

**Restor(y)ing Our Place in the More-than-human World:  
A Narrative Approach to an Everyday Ethics of the Self in Relationship to Earth  
Others and to Place**

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September 2007

**Abstract**

This thesis poses the question: how ought we to live in place such that survivable futures for all might be achieved? Drawing on narrative ethics, I suggest that the problems western societies face today, ranging from loss of local greenspaces and habitats to threats of global warming, are at root narrative crises. The stories we tell about who we are as individual selves and as collective communities, as well as the stories we tell about the places we dwell in and places further afield, affect how we relate to each other and how we act in the more-than-human world. The stories that dominate today are destructive ones: dualistic stories that assume a separation between nature and culture, cities and wilderness, humans and all other living creatures. If we are going to find our way to survivable futures for all (humans, animals, plants and other earth others), we need new stories to live by. I suggest that we can find some of the words to such stories through recently published ecological memoirs.

My goal in engaging dialogically with such memoirs, is to amplify the moral impulses of their authors. In order to do this, I adapt practices derived from narrative therapy and narrative bioethics. I assemble a “virtual reflecting team” made up of approaches to environmental ethics that respect both continuity and difference including theorists from care ethics, feminist science studies, and dialogical ethics perspectives, as well as Sack’s (2003) geographical guide to the real and the good. By bringing both the virtual reflecting team and my own storied life into dialogue with these ecological memoirs, I excavate subjugated alternative knowledges of living, open up new possibilities for acting ethically in the more-than-human world, and contribute to the development and increased circulation of counter narratives to dominant master narratives.