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In and Out: The Dynamics of Imagination in the Engagement with Narratives

Despite the attention the topic has received in recent years, there is still little agreement on how best to characterize what is at the core of engaging with narratives, irrespective of the medium—whether novels, films, plays, and so forth. Here, I look at a portion of contemporary philosophical debate, specifically, at Noël Carroll's and Matthew Kieran's criticisms of what we can call for convenience the "participant view" of narrative engagement.[1] Such a view comprises those accounts that, albeit in rather different ways, explain narrative engagement in terms of a narrative perceiver's *self*-oriented responses, that is, of responses involving some sort of imaginative projection onto the narrated events or some sort of imaginative sharing in the mental states of the characters.[2] The spectrum of notions invoked by such theories goes from identification to empathy, with the latter sometimes explained as mental simulation, to that form of imagination that Richard Wollheim dubbed "central imagining."[3] By contrast, the approach defended by Carroll and Kieran, hereafter called the "onlooker view," conceives of narrative engagement in terms of *other*-oriented responses, those typical of sympathy.[4] It privileges Wollheim's "acentral imagining" and deems a perceiver's understanding of a fictional situation from without, so to speak, as usually sufficient to explain one's engagement with a narrative.[5]

I argue for a partial redirection of this debate, both by pointing to what I consider the correct and most fruitful methodology in this area and by making the case for a *pluralistic* approach, one that acknowledges the existence of several mechanisms of engagement with narratives. I start by discussing the battery of objections raised by Car-

roll and Kieran against the participant view, for that will provide an excellent opportunity to correct the methodological mistakes that vitiate, I will claim, this debate, and to introduce my pluralistic approach (Section I). Then, I correct a rather prevalent misconstruction of Wollheim's notion of central imagining (Section II). Hence, I propose my own emendations to Wollheim's views on the modes of imagination, which will provide me with the conceptual structure needed further to indicate a novel direction for the investigation of narrative engagement (Section III). My positive proposal is then strengthened and clarified by applying it to passages from Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* (Section IV).

I. CARROLL'S AND KIERAN'S OBJECTIONS TO THE PARTICIPANT VIEW

The debate on narrative engagement is best assessed after having identified an area on which there should be agreement between the two opposing approaches. Here, then, are four basic claims that, though we can safely assume they would not, as such, be disputed by anyone, have certainly been overlooked in this debate. (1) Engaging with narratives involves the imagination. Whether one constructs a narrative perceiver's involvement primarily as first or third person, such an involvement is made possible by, and may largely consist in, an engagement of the imagination. In fact, the debate between the participant view and the onlooker view principally concerns the sort of imagination that narrative engagement involves (see Section II). (2) Narrative engagement is relevant to both narrative interpretation

and narrative evaluation or appreciation. Appropriately engaging with a narrative, responding in the ways it prescribes or invites, is integral to the process of appreciating the work. Further, appropriate engagement may be a condition of understanding at least some narratives or parts thereof, if under a sufficiently broad conception of narrative interpretation. (3) Engagement with narratives is usefully distinguished between participation in the narrated events—call it *narrative participation*—and participation in the characters' states of mind, primarily emotional states—call it *character participation*.[6] (4) To the extent that the debate on narrative engagement, and especially on character participation, largely turns on such notions as empathy, sympathy, and identification, the analyses of those notions must be consistent with what they amount to in their ordinary, extrafictional occurrences. Implicitly, this is accepted by everyone involved in this debate, as demonstrated, if nothing else, by the frequent references to extrafictional examples. Although these claims are quite basic and agreeable, and indeed some of them are explicitly or implicitly agreed upon, Carroll's and Kieran's critiques of the participant view betray an oversight of them, as will soon become clear.

Carroll's and Kieran's critiques mainly target the empathy-based explanation of narrative engagement and, in particular, Gregory Currie's appeal to mental simulation. Yet, Carroll has also extensively criticized identificationism, the theory that considers a narrative perceiver's identification with the characters to be key to engaging with narratives.[7] I briefly discuss these objections, for they are methodologically revelatory.

Common to Carroll's objections is that identification requires either an unlikely process of "fusion," "mind-melding" between narrative perceivers and characters, or at least sameness of emotional states, neither of which corresponds to narrative perceivers' characteristic behavior.[8] Such an assumption, then, amounts to conceiving of identification as either an illusory, hallucinatory process (mistaking oneself for one of the characters) or as a notion in no way different from the symmetrical notion of identity (requiring sameness of mental or at least emotional states).[9] Either understanding denies identificationism the possibility of explaining narrative and character participation as involving the imagination.[10] Being deluded is not an instance of but, rather, is a *failure* of the imag-

ination; nor is imagination a symmetrical notion like identity—my imagining being, say, a carrot does not require the carrot to imagine being me.[11] That Carroll's criticism of identificationism targets an artificial notion can easily be shown by recalling paradigmatic instances of ordinary identification. No illusion or hallucination, for instance, is involved in my identifying with the teenager who, years ago, received his first romantic kiss at a high school party and who then felt a certain way. Nor are my present emotional states, when I do that, the same in kind I had back then. Yet referring by the first-person pronoun to that young man, and identifying myself as the subject of his emotional experience, is a paradigmatic instance of identification.[12]

Characterizing the mechanisms of engagement central to the participant view in ways that are incompatible with the imagination is not just confined to Carroll's criticism of identification, for some of Kieran's objections to the simulation-based theory are along the same lines. Drawing on the comparison between a narrative perceiver and an actor impersonating a character, Kieran attempts to show that simulating the character's states of mind is no more appropriate in the first case than in the latter. He claims that "simulations of the states of dramatic characters would often preclude actors from performing as they are required to in order to convey or express the characters' thoughts and feelings."[13] An actor impersonating a character who is in a state of uncontrollable grief, claims Kieran, would do better *not* to attempt to simulate the state of someone who is taken by uncontrollable grief, for "uncontrollable grief (and presumably any veridical simulation thereof) is usually manifested in sobbing and wailing that muffles speech and paralyzes complex verbal thought."[14] He concludes that the same may happen to the perceiver of a narrative, precluding the perceiver from "being able to discern features that are crucial" to understanding the character and his or her situation.[15] Kieran's assumption, then, is that for a simulation to be veridical it must usually bring about the same kind of behavioral responses as having the real emotion, such as sobbing and wailing. Yet, that is what happens to someone in the grip of an illusion, not to someone who is engaged in an imaginative project; and, whatever its merits or faults, simulation theory is proposed in this debate as an explanation of a certain kind of imagination.

Kieran also exaggerates the consequences of an uncontrollable emotional state, for typically such a state is compatible with a range of other mental states and behaviors. Even when taken by severe bouts of despaired self-pity, we are often able to keep track of others' pity for us, of our own corresponding behavior, and so forth. In contrast, Kieran opts for appealing to rather extreme examples. He recalls the incident of when Daniel Day-Lewis walked off the stage where he was performing as Hamlet, incapable of continuing the performance for he had too much put *himself* in the place of the character.[16] Yet, likely this is again an instance where the imagination *fails*; hence it can hardly prove that imagination should not be explained by means of simulation. At most, the incident proves that imagination may occasionally lead to a state incompatible with itself. Likewise, the rare instances when the memory or anticipation of an event turns into some sort of hallucination do not disprove the role of the imagination in memories and anticipations.

Besides, Kieran's reasoning is ultimately an empirical one, on what will likely happen to actors who imagine being the characters they perform. As such, it appears to be supported by too small a sample and contradicted by a wider one. Actors often mention the necessity of "identifying" with their characters, as in the very anecdote Kieran mentions, involving the production of *The Marathon Man* (John Schlesinger, 1979) and Dustin Hoffman's attempts to "get 'inside' the skin of his character."[17] Kieran recalls with approval Laurence Olivier's invitation to Hoffman to "try acting" instead, and he takes it to exemplify the claim that good acting does not require the attempt to simulate a character's states of mind.[18] Yet, certainly Olivier's remark could be interpreted in a number of other ways, including as stating that a good actor ought to be capable of acting—whatever that entails—quickly and on demand. In any event, if anecdotal evidence from what actors say matters, then the pendulum seems to swing toward claims that speak the language of the participant view. Here is an example involving the expression of grief: Nicole Kidman, speaking of one of the final scenes of Stanley Kubrick's *Eyes Wide Shut* (1999), to the question of how she could look like someone who had cried for hours, responded, "I cried for hours."[19] In the same interview, Kidman claims that, after a year and a half of production, in a certain sense, "you become

one with Alice" (her character in the movie).[20] Indeed, the sample for Kieran's presumption is significantly small precisely with regard to Day-Lewis. Despite the very special *Hamlet* incident (special indeed, since the actor apparently saw the ghost of his own father!), Day-Lewis's habit of living the life of his characters, on- and offstage, for the time of a film's production, for all we know might have contributed to his many remarkable performances.

Finally, we should consider that even some of the most extreme cases, such as Day-Lewis's *Hamlet* incident, might be explainable as instances in which, even if the imagination—let us assume—does *not* fail, the *effects* of imagining a character or situation may be too strong for someone to bear.[21] When I imagine climbing Mount Rushmore, I may feel slightly dizzy, and that might enhance my appreciation for the final scenes of Alfred Hitchcock's *North by Northwest* (1959). Yet, if too vividly imagining such a scene makes me leave the room, it simply means that employing the imagination in a certain way is something that does not work *for me in the circumstances*. Indeed, the same may happen with memories and anticipations: recalling or anticipating a given event may prompt responses that, depending on the event and the person who is doing the remembering or anticipating, might have unbearable effects.

Constructing the notions key to the participant view in ways that are incompatible with the imagination is not the only methodological shortcoming in Carroll's and Kieran's critiques. Three more errors emerge from other objections Carroll and Kieran have for the participant view and, in particular, for explanations of narrative engagement in terms of empathy or mental simulation. They are (1) a construal of empathy and simulation, as they figure in this context, as mere inferential tools to attribute mental states to others; (2) relatedly, an emphasis on a narrow conception of narrative interpretation, hence a failure to consider all of the aspects of narrative understanding as well as properly to consider issues of narrative appreciation; and (3) a construal of empathy as incompatible with other kinds of responses and engagements of the imagination.

(1) Without denying the existence of such a process as mental simulation, both Carroll and Kieran show skepticism on its being necessary or interesting in most cases.[22] They point out, for instance, that, since most often omniscient narrators or the

characters themselves disclose to us the characters' states of mind, simulation simply does not have a big role to play in our interpretation of the emotional states of characters.[23] By such a thought, however, Carroll and Kieran appear to conceive of empathy, and specifically of simulation, as merely a process engaged in only for the purpose of attributing mental states, in particular emotional states, to others—call this the assumption of *empathy as emotional inference*.[24] This leads them to conclude that, in most cases, empathic engagement or the employment of mental simulation would be redundant in narrative and character participation.

Admittedly, there is no agreed upon definition of empathy among psychologists and philosophers, and, in fact, within psychological literature the capacity of "reading" other people's thoughts and feelings is sometimes given the name of "empathic inference."[25] Yet, there is also a broad consensus in characterizing empathy as vicariously experiencing the other's experiences, as putting oneself in the other's shoes.[26] With regard to emotions, many have attributed to empathy the distinctive function of allowing access to what another person's emotional states are *like*.[27] First-person event-memories and anticipations have an empathic component, insofar as a past or future mental state is represented from one's own past or future point of view. Yet, memories and anticipations only occasionally play an inferential role in our lives. Most often, when I recall to myself that first kiss I received as a teenager, I do not do so because I want to know *what* I felt that evening. Although with some approximation, I know what I felt: surprised, excited, and puzzled. By recalling this event to my mind, however, I remember what being surprised, excited, and puzzled on that occasion felt *like*.[28] Analogously, I do not need to empathize with myself, or simulate the situation I will be in, for me to know *that* I will be scared, say, the day of my surgery. Yet, empathic engagement may help me anticipate what my fear in the situation may be *like*. Hence, the assumption of empathy as merely being used to infer others' mental states is undercut by the multitude of everyday instances of empathic engagement where there is no need to infer those states.

(2) The claim that we do not need empathy in order to know what the mental state of narrative characters is also betrays an undue emphasis on interpretation only, indeed on interpretation quite narrowly conceived: as aimed at categorizing narrative characters under the appropriate emotional terms. It is somewhat surprising that Carroll would conduct his critique of the empathy-based theory in such terms, for he himself quotes Gregory Currie as claiming that a fiction "will seem dull and lifeless" if we were to go only on what "the author explicitly says and what can be inferred therefrom"; and, further: "It is when we are able, in imagination, to feel as the character feels that fictions of character take hold of us."[29] Clearly, the participant theorist is interested in considering narrative engagement relevant also to the *appreciation* of narratives, as well as to their *interpretation more broadly conceived*, that is, not as limited to attributing emotional states to characters.

As for Kieran, he explicitly mentions appreciation together with interpretation as the subject of his analysis.[30] Further, he correctly constructs the simulation thesis as being not about what Kieran calls "shallow understanding," but rather on a "deep understanding" of fictional characters.[31] Nevertheless, he mostly concentrates on the question of how we find out what a character's traits and states of mind are, and formulates an argument against the simulation thesis that mirrors Carroll's concerns as presented above. Indeed, Kieran expands on Carroll's argument that simulation or empathy is neither necessary nor interesting in most cases: on the one hand, narratives are explicit enough in describing characters, their thoughts, and their emotions, and, on the other hand, even when narrative perceivers are not explicitly told what sort of person a character is, they are conceptually well equipped to infer this, with no need to empathize with the character.[32] After quoting a long passage from Charles Dickens's *Hard Times* regarding the character Gradgrind, Kieran claims that it is sufficient to read what the passage says of Gradgrind's views on education to know the sort of person he is; there is no need to simulate anyone's thoughts or responses— Gradgrind's or anyone else's.[33] However, getting to know what sort of person Gradgrind is certainly is not all there is to know in regard to him or the novel that includes him, not even within the very context quoted by Kieran. Empathic engagement may very well play a role for dimensions of narrative understanding and appreciation other than categorizing Gradgrind's personality and values. For the reader of *Hard Times*, for instance, it may be appropriate to empathize with

the *listeners* of Gradgrind's declamations about education.[34]

Carroll's and Kieran's criticisms of the participant view concentrate on issues of interpretation aimed at achieving only an inferential or classificatory sort of understanding, at answering such questions as the following: What does the character think? What sort of person is he like? Yet investigating the mechanisms of narrative and character participation must include reference to forms of understanding—name them "experiential" and "imaginative" understanding—that enable one to know what it may be *like* to be a certain kind of person, having certain mental states, being in the presence of such a person, or living a certain kind of situation. Such forms of understanding, if achieved when perceiving a narrative, may enrich or deepen one's interpretation.

At the very least, thinking of narrative and character participation in merely inferential or classificatory terms unduly leaves out the claims of art appreciation altogether. Even if some narratives may be said to have been correctly interpreted once the characters' states of mind have been correctly categorized, the appreciation of a work is impaired by one's failing to give the responses that work prescribes or invites.[35]

(3) Finally, there is the error of conceiving of empathy as incompatible with other kinds of responses and imaginative engagement. Carroll, for instance, further supports his objection regarding the frequency of employing empathy or simulation when perceiving a narrative by claiming that our emotional responses as perceivers of a narrative differ in *object* and *kind* from the emotional responses and states of the narrative's characters. Most often, we *sympathize* with a character, not empathize with her:

Most often . . . the emotionally appropriate object of our attention is the situation in which a character finds herself and not the situation as the character experiences it. The character feels grief, but we feel pity for her, in part, because she is feeling grief. The object of her emotion is, say, her child. The object of our emotion is her situation—a situation in which she is feeling sorrow.[36]

Carroll seems to assume that empathy and sympathy are mutually exclusive.[37] He emphasizes that, while the character who has lost her child feels grief and sorrow, we feel pity for her. Yet why should this be a problem for the empathy-based account? The mere fact that we respond with a sympathetic, other-oriented response to someone does not preclude that we may also be responding to her empathically, in a self-oriented manner, perhaps precisely in virtue of our sympathetically responding to her. After all, it should be reminded that so-called self-oriented responses, including empathy, still have *another* as their target. Of such a person we understand the mental, emotional states in the sense of understanding what having such states is like. Then, as an *additional* response, we may very well sympathize with the person. Yet, by no means does doing that require empathy to cease playing its role. Indeed, I suggest, there is a central form of sympathetic engagement that has empathy as a main constitutive component.[38]

As is the case with empathy, there is also no agreed upon definition of 'sympathy'; no account can claim to cash out ordinary usage fully, simply because ordinary usage is not univocal about this notion. However, characterizations of sympathy, although ultimately somewhat stipulative, can be assessed for their explanatory power within a unified mapping of modes of emotional and cognitive engagement.[39] I suggest, then, that 'sympathy' be used to refer to that form of engagement that amounts to empathy plus a concern for the other. Of course, we may be concerned for people with whom we do not empathize, and such an emotional response is commonly called "sympathy." Yet, where everyday usage fails to distinguish between two different kinds of sympathetic responses, one entailing empathy and one merely constituted by what I would call "concern," the two senses are helpfully distinguished in technical discourse. I can be concerned for the starving children, and in this sense sympathize with them, without being able or even attempting to get to know what a starving experience may be like. Such a concern, I claim, is precisely what, once conjoined to empathy, gives rise to that more complex process that I call "sympathy." Indeed, as I feel that special tenderness *for* myself as a teenager, in no way does my memory of my first kiss disappear; rather, my empathic recalling of that experience is *part of* my feeling such tenderness.

It is worth noting that, as empathy is shown to be a process central to other responses, including other-oriented ones such as those of sympathy, there appears to be a heavier burden on the onlooker theorist to show the minor role of

self-oriented responses, that is, of empathy, than on the participant theorist to account for other-oriented responses, that is, for sympathy. The participant theorist need not deny that sympathy plays an important role in narrative and character participation, while, at the same time, can emphasize the central importance of empathy to our engagement with narratives and with their characters. On the other hand, the onlooker theorist, in order to relegate empathy to a secondary role, is forced to work with an unlikely notion of sympathy.

The incorrect assumption that empathy and sympathy are mutually exclusive may, in fact, be only a specific manifestation of a more general assumption vitiating the criticism of the empathy-based theories. Kieran, for instance, raises an objection—the last one that remains to be addressed here—that implies that empathy is incompatible with other operations of the imagination, although that might have not been Kieran's intention.[40] Kieran maintains that empathic engagement with narrative characters may sometimes prevent narrative perceivers from properly understanding the characters' states. There are narratives portraying characters that are self-deceived or unconsciously motivated, and a perceiver empathizing with them, Kieran claims, would fail to be in the state of mind appropriate to apprehending the narrative, incapable of seeing the self-deception as such or blind to the unconscious motivations.[41] Once again, reference to other, extrafictional instances of empathic engagement shows Kieran's concerns to be immaterial. Empathic engagement is not incompatible with other operations of the imagination. A man may remember the time when he thought he was not in love with his future wife—remember how he could not appreciate her attentions, for instance—and yet simultaneously realize how at the time he was incapable of seeing what everyone else could already see: that he actually did love her. Remembering his motivations and attitudes at the time would not prevent him, now, from seeing that behind such motivations and attitudes there were, in fact, hidden, unconscious desires and fears.

There are important positive lessons that can be learned from the shortcomings of Carroll's and Kieran's critiques. Methodologically, it is now apparent that never should the debate between opposing models of narrative engagement lose sight of the role that the imagination must play in it (re-

call claim 1 above). Further, an investigation of narrative engagement should never be conducted in an insular way, disregarding the paradigmatic, extrafictional instantiations of imaginative participation in real life, such as in acts of remembering and anticipating (3 above).

The account of narrative engagement that begins emerging from the preceding analysis, while somewhat sympathetic to the participant view for its emphasis on imagining characters' situations and emotional states from their point of view, is not a version of such a view. Rather, my approach breaks the dichotomy between the two opposing accounts, suggesting a healthy *pluralism*, so to speak, with regard to the variety of modes of emotional participation that are at play when we engage with narratives. A more detailed articulation of such a pluralism requires, however, a deeper analysis of the modes of imagination that subtend the various dimensions of narrative engagement, in light of the different goals sought when perceiving a narrative (2 and 4 above).

II. RICHARD WOLLHEIM'S ANALYSIS OF THE IMAGINATION

It is natural that part of the debate between the participant and the onlooker view would turn on the sorts of imaginative modes that play the most important role in our participating in narratives and their characters. The distinction between what Wollheim called central and acentral imagining has received special attention, with the participant view emphasizing the importance of the former, the onlooker view that of the latter. Yet, as I am going to show, the debate is partly vitiated by a misconstruction of Wollheim's distinction.

The distinction is first found in Wollheim's *On Art and the Mind*. Here, he distinguishes between imagining doing something from someone's point of view—my own or someone else's—that is, central imagining, and imagining someone doing something but from neither his nor anyone else's point of view—acentral imagining. Wollheim adds that, when centrally imagining someone doing something, but not when acentrally imagining it, we "also imagine what he feels and thinks."[42] The complexity of Wollheim's account is spelled out in more detail in *The Thread of Life*. Here Wollheim explains that when we centrally imagine an event, we imagine it from the point of view, "from the inside," of one of its characters, or "dramatis

personae": as when, for example, we imagine Mahomet II's 1453 entrance into Constantinople from the point of view of Mahomet or one of his guards or one of the crowd members present at the event. Whichever character I select, that is the "protagonist" of my "imaginative project."[43]

In *The Thread of Life*, however, the central/acentral imagining distinction is clarified to be one between different kinds of what Wollheim calls "iconic" mental states, in contrast to non-iconic ones.[44] Iconic states are those had when visualizing an event in imagination (one instance of iconic imagination), or having an event memory, as well as with dreams and fantasies.[45] By contrast, paradigmatic of non-iconic states are those had when we run a numerical calculation.[46] Iconic mental states are virtually always of *events*, and such events they *represent*.[47] Wollheim also suggests that iconicity is, at least with regard to iconic imagination and event memory, signaled by a "linguistic clue": "if I imagine something and imagine it non-iconically, I shall characteristically report this by saying something like, 'I imagined the horse fell down in the street.' But if I imagine that same thing iconically, I shall be able to say, 'I imagined the horse's falling down in the street.'"[48]

Commentators, however, have ignored the iconic/non-iconic distinction, consequently misconstruing the difference between central and acentral imaginings. Murray Smith, for instance, explains the central/acentral imagining distinction as that between imagining a scene from the perspective of a character involved in the scene and entertaining a proposition or thought or idea in mind with no mental picturing of the imagined state of affairs. Of acentral imagining Smith says: "[In] imagining *that* I jump from the building, I do not represent the event to myself with any of the 'indexical' marks of the imagined action—for example, transporting myself imaginatively into the appropriate position. I do not place myself 'in' the scenario, so much as entertain an idea, but not from the perspective (in any sense of the term) of any character within the scenario."[49] Notice that Smith applies the linguistic clue to the central/acentral imagining distinction rather than to the iconic/non-iconic one.[50] Further, his characterization contrasts a claim Wollheim in fact makes of central imagining to a claim he makes of *non-*iconicity.

Carroll similarly equates "acentrally imagining the situation of the character" with "entertaining it in thought."[51] Entertaining an idea or a situation in thought, however, is compatible with having a *non*-iconic mental state, and hence such a notion should not be used to characterize Wollheim's acentral imagining, which is instead iconic. By contrasting imagining as the entertaining of an idea in thought to imagining as the representing of a scene from the inside of some person or character, Smith and Carroll have in fact contrasted members of different distinctions.

The issue is not just one of correct exegesis. Correcting the misconstrual of the central/acentral imagining distinction may in fact reveal a problem for the onlooker theorist, who may now face a dilemma, insofar as he owes us an explanation of how, as narrative perceivers, we can be "onlookers" of a narrative's situation if the imagining is non-iconic. If the imagining of a narrated event is non-iconic, then there is *no* point of view from which to be onlookers. If the imagining is iconic, then we are *in* the situation, and hence, *pace* the onlooker view, we are participants in the imagined scene even when our imagining is merely acentral.[52]

More importantly, acknowledging the complexity in Wollheim's proposal suggests a richer way of investigating the mechanisms of narrative and character participation, one that, among other things, further breaks down the divide between the onlooker and the participant view. So, I can now move on to sketching in more detail my proposal for the investigation of narrative and character participation.

III. ICONICALLY IMAGINING EXPERIENCES

It is at this juncture that I part from Wollheim's analysis, though in a way that is, I think, very much in the spirit of his approach.

Carroll's and Smith's mismatch between distinctions—central/acentral and iconic/non-iconic—may find some explanation in the fact that Wollheim's own characterization of the central/acentral distinction, and of acentral imagining in particular, may be at fault and may indeed fail to indicate, in acentral imagining, a mode of imagination that can actually be instantiated. Wollheim characterizes those iconic mental states that fail to be central as *not possessing a point of view*, specifically *a point of view internal to what they represent*. When visualizing the entry

of Mahomet II into Constantinople, for example, he suggests that the iconic imagining would be acentral if the Sultan's entrance were visualized from no point of view internal to the historic scene: "[T]his pageant [of the Sultan's entry] would be presented to me, or I would represent it to myself, as stretched out, frieze like, the far side of the invisible chasm of history."[53] Yet, there is no reason to characterize acentral imagining this way. Claiming that acentral imagining is the one in which a scene is represented to us *not* from the inside of any dramatis persona is enough, with no need to require that the point of view from which the scene is presented to us be external to the scene.[54]

First of all, distinguishing between points of view internal and external to an imagined scene may not be so easy, for a point of view external to the scene is still internal to one's imaginative project, and the scene and the project may be hardly distinguishable. Indeed, the scene, if not the same as the imaginative project, simply seems to be that part of the imaginative project's content that is most important to the imaginer. And if a point of view is internal or external to *that*, although perhaps semantically relevant, it likely makes no epistemic or phenomenological difference. I may look, in imagination, at what interests me from *very far in* the scene or from *outside of* the scene—why should two different sorts of imagination be at work in the two cases?

Indeed, distinguishing between points of view as internal or external to an imagined scene risks confusing a difference in the *determinacy* of the point of view from which an imagining occurs with a distinction between different kinds of imagination. The point of view from which I represent an event to myself, whether by visualizing it or by activating some other sense modality, may be indeterminate in various ways. Perhaps this is best illustrated for sense modalities other than visualizing. I may imagine the smell of a ripe apple just as approaching or getting farther, from one side or another, with respect to my point of view, or I may even imagine the smell of a ripe apple as such, not even as increasing or decreasing in its intensity. In all cases, my imagining would have a point of view, however minimally specified, one internal to my imaginative project.

Accordingly, when acentrally imagining the Sultan's entry into Constantinople, we need not imagine it from the point of view of "the far side of the invisible chasm of history." *Any* point of view not corresponding to that of a dramatis persona, such as imagining the scene from the top of the gates of St. Romanus, will thereby make the imagining count as acentral. In sum, I claim that all iconic mental states have a point of view internal to the imagined scene.[55]

What distinguishes central imagining from acentral imagining, I submit, is that the former but not the latter represents, from the inside, a dramatis persona's thinking, valuing, desiring, feeling, in sum, aspects of the persona's experience. This characterization of central imagining allows me to successfully reply to an objection that Wollheim himself seems to have envisaged, namely, the objection that there be no difference between central and acentral imagining but a difference in point of view.[56] By contrast, the two imaginative acts, though both iconic mental states, are now shown to be usefully distinguished from each other, for central imagining requires an evaluative/conative/emotive switch that acentral imagination does not require. When imagining centrally, we do not merely imagine an event from a given point of view—we imagine *an experience*. When imagining the entry of Mahomet II into Constantinople, centrally, from Mahomet's point of view, or rather, still centrally, from the point of view of a member of the crowd, the two imaginative projects differ from each other in important ways, and not merely because of the two different perceptual perspectives. When taking on Mahomet's point of view, we may imagine his exaltation; when taking on the point of view of the crowd member, we may imagine his curiosity and submission.

Those imaginative projects do not differ from each other just because of differences in the emotions *accompanying* the imagined perceptions, for the perceptions themselves, besides their being from different points in the imagined scene, are conditioned and modified by the different cognitive, emotive, and conative perspectives of the two characters. Indeed, that should be a fairly common experience. Consider an instance of first-person event memory. When I recall my first visit to the university campus where I would spend my graduate school years, I do not just recall seeing the Philosophy Department building from a given direction but recall that visual experience as qualified by its being the first time I saw that building, my lack of orientation in the surrounding area, my

curiosity and anxiety for whom I would have met, and so on—quite a different perception of things from the one I now have, in reality or imagination.

A further specification may strengthen my proposal. The claim that central imagining is the imagining, from the inside, of someone's experience by no means entails that the imaginative act must embrace, so to speak, the *total* experience, that is, all of the experiential dimensions—perceptual, cognitive, conative, and emotional. As it happens, for example, with anticipations, central and more generally iconic imagination can be selective, focusing only on those aspects that are salient to the imaginative project. When I anticipate my next visit to the dentist, the visual sensations of the bright light in my eyes, the odd sensations in my mouth, the taste and smell of the chemicals, all these may enter into the "image" of the experience that I picture to myself; yet, there may be no room, among the contents of my imaginative act, for the background music which infallibly will be there. Likewise for memories of my previous visits to the dentist.[57]

Furthermore, the centrally imagined experience need not be total because central and acentral imagining can occur together and even interpenetrate. This is most typically exemplified by event memory. It has been noted, and is a common personal experience, that when recalling, say, an action of ours, such as entering a swimming pool, we often present ourselves with an image not of what we could see when performing the action but rather of ourselves entering the pool, as a third person could see us.[58] According to my terminology, the best description of what happens here is that, in iconically imagining our entering the pool, we centrally imagine, say, the warmth of the water, the smell of the air, the sound of the people swimming, as well as our joy for finally practicing again, but acentrally imagine seeing our entrance into the pool.

The above analysis provides us with a rich taxonomy of modes of imagination, which find instantiations in narrative and character participation as they do in our engagement, in real life, with others as well as with our own selves, in memories and anticipations. The onlooker theorist claims that engagement with narratives involves in most cases what I have here described as an instance of non-iconic imagining. By contrast, I claim that a range of imaginative acts—including but not limited to central imaginings—is part of our engagement with narratives, and that it is the same range of imaginative acts that can be encountered in some everyday psychological phenomena.

Emerging from this analysis is, once again, a healthy pluralism regarding the modes of participation involved in narrative engagement and the ways in which they are compatible with, and interpenetrate, each other. A theory of narrative and character participation, of which the current account is a rich but still incomplete sketch, will be best reformulated, I propose, in terms of *iconic imagining*. As perceivers of a narrative, we are often participants in the imagined scene (narrative participation). At times, and for selected experiential dimensions, the scene is *centrally* imagined, that is, iconically imagined from the inside of some character (character participation).[59]

After having provided a taxonomy of modes of imaginative engagement that quite clearly have an important place in everyday experiences, I will conclude by looking at an exemplification of these psychological processes vis-à-vis an actual narrative.

IV. AN APPLICATION: VIRGINIA WOOLF'S *MRS. DALLOWAY*

Of the many examples one could find, across different media, of a narrative through which to investigate the role of iconic imagining in its different forms, let us look at one that the onlooker theorist might see as especially congenial to showing how narrative and character participation need not involve imaginative participation, that is, iconic imagination. In Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*, we do not need to infer Clarissa Dalloway's states of mind, for the narrator gives us full access to them in the very stream of consciousness they belong to (recall the onlooker theorist's emphasis on this, Section I):

She parted the curtains; she looked. Oh, but how surprising!—in the room opposite the old lady stared straight at her! She was going to bed. And the sky. It will be a solemn sky, she had thought, it will be a dusky sky, turning away its cheek in beauty. But there it was—ashen pale, raced over quickly by tapering vast clouds. It was new to her. The wind must have risen. She was going to bed, in the room opposite. It was fascinating to watch her, that old lady, crossing the room, coming to the window. Could she see her? It was fascinating, with people still laughing and shouting in the drawing-room, to watch that old woman, quite quietly, going to bed alone. She pulled the blind now.[60]

The "healthy pluralism" regarding modes of narrative and character participation to which I have more than once referred can be further expanded by noticing that, while sometimes narratives *require* certain responses, most of the time, we should be happy with declaring that a given response is merely *invited by* a narrative. Different perceivers may respond in ways that are somewhat different and yet equally correct, depending on the perceivers' personalities, preferences, backgrounds, and even mood of the moment. And, generally, it is as possible to read novels and watch movies with emotional detachment as it is possible to engage with them in various ways. Hence, I submit, it is *possible* that while reading the above passage we *non*-iconically imagine the situation described, of Mrs. Dalloway being at the window looking at the old woman on one side and hearing the voices from the party on the other side. Yet we may instead imagine the scene iconically, from some point of view internal to the scene, perhaps, centrally, from Mrs. Dalloway's own point of view. From Mrs. Dalloway's point of view, we can imaginatively follow the old woman's movements to her bed, almost pictured in their softness and slowness by Woolf's choice of adverbs, the musical "quite quietly."

Suggesting as I have done that narratives most of the time invite, do not impose, the assumption of the perspective of one of the characters, one may be led to think that I am claiming that iconic and central imagining, after all, play a minor role in the experience of narratives. Yet, by leaving room for the possibility of interpreting the above passage with no iconic or no central imaginative engagement, I do not mean to deny that much of the *value* of the narrative would be lost that way. Being led to assume Mrs. Dalloway's point of view is very relevant, for it allows us to perceive reality, in imagination, the way she perceives it, among other things as presenting life and death (represented by the party and the old lady) as opposite poles by which the character is equally attracted. As I have claimed above (Section III), the *interpretation* of a narrative must be distinguished from its *appreciation*, and it must be recognized that, for many narratives, the former may not require any emotional responses but simply the inference of which responses the narrative aims at eliciting. In contrast, emotional responses, not the mere inferring of them, typically are essential to the appreciation of a narrative.

Moreover, there are narratives and aspects thereof where being able to empathize with a character indeed seems to be essential to understanding an important part of the narrative's content. In *Mrs. Dalloway*, for instance, the protagonist and Septimus Smith, the young man who had killed himself, are connected, though they never met each other. Mrs. Dalloway is the only one to be able to understand the man's action ("it was an attempt to communicate"). How can that be so? Among other things, the narrator tells us of Mrs. Dalloway's capacity to empathize:

He had killed himself—but how? Always her body went through it, when she was told, first, suddenly, of an accident, her dress flamed, her body burnt. . . . He had thrown himself from a window. Up had flashed the ground; through him, blundering, bruising, went the rusty spikes. There he lay with a thud, thud, thud in his brain, and then a suffocation of blackness. So she saw it.[61]

Hence, we can learn of Septimus through Mrs. Dalloway's consciousness; but we have full grasp of her consciousness only if we, in turn, empathize with her. Only by doing that can we fully understand what it may be like for her to imagine the man with a "thud, thud, thud in his brain," or the ground flashing *up*, and hence understand, as much as those things can be understood, what Septimus's dying might have been, and do so by imagining his death from the inside: "a suffocation of blackness."[62] Part of the content of the narrative, the connection between the two characters that is, yes, symbolic but also experiential, can be fully grasped only if Mrs. Dalloway's experience of the world, of the party but also of Septimus's death, is imagined from the inside.

v. conclusion

The acceptance of an analysis of our engagement with narratives cannot depend on how well it can account for one example. And certainly my own proposal—of analyzing narrative and character participation in terms of iconic imagination and its subtypes, central and acentral imagining as I have characterized them—is in need of refinement and further investigation. Yet, in this article, I have mainly tried to point to places where the debate over our engagement with narratives would benefit from some general rethinking.

Narrative participation, for instance, needs to be kept separate from *character* participation, and issues of *interpretation* must be distinguished from issues of *appreciation*. Further, since this debate is largely on the sort of imaginative processes that best explain our engaging with narratives, charity requires that, when possible, opposing views are not constructed as if they were appealing to mechanisms that are incompatible with the imagination.

In general, I have shown the advantages, methodologically, of comparing modes of imaginative engagement regarding narratives with the modes of engagement that are operative in ordinary life and that allow us to connect to others as well as to nonpresent stages of our own lives. Keeping these general principles and methodological tenets in sight has allowed me to show that most of the onlooker theorists' concerns with versions of the participant view are immaterial.

In pluralistic fashion, several modes of engagement with narratives and their characters can be shown to be compatible with each other and, typically, part and parcel of the experience of perceiving a narrative. Perceiving a narrative with engagement may then turn out to be not so different, in intimacy and complexity, from imagining other people's experiences as well as recalling and anticipating events from our own lives—not so different, that is, from what connects us to others and contributes to making us who we are.[63]

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1. See Noël Carroll, *The Philosophy of Horror* (New York: Routledge, 1990), pp. 88–96, and *A Philosophy of Mass Art* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), especially pp. 299, 311–319, 250–269, and 342–356; Matthew Kieran, "In Search of a Narrative," in *Imagination, Philosophy, and the Arts*, ed. Matthew Kieran and Dominic Lopes (London: Routledge, 2003), pp. 69–87.

2. Since my topic is the engagement with narratives in any medium, I have elected to refer to the reader of a novel, the viewer of a movie, and so forth as the "perceiver" of the narrative.

3. The role of empathy is emphasized, for example, in Alex Neill, "Empathy and (Film) Fiction," in *Post-Theory: Reconstructing Film Studies*, ed. D. Bordwell and N. Carroll (University of Wisconsin Press, 1996), pp. 175–194. Mental simulation is appealed to by Gregory Currie, "The Moral Psychology of Fiction," *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 73 (1995): 250–259, and "Imagination and Simulation: Aesthetics Meets Cognitive Science," in *Mental Simulation*, ed. Martin Davies and Tony Stone (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995). The notion of simulation is also endorsed by Susan Feagin, *Reading with Feeling: The Aesthetics of Appreciation* (Cornell University Press, 1996); Murray Smith, *Engaging Characters: Fiction, Emotion, and the Cinema* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995); and Kendall Walton, "Spelunking, Simulation, and Slime: On Being Moved by Fiction," in *Emotion and the Arts*, ed. Mette Hjort and Sue Laver (Oxford University Press, 1997), pp. 37–49. For central and acentral imagining, see Richard Wollheim, *On Art and the Mind* (Harvard University Press, 1974) and *The Thread of Life* (Cambridge University Press, 1984).

4. My terminology here is consistent with the one used in the debate. Carroll, for instance, attributes to identificationism the claim that "we are moved by the fiction in such a vivid way that we feel as though we are participants in it" (*The Philosophy of Horror*, p. 90). Elsewhere, he insists that narrative perceivers are best characterized as "onlookers or observers, not participants" (*A Philosophy of Mass Art*, p. 260).

5. Carroll, *The Philosophy of Horror*, pp. 95–96; Carroll, *A Philosophy of Mass Art*, pp. 261–269, 349–356; and Kieran, "In Search of a Narrative."

6. Of course, this can be accepted even by a theory aimed at reducing one mode of participation to the other.

7. Virtually never does Carroll discuss specific versions of identificationism. For the most part, he broadly refers to it as the view endorsed by some "professional critics," "contemporary commentators," "Neo-Platonic critics of mass art," and Plato's "contemporary avatars." See Carroll, *The Philosophy of Horror*, pp. 89–90, and *A Philosophy of Mass Art*, pp. 250, 259, 261; in *A Philosophy of Mass Art*, he does footnote a number of authors, but without really discussing their specific theories.

8. Carroll, *The Philosophy of Horror*, pp. 88–96, and *A Philosophy of Mass Art*, pp. 259–261, 311–319. A paradigmatic characterization of identificationism by Carroll is the view for which there is a "radical relation between the audience and the protagonist, one in which the audience comes to think of itself as identical or one with the character—i.e., a state in which the audience member somehow merges or fuses with the character. Under this conception, . . . we (mistakenly) accept (or confusedly take) the character's point of view to be our own" (*The Philosophy of Horror*, p. 90).

9. Compare: "this conception of character-identification depends on a notion of illusion—the illusion that the audience member is the protagonist," and, suggested as an alternative, "what is involved in character-identification is the exact duplication on the part of the audience of the protagonist's mental and emotional state [or perhaps only of her emotional states]" (Carroll, *The Philosophy of Horror*, p. 90).

10. Carroll fails to see this, for in the very context where he speaks of identification as "mind-melding of the character and the audience," and hence as an inadequate theory for its failing "to account for [audiences'] behavior," he takes himself as analyzing "identification [as] a matter of *imagining* oneself to be the character" (*A Philosophy of Mass Art*, p. 312 and 312 n., emphasis added). It is worth noting that actual identificationists do not seem to refer to illusory states. For

instance, in Keith Oatley, *Best Laid Schemes: The Psychology of Emotions* (Cambridge University Press, 1992), which Carroll refers to without discussing, a reader's identification with a character is a rather complex phenomenon, entailing, among other things, the adoption of the character's goals, "just as in a game we adopt a goal that the game affords" (p. 258). This seems more the language of the imagination than that of illusion.

11. Carroll's confusing identification with identity is also pointed out by Jerrold Levinson, "Horrible Fictions," reprinted in *The Pleasures of Aesthetics: Philosophical Papers* (Cornell University Press, 1991). There is no doubt that Carroll is conceiving of identification as a symmetrical notion: compare, for instance, "identification, a symmetrical notion, is not the correct model for describing the emotional responses of spectators" (*The Philosophy of Horror*, p. 96). See also Carroll, *A Philosophy of Mass Art*, pp. 260–261 and 261 n.

12. In *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Locke writes of *appropriating* an experience when we identify with ourselves (II.27.16). For the role of the notion of appropriation in Locke and some of his contemporaries, see Raymond Martin, John Barresi, and Alessandro Giovannelli, "Fission Examples in the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Century Personal Identity Debate," *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 15 (1998): 323–348.

13. Kieran, "In Search of a Narrative," p. 74.

14. Ibid.

15. Ibid.

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid.

18. Ibid.

19. "Kidman on Kubrick." Interview at the Four Seasons Hotel, Hollywood, California, July 12, 1999. DVD edition of Stanley Kubrick, *Eyes Wide Shut* (Warner Bros., 1999).

20. "Kidman on Kubrick."

21. Personal idiosyncrasies will, of course, be quite relevant. Day-Lewis, for instance, lost his own father at the age of 15. Compare Kendall Walton's claim that, to him, who tends to be claustrophobic, imagining being on an unsuccessful spelunking expedition becomes distressing ("Spelunking, Simulation, and Slime," p. 39).

22. Carroll, *A Philosophy of Mass Art*, pp. 342–356; Kieran, "In Search of a Narrative."

23. For Carroll, that is true not only of written narratives, since, for example, in a movie like *Casablanca* (Michael Curtiz, 1942) the character Rick (Humphrey Bogart) makes his feelings for Ilsa (Ingrid Bergman) very clear to us, with no need for us to simulate his situation (*A Philosophy of Mass Art*, p. 350).

24. This is not to deny that originally simulation theory was proposed as an alternative to so-called theory-theory in the explanation of the attribution of mental states to others. Yet, in its application to aesthetics, simulationists like Currie certainly are interested in claiming more than an inferential role for simulation in narrative appreciation (see, for example, the quote from Currie on p. 14).

25. See, for example, William Ickes, ed., *Empathic Accuracy* (London: Erlbaum, 1997).

26. See, for example, Mark Barnett, "Empathy and Related Responses in Children," in *Empathy and Its Development*, ed. N. Eisenber and J. Strayer (Cambridge University Press, 1987); Feagin, *Reading with Feeling*; Alex Neill, "Empathy and (Film) Fiction"; and Stephen Darwall, "Empathy, Sympathy, Care," *Philosophical Studies* 89 (1998): 261–282.

27. See, for example, Martin Hoffman, "Interaction of Affect and Cognition in Empathy," in *Emotions, Cognition, and Behavior*, ed. C. E. Izard, J. Kagan, and R. B. Zajonc (Cambridge University Press, 1984), and Neill, "Empathy and (Film) Fiction." Notice that the employment of empathy just to infer others' emotional states would likely be redundant if Paul Ekman is right in claiming that we have the capacity to detect which emotions other people are having simply by looking at their faces; Paul Ekman, "Facial Expressions: New Findings, New Questions," *Psychological Science* 3 (1992): 34–38. Ekman himself is well known for having also investigated the effect that assuming certain facial expressions, as happens when we mimic the expressions we see in other people's faces, has on *our own* mood; see Ekman, "Facial Expressions," and Paul Ekman and R. J. Davidson, "Voluntary Smiling Changes Regional Brain Activity," *Psychological Science* 4 (1993): 342–345. See also Pamela Adelman and R. B. Zajonc, "Facial Efference and the Experience of Emotion," *Annual Review of Psychology* 40 (1989): 249–280; and Antonio Damasio, *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason, and the Human Brain* (New York: Grosset/Putnam, 1994), pp. 148–149.

28. Barry Levinson, in his *Rain Man* (1988), has the autistic character, Raymond (Dustin Hoffman), describe his first romantic kiss as feeling "wet." Perhaps, even to the autistic memory, at least in the fiction, remembering his kiss that way was not the same as just giving it an attribute.

29. Currie, "The Moral Psychology of Fiction," p. 256, quoted in Carroll, *A Philosophy of Mass Art*, p. 347.

30. Kieran, "In Search of a Narrative," pp. 69–70.

31. Ibid.

32. It is peculiar that Kieran (and Carroll), in the context of this objection, would treat empathy merely as an inferential tool, after, in the context of the above discussed concerns, overemphasizing the experiential effects of empathy to the point of treating it on a par with illusion or hallucination.

33. Kieran, "In Search of a Narrative," pp. 71–72.

34. It is worth noting that Kieran makes some room for empathic engagement in narrative understanding and appreciation only to then declare empathy dependent on the memory of one's own past experiences: it is because we have ourselves experienced the feeling of betrayal that we can empathize with a character who is feeling betrayed—we relate the character's experience to the similar ones we ourselves had in the past ("In Search of a Narrative," pp. 75, 85). Yet, event-memories themselves involve the empathic imagination. Hence, if empathy is activated with memories that are needed in order to (better) understand and appreciate a narrative, the motivation to dismiss a more direct role of empathy in narrative engagement itself further loses strength.

35. I will go back to this important issue in Section IV below.

36. Carroll, *A Philosophy of Mass Art*, p. 351. The objection also reflects Carroll's view of narrative engagement, according to which we "assimilate" the protagonist's situation, also on account of a "conception" of how the character sees her situation, but then to give our response from a perspective that is ultimately "external" to the situation; see, for

example, *The Philosophy of Horror*, p. 95, and *A Philosophy of Mass Art*, pp. 354–355.

37. An additional problem, which we do not need to discuss here, has to do with Carroll's lack of clarity on what he means by each of the key notions in question: empathy, sympathy, and identification. At one point, he characterizes identification with characters as "vicariously experiencing their circumstances," putting "ourselves in their shoes, so to speak" (*A Philosophy of Mass Art*, p. 312), a characterization usually reserved to empathy and, indeed, strictly speaking, incompatible with conceiving of identification as an illusory process. He also refers to Mark Barnett's account of empathy in ways that, by erasing the distinction between empathy and sympathy, appear in contradiction with Carroll's main argument: "Empathy is a matter of a disposition toward a character on the basis of a similarity with my own emotional state, a similarity that may be as broad as a correspondence of positive or negative emotional valence—the character feels sorrow whereas I feel pity towards her" (*A Philosophy of Mass Art*, p. 315 n.). Compare Barnett, "Empathy and Related Responses in Children."

38. See also Raymond Martin, *Self-Concern: An Experiential Approach to What Matters in Survival* (Cambridge University Press, 1998).

39. A complete mapping, not necessary to the goals of this article, will have to include at least the following: emotional inference (the classification of another under an affective term), affective mimicry (roughly, the facial and bodily instinctual imitation of the state of another), empathy (the representation to oneself of another's state of mind, from that person's point of view), concern (the "sympathetic" response to someone of whom we adopt the relevant goals), sympathy (the result of being concerned for someone with whom we empathize), and identification (perhaps the most difficult of these notions to account for, involving in some sense an "appropriation" of the other person's experiences). The constitutive dependence of identification on sympathy (hence, in turn, on empathy) is suggested in Martin, *Self-Concern*.

40. The objection is somewhat reminiscent of Carroll's claims against identificationism as well as the empathy-based theory, to the effect that the state of mind of a narrative perceiver most often is, and it would better be, different from the state of mind of the narrative's characters.

41. Kieran, "In Search of a Narrative," pp. 73–75.

42. Wollheim, *On Art and the Mind*, p. 59.

43. Wollheim, *The Thread of Life*, pp. 71–73.

44. Wollheim, *The Thread of Life*, pp. 71–72.

45. Wollheim, *The Thread of Life*, p. 62.

46. Wollheim, *The Thread of Life*, p. 64.

47. Wollheim admonishes, however, how spelling out this representation relation is not without difficulties (*The Thread of Life*, p. 63).

48. Wollheim, *The Thread of Life*, pp. 63, 64.

49. Smith, *Engaging Characters*, p. 77.

50. This might in fact have been suggested by Wollheim's own remarking, in *On Art and the Mind*, that when centrally imagining something one "imagines *that* … " (p. 59, emphasis added).

51. Carroll, *A Philosophy of Mass Art*, p. 355.

52. In fact, Wollheim's own characterization of acentral imagining might weaken this point. Yet, the cogency of my reasoning will be reinforced in Section III by my own char-

acterization of the central/acentral imagining distinction.

53. Wollheim, *The Thread of Life*, p. 73.

54. James Harold has suggested that, rather than calling this form of imagining "acentral," I should use another term introduced by Wollheim: "peripheral imagining" (in his "Comments on Alessandro Giovannelli's 'In & Out: The Dynamics of Imagination in Narrative Participation,'" at the 60th Annual Meeting of the American Society for Aesthetics). I disagree, however, since Wollheim defines peripheral imagining as the imagining of all the *other* characters of a scene that I am centrally imagining *from the perspective of one of its characters* (see Wollheim, *The Thread of Life*, p. 74). By contrast, I am arguing that acentral, iconic imagining need not be from the perspective of *any* character. Hence, it is much preferable to keep the terminology as it is here and concentrate on the locus of my disagreement with Wollheim: that iconic, acentral imagining is still internal to an imagined scene even if it is the imagining from an unoccupied (by a dramatis persona, that is) point of view.

55. The continuous presence of a point of view is something that iconic states share with perceptions. There may be other features that they share with perceptions. By reference to a number of psychological experiments, Gregory Currie and Ian Ravenscroft, for instance, list several points of resemblance between vision and visual imagery, as well as between real and imagined movement; see their *Recreative Minds: Imagination in Philosophy and Psychology* (Oxford University Press, 2002), chap. 4.

56. Wollheim, *On Art and the Mind*, pp. 58–59. Wollheim's own reply to the above objection would perhaps be in terms of what he calls "plenitude," one of the essential features, by Wollheim's lights, of central imagining. He defines plenitude thus: "As I centrally imagine the protagonist's doing or saying this or that, so I shall *tend* to imagine his thinking, his experiencing, his feeling this or that" (*The Thread of Life*, p. 79, emphasis added). But speaking of a *tendency* to imagine the other's experience cannot be sufficient to reply to the objection that central and acentral imaginings are not worth distinguishing from each other. For in any of the cases where the alleged tendency fails to produce its results we would have just an instance of acentral imagining that happens to occur from some dramatis persona's point of view, not an instance of central imagining as according to Wollheim.

57. Missing this (and indeed the following) point may be at the origin of a good amount of skepticism with respect to the participant view. Yet, why should the participant theorist be committed to claiming a connection between us, qua narrative perceivers, and narrative situations and characters that is more comprehensive than most of the psychological connections we entertain with our own selves?

58. See also Eduard Branigan, *Point of View in the Cinema* (Berlin: Mouton Publishers, 1984), p. 3.

59. R. K. Elliott may appear to suggest a distinction similar to mine in his account of the relationship between the reader of a poem and the poet. Elliott claims that a work's expressing an emotion may be experienced "from within": "roughly speaking, [when one is] experiencing it as if one were the poet or the artist … experiencing [it] as one's own"; in contrast, "[e]xperiencing it from without is experiencing it as expression, but not experiencing this expression as if it were one's own"; "Aesthetic Theory and the Experience of Art," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian*

Society 67 (1966/67): 112. (For Elliott, the artist whose emotion one feels need not be the actual artist, hence may presumably be what some call the implied author.) Elliott also makes the point that the emotion one feels when experiencing a work of art *from within* need not be "predicable" of oneself (I may feel the poem's and the poet's sadness without that I can be said to be sad or to feel sadness without qualification). My own account differs from Elliott's in a number of ways, although it is not incompatible with it. First, experiencing, imaginatively, a scene from within the scene does not involve experiencing it from the perspective, in any sense of the term, of the (implied) author. Second, experiencing a scene from within the scene does not entail (although is compatible with) experiencing it from the point of view of one of the characters. Third, experiencing the scene from the point of view of one of the characters is not incompatible with experiencing it, also, from the point of view of other characters. (In sum, we may experience a scene from within the scene, but from within some characters and from without others.) And, finally, experiencing the scene from the point of view of a given character does not entail imagining all the dimensions of that character's experience. Thanks to an anonymous referee for calling my attention to the apparent similarity with Elliott's view.

60. Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway*, ed. S. McNichol (London: Penguin, 1992), pp. 203–204. Notice that Woolf's use of the pronoun "she" may at times be ambiguous, and the reader might be invited to read it as referring to the old lady, to Mrs. Dalloway, or to both (that is, to Mrs. Dalloway as she imagines being the old lady). Many thanks to Joe Shieber for suggesting this interpretation.

61. Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway*, pp. 200–201.

62. For another example of someone's dying being represented from the inside of his consciousness, see Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa, *The Leopard*, trans. A. Colquhoun (New York: Pantheon, 1960), part VII.

63. Versions of this article were presented at the 60th Annual Meeting of the American Society for Aesthetics (Coral Gables, FL, 2002), the First Inter-University Workshop on Mind, Art, and Morality (Murcia, Spain, 2002), and the philosophical colloquia at Central Michigan University and at Wayne State University. To those audiences I am grateful for their comments and suggestions. Special thanks go to Jerrold Levinson, Joe Shieber, Robert Stecker, John Uglietta, and the late Richard Wollheim. Also many thanks to three anonymous referees and the editor of this journal, Susan Feagin, for their helpful comments on content and style.