

Two Narratives of One Habitual Offender

Carlene Mallory (carlene_mallory1@mymail.eku.edu; DUSTYROAD40744@YAHOO.COM)
Tyler Shuplinkov (tyler_shuplinkov@mymail.eku.edu)

For twenty-three years, Brad has been incarcerated off and on; he has been labeled a persistent felony offender and has been a heavy drug user for years. Why does Brad blame his mother for his past criminal history? “Maybe if YOU had done things different, I wouldn’t have turned out the way I had,” he has often told his mother. For years, Brad could not hold down a job; now he owns his own business, but continues to fault his mother for his past criminal history. While Brad has not been rearrested of late, he has reoffended. How does Brad’s story related to Maruna’s (2001) “condemnation” and “redemption” scripts? Will Brad follow the former or has he aged out of crime? Will Brad’s recent (official) desistance from crime continue? This paper presents two narratives of one offender. In so doing, it forces us to contemplate the relationship of the offender to his family and his victims. It also requires that we reconsider the multiplicity of roles played by the narrative criminologist.