Annika Arnold

Climate Change and Storytelling

Narratives and Cultural Meaning in Environmental Communication



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This work was made possible by a scholarship provided through the Friedrich-Ebert-Foundation Germany. The book would not have happened without the cultural and institutional support offered by the University of Stuttgart and the Center for Cultural Sociology, Yale University. Institutions are nothing without the people that fill their halls with life and intellect, so my special thanks goes to my supervisors, Ortwin Renn, Stephan Moebius and to Philip Smith as well as to colleagues and friends along the way: Shai Dromi, Jin Su Joo, Stina Kjellgren, Hannah Kosow, Marco Sonnberger and Jette Weiss. On the publishing side, I want to thank Rachael Ballard and the team at Palgrave Macmillan for their advice, encouragement and patience. Empirical research is nothing without those who provide knowledge, insights and not least their time to the researcher, so I want to thank the interviewees who contributed to this project.

I also want to thank Veronika Arnold and Gerd Prandtstetter for their support and a special thank you to Karin and Ulli Arnold, my parents, for their constant encouragement in every way imaginable. Their contribution to this project is more than I can comprehend.

Contents

| 1 | Introduction: Why Narratives Matter in Climate Change Communication | 1 |
|----|--|------------|
| 2 | Climate Change Communication Studies: Inquiries into Beliefs, Information and Stories | 7 |
| 3 | How to Understand the Role of Narratives in Environmental Communication: Cultural Narrative Analysis | 5 <i>7</i> |
| 4 | Telling the Stories of Climate Change: Structure and Content | 83 |
| 5 | Conclusions: Pitfalls and the Power of Narratives | 123 |
| In | Index | |

List of Figures

| Fig. 2.1 | Opposing arguments in the climate change discourse | 14 |
|----------|--|----|
| Fig. 2.2 | Down's issue attention cycle | 16 |
| Fig. 2.3 | Social ecology – the interaction between cultural and natural | |
| | spheres of causation | 24 |
| Fig. 2.4 | Grid-group dimensions and the five myths of nature | 30 |
| Fig. 3.1 | The structural model of genre | 71 |
| Fig. 3.2 | Integrated model of cultural narrative analysis (own illustration) | 77 |
| Fig. 4.1 | Climate advocates' narratives (own illustration) | 86 |

LIST OF TABLES

| Table 2.1 | Paradigms, problems, and proposals [in 25 years of | |
|-----------|--|----|
| | PUS research] | 21 |
| Table 2.2 | Overview: terminology and topics in climate change | |
| | communication literature | 35 |
| Table 3.1 | The social role of narratives | 61 |
| Table 3.2 | Narrative in linguistics, literary theory, and social sciences | 64 |