

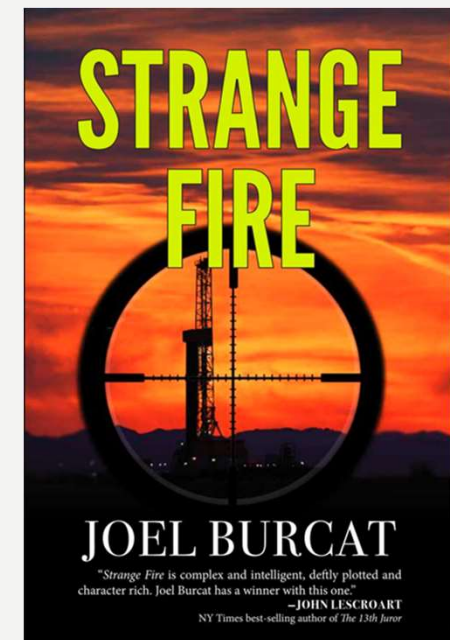
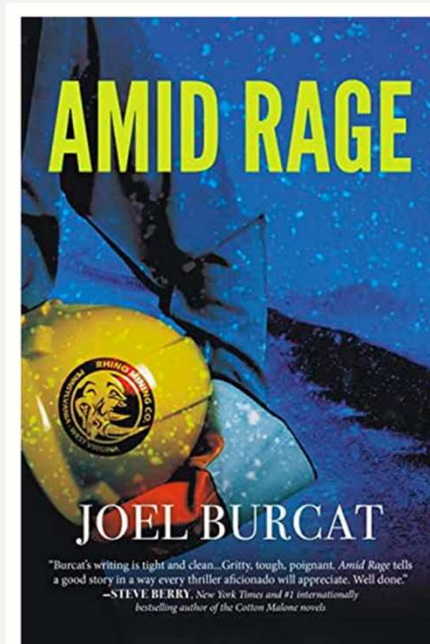
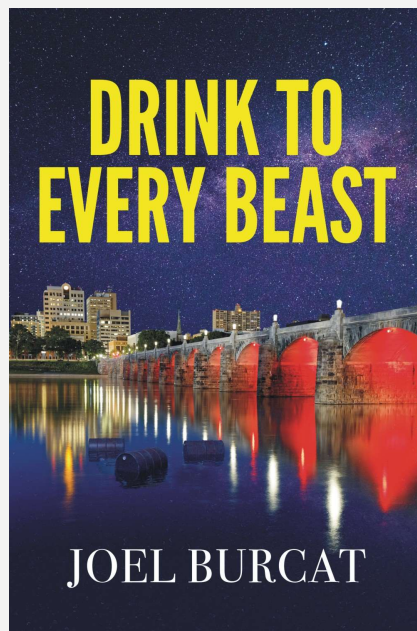
FRACK THIS BOOK!

**WRITING ABOUT THE
ENVIRONMENT IN
FICTION**

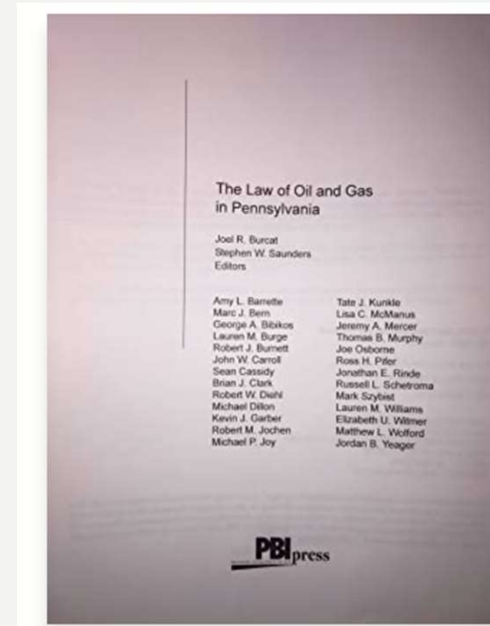
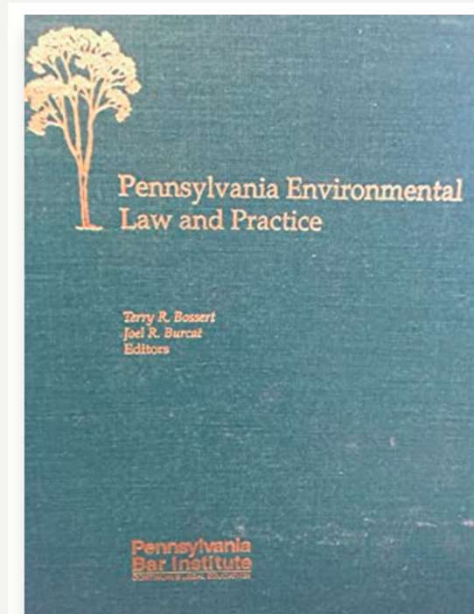
BY: JOEL BURCAT

<https://joelburcat.com/>

ENVIRONMENTAL FICTION:



NON-FICTION:



WHAT IS ENVIRONMENTAL FICTION?

- THE MONKEY WRENCH GANG
- JAWS
- THE PELICAN BRIEF
- HEAT AND LIGHT
- THE OVERSTORY

ECO-FICTION IS... (1)

Books and stories in which the environment (i.e. the setting or object) plays a central role.

ECO-FICTION IS... (2)

- The book or story may be about the environment, protecting the environment, or destroying it. The environment must play a central role in the story.

WHY DOES THIS MATTER?

- First, a little more background

FIVE TYPES OF ECO- FICTION





**WHY DISCUSS
THE 5 TYPES OF
ECO-FICTION?**

- 1. ECO-THRILLERS**
- 2. ENVT'L THRILLERS**
- 3. ENVT'L LEGAL THRILLERS**
- 4. CLI-FI**
- 5. LITERARY ECO-FICTION**

A LITTLE MORE ON ENVIRONMENTAL FICTION

Common characteristics:

- Books that have as a critical setting “the environment”
- “The environment” is a key component of the story
- It may verge on being a character

**CLASSIC
EXAMPLE**

- Environment as setting, or even as a character.
- To Build a Fire
- By Jack London

DAY DAWNED COLD AND GRAY

WHEN the man turned aside from the main Yukon trail. He climbed the high earth-bank where a little-traveled trail led east through the pine forest. It was a high bank, and he paused to breathe at the top. He excused the act to himself by looking at his watch. It was nine o'clock in the morning. There was no sun or promise of sun, although there was not a cloud in the sky. It was a clear day. However, there seemed to be an indescribable darkness over the face of things. That was because the sun was absent from the sky...



**LET'S DISCUSS
"ECO-
THRILLERS"**

**AN ISSUE
ABOUT “ECO-
THRILLERS”:
ARE ALL OF
THESE ECO-
THRILLERS?**

ZOO by James Patterson

THE MONKEY-WRENCH
GANG, by Edward Abbey

THE PELICAN BRIEF, by John
Grisham

BARSKINS, by Annie Proulx

INVARIABLY, THESE BOOKS ARE ALL FILED IN THE SAME PLACE...

Are they the
same?

The only thing
that binds them is
the setting, the
environment.



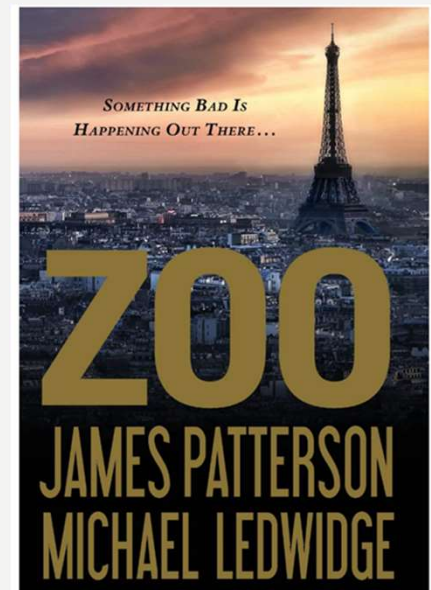
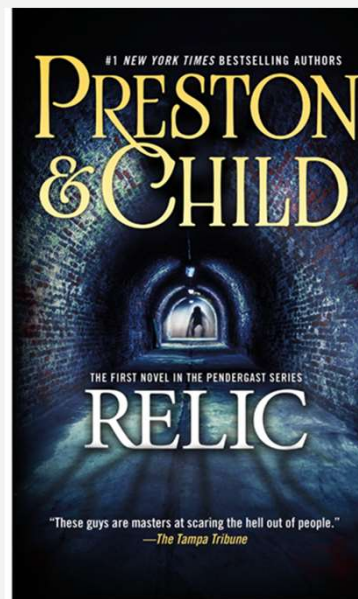
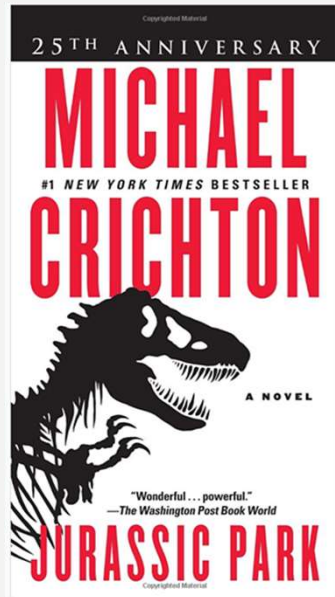
SO WHAT?

- These books are markedly different.
- Readers looking for “eco-thrillers” (e.g. The Monkey Wrench Gang) may be looking for something entirely different than what commonly is called an eco-thriller. (e.g. Zoo, Relic)
- It is lazy for reviewers to categorize them this way
- **WRITER has to decide what kind of book you are writing.**

ECO-THRILLERS

- Key component: environment as setting
- Catastrophe/calamity will or has occurred
- M..C. (hero) has to stop the catastrophe from occurring or put the genie back into the bottle
- **KEY: Science fiction or horror elements**

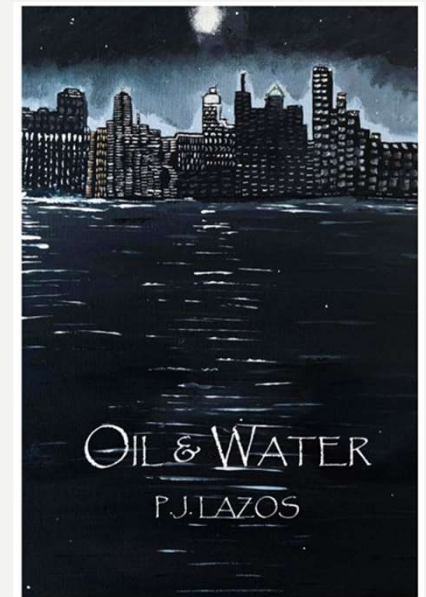
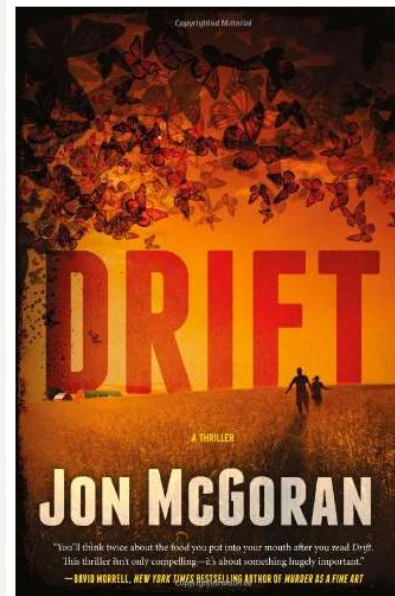
ECO-THRILLER EXAMPLES:



“ENVIRONMENTAL” THRILLERS

- Key component: environment as setting
- Man-made calamity is going to occur
- M..C. (hero) has to stop the calamity from occurring
- **Realistic scenario**
- **No science fiction or horror elements, but may have speculative fiction element (i.e. what if...)**

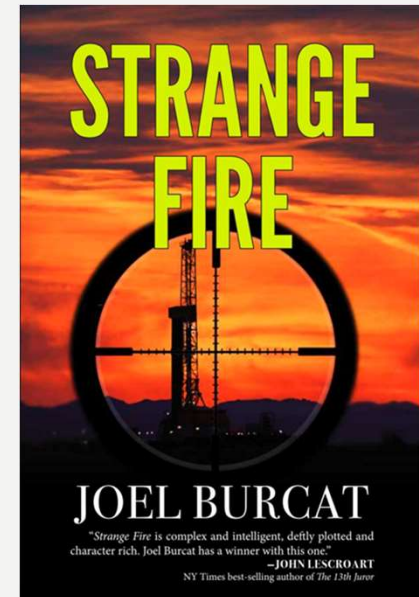
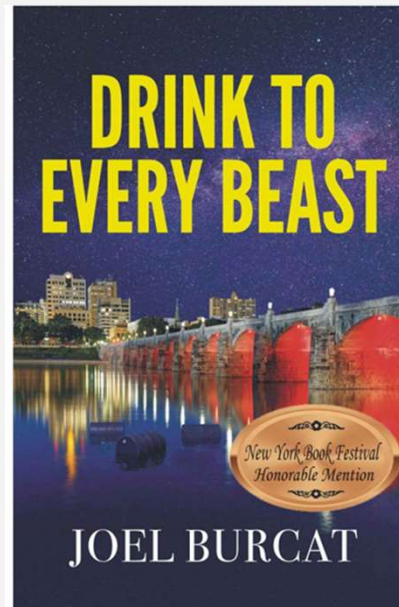
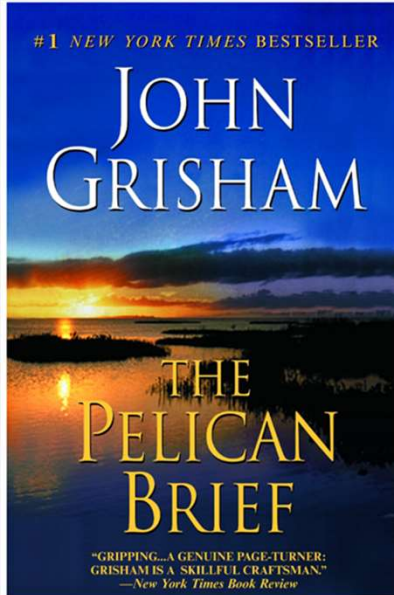
ENVIRONMENTAL THRILLER EXAMPLES:



ENV. LEGAL THRILLER EXAMPLES:

- Key component: environment as setting
- Man-made calamity has occurred
- M..C. is a lawyer who must resolve a **legal case** to bring justice or prevent the calamity from occurring again
- **Realistic scenario. Courtrooms.**
Investigations.

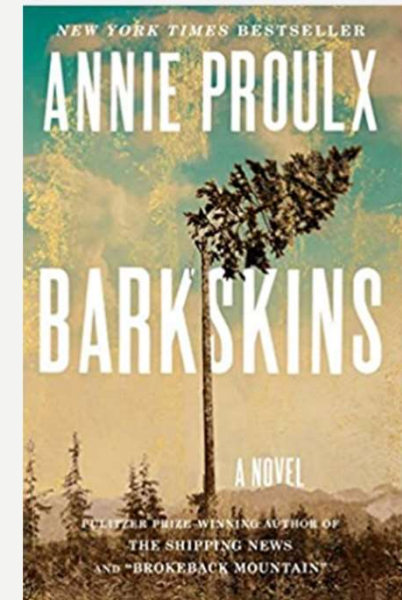
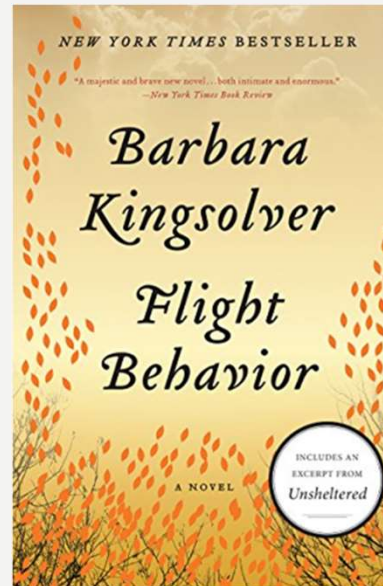
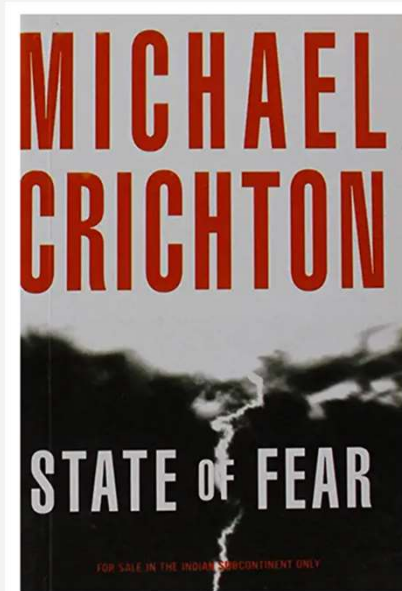
ENV. LEGAL THRILLER EXAMPLES:



CLI-FI

- Cli-Fi = Sci-Fi, get it?
- **Key component: environment as setting, particularly climate**
- Catastrophe/calamity will or has occurred
- **M.C. has to stop the catastrophe from occurring or put the genie back into the bottle**
- Science fiction elements
- Often is dystopian

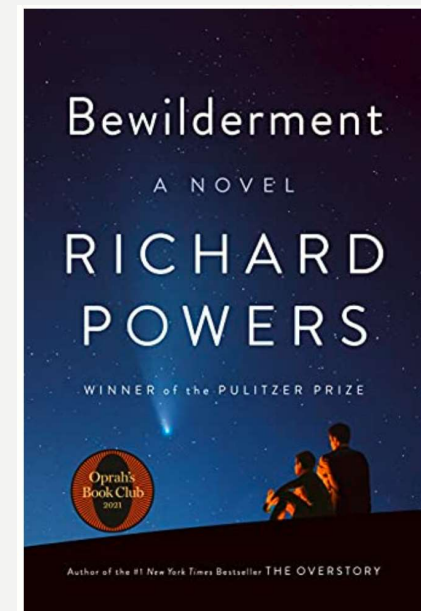
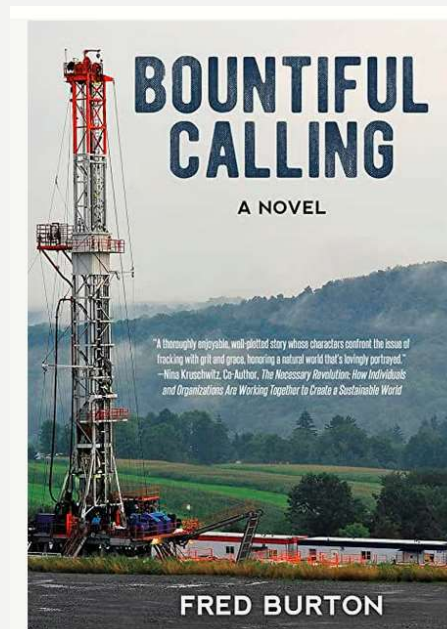
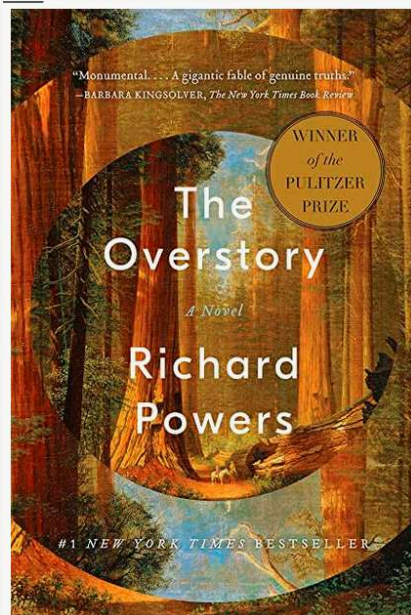
CLI-FI EXAMPLES:



ENVIRONMENTAL LITERATURE

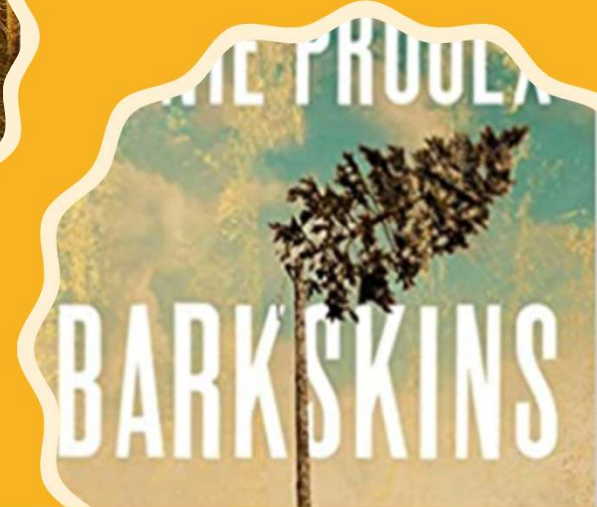
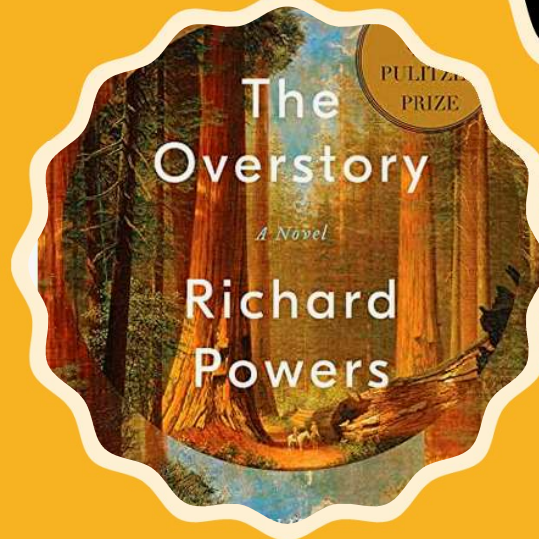
- Key component: environment as setting
- **Natural or man-made calamity is going to occur? Maybe.**
- Realistic scenario
- No science fiction or horror elements, but may have speculative fiction element (i.e. what if...)

ENV'TL LITERATURE EXAMPLES:



BIG DECISION

WHAT KIND OF
ENVIRONMENTAL
NOVEL ARE YOU
GOING TO WRITE?



BIG ISSUES

BIAS/APPROACH

Pro-approach

Anti-approach

Down the middle.

How do you handle the balance?

MORAL ISSUES

How do you handle the compelling moral issues involved?

What moral code do you follow? Examples:

- Western?
- Eastern?
- Indigenous?
- Judeo/Christian?

CONFLICTING MORAL ISSUES


Be sure to introduce conflict throughout story



What morally conflicting issues create conflict?



Best (I think) is where there is no right or wrong answer



MC has to find a way to deal with conflicting moral issues.

CONSIDERATIONS WHEN WRITING YOUR STORY

If your work is strongly anti-fracking, for example, will you turn off a part of your intended audience or will you only attract readers looking for a book/story with which they agree?

- Will you turn off readers who you may be able to influence?
- Can you be true to yourself?

WRITING A NOVEL

Here are my 10
things you need
to do to write a
novel

10 THINGS:

1. Write

2. Read

3 What do I write about?

4. Research

5. Outline/no outline

6. Writing courses

7.. Critique Groups

8. how long will it take?

9. How hard is it really?

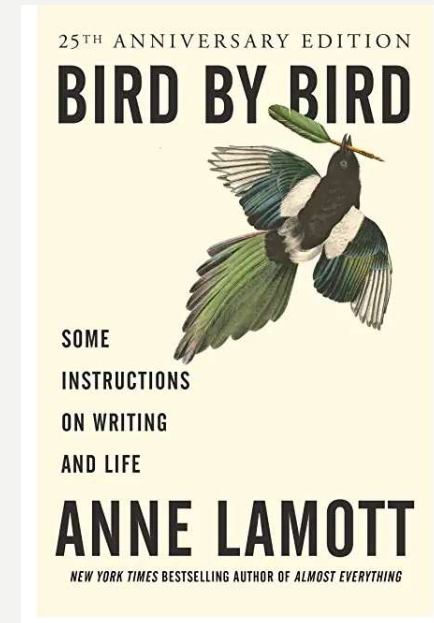
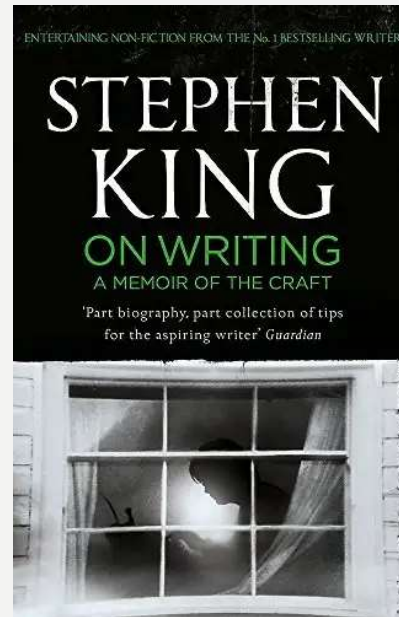
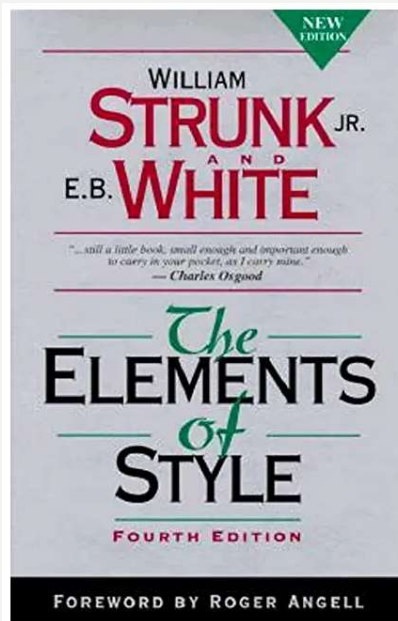
10. Agent, direct to publisher, self-publish?

**FOR A FULL
DESCRIPTION OF
DIFFERENT KINDS OF
ECO-FICTION**

**[HTTPS://JOELBURCAT.
COM/BLOG2/](https://joelburcat.com/blog2/)**

--WRITING GUIDEBOOKS

EVERY WRITER'S LIBRARY SHOULD HAVE ONE



**WHERE TO FIND TODAY'S
PROGRAM, GO TO MY BLOG...**

www.JoelBurcat.com/blog2

THANK YOU!

Joel Burcat, Author