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GREGORY CURRIE

What is Fiction?

I.

WHAT DISTINGUISHES fiction from nonfiction? Seeking an answer, literary theorists have analysed the stylistic features characteristic of fiction and the genres into which works of fiction may fall. But while stylistic or generic features may certainly count as evidence that a work is fiction rather than nonfiction, they cannot be definitive of fiction. For the author of nonfiction may adopt the conventions of fictional writing; and it is agreed on all hands that there are certain works of fiction which, considered merely as texts, might well be nonfiction.[1]

In order to understand what distinguishes fiction from other kinds of discourse it may be helpful to enquire into the conditions which must prevail in order for a successful act of fictional communication to take place. Such an approach suggests a "speech act" analysis of fiction, and it is a version of this theory that I will offer here. Such analyses of fiction are relatively common in the current literature, but the prevailing tendency is to regard fictional utterance (in a generalized sense of utterance which includes writing) as a "pseudo-performance" which is not constitutive of a fully fledged illocutionary act.[2] I want to resist this tendency. My strategy is to treat the utterance of fiction as the performance of an illocutionary act on a par with assertion. I shall then attempt a definition of fiction in terms of this illocutionary act (together with a causal condition). Before I come to the details of the proposal let us take a critical look at the reasoning which has led speech act theorists to reject this approach.

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II.

The idea that fiction is associated with a distinctive illocutionary act is considered and rejected by John Searle in his influential study of our topic.[3] He reasons as follows. There are a number of illocutionary acts which one can perform in uttering sentences. One may assert something, make a promise or a request, ask a question, etc. A principle which Searle adheres to is this:

> In general the illocutionary act (or acts) performed in the utterance of a sentence is a function of the meaning of the sentence. We know, for example, that an utterance of the sentence "John can run the mile" is a performance of one kind of illocutionary act, and that an utterance of the sentence "Can John run the mile?" is a performance of another kind of illocutionary act, because we know that the indicative sentence form means something different from the interrogative sentence form (p. 64).

Talk of a sentence form "meaning" something is admittedly obscure, but Searle's point is clear from the first sentence quoted: the meaning of a sentence determines the kind of illocutionary act it is used to perform. I shall call this the *determination principle*.[4]

Searle applies this principle to the idea that the difference between fiction and nonfiction is a difference between kinds of illocutionary acts performed. On this view the writer of nonfiction is performing the illocutionary act of asserting (when using the indicative sentence form), while the writer of fiction is performing the illocutionary act of "telling a story" (p. 63).

Searle rejects this theory because the writer of fiction may use the same indicative sentences as the writer of nonfiction. And this is inconsistent with the determination principle; we would have sameness of meaning and

distinctness of illocutionary act: asserting and storytelling.

I want to make two observations about this argument. First, the argument depends entirely upon the determination principle. But the principle seems obviously false. The same sentence may, given the right context, be used to make an assertion, ask a question, or give a command (e.g. "You are going to the concert").

Secondly, it turns out that Searle's own theory of fiction offends against the determination principle. On Searle's view the author of fiction engages "in a nondeceptive pseudo-performance which constitutes pretending to recount to us a series of events" (p. 65). In doing so "an author of fiction pretends to perform illocutionary acts which he is not in fact performing" (p. 66). Instead of engaging in an illocutionary act of any kind the author is pretending to engage in the illocutionary act of asserting when he writes an indicative sentence.

What Searle is saying is that the same sentence with the same meaning can occur in nonfiction as the result of the illocutionary act of assertion, and again in fiction as the result of an act which is not an illocutionary act at all. So sentence meaning does not determine the illocutionary act performed. To put the matter slightly more formally, Searle's determination principle says that there is a function f from sentence meanings to illocutionary acts where $f(P)$ is the act performed in uttering P. But on his own further account there is no such function, because the value of f for a given argument is sometimes an illocutionary act and sometimes (as in the case of fictional utterance) the value is undefined (since the associated act is not an illocutionary act). And a function cannot be both defined and undefined for a given argument.

Seale might respond by saying that sentence meaning determines illocutionary force in the following modified sense. If we know the meaning of a given sentence *and* know that it is being used to perform an illocutionary act then, we know what kind of illocutionary act it is being used to perform. On this view illocutionary force is a function of two arguments rather than of one. The first argument would be the sentence meaning in question, the second some conventionally chosen object indicating whether the sentence is being used to perform an illocutionary act. If it is, let that object be 1; if not, let it be 0. Let P be an indicative sentence. Then $f(P,1)$ = assertion, and $f(P,O)$ = undefined. This is a way of modifying the determination principle so as to restore consistency with Searle's account of fiction. Notice, however, that the argument I set out earlier against the determination principle is also an argument against this modification of it. Further, if the illocutionary act is taken to be a function of two arguments, only one of which is sentence meaning, then the theory that fiction is the product of an illocutionary act may be presented in a way which is formally parallel to the modified Searlean account. Let f be a function of two arguments—the first a sentence meaning, the second a conventionally chosen object indicating whether the context is fiction or nonfiction. If it is non-fiction, let that object be 1; if fiction, let it be O. Then $f(P,1)$ = assertion and $f(P,O)$ = telling a story. I do not believe that Searle has given us any reason to prefer one of these accounts to the other, and so he has given us no reason to think that fiction is the product of a merely pretended illocutionary act. Let us take a closer look at the idea that it is.

Monroe Beardsley adopts the "pretended assertion" theory (as we may call it) on grounds rather similar to Seale's:

> . . . if certain words are generally used in performing an illocutionary act of one kind, then to utter those words without fulfilling all the conditions for that illocutionary act is to present something that is like—not quite—that illocutionary act. Thus deception becomes possible—and also harmless pretending. It is only necessary to make it clear that one or more of the requisite conditions are lacking, while at the same time inviting the receiver (the hearer or reader) to make-believe that they are present, in order to convert a genuine illocutionary action into a fictive one. So fictive discourse, on this view, is discourse in which there is make-believe illocutionary action, but in fact no such action is performed.[5]

I think Beardsley is right to say that the author of fiction invites the receiver to engage in a kind of make-believe. The question is whether, in doing so, the author *himself* engages in make-believe; whether, as Beardsley says, the author performs a make-believe illocutionary act rather than a genuine one. (Notice that Beardsley is not careful to distinguish these two alternatives.) It is true that the author of fiction utters sentences which normally have the illocutionary force of assertion, without their doing so in his mouth. But this is not conclusive evidence that no

illocutionary act is being performed. For, as I remarked against Searle, we are clearly capable of transposing utterances from one illocutionary key to another. So it is not true, as Beardsley suggests, that to utter a sentence generally used to perform one illocution without fulfilling the conditions appropriate for that act is always merely to perform a pretence of that act. Suppose that a speaker who utters an indicative sentence, "It's hot in here," is actually giving the command "Open the window." We would not describe such an action as a pretence. The speaker intends his utterance to be understood as a command, and believes that the context will enable his hearer to divine his intention. So too with the author of fiction. He relies upon the audience being aware that they are confronting a work of fiction, and assumes that they will not take utterances which have the indicative form to be assertions. He is thus not pretending anything. He is inviting us to pretend, or rather, to make-believe something. For to read a work as fiction is to play a kind of internalized game of make-believe. Kendall Walton has given an illuminating account of the role of make-believe in fiction and the visual arts, and I shall make relatively uncritical use of the idea in what follows.[6] (Let me apologize here to the reader for the use I make of the barbaric expressions "make-belief," "make-believing," and "make-believed.")

If, as I have suggested, we think of fiction in communicative terms, then I think we see that the hypothesis of authorial pretence plays no role in the explanation of how such communication takes place. What is required is that the reader understands which attitude towards the statements of the text the author intends him to adopt. In the case of fiction the intended attitude is one of make-believe. So the author of fiction intends not merely that the reader will make-believe the text, but that he will do so partly as a result of his recognition of that very intention. Recognition of that intention secures "illocutionary uptake." So while it is essential that the author have a certain complex intention it is not required that he engage in any kind of pretence.

III.

These last remarks serve to introduce the strategy I shall adopt here. For I shall take up the suggestion of Strawson and others that the illocutionary act is a function of the speaker's intention.[7] There are, of course, difficulties about implementing this idea in a general way; there are arguments for thinking that speech acts of a purely conventional kind are not amenable to analysis in terms of any mechanism based on a speaker's intentions. But for many cases the intentional approach seems right, and I believe it is right for the case of fiction. After I have filled in some details we shall see one important advantage of this account over Searle's: that it enables us to distinguish the action of the author of fiction from that of the one who merely recites or acts out a fictional work.

We now have the elements for an account of the illocutionary act performed by an author of fiction. The author of fiction intends that the reader make-believe *P*, where *P* is the sentence or string of sentences he utters. And he intends that the reader shall come to make-believe *P* partly as a result of his recognition that the author intends him to do this. The author intends that the reader will read the work *as* fiction because he perceives the work to *be* fiction; that is, because he realizes it to be the product of a certain intention. The reader may recognize this intention in a number of ways; through his perception in the work of certain familiar elements of fictional style, or simply by noting that the work is presented and advertised as fiction. The author may even make an explicit avowal of his intentions, commonly done by prefixing the formula "once upon a time" to the text. Of course the reader may misperceive the author's intentions: he may think that the work is fiction when it is not, as readers of Defoe's *The Apparition of Mrs. Veal* used to misperceive that work as fiction. In that case we have the familiar case where "illocutionary uptake" is not secured.

With this in mind we may present the following "zero-definition" of fictional utterance, where *U* is the utterer, ø a variable ranging over characteristics of persons, and *P* a proposition.

(F)

U performs the illocutionary act of uttering fiction in uttering *P* if and only if

There exists ø such that *U* utters *P* intending that anyone who were to have ø

(1) would make-believe *P*;

(2) would recognize *U*'s intention of (1);

(3) would have (2) as a reason for doing (1).

ø may be any characteristic or group of characteristics (perhaps vague) the author would acknowledge as sufficient to ensure that anyone possessing them would, under normal circumstances, grasp his illocutionary intentions. It may be as general as "member of the author's speech community." On this definition it is of course possible for someone to write fiction without intending that anyone shall actually read it. I call this a "zero definition" because I leave open the possibility that it may require refinement of some kind.[8] But my aim here is to present the outlines of a program, not to pursue any one aspect of it in great depth. I shall therefore leave the question of definition here.

IV.

In characterizing fictional communication in this way do we arrive at a satisfactory definition of fiction itself? Not immediately. That is, if we say that a discourse is fictional if and only if it is the product of the illocutionary intention defined by the schema *F*, then we are faced with some problem cases. For example, an author may concoct a story which he intends the audience to believe rather than to make-believe. It has been suggested to me that this was Defoe's intention in writing *Robinson Crusoe*.[9] I do not know whether this is the case, but it certainly might have been. If we were to discover that it was we would surely not cease to regard *Robinson Crusoe* as fiction. Conversely, there may be cases where the author had a fictional intention but where we do not want to grant the fictional status to the resulting text. Someone may write a strictly autobiographical account of his or her life (perhaps a life full of highly unlikely events), adopting as he or she does certain stylistic devices usually indicative of fictional discourse. The author might intend that the audience make-believe the story, and reasonably expect that the audience will understand that this is the intention. But it is doubtful whether such a work is genuinely fiction. These are difficulties for my theory. They are also difficulties for a position like Beardsley's and Searle's.

What examples like the first suggest is the existence of some capacity on the part of the literary public to confer the status of fiction on works which are not fiction merely in virtue of the intentions of their authors. If Defoe really did intend the reading public to be taken in by *Robinson Crusoe* then what he produced was not fiction but deceptive assertion. (This is as much a consequence of the Searle-Beardsley theory as of mine, and I think it is intuitively correct.) But it is also true that *Robinson Crusoe* is today too firmly in the fiction category to be shifted by discoveries about the author's intentions. I think we should say that a "core" category of fiction is defined by the author's illocutionary intentions, and then allow for a category of "secondary" fiction defined in terms of a prevailing tendency in the community to adopt the make-believe attitude towards the texts in question. (The case of the Bible tends to confirm this hypothesis. Some people certainly read biblical stories "as fiction," but there are sufficiently many who don't to prevent the fictional attitude from prevailing. And I think we would not comfortably say, whatever our theological standpoint, that the Bible *is* fiction.)

The case of the apparently fictional autobiography presents another kind of difficulty. It is not that the community may intervene to revoke the work's fictional status; intuitively the work never was fiction at all. Is it because the story is true? No; merely being true would not be enough for us to say that the work was not fiction. Someone may write an historical novel, staying with the known facts and inventing incidents only where historical knowledge is lacking. Suppose it then turns out that these events described in the novel exactly correspond to what actually happened. I want to say that the work is fiction, even though it is entirely true.

It may be thought that the trouble arises because the author is engaging in a kind of deception; encouraging the audience, by indirect means, to assume that what he is saying is true. But this does not reach the heart of the matter; there are counterexamples to the proposal which do not depend upon such a deceptive intent as this.

Here are the counter examples:[10]

1. Jones finds a manuscript *m* which he takes to be fictional and which he determines to plagiarize. He produces his own text, exactly recounting the events in *m*, but written in a somewhat different way. But *m* was, unknown to Jones, nonfiction. Surely Jones's text is nonfiction; but on my theory it is fiction.[11]

2. Jones experiences certain events which he represses. He then writes a story, recounting those events, but which he takes to be a fiction invented by himself. Again. Jones's text is surely nonfiction; on my theory it is fiction.

In these counterexamples, and the many variants of them that we can imagine, the trouble seems to be caused by what we may call an "information-preserving chain" from certain obtaining events to the text in question. That is, in these cases Jones's production of his text depends (causally) upon him processing information which correctly describes certain events. (In 2 the processing is subliminal.)

Much more could be said in explication of the notion of an information-preserving chain, and many difficulties might be encountered on the way. But for present purposes I think we may rest content with the intuitive idea I hope that I have conveyed so far. Let us say, then, that a work is fiction (in the "core" sense) if and only if it is the product of an intention of the kind specified in the schema (F), *and* the resulting text is not related by an information-preserving chain to a sequence of actually occurring events. This allows us to avoid counterexamples 1 and 2, and the deceptive intent counterexample, for in that example there clearly is an information-preserving chain from author to text. It also explains, incidentally, why the accidentally true historical novel is fiction—there is no information-preserving chain between event and text.

David Lewis has drawn my attention to the following interesting case. Kingsley Amis has a short story, entitled "Who or what was it?" in which he begins by saying that he is going to recount certain events which happened to him and to Elizabeth Jane Howard, his wife.[12] At first one is inclined to believe that this is a piece of autobiography, but it becomes increasingly clear that what we are being offered is a fictional story of the supernatural. Amis is playing with his audience; revealing his fictional intent only late in the piece. He apparently does not intend that we make-believe all the propositions of the story (at least on the first reading). But surely the *whole* piece is fiction. What am I to say about this?

Now while it is true that Amis intends us, on a first reading, to believe the earlier part of the story, it seems to me that, for the intended effect to be achieved, Amis must also intend us *retroactively* to make-believe the early part. That is, the effect is achieved, not merely by getting us to switch over from belief to make-belief at some stage, but by getting us to recognize, later, that we have misread the earlier part, and should now revise our understanding of the author's intention. Thus Amis intends that the whole story is to be make-believed; it is just that he does not make this intention clear until late in the piece.

The example raises another question. Amis, sorrowing at the world's credulity, reports that a number of people were wholly taken in by the story, despite the fantastical nature of the events depicted.[13] Suppose he had intended his deception to be seamless, to be carried through to the end. On my account the story would then be nonfiction. Is this correct? I believe it is. The feeling that it is not is due, I believe, to the conflation of the fiction/nonfiction distinction with a distinction between serious and nonserious intention to deceive. Hold on for a moment to the supposition that Amis's deceptive intent was global, and ask about the possible reasons he might have for this deception. Probably the reason would be a desire simply to see how much he could get away with; how much gullibility he could draw on. This would be nonserious deception. But suppose (and I mean no actual imputation of unworthy motive) the reason were a desire to make a name for himself as one in contact with the occult, or perhaps to provide false evidence for an irrationally favored theory about the supernatural. This would be serious deception; and in that case none of us would want to call the work fiction. Those who claim that the work would be fiction even if the deceptive intent were global must really, then, be claiming that the work would be fiction as long as the deceptive intent were global *and* nonserious. In that case the boundary between serious and nonserious deceptive assertion would be part of the boundary between fiction and nonfiction. But I do not think that this can be right. First of all, the boundary between nonserious and serious intention to deceive is vague, perhaps very vague. But the distinction between fiction and nonfiction is, intuitively, a rather sharp one. (That is, as sharp as any such distinction can be prior to explication.) But more importantly, it is clear that if Amis's intention were to deceive us then, regardless of whether that intention was serious or nonserious, he would be lying, and to say that a work is fiction is surely to absolve the author from any accusation that he is telling a lie.

I suggest, then, that the claim that the story would be fiction even on the supposition

of a global intention to deceive stems from a desire to avoid classing the story, if it were deceptively intended, with misrepresentations of personal achievement or of scientific evidence, or similarly mischievous activities. But this can be done by distinguishing serious from nonserious deception, and leaving all deception outside the boundary of fiction.

V.

I turn now to a distinct advantage of this theory over Searle's. It enables us to distinguish the activity of the author of fiction from that of the speaker of fiction, the actor, or the reciter of poetry. It seems intuitively clear that the author and the speaker are engaged in quite different kinds of linguistic actions. From an illocutionary point of view, the performance of the actor or one who merely reads aloud from a given text is a lower grade activity than that of the author writing (or dictating, as it may be) his work. But Searle tends to assimilate the one to the other. He tells us that "The actor pretends . . . to perform the speech acts and other acts of [the] character [he portrays]."[14] Thus both author and actor are engaging in the same kind of pretence. They are both pretending to perform illocutionary acts which they do not in fact perform.

On the theory presented here we can clearly see the difference between the actions of the author and the actor. The author is performing a genuine illocutionary act determined by his intentions. But the actor on the stage is not performing any illocutionary acts. This is evident from the fact that what he is doing when he utters his lines is quite independent of any illocutionary intentions he may have. What determines that he is acting is the fact that his utterances and other actions are intended by him to conform to the script and to the directions of the play, together with the fact that he is doing these things in the right institutional setting. Now "acting" is an intentional verb, as my account of it in the previous sentence makes clear. To be acting the actor must have various intentions. But he does not need to have any of those intentions which would make his utterance an illocutionary act.[15]

This explains our intuition that the actor's linguistic performance is a pseudo-performance in the sense that it is not the performance of an illocutionary act. But this is not true of the author of fiction, who performs a genuine illocutionary act.

VI.

There are some complications in the notion of make-believe that we need to take note of. I have spoken as if we always make-believe those propositions contained in the text of a fictional work. This is not so.

The author of fiction frequently uses words and sentences nonliterally. What happens in such a case? Suppose that an author of fiction uses words ironically or metaphorically or in some other nonliteral way. Then he is uttering the proposition *P* but not with the intention of getting us to make-believe *P*. He intends that we should make-believe *Q*, where *Q* is a proposition distinct from *P*. He does this by invoking the same mechanism of conversational implicature, described by Grice, which we invoke when we speak nonliterally in ordinary conversation.[16] Thus if the author says *P* at some point in his text, and if the previous course of his text makes it seem inappropriate that we should make-believe *P* at that point, then we cast about for some other proposition that it would be appropriate for us to make-believe. And our choice of an appropriate proposition is guided by the same rules of quality, quantity, etc., which govern the progress of a well-conducted conversation.

Make-believe is complicated in another direction. There are things that we are called upon to make-believe in a work of fiction that are neither stated nor conversationally implicated by the text itself. If Holmes leaves London and arrives in Edinburgh without his mode of transport being described we are clearly called upon to make-believe that he travelled there by some conventional means of transport available in the late nineteenth century, presumably by railway. We are not to make-believe that he travelled by a teleportation device of his own invention, for it is surely false "in the fiction" that he used such a device.

David Lewis has given a complex and ingenious account of the conditions under which a proposition is true in a given fiction.[17] His account seems to be able to deal with a large class of cases where the text fails explicitly to determine the truth-value of some relevant state of affairs. Counterexamples of one kind or another are to be expected

however. As with the characterization of fictive illocutionary intentions given earlier, I shall simply assume that Lewis's account is on the right lines, and help myself to the idea of truth in fiction with a reasonably clear conscience.

The question is, how do we mesh the idea of a proposition being true in a fiction with our account of make-believe? Must the reader make-believe all and only those propositions true in the fiction? It will certainly not generally be the case that the author intends the reader to make-believe all and only all the propositions true in the fiction. It is probably true in the Sherlock Holmes stories that Holmes, for all his amazing powers, is a human being in the biological sense. But it would have been a philosophically very self-conscious Conan Doyle who intended his audience to make-believe that proposition. To answer the question of whether readers of Sherlock Holmes stories do even ideally make-believe that proposition we would have to have a sharper concept of make-belief that we do. Perhaps we can use the vagueness of the concept of make-belief here to our own advantage, simply articulating it further in the way that suits us best. Thus it is perhaps convenient to say that the wholly successful act of fictional communication involves make-believing exactly those propositions true in the fiction. (We must be careful to leave room for greater and lesser degrees of success here. Success in fictional communication cannot be an all or nothing affair.)

If we pursue this line, or any line similar to it, we start to complicate matters by separating the intended act of fictional communication from the reader's act of make-believe. There will be cases of successful fictional communication where the reader is required (ideally) to make-believe propositions which the author does not intend him to make-believe. But this is not an unacceptable consequence. We merely have to understand that fiction involves a two-levelled structure of make-believe. To be fiction the text must be such that what it contains is intended by its author to be make-believed. But in picking up the invitation, the reader also picks up an obligation (ideally) to make-believe certain things not explicitly stated in (or conversationally implicated by) the text.

Let us note also that works of fiction may contain sentences which are nonfiction. The author of fiction may make statements which he does not intend the reader to make-believe, but rather to believe. Thus Walter Scott breaks off the narrative of *Guy Mannering* in order to tell us something about the condition of Scottish gypsies. And it is pretty clear that what he is saying he is asserting. This is an obvious point. But there is a related and less obvious point. It should be clear by now that the distinction, within a text, between fictional and nonfictional statements is not the same as the distinction between false and true statements. Nor is it the distinction between what authors (and readers) acknowledge as factual and what they do not so acknowledge. Thus consider a statement within a fictional text, the truth of which is common knowledge between the author and the intended readership—for instance a fact about London geography. Such a statement may be offered as an integral part of the narrative, as vital to our understanding of how certain events in the novel take place. The offering of such information is, it seems to me, very different in status from the clearly nonfictional utterances which constitute Scott's remarks on gypsy life. We are not intended to bracket out the geographical information from the rest of the story; we are intended, I think, to adopt the make-believe attitude towards it as much as towards the description of fictive characters and their doings. Thus it may be that we are asked to make-believe not only what is true, but also what is common knowledge between author and reader.[18] A statement may be both fictional *and* common knowledge.

VII.

I shall conclude by making a point of clarification about my main thesis.

The answer I have given to the question "What constitutes fictional communication?" is not an answer to any question about the aesthetic value of fictional works. That fictional communication takes place between author and reader does not entail that the reader finds the work satisfying, or that there is anything satisfying in it to be found. To use again the terminology of speech act theory, success in the aesthetic sense is a matter of perlocutionary effect, not of illocutionary uptake. The author may intend the reader to be moved by the work, to draw from it conclusions about the nature of human

existence, and so on. But these are not his illocutionary intentions, and the work's being fiction is not dependent upon his having intentions such as these. That the work's aesthetic value is a matter of its being apt to produce certain perlocutionary effects is—the "affective fallacy" to the contrary—a proposition I adhere to, but this is not the place to argue for it. I am concerned here only with what is constitutive of the very notion of fiction.

[1] On the linguistic approach to fiction *see also* Monroe Beardsley, "Fiction as Representation," *Synthese* 46, no. 3 (1981), 291-311, especially Section II.

[2] *See* John Searle, "The Logical Status of Fictional Discourse," *New Literary History* 6 (1975), 319-22. Most writers on the "logic" of fiction believe that the author is engaging in some kind of pretence. *See also* Richard Ohmann, "Speech Acts and the Definition of Literature," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 4, no. 1 (1971), 1-19; Barbara Herrnstein Smith, "Poetry as Fiction," *New Literary History* 2, no. 2 (1971), 259-81; D. M. Armstrong, "Meaning and Communication," *Philosophical Review* 80, no. 4 (1971), 427-47; R. L. Brown and M. Steinmann, "Native Readers of Fiction: A Speech-Act and Genre-Rule Approach to Defining Literature," in P. Hernadi, ed., *What is Literature?* (Indiana University Press, 1978); M. C. Beardsley, "Aesthetic Intentions and Fictive Illocutions," in P. Hernadi, ibid; D. K. Lewis, "Truth in Fiction," *American Philosophical Quarterly* 15, no. 1 (1978), especially p. 40. Searle's theory is conditionally endorsed by John Reichert, in his *Making Sense of Literature* (University of Chicago Press, 1977), especially p. 54. *See also* Richard Gale, "The Fictive Use of Language," *Philosophy* 46, no. 178 (1971), 324-39.

[3] *See* Searle (ibid). Page references are to the reprint of this article in Searle's *Expression and Meaning* (Cambridge University Press, 1979).

[4] "Kind of illocutionary act" must be construed broadly. Thus the indicative sentence form may be used to perform illocutionary acts within the assertive class of illocutionary acts, and this "includes statements, assertions, descriptions, characterizations, explanations and numerous others" (Searle, p. 65n). It is a principle of determination thus broadly construed which is the target of my attack below. In the discussion of Searle's view I shall often use "assertion" in this wider sense.

[5] Beardsley, "Aesthetic Intentions," p. 170.

[6] *See* Kendall Walton, "Fearing Fictions," *Journal of Philosophy* 75, no. 1 (1978), 5-27 and "Pictures and Make Believe," *Philosophical Review* 82, no. 3 (1973), 283-319. *See also* David Novitz, "Fiction, Imagination and Emotion," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism XXXVIII*, no. 3 (1980), 280-88. Walton and Novitz draw rather different conclusions from this idea.

[7] *See* H. P. Grice, "Meaning," *Philosophical Review* 66, no. 3 (1957), 377-88; "Utterer's Meaning, Sentence Meaning and Word Meaning," *Foundations of Language* 4, no. 3 (1968), 225-42, "Utterer's Meaning and Intentions," *Philosophical Review* 78, no. 2 (1969), 147-77; P. F. Strawson, "Intention and Convention in Speech Acts," *Philosophical Review* 73, no. 4 (1964), 439-60; D. M. Armstrong, "Meaning and Communication," in S. R. Schiffer, *Meaning* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972).

[8] Here are two obvious refinements. Sometimes in fiction the narrator seems to be addressing a question directly to the reader. But we cannot be called upon to make-believe an interrogative; rather the author is inviting us to make-believe that the narrator is asking us a question. We may adjust our account by reformulating *F*: replace (1) by (1′) would make-believe that the narrator is γ-ing *P*; where γ ranges over illocutionary acts.

Note that to make-believe *P* is the very same act (type) as to make-believe that someone is asserting *P*. This reveals an important asymmetry between make-belief and belief. To believe *P* is not the same as to believe that someone is asserting *P*.

Secondly, it might be argued, that *U* will not have performed any illocutionary act unless illocutionary uptake is secured (i. e., recognition of intention (1)). If you regard this objection as serious, then simply take *F* as defining what it is for an utterance to have a fictional illocutionary *force*, then say that the utterance is a fictional illocutionary act only if there is an audience that recognizes intention (1).

[9] By Roy Perrett.

[10] Here I am grateful to Don Mannison.

[11] Three additional points need to be made about this case. One: it involves deceptive intent, but not of the kind involved in the previous case. Two: to secure the nonfictionality of Jones's revision of the original text we must assume that, whatever other stylistic variations he introduces, he leave proper names unchanged. Three: the example is, strictly speaking, underdescribed. There are two subcases to consider: (1a) the original text from which plagiarizes is both the product of an assertative illocutionary intention and largely true; (1b) it is the product of an assertative illocutionary intention and mostly or wholely untrue. If the case were (1b) then I think our intuition that Jones's text was fiction would be, at best, a very weak one. Let us assume then that the case being considered is (1a).

[12] In *Collected Short Stories* (Harmondsworth and New York, 1983). The story was originally given as a radio broadcast by the author.

[13] *See* his "Introduction" to *Collected Short* Stories, pp. 11-13.

[14] Searle, p. 69.

[15] A related point is made by Walton, ("Fearing Fictions," p. 14).

[16] *See* H. P. Grice, "Logic and Conversation," in P. Cole and J. L. Morgan, eds., *Syntax and Semantics*, volume 3: *Speech Acts* (New York, 1975), pp. 41-58. For an application of these ideas to literature *see* Mary Louise Pratt, *Towards a Speech Act Theory of Literature* (Indiana University Press, 1975), chapter 5.

[17] Lewis, "Truth in Fiction."

[18] This may be developed into an argument against the identification of make-believe with pretence, since one cannot pretend to believe what one actually does believe. I omit the details.

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