Editors' Introduction to the Special Issue, "Researching Environmental Harm, Doing Green Criminology"

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Green criminology is a fast expanding field within criminology with healthy roots in critical criminology (Lynch 1990; for a discussion, see, e.g., Sollund 2015; South 2014; South et al. 2013) and a wide range of concerns regarding legal and illegal harms against the environment (see, e.g., Beirne and South 2007; Ellefsen et al. 2012; Sollund 2008, 2015; South and Beirne 2006; Walters et al. 2013; White 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013; White and Heckenberg 2014). To date, green criminologists have investigated the causes and consequences of environmental crimes and harms, as well as the meaning thereof and the responses thereto (e.g., law enforcement, punishment (or the lack thereof)).

In October 2015, a seminar at the Department of Criminology and Sociology of Law, at the University of Oslo, organized by one of us (Sollund), brought together experienced green criminologists and younger academics. The goal of the seminar was to contemplate the meaning and parameters of green criminology, share previous and ongoing research, reflect on entry into this area of study, discuss different theoretical orientations and methodological approaches to the study of environmental crimes and harms, and consider future directions. This special issue, "Researching Environmental Harm, Doing Green Criminology," develops some of the papers presented. In so doing, it serves as a "companion" of sorts to a forthcoming special issue of *Theoretical Criminology*, "Twenty Years of Green Criminology," in May 2018 (Volume 22, Issue 2)—an issue co-edited by the two of us and Piers Beirne and Nigel South, which attempts to pay homage to the first special

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issue of *Theoretical Criminology* (Volume 2, Issue 2) in May 1998, and which seeks to demonstrate the growth, breadth and depth of green criminological research over the last 20 years.

Although the articles in “Researching Environmental Harm, Doing Green Criminology” consider different methodological approaches, this is much more than a “methods issue” focused on *how* one conducts research in or on green criminology. Rather, it is a special issue devoted to the *praxis* and *practice* of green criminology—one that engages questions of ecophilosophical orientation, personal inspiration, research ethics, and horizon scanning for future directions, in addition to methodological quandaries. One of our goals with this issue is to offer examples of green criminology’s diverse topics of study and interdisciplinary approaches thereto in order to inspire budding and seasoned criminologists who may be hesitant about researching environmental crimes and harms under the umbrella of green criminology. At the same time, this issue serves as a commitment to green criminology’s innovativeness and openness—its willingness to expose and explore harms that have not traditionally been perceived as crimes and its readiness to cast light on victims, such as nonhuman animals, who have previously not been accorded the status of victimhood.

One of the challenges for green criminology is to not only look ahead and anticipate future environmental degradation and despoliation, but to bear in mind what has happened before us—and why. For each new generation, there is a tendency to accept the conditions of the world into which it was born as “normal” and “natural”; in reality, what we are offering new generations is a world, diminished in its richness, and yet accepted as such. Green criminology should serve as a reminder of what has occurred, what could transpire, and what *might be*.

The first article in the present issue, “Green Criminology Before ‘Green Criminology’: Amnesia and Absences,” by David Rodríguez Goyes and Nigel South, describes criminological engagement with, and analysis of, environmental crime and harm that occurred prior to 1990—the decade that in the Anglo-Saxon world is usually regarded as the beginning of green criminology. By illuminating some of the antecedents to green criminology—much of it in languages other than English that deserves acknowledgement and what the authors refer to as “pre-green criminology”—Goyes and South demonstrate the value of “learning from ‘absences’”—from knowledge that existed but has been forgotten.

The second article, “The Neglect of Quantitative Research in Green Criminology and Its Consequences,” by Michael J. Lynch, Kimberly L. Barrett, Paul B. Stretesky, and Michael A. Long, argues that while interest in green criminology has expanded rapidly over the past three decades, much of this growth has occurred on the periphery of orthodox criminology. Lynch and colleagues suggest that this marginalization of green criminology is partially a result of its non-quantitative methodology given orthodox criminology’s privileging of quantitative methods. Intentionally provocative in their approach, the authors submit that employing quantitative approaches within green criminology is one way to increase its appeal to mainstream criminology, and that quantitative studies, in conjunction with other research methodologies, can also enhance generalizability of findings, influence policy, and advance theory construction and hypothesis testing.

Lorenzo Natali and Bill McClanahan’s article, “Perceiving and Communicating Environmental Contamination and Change: Towards a Green Cultural Criminology with Images,” functions somewhat as a retort to that of Lynch and colleagues. In this article, Natali and McClanahan respond to recent calls for a “green cultural criminology” by attempting to open the way for new visual explorations of environmental harms and crimes, and by suggesting some methodological perspectives that can be advanced by the use and analysis of the photographic image. To demonstrate the power, potential and

possibility—as well as some potential limitations—of a green cultural criminology with images, the authors draw on two ethnographic studies carried out in Huelva (Spain) and central Appalachia (United States). Such methods, Natali and McClanahan contend, have the advantage of (1) bringing together the multiple and complex experiences of those who live in polluted areas; (2) considering the cultural meaning given to experiences of ecological change and destruction; and (3) exploring how those experiences are represented, communicated and understood. In contrast to Lynch and colleagues' argument for increased use of *quantitative research methods*, Natali and McClanahan conclude with a call to use *qualitative visual approaches* for carrying out research in an emergent green cultural criminology designed to develop a complex understanding of the multiple forms of environmental harms and crimes.

Natali and McClanahan's point that "nearly all material environments are in some ways contested" raises questions of *where* we conduct our research and *whom* we study, which are considered in the fourth and fifth papers in this special issue: Christoph H. Stefes and Pete Theodoratos' "Researching Environmental Crime in Non-democratic Regimes" and Rune Ellefsen's "Taking Sides? Issues of Bias and Partisanship When Researching Socio-political Conflict." Stefes and Theodoratos explore how and why we should study environmental crime in non-democratic regimes—research that may entail particular methodological challenges given the role of institutions, actors, and their networks in facilitating environmental crime. Drawing on their research on environmental crime in the Armenian mining industry, the authors contend that understanding environmental crime helps reveal how autocratic leaders may (ab)use or otherwise exploit natural resources in order to cement their power—at least, initially. Studying environmental crime in such settings, Stefes and Theodoratos contend, may stimulate a reconceptualization of the meaning and etiology of environmental crime—one that begins at the law-making, rather than law-implementation stage.

Ellefsen's article contemplates issues of bias and partisanship that confront social scientists who study socio-political conflict. Drawing on his own experience conducting research on the conflict between animal liberation activists and their state and corporate adversaries in Britain (1999–2014), Ellefsen's article argues for a *relational research approach*—one focused on the interaction between contending parties (rather than one centered on one group of stakeholders as a discrete entity)—as a way to overcome challenges of "taking sides" when studying socio-political conflict. The debate generated by Howard Becker's classic essay, "Whose side are we on?" (1967), is used throughout the article as a point of reference for addressing the issues involved, and Ellefsen puts forth an innovative argument for constant reflexivity during research on radical social movements, and for "temporary bias" during such qualitative fieldwork.

Ellefsen's article is followed by Ragnhild Sollund's article, "Doing Green, Critical Criminology with an Auto-Ethnographic, Feminist Approach," the first of four articles on topics relating to animal abuse, crime, harm and trafficking. Sollund's piece explores the ways in which previous personal experiences (such as with respect to parrots as her companions) have influenced her research on and analysis of the legal and illegal wildlife trade. In the same vein as Ellefsen, she is preoccupied with values inherent in research agendas and analysis, and, siding with feminists like Sandra Harding and Josephine Donovan, maintains that prior experiences and the attitudes formed by them are helpful in developing a deep understanding of one's research questions. Sollund contends that rather than attempting to free oneself from subjective realizations, such realizations may be examined as additional sources of data of which empathic reactions to oppression and abuse form a part.

Erica von Essen and Michael Allen's article, "Interspecies Violence and Crimes of Dissent: Communication Ethics and Legitimacy in Message Crimes Involving Wildlife," considers the phenomenon of message crimes involving harm to wildlife. Using a case study of dissident Nordic hunters killing protected wolves in order to send a message to state agencies responsible for their conservation, the authors grapple with philosophical questions regarding the nature and scope of wildlife victimhood, as well as the justifiability of interspecies violence as a mode of political dissent. In so doing, von Essen and Allen argue not for a moral theory of justice for wolves (along the ecophilosophical lines of Sollund), but for a green criminology attuned to communication ethics and democratic theory. Indeed, as they conclude, "[a]t the level of moral analysis, there may be reasons to say that no wolves should ever be intentionally killed by humans, legally or illegally. At that level, all wolves are potentially the victims of any kind of hunting practice. But we take no stand here... [S]ome green harms—such as the illegal killing of protected wolves—come about as the result of legitimacy failures of the laws that protect them. The proper response to such harms is... to take seriously the sincere belief of the hunters that the political system for justifying the legitimacy of environment law has failed in their eyes...."

While von Essen and Allen's article stands in contrast to the approach of Sollund, it also provides a nice segue to Siv Runhovde's article, "Comparing Discourse to Officer Perceptions: The Problems of War and Militarization in Wildlife Crime Enforcement." In this piece, Runhovde considers not message crimes, but the model or metaphor of "war" for biodiversity conservation in Africa. Focusing on the specific challenges of wildlife crime enforcement in Uganda and drawing on her interviews with law enforcement officers in this East African state, Runhovde challenges the "war on wildlife crime" discourse, arguing that it is profoundly unhelpful because of a lack of alignment between the problems highlighted by Ugandan law enforcement officers and the solutions typically favored in the "wars on crime." Most wildlife crimes are subsistence-driven, she finds, and interviewees' requests are for basic equipment and conventional capacity building. As such, Runhovde argues that the language of war, militarization and securitization should be used with caution as it risks constructing an image of wildlife crime that is misleading—and one that prevents responses that are effective in the long term.

Martine Lie's article, "'Stepdogs' of Society: The Impact of Breed Bans in Norway," continues the thread of the previous three articles, drawing on qualitative interviews with dog owners and police officers to explore the ban against "dangerous dogs" in Norway. Lie demonstrates that this particular set of dog regulations (*hundeforskriften*) has had a negative impact on the affected dogs' lives, despite the best efforts of their owners. Labeling, stigmatization and the risk of confiscation by the police has not only prevented the dogs from interacting with other members of their species, but has resulted in the labeling and stigmatization of their *human* companions. Lie analyzes the breed ban from a critical, anti-speciesist perspective, arguing that it is consistent with other discriminatory practices in modern western societies.

The final article in this special issue, "Tensions for Green Criminology," by Avi Brisman, considers a number of tensions that for the most part exist outside green criminology that could—and should—be brought under the green criminological gaze—issues that are not necessarily the province of green criminology but which have implications for the study of environmental crime and harm. Brisman's examples include conflicting messages that Western society encounters with respect to "victims" and "survivors"; claims regarding a lack of future orientation (Hayward 2012) in contrast to assertions of a risk-aversion in late modernity (Giddens 1999); frictions between the "precautionary

principle" (Magnus 2008) and "precautionary logic" (Aas 2013); and the peculiarities of the "war on youth" (Grossberg 2001) in an era of "overparenting" (Kamenetz 2015) and "overindulged youth" (Kolbert 2012). Consistent with the rest of the special issue, his goal is to heighten awareness of issues and contradictions that may contribute to environmental despoliation and degradation or frustrate efforts to address such harm.

Overall, the special issue offers just a small sample of the type of research being conducted on environmental crime and harm by green criminologists. But with ten articles by seventeen contributors from seven countries (Colombia, Germany, Italy, Norway, Sweden, United Kingdom, United States), the special issue stands as a testament to green criminology's diversity and an overture to join a scholarly endeavor committed to the health and vitality of the Earth for present and future generations.

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