



Walking at the edges of green criminology:

The edges of the city and the extraordinary consequences of ordinary harms

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Abstract:

Positioned at the periphery of green and urban criminology, this article focuses on the heuristic value of the edge. Examining the urban physical edges – the continued horizontal (outwards) and the vertical (upwards and downwards) sprawl of our cities – exposes serious harm. I employ the concept of atmosphere to explore both phenomenological and ontological atmospheres. This leads me to interrogate the edge between ordinary (slow) and extraordinary (more immediate) environmental harms, highlighting the need to move beyond binary conceptions of human and more-than-human concerns. I develop the concept of ‘the city beyond the city’, which transcends the material urban edges to further untangle green and urban criminological boundaries.

Introduction

To zoom in on an edge or a border is to examine what lies within or outside a physical space, a discipline or a definition. In this article, I take up the idea of edges to examine what I term ‘the edges of the city’ (the horizontal and the vertical edges), and I discuss what the scrutiny of these spaces can contribute to urban and green criminological thinking related to cities and harm. The horizontal edge is found at the outer suburbs of cities, and in many ways, at the periphery of the urban imaginary: not fully city but neither rural nor small town. The vertical edge, in contrast, reaches upwards into the sky through the construction of taller and taller buildings and downwards into the underground. As a parallel epistemological question, I question another type of edge that lies between ordinary (slow) and extraordinary (more immediate) environmental harms, warranting a transition beyond binary conceptions of human and more-than-human interests and injuries.

Although certainly a form of ‘edgework’, my take on edges resides far from Lyng’s (1990) conception of the term. The urban edges examined here refer to the physical limits of the city, whereas Lyng discussed voluntary participation in dangerous and adrenaline-inducing (and sometimes criminal) activities, such as skydiving or motorbike riding. In particular, Lyng highlighted the seduction of ‘the particular sensations and emotions generated by the high-risk character of these activities’ (2004, p. 360). This article is indeed interested in experiences on the urban edges; however, instead of engaging with the thrilling, masculine expressions associated with ‘living on the edge’, I pay attention to the most mundane behaviours and their associated harm.

As emphasised by urban criminologists, the city is central in understanding the harm and crimes which take place within it (Atkinson & Millington, 2019, 2020). Despite this, ‘criminology has rarely moved beyond thin portrayals of the city (and by default the “urban”) as a criminogenic space’ (Atkinson & Millington, 2020, p. 63). Even street-level crimes that take place in the nooks and crannies of our cities have suffered from this lack of attention (Hayward, 2004, p. 87). Cities are constantly evolving, reacting and reforming, and they are also places where, for the first time, a majority of the world’s population lives, a proportion estimated to increase to 68% by 2050 (United Nations, 2019).

The edges of the city evoke associations with the early 20th century Chicago School and its work outlining the concentric zones of the city – moving outwards from the central business district, through deteriorated areas and working-class residences and on to the more exclusive suburban and commuter zones (Burgess, 1967 [1925]). This work highlighted social mobility and the changing nature of cities, which is analogous to the capricious nature of the urban edges. Nonetheless, Hayward wrote, ‘the [Chicago] School’s interpretation of “space” set the geography of crime down a very particular and... rather narrow conceptual path from which it has rarely deviated’ (2012, p. 443). Instead, drawing from the ‘spatial turn’ in cultural geography, Hayward emphasised the ‘complex urban social dynamics’ that make up space and construct the conditions for various crimes and disorders (2012, p. 444). The emergence of more complex understandings of the physical, cultural and social contexts of criminological inquiry contributes distinct and new ways of conceptualising crimes, harm and their effects.

The city’s edges denote physical spaces where residential areas end and grasslands, agricultural areas or simply the sky commence. The edges are far from fixed; instead, planning zones are often amended to allow further residential development beyond the horizontal edge and new structures that tower over more dated buildings in the urban centres. There is something ultimately momentary or fleeting to these edges, characterised by an in-betweenness and propensity to change. This examination of the edges of the city contributes to urban criminology’s challenge of, as Peršak and

Tulumello (2020) put it, ‘grasping the complex interrelations among social, cultural, political, economic, and spatial phenomena’ (p. 3). The edges of the city can be represented upon a map, but with time, ‘ripping up the map’ will be inevitable (Kindynis, 2014). Despite criminologists’ generally unsophisticated and uncritical use of cartography, Kindynis (2014) wrote that ‘it is possible to imagine alternative mappings of densely enmeshed and multidimensional, criminogenic and criminalizing processes—urban (socio)spatial configurations, individual biographies, institutional dynamics and so on—that would constitute a more vivid rendering of the interrelationship between space and crime’ (p. 232). The zoning that allows different forms of development in various spaces (including the height of buildings) is ultimately a cartographic exercise, and I pursue criminological attention to its complex social, spatial and environmental dynamics.

In this article, I examine the urban edges of the city as they interact with our experiences and behaviours; in particular, those that harm the environment and contribute to the changing nature of our climate. Hence, I am concerned with ideas primarily conceptualised within green criminology, a perspective which focusses on environmental harm and crimes (Hall, 2014; Ruggiero & South, 2013a; Sollund, 2017). Similar to the elasticity of city borders, the edge between what is considered ordinary and extraordinary harms is in constant flux. Thinking about this boundary is a way to question taken-for-granted assumptions, uproot previous understanding of harm and reconsider the ways in which we live. I argue that doing so will contribute to resituating our priorities in building, rebuilding and expanding our cities. It would also allow us to reflect on environmental harm, its consequences and our responses, and to do all of this in new ways. Ultimately, this endeavour helps to articulate what I call ‘the city beyond the city’,¹ and to transcend current understandings of the material boundaries of the city.

Approaching harm

The edges of the city and their associated harm are the subjects of a larger project in which I explore urban development in Melbourne, Australia. This article concentrates on data that was gathered with a range of methods for the purpose of tracing the urban expansion of Melbourne, Australia, in order to generate ‘a deepened, complex interpretation’ (Ellingson, 2014, p. 444), or ‘thick description’ (Geertz, 1973) of everyday life and its criminological challenges on the urban edges. I draw on methods which include auto-ethnographic observations and my own sensory, affective and atmospheric experiences in two growing Melbourne suburbs – Docklands in the Central Business District and Craigieburn in the outer north of the city. As Sollund (2017) has argued, ‘we think because we feel’, and attention to such feelings are, thus, ‘fundamental for thinking and questioning “taken for granted truths”’ (p. 248). Interviews were also conducted with people living in or near these neighbourhoods, centred on their experiences as residents, as well as with planners and architects on the particular issues facing the edges in terms of social and environmental sustainability. Finally, local council and state government planning and policy documents on Melbourne were examined to identify semiotic and thematic relationships, contrasts or consonances between the documents and the practices represented by residents, planners and architects.

Harm taking place on the urban edges is conceptualised by means of what Agnew (2012) termed ‘ordinary harms’. This concept emphasises the frequent and broad-ranging mundane behaviours that harm the environment through their gradual accumulation. These include, for instance, living in large homes that are kept at a comfortable temperature through artificial heating and cooling systems, the driving of cars and other gasoline-powered vehicles and over-consumption. Agnew (2012) highlighted ‘the ordinary acts that contribute to ecocide’; that is, ‘the contamination and destruction of the natural environment in ways that reduce its ability to support life’ (p. 58). Or-

¹ A term inspired by Miéville’s (2009) novel *The City & the City* and Young’s (2014b) ‘Cities in the City’.

dinary harms pollute land, air and water, disrupt ecosystems, extinguish natural habitats, contribute to climate change and exhaust natural resources. Although such harms may be routinised and commonplace, their impacts are far-reaching and extraordinary. Such an approach of scrutinising harm rather than crimes is in line with critical criminology's break with '(actual or potential) legal definitions of harm' and moves towards the broad set of social harm associated with zemiology (for example, Tombs, 2018).

Agnew examined ordinary harms using classical social–psychological theories which contribute to understanding the interesting relationships between individual strains and behaviours in relation to the social world around them (2012). In this article, I posit that the interactions between the physical features of a city and ordinary harms require scrutiny to conceptualise the city as 'the place where things can (and must) be changed' (Atkinson & Millington, 2020, p. 63). Poor planning that perpetuates such harms by increasing dependency on cars or profit-driven housing development with barely minimal insulation of new buildings generates the conditions for unsustainable ways of life. However, links between the city and harm refer to much more than the physical features of the city and include how cultures, people, movements, affects, laws, emotions and behaviours interact (Hayward, 2012; Kindynis, 2019; Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2013).

Hayward (2012) argued for attention to 'phenomenological place over abstract space in an attempt to take seriously the cultural and structural relationships that contribute to crime and disorder or, for that matter, community safety and stability' (p. 442). He developed five 'new' criminological spaces to create a more complex interpretation of urban spaces (p. 459). One of these is 'more-than-representational spaces' which are attentive to 'experiential, affective, and inter-material aspects of space' (p. 449). Such a focus on affective and phenomenological experiences of spaces would benefit from the concept of atmospheres.

Atmospheres have both a meteorological and an affective meaning, as they consider how bodies affect each other and are affected by/affect the material elements of the environment (Anderson, 2009; McCormack, 2008). As Adey (2013) wrote, 'air is more than just air but constitutive of the material affective relations that animate the experience of the city in a way which we might say is atmospheric' (p. 293). Atmosphere is a theoretical concept prominent in philosophy (Bille et al., 2015; Böhme, 2013), geography (Adey, 2013; Adey et al., 2013) and more recently in legal studies (Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2016) and criminology (Kindynis, 2019, 2021; Young, 2019, 2021). Following Young (2019), 'deeper engagement with the concept of atmosphere offers ways of enriching cultural, spatial and affective criminologies ...' (p. 777).

I draw on such work to develop what I term phenomenological and ontological atmospheres. *Phenomenological* atmospheres denote what can be humanly perceived, and *ontological* atmospheres describe what resides beyond human perceptions. Phenomenology examines awareness, perceptions and impressions: the way we see the world as opposed to the way the world really is. Phenomenological atmospheres are deeply entangled with our senses, and it is through these that "'the environment" emerges in the social and criminological imagination' (McClanahan & South, 2019, p. 14). In contrast, while 'retaining the ambiguity of atmosphere as both a meteorological and an affective event', Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos examined the ontology of atmospheres (2016, p. 152), which denotes the world detached from our senses and experiences of it. 'Although intimately relying on these bodies (there can be no atmosphere without planet, gravity, a variety of gases, inanimate and animate things), atmosphere precedes and exceeds them' (p. 155).

In this article, I employ concepts of both phenomenological and ontological atmospheres to pick apart the relationships between the edges of the city and 'green harm'. This approach unravels

the boundaries and limitations of criminological inquiry and resituates the green criminological gaze towards spaces and harms that were previously mostly located on the wrong side of the disciplinary limits.

The edges of the city

The horizontal edge

Urban sprawl has long been a feature of urban development. Urban boundaries extend to accommodate rising population numbers, upsizing of residential homes and the building of more affordable houses on the outer boundaries of towns. These regions are also known as peri-urban areas, a terminology with ‘roots in the need to transcend the traditional urban-rural dichotomy’ (Buxton et al., 2006, p. 1). The urban is at times clearly distinct from the rural with a ‘hard edge’, and other times it is a more gradual transition (Buxton et al., 2006, p. 1). The urban fringe is commonly featured in urban studies and in health, water and environmental sciences. This work has generally concluded that excessive sprawl should be avoided. Despite these well-documented harms, many major cities continue to spread out horizontally.

Urban sprawl contributes to less cost-effective delivery of services, including transportation, waste collection, police and fire protection, libraries, education and more (Carruthers & Ulfarsson, 2003), and studies indicate an association between urban sprawl and increased risk of obesity (Lopez, 2004). Moreover, urban sprawl is associated with the loss of important agricultural land, increased run-off, poorer water quality and the loss of biodiversity as natural habitats become engulfed by the city (Maheshwari et al., 2014, p. v).

During my repeated visits to Craigieburn in mid-2020, the continued outward push of the suburb (and the edge) was evident. Closer to the train station, the suburb was well-established; meanwhile, nearer to the suburb’s northern and north-western boundaries, I was surrounded by construction sites. Reaching a major road to the north of Craigieburn, the edge was clearly visible. ‘North of Mt Ridley road, houses are separated by large distances and farmland. There are horses in paddocks and green areas of land. And on the side I am standing on, residential areas continue’ (Fieldnotes, Craigieburn, 3 November 2020, 3pm).

The horizontal edge has infrequently made it into the criminological literature. In green criminology, virtually nothing is written on urban sprawl and its effects on crimes or harm to the environment. Criminological research around peri-urban areas tends to focus on the intensified bushfire arson risk in such areas (Cozens & Christensen, 2011; Stanley, 2020). Nonetheless, the suburban, horizontal edge is an important green criminological space, transitioning outwards in the form of new developments and infringing on agricultural land and green fields. Due to the affordability of these areas in Melbourne, as in many other cities, lower-income residents tend to accumulate here. These populations are at risk of further marginalisation due to their distance from the urban core. A lack of holistic and long-term planning in these outer suburbs (Buxton et al., 2006, p. 2) has serious implications for the activities in which new residents can engage, leaving the urban fringe susceptible to a variety of social and environmental harm.

The vertical edges

The second form of urban edge is defined by the vertical expansion of the city: the construction of increasingly tall buildings is moving urban residents upwards in the sky. Similar to expansion on the urban fringes, such construction is meant to accommodate growing urban populations. On arriving in Docklands, the first thing you see are the tall buildings reaching into the sky, and when struck by light, they glimmer in different shades of grey, purple and blue. Docklands is also showing

clear signs of ongoing construction, and as I moved through the area, I noted that: 'I can both hear and smell the construction work. The sound is of tools at work and the smell is of dust in the air ... Docklands is still very much a construction site' (Fieldnotes, Docklands, 24 June 2020, 3pm).

In contrast to the horizontal edge, the tallest buildings are often found in the more expensive and attractive urban cores. The central location provides access to many services, local amenities, entertainment precincts, good public transport and many sources of employment. However, the vertical dimensions of urban life have long been neglected in urban research which has failed to keep up with the vertical rise of cities and the implications on the political struggle in public space (Graham and Hewitt, 2012, p. 73). Criminology is not an exception; it also suffers from this neglect (although see Walters, 2013).

Encouragingly, urban scholars are increasingly taking on the challenge of addressing the social and political nature of urban verticality. Such research recognises the unequal vertical characteristics of urban life (Murray, 2004). In metropolitan cities, such as London and Mumbai, vertical construction is allowing further urban segregation as the rich and powerful segregate themselves in the air (Ayoub, 2009; Rao, 2007). Such separations, South (2019) notes, 'become even more suggestive when examining the boundaries drawn and initiatives pursued to preserve a "healthy" environment for some, at the expense of, or with disregard for, "others"' (p. 5). Privatised and artificially created environments are increasingly constructed to defend against outside threats, including threats associated with the Anthropocene (South, 2019, p. 7). Nonetheless, apart from luxury apartments owned by the rich, inner-city apartments in Melbourne are not always luxurious nor are they always very liveable. Moreover, just as the distance from the streets can be associated with security and privilege, it can also lead to detachment and isolation from the streets and communities below.

Even though the vertical edge has lessened dependency on cars compared to the horizontal edge, it is burdened by other types of ordinary harms. High-rise buildings tend to encompass large amounts of embodied carbon (the combined carbon footprint from the building materials, construction methods and the building's maintenance) (Zhao & Haojia, 2015). Large glass screens are common and act as terrible insulators, thereby requiring artificial heating and cooling (Moroz, 2017). Finally, elevators and common areas that are a functional need contribute to the building's energy footprint and increase what Wood (2021) termed 'generative technicity harms' (p. 628). A vertical approach to urban research contributes to an understanding of life on the edges as a multifaceted and volumetric experience.

If we imagine the horizontal edge looping around the city periphery, the vertical edge has an upper and a lower dimension to it. The lower edge stretches below our feet into the underground. Underneath cities are sewage and water systems, tunnels, underground panic rooms and bunkers, root cellars, basements and even transport routes. This below-ground region is for some consonant with filth, delinquency and demise (Graham & Hewitt, 2012, p. 87), acting in stark contrast to the perceived luxury at the upper edge of the city. Despite its bad reputation, the lower vertical edge of the city provides an alternative to many everyday challenges and harms. For example, root cellars were used to preserve food long before the use of refrigerators became commonplace, and underground subway networks offer alternatives to private vehicles, allowing rapid underground access across the city. Nonetheless, the vertical sprawl towards the sky disconnects residents from these same roots, taking us closer to private helicopter rides (Adey, 2010) rather than to the subterranean places below.

Ordinary vs extraordinary harms

Green criminology tends to emphasise crimes committed by the powerful and the inequalities of law (South, 2014, p. 8), while the ‘crimes of individuals and non-profit organizations have received remarkably little attention’ (Shover & Routhe, 2005, p. 326). Brisman and South (2018, p. 204), therefore, encourage attention to ‘individual-level environmental harms and crimes’. Ordinary harms are not primarily associated with environmental harm, nor are these harms properly recognised by green criminology or the criminal justice system. Ordinary harms are instead legal and normalised, which disqualifies them from criminal justice scrutiny. Green criminological work highlights the relationship between capitalism, consumerism, exploitation and harm to the environment (for example, Lynch et al., 2013; Lynch et al., 2018). Ordinary harms are associated with consumption in all of its forms, including consumption of energy and petrol and of increasingly large spaces in which to live.

To understand the difference between ordinary harms and harms deemed extraordinary, consider the 2010 BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. An explosion on the Deepwater Horizon oil rig killed 11 people and led to the largest offshore oil spill in United States’ history. For almost three months, BP attempted to contain the leak, which they later spent years cleaning up (Uhlmann, 2020). BP was criminally charged with manslaughter, various environmental crimes and obstruction of Congress (Department of Justice, 2014) and ended up paying over US\$60 billion in penalties, damages and clean-up related costs (Uhlmann, 2020). The oil spill was a crisis that required immediate action. It grasped the attention of the media, the public and the criminal justice system.

Walters (2013) noted that in the emphasis of catastrophic events, such as nuclear disasters at Chernobyl and Fukushima and the BP oil spill, ‘the dangers associated with trade and air pollution become normalized within a doctrine of exceptionalism’ (p. 137). In contrast, ordinary harms are slow, accumulative processes that fail to generate many headlines, and, following Walters, such harms are also normalised and forgotten due to the emphasis on more extraordinary events.

Ordinary harms can also be conceptualised in terms of their slowness as opposed to the speed of extraordinary harms, such as the BP oil spill. Nixon’s (2011) concept of ‘slow violence’ refers to ‘a violence that occurs gradually and out of sight, a violence of delayed destruction that is dispersed across time and space, an attritional violence that is typically not viewed as violence at all’ (p. 2). Slow violence does not refer to climate change and environmental harm in isolation but is a concept apt to describe these more invisible and gradual types of harm. Nixon (2011) sought to widen the concepts of violence, harm and social injustice, moving away from faster, more action-filled and spectacular definitions (p. 2), akin to this article’s transition from the more thrilling edgework (Lyng, 1990, 2004). Ordinary harms are a form of slow violence to the environment. It is not until we examine the accumulative effects over time that the harm from individual incidents becomes apparent. Importantly, ‘harm typically does not have particular beginning or end nor a definable boundary between harm and non-harm’ (Lundberg, 2022, p. 6). Nonetheless, if we conceptualise ordinary harms as characterised by these slow and invisible features, extraordinary harms should be understood as more immediate, outstanding and much harder to ignore, giving them a more prominent place on the academic, political and social agendas.

Apart from being a problem of visibility and attention, ordinary harms do not satisfy the human bias prominent in criminology and society more generally. Ruggiero and South (2013b) wrote, ‘(r)eflecting society generally, criminology tends to be anthropocentric, positioning and privileging human beings as the central and most significant species’ (p. 363). Environmental harm is often accepted as an inadvertent and inconsequential outcome of the neo-liberal agenda (Ruggiero &

South, 2013a, p. 13). Without minimising the inequalities that exist between human groups and populations, the human bias renders some forms of harm more relevant and urgent than others. I examine the distinction between ordinary harms – which often lack consideration – and extraordinary harms – compelling immediate action – in more detail as I reflect on the relationship between phenomenological and ontological atmospheres.

Phenomenological atmospheres

To develop the concept of phenomenological atmospheres in more detail, let us start with air, a neglected substance in the criminological literature despite its significance for life on this planet (although see Walters, 2013). Air is a combination of gases that occupies space (Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2016, p. 153); it not only contains the oxygen that we breathe but also a range of other gases. More often than not, air goes unnoticed, and the reflex to breathe is an unconscious one. However, when polluted, air can become visible, grey and smoggy, and yet it can also give rise to beautiful, yet unsettling, nuances of orange and red.² Thinking about air allows us to theoretically transition beyond solids and consider new ways that life is entangled with the health of the environment (Choy, 2010).

The term atmosphere is also used to denote something very different, a mood or a particular presence in a room (Anderson, 2009, p. 78). Choy (2010) wrote: ‘the sensation of confronting simultaneous, parallel, sometimes incompatible units of analysis, methods of sensing, etc. — is a singular feature of what I am terming the atmospheric’ (p. 4). In the air, gases move, bounce and combine; and between different bodies, in a similar fashion, affect circulates (Adey, 2013, p. 293). In this article, I follow Deleuze’s (1988) definition of affect as a form of interpersonal tension, as bodies affect each other (1988). Affect can be understood as that which alerts the body to an experience or a sensation (Young, 2014a, p. 162) and should be distinguished from emotion, which is the semantic ordering of these intensities (Massumi, 1995, p. 88). Affect is an important aspect of an atmosphere; it contributes to the tensions and the mood of a particular space. But more than that, atmosphere refers to culture, materiality, perception, senses, land, weather, laws, light, textures, smells, architecture, bodies, movements and more.

McClanahan and South (2019) called for a ‘sensory criminology’ and suggested that “‘atmospheres’ are already always spaces configured in the totality of sensory information’ (p. 13). From their perspective, atmospheres are particularly suited for green criminology. Since we experience the world through our senses, ‘it is through sensorial immersion that “the environment” emerges in the social and criminological imagination’ (McClanahan & South, 2019, p. 14). The phenomenological perspective requires attention to the senses and our experiences of the atmosphere in terms of, for example, light, smell, sounds, touch and rhythms. Hence, different parts of the city can have distinct atmospheric presences that are both formed by and constitutive of our lives within it. An area might be perceived as idyllic, dangerous, luxurious, tranquil or haunted. By attending to each of our senses, we can start to break down phenomenological atmospheres and their implications with respect to ordinary harms.

Ontological atmospheres

Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos (2013) pointed out that ‘most attempts at pinning down atmosphere are largely phenomenological’ (p. 41). Nonetheless, ontological atmospheres are about what lies beyond human perception and self-serving ideals. I disagree with McClanahan and South (2019) ‘that a sensory green criminology would (or should) arise to consider human-environment interac-

² During the Australian 2019/2020 ‘Black Summer’ bushfires, there was an unnerving beauty to the sunrise and sunset reflected in the particles from the smoke.

tions as entirely configured by our sensory perceptions' (p. 14). I also oppose Böhme's (2013) conclusion that 'atmospheres are something entirely subjective' (p. 2). Although it is true that, to some extent, atmospheres are always subjective, experienced and sensed, I disagree that '(w)ithout the sentient subject, they are nothing' (Böhme, 2013, p. 2). Let us for a moment redirect our attention to the atmosphere around the Earth, shared by millions of species beyond our own. This perspective is central to a better understanding of environmental harm and its consequences.

A purely phenomenological perspective, as Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos (2016) argued, eludes 'a supracorporeal emergence that does not rely on consciousness, individual apperception or subjectivity' (p. 155). He, therefore, developed an ontology of atmospheres that exceeds the phenomenological binary of subject and object in which there is a human subject acting on an object (p. 156). That is, atmospheres apply pressure to animate as well as non-animate subjects in ways that are not perceivable to us. This perspective draws attention to often-surpassed elements, such as gases, dust and rock, and how the environment acts on the human instead of only the human acting on nature (Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2016, p. 155). Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos (2016), therefore, encourages us to 'withdraw from the illusion of human centrality, while retaining the ontological knowledge that the human is, by now, everywhere' (p. 163). For this article, the challenge of withdrawal is to consider our role in the more-than-human ontological atmosphere. The first step is to recognise overlooked harms and to disavow criminology's anthropocentric tendencies. Following from Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos' arguments, this article argues for a redirection of our attention towards the ways that we are contained in and responsible for the atmosphere shared by all species on Earth.

Drawing from posthumanism and 'more-than-human' philosophies, the understanding of harm must be shifted towards what has previously mostly been considered outside the criminological agenda, such as harm to non-human species, biodiversity and the ecology at large. Posthumanism can be understood as a shift towards what lies beyond humanity (Panelli, 2010). Others, such as Whatmore (2004), prefer the term 'more-than-human', emphasising 'what *exceeds* rather than what comes *after* the human' (p. 1361, emphasis in original). These re-conceptualisations question mainstream distinctions between human and non-human, including at what point the human ends and 'the other', such as the animal, begins (Derrida, 2002, 2003). Binaries of the discursive world are elements that come to structure our thinking and the way we interact with the world around us. I am especially concerned with the erroneous binary between human/non-human or culture/nature.³

Following Braidotti (2013), nature–culture is a continuum that represents 'the vital, self-organizing and yet non-naturalistic structure of living matter itself' (p. 2), thus emphasising non-human intelligence and agency.⁴ This notion contributes to disruption of the human privilege, categorical distinctions between human and non-human and the apparent divide between each set of concerns. For example, Rose (2017) wrote about 'multispecies kinship and connectivity' found in 'the Dreamings', 'the creators of much of the biotic life of earth' in Aboriginal Australian peoples' storytelling traditions (p. 52). The Dreamings are the founders of various kin groups, including human and animal species. Having been accepted into a group of 'flying fox people', descendants from the flying fox ancestors, Rose had to consider how one 'might live an ethic of kinship and care within this multispecies family' (p. 53). Such kin groups represent an alternative way of categorising the world's species outside the binary of human/non-human. In fact, the fate of the flying foxes is en-

3 Although importantly, Sundberg (2014) has highlighted how posthuman thinkers tend to reproduce colonial epistemologies, subordinating alternative worldviews and ways of knowing.

4 Todd (2016) reminds us that various concepts and ideas 'produced' by posthuman scholars strongly resemble established Indigenous epistemologies that predate posthuman writers by many thousands of years (p. 7).

twined with our own.⁵

This can be expressed in terms of the relationship between phenomenological and ontological atmospheres as they interact and depend on the state of the other. Human experiences and harm are inseparable from those of non-human species and the more-than-phenomenological world, although the threat of ordinary harms and their climactic effect on human lives is not as clear as, for example, during a global pandemic. By destabilising the boundaries between humans and animals, we also come to disrupt ideas around harm and non-harm, or rather, ordinary versus extraordinary harms. Destabilising the polarities of ordinary and extraordinary harms warrants ordinary harms to be recognised for their far-reaching, devastating consequences.

The urban edges identify and feature the edges of cities as relatively stable material structures. Atmospheres, on the other hand, extend beyond the material edges of cities. In this sense, ontological atmospheres represent 'the city beyond the city'; that is, beyond the visible, experienced and even psychological parameters of the city. Consider the urban resident on a flight between Canberra and Melbourne or the way the urban sky extends well beyond even the tallest skyscrapers. Let us also think about how polluted air from the city affects the atmosphere way beyond its structural limits. Despite occupying only 2% of the world's surface, cities are responsible for more than 60% of the Earth's greenhouse gas emissions (United Nations, n.d.), and hence, the city extends well beyond the limits of its physical structures. I have argued elsewhere for the importance of mobility in green criminological thinking; a 'green criminology in flux' (Lundberg, 2022) brings our attention to the fact that since air vibrates, expands and travels, activities undertaken in one place, such as in our cities, have consequences on air all around the globe.

Harms and the city

Engaging with phenomenological and ontological atmospheres uncovers various harms which are prominent on the urban edges. Böhme (2013) suggested that 'atmospheres are involved wherever something is being staged' (p. 2), entangling atmospheres with urban design and architecture. For example, air differs in different spaces, and inner cities often experience the worst air quality due to heavy fuel-driven traffic. Choy (2010) highlighted that air when scarce or polluted becomes a part of the political consciousness. Moreover, access to better or worse air tends to follow economic inequalities in that the rich access the best air and the poor end up in areas with the worst (Choy, 2010, p. 27). With economic stability comes the ability to choose where to live and how to avoid a range of problems – long commutes, dilapidated and less-aesthetic areas, heavily congested roads, criminality or bad air. Vertical developments have the ability to lift some people above the smog, smells and the lower classes on the ground (Adey, 2010, 2013). Others escape the smog and associated conditions by moving towards the outer edges of the city. The lower vertical edge comes with its own experiences: at this substratum, air often feels wet and leaves the taste of soil on your tongue. These are all aspects encompassed by the phenomenological experience of atmosphere, a perspective that fails to capture more-than-human harm and harm to the city beyond the city.

Ontological atmospheres, in contrast, highlight the fact that urban air affects more than its human residents. Air quality affects all species that require oxygen to live, and high rates of greenhouse gases contribute to climate change, which underscores the often-times extraordinary, evasive, and extensive consequences of ordinary harms. Combining the affective, climatological and chemical components of atmospheres, Verlie (2019) constructed 'climatic-affective atmospheres'. This approach merged two often separate atmospheric approaches, the meteorological and the affective. For example, the way weather conditions alter mentality and mood or how people experience anxiety due to a changing climate (Verlie, 2019). Such an approach acknowledges how different weath-

⁵ Flying foxes disperse larger seeds important for plant distribution, a vital role in preserving ecological functions (McConkey & Drake, 2006, p. 271).

er conditions induce behaviours, including attempts to heat or cool different living spaces, often with an adverse impact on the natural environment. As Verlie pointed out, hot weather can make the experience of public transport insufferable, promoting other forms of transport. This creates ‘affective-climatic feedback loops’ as people drive more, leading to associated effects on the atmosphere and the climate (Verlie, 2019, p. 3).

Attuning to the senses allows an exploration of atmospheres in more detail (McClanahan & South, 2019). Before artificial light sources, life’s rhythms followed that of the sun. Today life in the city never stops, and an important reason for that is electric light upending our dependency on our path around the sun. Light, lack of light and different forms of light all contribute to the affective experiences and atmospheres of spaces (Kindynis, 2021). Inner-city life is associated with light in all its colours, calling attention to a bar, an ad or a building. The underground is darker, but artificial lights have allowed us to explore and exploit the substrata more thoroughly. Similarly, sounds construct our atmospheric engagement with the city, and different sounds are conducive to pleasure, relaxation or even emergency. Expanding on Verlie’s (2019) climatic–affective atmospheres, the design of the urban edges constructs phenomenological atmospheres with implications on behaviours, ordinary harms, and the city beyond the city.

Ordinary harms in the city are associated with light, touch and sound, and many of the activities that have a negative impact on the environment also produce energy in the form of noise, smells and light. The notion of ontological atmospheres alerts us to how light and noise pollution affect not only urban inhabitants but also non-human species with a concomitant loss of biodiversity. For example, there are indications that noise pollution disrupts bird migration patterns and that bee populations are decreasing due to ambient environmental circumstances (García Ruiz & South, 2019, p. 131). Thinking phenomenologically as well as ontologically about atmospheres identifies the wider consequences of our actions and of affective–climatic feedback loops (Verlie, 2019, p. 3).

Conclusion

The edges of the city are peculiar places, moving outwards and upwards in constant flux; their in-betweenness brings about distinct appeals and challenges. This article examines the drive to develop and move the edges outwards and upwards and the harms that ensue as the edges transition and new spaces become part of the city. I have argued that green criminology should pay attention to the urban edges, the ordinary harms taking place there and the extraordinary consequences of these. In addition, the edges of the city contribute to work in urban criminology, adding another layer of complexity to the crime/harm/city nexus and pushing the boundaries beyond the urban/rural dichotomy.

At the time of writing, urban life is undergoing major changes due to the COVID-19 pandemic that has altered the lives of people all around the world since 2020. Many people are suddenly carrying out their work from home and schools and childcare facilities have temporarily closed, reducing the need to commute. As a result, city dwellers on continents and in countries such as North America, Australia and in Europe are looking to escape the inner cities for suburbia, summer houses and smaller towns (Hughes, 2020; Lasker, 2020; Marsh, 2020). These changes are also affecting ordinary harms in various ways, for example, by taking people off the roads during peak-hour traffic, increasing household energy consumption, and increasing the energy demand associated with working from home technologies. Given that people continue to work from home while dispersing around the country, our understanding of the edges of the city and perhaps our definition of cities altogether will be challenged.

Ontological atmospheres highlight important connections between us and the world around us as well as between the city edges and the cities beyond our cities. They have implications on the methodologies we employ and the ways we approach green and urban harm. For example, it draws attention to the importance of regulating urban expansion and considering the social, spatial and environmental implications of sprawl. Moreover, ordinary harms achieve something extraordinary as they implicate so many of us (residents in wealthy countries) as perpetrators and all of us (human and non-human species) as the victims of these types of harms. Moreover, we live in societies that not only encourage ordinary harms but have economies organised around continued consumption. Avoiding these types of harms sometimes seems like an impossibility or at least an uncomfortable task. Instead of rendering the idea of offenders who cause ordinary harms meaningless, it shifts the offender status away from individuals towards an economic system and a culture which encourages us to offend.

Nonetheless, the consequences of these harms rest most heavily on non-human species and more vulnerable human populations. Hence, people who enjoy the rewards of ordinary harms are those who suffer the least from them, a common narrative in the neoliberal society. Instead of concerning ourselves with the exact nature of offenders and victims, green criminology could pay more attention to the broader implications and consequences of an activity or a set of activities, in addition to who is immediately affected and by whom. In addition, Brisman and South (2018) rightly argued that '(o)ur inter-relationship with nature... needs to be conceptualized in relation to our means and capacity to act' (p. 211). They highlighted the disproportionate responsibility between someone taking from nature what they need and someone poaching wild animals in pursuit of pride and pleasure. A shift to phenomenological and ontological considerations within green criminology will help expand the edges of green criminology and expose the extraordinary consequences of ordinary harms.

Alternative development of our cities aimed at reducing the harms outlined here would see public transport and services implemented in an area before residents settle there. Urban policies should consider increased densities and encourage building in already established middle-ring suburbs. In addition, high-rise development requires further regulation to improve both social and environmental sustainability, to provide affordable housing and to improve the energy performance of buildings to reduce the energy needed to heat and cool these spaces. Ultimately, urban growth requires a holistic consideration of social inequalities and the far-reaching consequences of urban development on the more-than-human world.

Apart from the edges of the city, this article has drawn attention to several other edges: the border between ordinary and extraordinary harms, the limits of human perception of harm and finally, the edges of green criminological inquiry. Walking at the edges of green criminology exposes the limitations of criminology's current research imagination. What spaces and what harms matter and what is instead relegated to (or kept outside) the boundaries of the criminological gaze? Following the argument that binary oppositional categories such as nature/culture, harm/non-harm and offender/victim are in flux (Lundberg, 2022, p. 6), I question the taken-for-granted nature of the edges separating these often binary concepts. Bringing the periphery to the centre is crucial to advance the criminological conception of environmental harm and its expansive consequences. The city beyond the city is an attempt to resituate the green and urban criminological gazes to supersede the binary distinction between the inside and the outside of cities.

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