected by the first author during doctoral research.

with leaflets and information about services and photos of young people who have passed away. One of these photos was that of June's son, a tall, young man sitting on a white sandy beach. June greeted me in her usual way, throwing her arms around me and then welcoming me into the office. Over the next three and a half hours, our interview elicits a rich, in-depth and uninterrupted story spanning across her childhood, the loss of her son and the importance of faith in dealing with the aftermath of his death.

Practising Faith as 'Preparation' for Violent Bereavement

During our interview, June discussed her practise of Christianity and would often draw upon passages from the Bible to tell her story, highlighting the significance of faith-based understandings of justice, suffering and agency. June had attended Church since childhood, firstly with her mother as a child and continued her relationship with her faith after being baptised in a Methodist Church. From conversations in the Church community and regular attendance at prayer meetings, June noted the importance of 'meditating' and 'studying' these lessons about her faith. Reflecting on this over time, June had come to recognise that these lessons were in fact preparation for what was to follow. Nearly 20 years ago, after returning home from teaching on a Summer Vacation Bible School, June answered to a knock at her door from a friend of her son who had invited him out that evening. June describes her son as a 'tall and handsome', friendly young man, 'he had friends from all over the place'. Following his friend, June's son left the house that evening to play basketball and later that night was shot dead. Reflecting on this episode two decades later, June retold me the story of her experience, recognising the renewed importance of her conversations with God:

> *And that was the last time I saw my son. He left the house and the amazing thing about that, when my son was coming down the stairs – this is what I'll talk about in relation to – because I wasn't that familiar at that time with God's voice. I thought I was hearing his voice you get what I'm saying. But there was nothing that I could pin my hat onto kind of to prove it in the sense you know what I mean. But as my son was coming down the stairs I believe that God spoke to me and he said tell him not to go out. And I thought tell him not to go out? This is me now thinking tell him not go out? He's twenty. You [can't] tell a twenty-year-old boy not go out? But I believe if I had obeyed he wouldn't have gone. I believe that with all my heart because he was that type of person. So I thought I can't tell him that – not to go. Y'know. And it came…the voice came and it kind of shook me a little bit inside because I wasn't expecting that – how can you tell a twenty-year-old boy not to go out with his friend…And he brought the car, and he took him in the car and they went in the car and never came back. He never came back, yeah? And every time I think about that I think you know something June if you had obeyed,*

> *your son would have been still alive. But again, because the bible tells me all things are working together for my good…*
>
> *So, I believe I was being prepared as well for what happened to me you get what I'm saying? Even though I didn't fully understand everything, now I know more now than I did then. I know more now than I did then before my son…*

Lethal violence confronts victims with a moment of crisis. Indeed, our interview involved candid accounts of the pains of bereavement which was intimately connected to a maternal suffering. However, faith was an important anchor during this time. Read from the perspective of a narrative victimology, prayers and readings which she had reflected earlier on in life were able to lend coherence to her painful experience, constructing a meaningful narrative around her experience. Recounting this story, she drew a distinction between 'then' and 'now', explaining how her familiarity with God's voice had developed since the death of her son. June describes hearing a voice or impulse telling her to stop her son from leaving the house, one which she now recognises clearly as part of her conversation with God. June consistently returned to the phrase, 'all things are working together for my good' throughout the interview, remaining faithful to the notion that her son's death held purpose and consequence and placing trust in a higher power. The death of her son was realised as forming part of a greater 'calling' and 'purpose'. Rather than becoming a 'spiritual challenge', as Balk (1999, p. 487) has argued, these experiences are recounted as providing confirmation of 'what she had read' and consolation and validation of 'what she believed':

> *And, all of a sudden, one day I just thought I heard him come in and when I looked back 'round he wasn't there…And he came to my mind and he wasn't there and a kind of sadness came upon me and then all of a sudden I heard his voice. He said, 'Mummy why are you so sad?' And I looked 'round and there was nobody there [laughs] and I said, 'because I miss you'. And he said to me 'I'm alright. I'm alright'. And that took my life in another turn because it was confirming for me what I believe and what I read. Not only just what I believe because I had to read it first to believe it… And I remember that never happened to me again after that. I was quite calm and normal with that. It's like it settled me. That he was alright and he was telling me that he was alright do you get what I'm saying? So, I think well if he's alright why am I worried? [laughs]*
>
> *…So that's where I am and I think by the time my son was killed I was ready for what God had called me to do.*

She often came to describe her experience through expressions of 'destiny', 'vision', 'journey' and 'sacrifice' which spoke to the notion of fate, finding purpose

and restoring meaning in, as Rock (2004, p. 444) writes, an 'otherwise meaningless act'. The story had become a blend of memories of past uncertainties and painful experiences, her understanding of her purpose in the present day and her hopes for Mothers Against Violence in the future.

Finding a 'Calling' in the Aftermath of Violence

During our afternoon of discussion, June remained confident of the significance and consequence of her son's death, returning often to the passage 'all things are working together for my good'. Reconciling the death of her son with the birth of Mothers Against Violence, she described how her son represented the 'seed' for change:

> *…my son was the seed that was sown into the earth to bring it about… My son's life was never a waste. Even when he died I never saw it as a waste. I believed that something good was coming out of it do you get what I'm saying. So that's how the change has come about it.*
>
> *Why's he dead, Lord? You know what I mean – but now I can see the why him. And because of the way I think that he is in a better place and his life was for a purpose, the life that he lived, the 20 years that he lived, was for a purpose and that purpose was being fulfilled by the things that I did do you get what I'm saying?*

Rather than challenging her commitment to faith, this confrontation with lethal violence provided affirmation of the lessons she had only just started to understand in her early life. June made assertive connections between the pains of bereavement and the purpose that these pains gained through the emergence of Mothers Against Violence. She was not alone in this line of thought as a number of other bereaved relatives made references to the notion of violent bereavement as 'transformative' or 'catalysts' for change. Describing this, June refers to her engagement in Mothers Against Violence as an act of fate: on the one hand, her 'calling' to become a 'vessel' and, on the other hand, encouraged and reassured by the confidence that this 'calling' instilled:

> *He was just using me as his vessel to speak to people and to tell them the truth and I knew he was with me and I knew that he held me together to tell you the truth. Otherwise, I think I would have gone under myself.*

Referring to her own part as a mere 'vessel', June might be referring the Mothers Against Violence as a greater project with a greater purpose. Describing the emergence of Mothers Against Violence as a 'calling' also perhaps reflects the notion of vocation within Christianity: the invitation to being summoned to carry out God's work. Here, June's reference to becoming a 'vessel' to carry out 'God's

work' or to a 'calling' infers an alternative understanding of agency to those established in victimology. In her faith-based understanding of agency, agency is construed in the literal sense whereby June represents an agent. Our tendencies in the past have been to equate agency with action, voice and speaking out, whereas a lack of agency has been equated to silence, shame and fear. However, in this context, June exerts agency by denying it and adopting an identity of agent for something else: her faith. This concept of agency still captures the sense of voice and act of speaking but does so with the principles of another power in mind. In this way, Mothers Against Violence is perhaps seen as part of June's conversation with God.

This illustrates the way in which narrative research represents a valuable opportunity for a victimological engagement with religion, faith and spirituality. Rather than focus on the truthfulness or the historical accuracy of this story, the narrative approach emphasises the meanings and significance of the story for the storytellers. The story is real in its consequences for June. She discusses this in the following passage:

> *Whatever I'm doing now, I can continue to do until my last breath because I believe it's what I was called to do. I was called to do it. The circumstances that led me to here wasn't a very pleasant one but after the unpleasantness came the joy. The satisfaction, the amazing tingle in my body, in my mind.*
>
> *For me, I've lived so much more than I've died. You get what I'm saying. And it's just so amazing you know what I mean. Yeah. But I don't really know. I think of where my son and where he brought me to, I wouldn't have it any different….*

Rather than undermining her sense of self-identity, lethal violence provided clarification and confirmation – much like Denzin's (1989, p. 34) notion of 'epiphany': moments that 'leave marks on people's lives [and] have the potential to create transformational experiences'. Epiphany moments, such as the sudden loss of a son, are defined by the subject and lend significance to other elements of the life story: between the strengthening and practice of faith and role as a bereaved mother on a public campaign. June became a visible and distinguished figure of leadership in Mothers Against Violence and her story took on a public life long after the problem it was originally voiced in response to had diminished. This story provided a source of motivation, inspiration and understanding within the community in which it was read and heard, reinforcing it and drawing acknowledgement from a wide public audience. Victims' stories, such as June's, can bridge divides and encourage identification across groups of people, offering a platform for understanding, reworking and learning about otherwise dissimilar individuals. Reflecting on this legacy of her son's death, June voiced the sense of fulfilment that she feels today:

> *And because I'm satisfied with where I am at this present moment, because of my son's death, I usually tell people if I had to live again I*

> *will do the same thing. My son's death because it has brought me into a place that I'd never been before and it's taken me beyond what I ever thought or imagined. I'm thinking who would have been phoning me up and sending me emails like that and asking my opinion of things you get what I'm saying [laughs] – who would have been doing that?*

Therefore, whilst it is the case that victimology has had suffering as its focus since its inception (McGarry & Walklate, 2015), this story adds some considerable nuance to how such suffering might be experienced and understood over and through time from the 'victim's' perspective. One way of making sense of these experiences is through the concept of redemption.

Redemptive Suffering

The significance of stories of suffering lies not only in what they 'reveal' about the storytellers but in what they 'do' for others and how they might encourage recovery from harm (Presser, 2016, p. 139). Green and Pemberton (2017, p. 93) make the case for the power of understanding experiences in the victim's own terms and the power of narratives to enable victimology to do this. This is a focus which has been further endorsed by Pemberton et al. (2018b) and Walklate et al. (2018). To date, however, much of this narrative work has been conducted on offenders' stories of desistance from crime and Maruna's (2001) work has made a significant contribution to this. His work resisted the temptation to look for significant points of desistance for offenders but was concerned to embrace the desistance process as part and parcel of an offender's redemption narrative. This holistic approach to understanding desistance led Maruna (2001) to identify a number of themes in stories of redemption and Stone (2016, p. 957) has gone on to suggests that 'Redemption stories cast past negative experiences as necessary for the positive present and future: "If I hadn't gone through that, I wouldn't be the person I am today".'

This kind of narrative of redemptive suffering runs through the story of June as presented above. June's faith afforded her a way of making sense of her own suffering and its purpose for informing her life now. This story is not too dissimilar from that of Kim Phuc (often referred to as 'The Girl in the Photograph' or 'The Napalm Girl') whose rediscovery of Christianity also seems to have enabled her to make sense of her past, present and future, as a whole (see Walklate, 2019).

This search for making sense of one's past, present and future is not confined to those who have experienced 'extreme' suffering as in the two examples cited above. For example, Zehr (2001) presents the stories of a more 'ordinary' kind in which the people who were the subject of them found a way to come to terms with the effects of violent crime which were extraordinary and exceptional for them. All of Zehr's (2001) respondents voice the full range of feelings any individual might have to challenging events from revenge to forgiveness, but rather like June and Kim Phuc they do not talk of themselves as victims or survivors. Zehr (2001)

struggled to find a word that would encompass these experiences so he settled for 'transcending'. In a similar vein, June found a way of making sense of her painful past and giving a meaning to her future through a transcendental commitment to faith. Thus she has resisted being frozen in the moment of a bereaved mother. Through her faith she set on a path to redemption in which making sense of her past, present and future come together as a whole. Importantly this path is hers and hers alone: she has been the agent acting on her own choices (Green & Pemberton, 2017). So her son might have been in the wrong place at the wrong time but, for her, the pain associated with this has been reconciled by her belief in a bigger purpose behind this event for her and her son. In her terms they are now both at peace.

Other stories of reconciliation as a way of dealing with the impact of lethal violence touch on similar processes of redemption. For example, Colin and Wendy Parry established the Warrington Foundation4Peace in memory of their son, Tim, and fellow victim, three-year-old Johnathan Ball, victims of the IRA bomb planted in Warrington in 1993. As time has evolved their story of redemptive suffering has been widely reported in local and national media in the UK. In a letter to his son published in the Huffington Post on 20 March 2018, 25 years on from the 1993 bomb, Colin Parry writes: 'So you see, Tim, that your life and memory is a beacon to so many others.' Thus it is possible to suggest Colin and Wendy Parry found a way to transcend their experiences creating a life with a meaningful whole for themselves rather than staying locked in a past ruptured by violence. Similarly, Walklate et al.'s (2018) case study of Rosie Batty and her influence on policies addressing violence against women in Australia in the aftermath of the brutal murder of her son Luke hints at a desire to create something good out of the bad. Taken together all of these stories hint at redemption. Importantly this redemption is not a simple and/or measurable moment, but it is a process of coming to terms with the impact of the different violence(s) in different lives in their own way for those subjected to them. However, importantly many of these stories are not only private ones, they are also public ones. Brison (2002, p. 51) states:

> In order to construct self-narratives we need not only the words with which to tell our stories, but also an audience able and willing to hear us and to understand our words as we intend them. This aspect of remaking a self in the aftermath of trauma highlights the dependency of the self on others and helps to explain why it is so difficult for survivors to recover when others are unwilling to listen to what they endured.

Thus the role of the audience, in whatever shape and form that takes, enables the avoidance of 'ethical loneliness' (Stauffer, 2015). In avoiding such loneliness, victims of any kind, but of lethal violence in particular, are able to engage in the kind of repair work essential to their sense of self as well as avoiding the stigma of blame so easily associated with the experience of victimisation. As Pemberton et al. (2018a, p. 12) point out:

> The damage of victimisation can be understood as a narrative rupture, which endangers a sense of control and continuity of one's life story throughout time and with the social surroundings. The way victims attempt to make sense and meaning of their ordeal occurs in narrative modes of reasoning, while they adopt narrative means to regain agency and re-establish communion with their social context.

Such stories have particular importance in reinforcing and strengthening dialogue between communities: they 'gather people around them' and can voice demand for changes (Plummer, 1995, p. 174). Most importantly, these stories return the prospect of ownership to victims which criminal justice agencies have historically attempted to retain for themselves. Recognition of this has significant methodological and theoretical implications for victimology.

For June's dialogue with faith and bereavement to come to the fore, there needed to be not simply a qualitative orientation to gathering 'data' about her and her experiences. There also needed to be a conceptual openness to hearing what she was saying. There are different ways this might have been achieved. For example, McGarry (2017) makes a compelling case for victimology to dig deeper into biographical methods in order to better appreciate when 'typical victims' have 'no story to tell and no one to tell it to'. Here he is alluding to the ways in which positivist victimology erases some victim experiences more than others. For him it is the inability of such a victimology to envision the young, white, male soldier as a victim. Yet this victim too has a story to tell which has its own narrative and epiphany moments (McGarry, 2017, p. 114) which put this soldier on the road to recovery. Whether through the biographical method embraced by McGarry (2017) or the in-depth interviews deployed with June, both approaches facilitate an appreciation of living in time and through time. In other words, the importance of lives lived both diachronically and synchronically is centred. The narrative method that facilitates the ability to take the long view (in time) simultaneously reveals so much more about victimhood and how to make sense of it.

One of the consequences of the contemporary desire to see the world through the prism of pain (Fassin, 2012) is that we are also drawn into assuming individuals become defined by that moment of pain. This is patently not the case for June or the other examples cited here. People can and do change. Experiences of lethal violence can become 'turning points' or junctures in the life stories of victims, prompting new ways of thinking, changes in meaning or renewed purpose. Importantly for June, this is not a story of conversion and/or the way in which religion might contribute to desistance from crime (qua Maruna, Wilson, & Curran, 2006). This is a story about how to continue living in the face of demanding circumstances. Nonetheless these moments can also hold transformative potential and come to punctuate, lend significance to and make life stories coherent. Thus the kind of narrative analysis proffered here assists in appreciating this. However, this excursion into making sense of June's story through the lens of redemptive suffering also raises important theoretical challenges for narrative victimology.

The Challenges for a Narrative Victimology

The story presented in this chapter was a rich, uninterrupted story and a consequence of a series of open-ended, conversational questions that asked respondents to recount their life stories. However, narrative research is not without its difficulties. Narrative does not merely represent a 'more or less transparent and neutral medium for conveying something that lies beyond language and the story' (Bruner, 1987; Hydén, 1997, p. 50). The nature of this relationship is uncertain and therefore the translation of experience into narrative is not necessarily linear (Presser & Sandberg, 2015). Rather, as Riessman (2008, p. 3) explains, '… transforming a lived experience into language and constructing a story about it is not straightforward, but invariably mediated and regulated by controlling vocabularies'. This problem prompted some to question whether the researcher may ever be able to 'fully know' the subjects of their research (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000; Mauthner & Doucet, 2008). Indeed, even as Bruner (1987, p. 14) contends that narrative offers the only means for communicating experience, he concedes that narrative is nonetheless very 'unstable'.

The conceptual openness embraced in the narrative approach adopted here gave space for thinking through June's story through a relatively underdeveloped conceptual agenda for victimology more generally. This story highlighted the importance of providing faith-based understandings of suffering, agency and injustice but also raised concerns of reading the unfamiliar in the 'wrong' lens. The import of faith and spirituality to people's lives has been increasingly marginalised through the twentieth and twenty-first centuries and this process of marginalisation is as evident in criminology and victimology as it is in other social sciences (Spalek & Imtoul, 2008). Akers (2010) offers a review of the available criminological work that has focused on the relationship between religion and crime which has since been noted by Cottee (2014) who has argued that much of this work pays attention to the deterrent effects of religious belief. However, when religious belief is seen to encourage violent actions replete with transcendental rewards, this relationship not only becomes more complicated, criminology also becomes mute (Routledge & Arndt, 2008). As Cottee (2014) argues, criminology has indeed been remarkably quiet in understanding these interconnections in relation to violence, and the same remains true in the parallel discipline of victimology.

Arguably, this highlights the other side to Fassin's (2012) concern with seeing the world through the prism of pain. Most of the time, human beings do not choose pain as their way of life. Importantly, understanding the gap between when victims embrace a victim identity and when they do not (pointed out some time ago by Rock, 2002) is still a prescient concern for this area of investigation. June did not embrace a victim identity focussing on her pain. She found redemption from her suffering through her faith, which was made visible by an open conceptual agenda and methodological approach. Importantly she had a story to tell and someone to tell it to. As McGarry (2017) alludes to, there may be considerable more mileage in unpacking what and who is made visible and invisible in the secular assumptions in the dominance of positivist victimology and the discipline of criminology more broadly.

Stories of suffering are shaped not only by the storyteller but mediated by the audiences by which they are 'heard' or 'read'. Reading nonsecular stories with a secular lens also raises ethical and political questions over the professional use of victims' stories, whether in the context of media platforms, truth commissions or academic scholarship. For example, Yazir Henri (2003) has commented on the dangers of appropriating victims' life stories outside of the setting in which they were originally exchanged. Reflecting on his personal experiences of providing testimony at the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission in 1996, Henri (2003, p. 266) stresses that:

> Serious thought needs to be given to the ethics of appropriating testimony for poetic licence, media freedom, academic commentary and discourse analysis. Arguing these lines and 'It's on the public record' are too easy positions to take since they do not address the rights of self-authorship and the intention of the speaker, the reclamation of one's voice and one's agency.

As researchers, when we read the stories of victims, a degree of distance is almost inevitably created between the lived experience and narrative. Rather than simple recitals of experience, researchers are intimately involved in the coproduction of stories, helping to tell the story and later to read it. In this sense, it is important to acknowledge that this 'reading' of June's story is a product of criminological analysis which has its own established frameworks and assumptions rooted in secularism. Unfamiliarity with matters of faith and spirituality in criminology creates a danger that such stories might be over-attributed to social forces and concepts. It is therefore essential to remember that this analysis is a secular criminological reading of a nonsecular story. As Orsi (2016, p. 42) discusses in his critique, studies of modern religion have come to replace the 'presence' of Gods which now 'appear as tropes, metaphors, and distortions of language'. Reducing Christianity to a 'narrative' of coping and comfort upon which victims draw upon diminishes their understandings to outer world views rather than inner-world, existential, intrinsic ways of actually being in the world.

The ethical responsibility to read June's story is therefore in a sense a methodological dilemma, as Henri writes, and requires attention to the 'interpretive conflicts' in storytelling, writing and reading (Borland, 1991). Many different actors are invested in the creation of stories aside from the storyteller and, as Polletta (2006, p. 1) writes, 'we battle over storytelling as well as celebrating'. Narratives are characterised by ambiguity, uncertainty and contradiction, and are subject to subsequent mediation by the audience by which they are 'heard' or 'read' (Stauffer, 2015). June's story served the purpose of personal recovery but also held wider political consequences and a social life for victims in the public sphere, providing inspiration and motivation for others in the community. Therefore, while narrative research with victims can provide a platform for rediscovering agency, researchers must be sensitive to issues of ownership and authenticity and consider whether the act of interpretation risks diluting

experiences rather than remaining faithful to them. As Henri (2003) asserts, victims must find a space in which their stories can be heard without compromising the dignity of victims outside of these exchanges.

Conclusion

As Walklate and Spencer (2016, p. 191) state tracing the victim and victimological 'story' is '……fraught with difficulties: where to start geographically, where to start historically, whose story is to be listened to and so on'. However, making sense of victims and victimhood is also fraught with conceptual, methodological and ethical difficulties. June's story raised several questions concerning the professional uses of victims' stories, the ethics and issues of authenticity in reading stories which are unfamiliar and the condition of victimology more broadly in making sense of matters of faith and spirituality. However, it also highlighted the promise of narrative research for adding nuance to understandings of victims' experiences. The narrative approach has become the subject of numerous disciplines in the social sciences where some have argued that 'specificity has been lost with popularisation' (Riessman, 2008, p. 5). Narrative has emerged in various forms in criminology, very often with the assumption that we are talking about the same thing, using it in the same way and achieving the same outcomes. However, as the emergence of a narrative victimology has demonstrated, narrative serves different purposes.

Narrative victimology has a long way to travel to fully realise the applications of narrative in understanding what it means to be harmed and to learn the lessons (and from the mistakes) of narrative criminology. This chapter has endeavoured to outline some of these difficulties as they emerged as part of the process of doing narrative research. This 'doing' comprised all of these challenges and posed some new ones for those who might claim to speak on behalf of victims as a means of influencing criminal justice policy. It also poses some challenges for those victims who might use their voice to make claims for all victims. Of course living through the disruption of experiences thrust upon individuals unexpectedly is challenging and a narrative victimology offers some deep sense of those challenges. However, a narrative victimology as presented here also serves as a reminder that human beings sometimes stay frozen in and with the events that have affected them, and sometimes do not. This is equally important to recognise for a victimology still wedded to the policy domain.

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