Contents

Acknowledgments vii
Introduction 1
DAVID HERMAN

Part I: Representing Minds in Old and Middle English Narrative

1. 700–1050: Embodiment, Metaphor, and the Mind in Old English Narrative 43
   LESLIE LOCKETT

2. 1050–1500: Through a Glass Darkly; or, the Emergence of Mind in Medieval Narrative 69
   MONIKA FLUDERNIK

Part II: Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Minds

3. 1500–1620: Reading, Consciousness, and Romance in the Sixteenth Century 103
   F. ELIZABETH HART

4. 1620–1700: Mind on the Move 132
   ELIZABETH BRADBURN

Part III: Contexts for Consciousness in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries

5. 1700–1775: Theory of Mind, Social Hierarchy, and the Emergence of Narrative Subjectivity 161
   LISA ZUNSHINE

6. 1775–1825: Affective Landscapes and Romantic Consciousness 187
   DAVID VALLINS
7. 1825–1880: *The Network of Nerves*
   Nicholas Dames

Part IV: Remodeling the Mind in Modernist and Postmodernist Narrative

8. 1880–1945: *Re-minding Modernism*
   David Herman

9. 1945–: *Ontologies of Consciousness*
   Alan Palmer

Contributors 299
Index 303
Introduction

DAVID HERMAN

What This Book Is About, Who It Is For, and What It Aims to Do

In her foundational 1978 study of strategies for representing consciousness in narrative fiction, *Transparent Minds*, Dorrit Cohn begins her analysis by underscoring what she takes to be “the singular power possessed by the novelist: creator of beings whose inner lives he can reveal at will” (4). As Cohn’s study demonstrates, however, the power in question manifests itself through a multiplicity of methods for evoking fictional minds, which can of course be as richly various, as strikingly memorable, as minds encountered outside the domain of fiction. From Chaucer’s Pardoner to Eliot’s Edward Casaubon, from Behn’s Oroonoko to Woolf’s Clarissa Dalloway: the multifarious perceptions, inferences, memories, attitudes, and emotions of such characters are in some cases as vividly familiar to us readers as those of the living, breathing individuals we know from our own day-to-day experiences in the world at large. Equally diverse are the investigative frameworks that have been developed to study such fictional minds, their operations and qualities, and the narrative means used to portray them. *The Emergence of Mind* aims to provide new perspectives on the strategies used to represent minds in stories and to suggest the variety of analytic approaches that can help illuminate those methods of mind creation. More than this, the volume is the first of its kind: a collection of new essays by specialists in different literary periods who, using a range of research tools, examine trends in the representation of consciousness in English-language narrative discourse from 700 to the present. Together, these nine essays thus trace commonalities and contrasts in the presentation of consciousness over virtually the entire time span during which narrative dis-
course in English has been written and read. In doing so, the book’s chapters collectively outline new directions for studying fictional minds—not only across different epochs of English-language narrative, but also (by extension) vis-à-vis the world’s many narrative traditions.

The volume seeks to promote genuine dialogue among scholars of narrative, on the one hand, and researchers in the many disciplines concerned with the nature and functioning of the mind, on the other hand, while also benefiting specialists and students working within various subfields (or historical periods) of English-language literature. Target audiences thus include not just narratologists, philosophers of mind, linguists, psychologists, and anthropologists, but also researchers concerned with different literary periods who share an interest in the power of narrative to figure the mind in all its complexity, as it perceives, assesses, remembers, and imagines situations and events. Each contributor uses several case studies from his or her focal period to examine techniques for presenting fictional consciousnesses; in addition to novels, these case studies encompass verse narratives (Lockett, Fludernik, Hart, Bradburn, and Vallins), romance tales in prose (Hart and Zunshine), allegory (Bradburn), hagiography (Fludernik), children’s narrative (Zunshine), and hypothetical narrative vignettes used in the service of philosophical treatises (Zunshine). Yet the volume delimits its focal object more narrowly than this initial characterization would suggest, because all the chapters discuss narratives that originated from what are now Great Britain and Ireland. By focusing on methods of mind portrayal as they evolved in a geographically localized area of narrative practice, the contributors can point to critical junctures in the history of consciousness representation within a particular narrative tradition—while also suggesting how other developmental trajectories might be traced in other such traditions.

Thus, in addition to the variety of the methods used to explore representations of fictional minds, the historical or diachronic focus of the volume makes it relevant for several (overlapping) fields of study. Literary historians and theorists of the novel, for
example, can use the volume as a kind of source book, given that each chapter features detailed case studies in discussing techniques for mind presentation that were more or less dominant in a given period. Further, the chapters cumulatively provide a basis for investigating the dividing line between “narrative universals” (Hogan 2005) —in this instance, constraints on consciousness representation built into narrative as a discourse genre—and variable, period-specific techniques for representing minds. At the same time, the volume’s diachronic profile will make the book useful for historians of the English language and specialists in such fields as historical pragmatics (Jucker 2008), and also for cultural and intellectual historians who use developments in the literary domain as a window onto changes and innovations in the wider sociocultural context.²

In the realm of narrative studies, fictional minds and the strategies used to present them have become a prominent concern, thanks to a number of convergent research initiatives.³ Relevant work includes not only Cohn’s (1978) groundbreaking analysis, which attempts to map categories of speech presentation on to the representation of characters’ mental processes, but also other pioneering studies of the linguistic texture of speech and thought representation, conducted by scholars such as Brian McHale (1978), F. K. Stanzel (1984 [1979]), Geoffrey Leech and Michael Short (2007 [1981], 255–81), Ann Banfield (1982), Michael Toolan (2001 [1988], 116–42), and Monika Fludernik (1993, 1996, 2003).⁴ Another important strand of work focuses on the thought-worlds or “subworlds” of fictional characters, as analyzed by Marie-Laure Ryan (1991) and Paul Werth (1999), among others. At issue are the embedded worlds in which, in the context of a larger storyworld evoked by a fictional narrative as a whole, characters make plans, deliberate among possible choices, and imagine wished-for states of affairs. Still more recently, scholars of story have begun to draw explicitly on ideas from psychology, philosophy, linguistics, and other fields clustered under the umbrella discipline of the cognitive sciences to explore aspects of fictional minds. Pertinent here is Alan Palmer’s (2004) rethinking of Cohn’s “speech-category approach” via research on

INTRODUCTION 3
what Palmer terms the social mind in action. Pertinent, too, are some of the contributions assembled in Herman (2003a); Patrick Colm Hogan’s (2003, 2005) reanalysis of the surface structure of fictional plots in terms of deep structures of emotion; George Butte’s (2004) use of Merleau-Ponty’s ideas to examine moments of “deep intersubjectivity,” or characters’ multilayered attributions of mental states to one another; Lisa Zunshine’s (2006) discussion of similar phenomena from perspectives afforded by work in cognitive and evolutionary psychology rather than phenomenology; and several of the evolutionary-psychological and other studies included in Abbott (2001).

Yet with some exceptions (e.g., Cohn 1978; Fludernik 1996; Palmer 2004, 240–44; Stanzel 1984 [1979]), rather than studying the evolution of the system of mind-revealing techniques over time most of the existing work on consciousness representation aims to give a snapshot of the possibilities for representing minds in narrative at a given moment in the history of the system’s development. Thus, while building on previous scholarship in this area, the present volume seeks to extend the earlier studies by developing an approach grounded in the historicity of narrative forms and the mutability of their representational functions. Collectively, the chapters of this book throw new light on the history of the interface between narrative and mind over the past thirteen centuries; they do so by using case studies to examine changes in the way English-language narrative discourse has cued readers to build storyworlds that are more or less densely populated with fictional minds.

Getting Down to Details: How Storyworlds Are Populated with Minds

To get an initial sense of the variety of discourse strategies that can be used to evoke fictional minds in narrative texts, consider this short passage from chapter 2 of George Eliot’s 1872 novel, *Middlemarch*, where Dorothea Brooke’s sister, Celia, negatively evaluates her sister’s expressed (and, as it turns out, ill-fated) preference for Edward Casaubon over Sir James Chettam as a potential spouse:
[1] Celia thought privately, “Dorothea quite despises Sir James Chettam; I believe she would not accept him.” [2] Celia felt that this was a pity. [3] She had never been deceived as to the object of the baronet’s [Sir James Chettam’s] interest. [4] Sometimes, indeed, she had reflected that Dodo would perhaps not make a husband happy who had not her way of looking at things; and stifled in the depths of her heart was the feeling that her sister was too religious for family comfort. [5] Notions and scruples were like split needles, making one afraid of treading, or sitting down, or even eating. (Eliot 1910 [1872], 25)

How does one go about parsing these five sentences so as to make sense of Celia’s mind—to construe her take on and responses to situations and events in the storyworld that she inhabits, along with the other characters who populate that fictional world? Or, to put the matter another way, how do readers use discourse cues of the sort provided by Eliot to build storyworlds that contain more or less richly detailed—and appreciably distinctive—fictional minds?

For her part, Cohn (1978) influentially drew on theories of speech representation as the basis for her account of how readers interpret minds like Celia Brooke’s. Just as narratives can use direct discourse, indirect discourse, and free indirect discourse to present the utterances of characters, fictional texts can use what Cohn calls quoted monologue, psychonarration, and narrated monologue to represent the processes and states of characters’ minds. Subsequent theorists, seeking to underscore even more clearly the assumed analogy between modes of speech and thought representation, and thereby consolidating what Palmer (2004) terms the speech-category approach to fictional minds, have renamed Cohn’s three modes as direct thought, indirect thought, and free indirect thought, respectively. Thus, in the passage from Middlemarch, sentence 1 exemplifies direct thought (by analogy with direct speech, as in Celia said, “Dorothea quite despises Sir James Chettam”); sentences 2 and 3 are examples of indirect thought (by analogy with indirect speech: Celia said that this was a pity); and sentence 5 arguably exemplifies free indirect thought (by analogy with free indirect speech: Celia said that her sister was
too religious for family comfort. Notions and scruples were like spilt needles). In sentence 5, although Eliot continues to use past-tense verbs, these can be read as “backshifted” from the present tense that would have been used in a direct thought quotation (along the lines of Celia thought, “notions and scruples are like spilt needles”). At the same time, the evaluative appraisal expressed through the simile, as well as the use of terms like “notions” and “scruples” rather than “convictions” or “beliefs” for the tenor of that comparison, can be assumed to reflect Celia’s own tacit construal of the situation. Granted, the impersonal pronoun “one” makes the sentence read like a general maxim or gnomic sentiment; but given the larger context, that sentiment, rather than floating free from the particulars of this fictional world, can be anchored in Celia’s vantage point on events. Meanwhile, sentence 4 can be viewed as a hybrid construction, combining aspects of indirect and free indirect thought. Although the sentence is largely a third-person report of Celia’s act of reflection and of the contents or result of that act, in the first clause the use of the nickname or term of endearment “Dodo” (for Dorothea) colors the report with Celia’s subjectivity. Then, in the second clause of sentence 4, the mention of a feeling stifled in the depths of Celia’s heart returns the sentence to the mode of indirect thought, or perhaps the mode that Leech and Short (2007 [1981]) call “narrative report of thought act,” which in comparison with indirect thought is less closely tied to or indicative of a particular subjectivity or quality of mind.

As should already be evident, Cohn’s study and work related to or taking inspiration from it afford a powerful investigative lens for studying representations of consciousness in narrative. This research suggests how even a single passage from just one text can present readers with multiple species of discourse cues, each prompting interpreters to draw, with more or less latitude, particular sorts of inferences about fictional minds. In the years since Cohn developed her pioneering approach, however, commentators concerned with the representation of consciousness in stories have factored in other kinds of discourse cues and other contexts for interpreting them, with some of those theorists also propos-
The chapters of this volume reflect some of the major innovations in the field, and to provide further context for the project I turn now to an overview of two main areas of interest within this domain of inquiry—areas concerned with distinct but interrelated questions. For the first area, the key question is: what is the best way to study the structure of fictional minds and to characterize their functioning? For example, if analysts seek to go beyond the speech-category approach set out by Cohn and others, what tools should they use to describe and explain mind-evoking features of a passage like the one taken from *Middlemarch*? For the second area of interest, the key question is: what trend lines can be discerned in the development of narrative strategies for representing the states and activities of fictional consciousnesses? For instance, how do Eliot’s methods of presenting minds compare with the methods used in earlier and later texts, and what broader patterns in the history of consciousness representation do those commonalities and contrasts reveal?

**The Structure of Fictional Minds**

As indicated at the outset, Cohn (1978) characterizes narrative fiction as sui generis because of its power to reveal the contents of minds. Here Cohn builds on Käte Hamburger’s *The Logic of Literature* (1957), which likewise argued that “the representation of characters’ inner lives is simultaneously the touchstone that sets fiction apart from reality and builds the semblance (*Schein*) of another, non-real reality” (Cohn 1978, 7). Hamburger, as Cohn also discusses in her later (1999) attempt to identify “signposts of fictionality” (formal features that set fictional narratives apart from nonfictional ones), held that certain language patterns are unique to fiction, such as verbs of consciousness in third-person contexts, interior monologues, and temporal and spatial adverbs referring to the characters’ here and now, and on that basis suggested that “narrative fiction is the only literary genre, as well as the only kind of narrative, in which the unspoken thoughts, feelings, perceptions of a person other than the speaker can be portrayed” (Cohn 1978, 7–8; see also Banfield 1982, 65–108, 141–
80; Gorman 2005, 166–67). Or in Hamburger’s own words: “epic fiction [i.e., third-person or heterodiegetic fictional narration] is the sole instance where third-person figures can be spoken of not, or not only[,] as objects, but also as subjects, where the subjectivity of a third-person figure qua that of a third-person can be portrayed” (1993 [1957], 122).

Yet recent developments in the philosophy of mind, cognitive and evolutionary psychology, and related fields call into question the claim that readers’ experiences of fictional minds are different in kind from their experiences of the minds they encounter outside the domain of narrative fiction—a claim that I will refer to in what follows as the “Exceptionality Thesis.” Of particular importance here is work on the competencies and practices bound up with what has come to be called folk psychology, or people’s everyday understanding of how thinking works, the rough-and-ready heuristics to which they resort in thinking about thinking itself. We use these heuristics to impute motives or goals to others, to evaluate the bases of our own conduct, and to make predictions about future reactions to events. In short, folk-psychological rules of thumb are what people use to characterize their own and others’ reasons for acting in the ways that they do. Although the nature and origins of humans’ folk-psychological practices are matters of lively dispute, that dispute itself provides grounds for questioning the Exceptionality Thesis—that is, the purportedly unique capacity of fictional narratives to represent the “I-originarity” of another as a subject, in Hamburger’s parlance. Drawing on this recent work in the sciences of mind, I question the supposed Exceptionality of fictional minds by highlighting the Cartesian dualism that underlies arguments such as Cohn’s and Hamburger’s—and also later scholarship building on their arguments.

Dualism of the Cartesian kind informs two related assumptions underpinning the arguments at issue: first, that because the mind is “inside” and the world “outside,” in contexts of everyday interaction others’ minds remain sealed off from me in a separate, interior domain; and second, that this sealed-off-ness of actual minds means that it is only in fictional contexts that I
can gain direct access to the subjectivity of another. As I discuss in my chapter in this volume, however, a variety of post-Cartesian frameworks for research, moving away from older geographies of the mental as an interior, immaterial domain, suggest the extent to which minds are inextricably embedded in contexts for action and interaction, and arise from the interplay between intelligent agents and the broader social and material environments that they must negotiate. In turn, if minds are not closed-off, inner spaces but rather lodged in and partly constituted by the social and material structures that scaffold people’s encounters with the world, then access to the I-originarity of another is no longer uniquely enabled by engagement with fictional narratives. A binarized model that makes fictional minds external and accessible and actual minds internal and hidden gives way to a scalar or gradualist model, according to which minds of all sorts can be more or less directly encountered or experienced—depending on the circumstances.

Let me clarify here that my quarrel is not with the claim developed by Hamburger and then Cohn that certain language patterns, or collocations of discourse features, are unique to or distinctive of narrative fiction. Thus I am not disputing what a reviewer of this volume called “the distinctiveness of literary modes of articulation and representation.” What I am disputing, rather, is the further inference, based on this initial claim about fiction-specific techniques, that only fictional narratives can give us direct, “inside” views of characters’ minds, and that fictional minds are therefore sui generis, or different in kind from everyday minds. In the subsections that follow, I dispute this further inference by arguing on the one hand that (whatever their distinctive repertoire of representational techniques) fictional narratives do not provide wholly direct or immediate views of others’ minds, and on the other hand that experiencing someone else’s I-originarity is not limited to the domain of fiction. In a further disagreement with the reviewer whom I just mentioned, I deny that in making these arguments I am surreptitiously changing the subject from matters of technique to matters of theme when it comes to the study of narrative repre-
sentations of mind. Instead, my focus is on how narratively organized discourse prompts interpreters to populate storyworlds with minds, a process that encompasses both the “what” and the “how” of mind representations.

To be sure, it is a basic convention of fictional discourse that in distanced, third-person narration reports about what is happening in a storyworld are “authenticated” in a way that reports given by characters, including characterized first-person narrators, are not (Doležel 1998, 145–68). Thus, in the passage from Middlemarch quoted previously, the structure of the narrative authenticates the narrator’s report of what Celia is thinking, but not (or at least not to the same degree) Celia’s own inferences about Dorothea’s beliefs and attitudes— inferences that remain anchored in a particular character’s vantage point on the storyworld. As Doležel (1998) puts it, “a general rule defines the character of the dyadic authentication function [i.e., the way authentication works in narratives that alternate between the discourse of a third-person narrator and the direct speech of fictional individuals]: entities introduced in the discourse of the anonymous third-person narrator are eo ipso authenticated as fictional facts, while those introduced in the discourse of fictional persons are not” (148). Nonetheless, it is important to disentangle issues of authentication, in this case the manner in which fictional narratives can stipulate as true a character’s mental contents and dispositions, from issues of accessibility, or the strategies that interpreters use to make sense of those stipulated contents and dispositions, not to mention other, non- or less fully authenticated mind-contents. And as I go on to discuss, the procedures used to engage with the minds evoked in fictional narratives necessarily piggyback on those used to interpret minds encountered in other contexts (and vice versa).

At the same time, the post-Cartesian frameworks for inquiry that I also describe in more detail below can be used to resist the dichotomization of fictional and actual minds from another direction. These frameworks suggest how in contexts of everyday interaction another’s I-originarity is not locked away inaccessibly in some inner recess of the self, but rather spread out across the
elements of a given social encounter and situated within that encounter’s spatial environment and temporal flow. From this perspective, it is not the case that third-person fictional narration is unique in providing access to another’s subjectivity. Rather, in any communicative encounter, I can experience another’s I-originarity by engaging with the propositional content of that person’s utterances as well as his or her facial expressions, bodily orientation, gestures, and so forth—and also with the way our encounter is situated within a broader material and social context. As P. F. Strawson (1959) argued some fifty years ago, part of the meaning of the concept of person is having a constellation of interlinked mental and material predicates (e.g., “doesn’t feel well” and “is lying down with a flushed appearance”); hence the very idea of person entails that mental states and dispositions will be self-ascribable in one’s own case and other-ascribable in the case of others.

Thus, to preview the two subsections that follow: from one direction, dichotomous treatments of fictional and actual minds can be questioned via research suggesting that readers’ knowledge of fictional minds is mediated by the same kinds of reasoning protocols—namely, reasoning about people’s reasons for acting—that mediate encounters with everyday minds. In this sense, fictional minds are accessible but not transparent. A second argument, trending in the opposite direction, can also be grounded in recent work in the sciences of mind. Now the claim is that, contrary to the assumptions of Exceptionality, people do in fact experience others’ minds, encountering the I-originarity of others in everyday settings as well as fictional narratives. Everyday minds are not transparent, but they are accessible. Though these two arguments follow divergent paths, their force is ultimately the same: they provide a basis for disputing the Exceptionality Thesis, as developed by theorists like Hamburger and Cohn, and extended in more recent work on modes of fictional narration that are taken to be “anti-mimetic,” or to challenge real-world understandings of (for example) the nature of consciousness (Mäkelä 2006; Richardson 2006; Alber, Iversen, Nielsen, and Richardson 2010).
Positively, these two arguments against Exceptionality suggest the need not to flatten out historical or stylistic variation in methods for presenting and experiencing fictional minds, or to ignore what the reviewer called “the distinctiveness of literary modes of articulation and representation,” but rather to develop a unified picture of mind representations of all sorts, fictional and other. By connecting consciousness representation in narrative with other discourses of mind, a unified picture of this sort can prevent the cordoning off of fictional discourse as an anomalous case, incapable of illuminating the nature of conscious experience more broadly.\(^\text{12}\) Again, in working to develop counterarguments to Exceptionality I am not trying to deny the difference between fictional and other kinds of representations; indeed, according to a number of specialists on children's cognitive development, acquiring the ability to engage in symbolic, fictionalizing play and to recognize its distinctiveness from nonfictional representations of the world is a crucial growth point in the ontogeny of human intelligence (see, e.g., Boyd 2009, 177–87; Harris 1991; Hobson 2002, 76–78, 110–22; Leslie 1987; Tooby and Cosmides 2001, 14–15). Yet acknowledging (the cognitive benefits of) the ontological divide between fiction and nonfiction is consistent with hypothesizing that the same protocols for engaging with minds cut across this divide. In outlining that hypothesis, my aim is to underscore the importance of bringing to bear on fictional narratives the full battery of tools being developed in mind-oriented research and, conversely, the broad relevance of research on narrative representations of consciousness for disciplines such as psychology and the philosophy of mind, among others.

\textit{Two Accounts of Folk Psychology; or, the Mediation of Fictional Minds}

As noted by Slors and Macdonald (2008), one of the cornerstones of recent research on folk psychology is Premack and Woodruff’s 1978 article “Does the Chimpanzee Have a Theory of Mind?” which characterized attributions of mental states as analogous to the positing of unobservable entities in the construction and
The two accounts of folk psychology that have been dominant within the philosophy of mind and related fields over the past several decades took shape against the backdrop of two presuppositions supporting Premack and Woodruff’s argument: namely, (1) that to detect intentionality in others’ behavior is to have some knowledge of the other’s mind, and (2) that in order to acquire such knowledge one needs to have some sort of theory (Slors and Macdonald 2008, 154). According to one of the dominant accounts, which accepts both presuppositions 1 and 2, folk psychology is a kind of low-level theory; it is based on a set of rules or explanatory principles similar in kind to those associated with scientific theories but targeted specifically at propositional attitudes such as believing X and motivational attitudes such as desiring Y. This account is standardly called “theory theory,” with some variants emphasizing how the theory at issue is an innate endowment, bestowed upon humans in the form of an inherited Theory of Mind module, and others stressing the way children use a trial-and-error procedure to build up and refine a theory of the minds of others—just as scientists (dis)confirm theories about the structure of the world on the basis of observational data. According to the second account, which denies presupposition 2 but at least on some versions accepts presupposition 1 (Slors and Macdonald 2008, 156), folk psychology is a simulative ability—that is, an ability to project oneself imaginatively into scenarios involving others. By running off-line a simulation of what one would do in similar circumstances, one can explain or predict what another has done or will do in the target scenario. This second account of folk-psychological practices and abilities is standardly called “simulation theory.”

In turn, to characterize the assumptions and inferences that readers make about the minds of characters in fictional worlds, story analysts have developed both theory- and simulation-based accounts of the mind-reading practices that, according to the first argument for the non-Exceptionality of fictional minds, are required for such narrative engagements. This research, by mapping aspects of theory theory (e.g., Zunshine 2006 and this volume)
as well as simulation theory (e.g., Currie 2004, 176–88) on to the
heuristics used by interpreters to make sense of characters’ ac-
tions in storyworlds such as *Middlemarch*, suggests that the same
basic folk-psychological competencies and practices cut across
the fiction/nonfiction divide (for additional discussion, see Her-
man 2008, 249–52; Palmer 2004, 143–47). In other words, folk-
psychological heuristics, whether described in terms of theory
or of simulation, are no less necessary a support for authors,
characters, and readers than they are for participants in every-
day communicative exchanges.

A theory-based account of the passage from *Middlemarch*, for
example, would develop the assumption that narrative under-
standing requires explaining behaviors via unseen, hypothesized
mental states. Eliot’s narration could be read as attributing a va-
riety of mental states to Celia, which involve, in turn, further at-
tributions by Celia that are designed to explain Dorothea’s overt
behaviors. From this perspective, Celia interprets Dorothea’s
earlier conduct (during her conversation with Sir James Chettam)
by hypothesizing that Dorothea despises Chettam; Celia then
uses that hypothesized aversion to predict, in turn, that Dorothea
would reject any proposal of marriage by Chettam. The passage
also prompts readers to attribute to Celia, first, the recognition
that Chettam is interested in Dorothea, even though Dorothea
herself, who thinks that Chettam favors Celia, is “deceived as to
the object of the baronet’s interest”; and, second, the belief that
Dorothea is too inflexible to accommodate others with perspec-
tives different than her own. At another level, readers’ constru-
als of Celia’s behavior can be described in terms of attributions
of the same general kind, whereby Celia can be assumed to want
her sister to thrive in marriage but also believe (fear) that Dor-
othea holds potential suitors to too strict a standard.

For its part, a simulation-based account of Eliot’s text would
likewise focus on the relation between interpreting the passage
and the problem of knowing other minds (cf. Slors and Macdon-
ald’s first presupposition), but would posit a different mechanism
to account for how the knowledge of minds comes about (cf. the
second presupposition). Specifically, the simulationist would ar-
gue that Celia makes sense of Dorothea’s reasons for acting by using her own mind to model her sister’s conduct and the beliefs and desires that might account for it—just as, at another level, readers rely on comparable simulation routines to make sense of Celia’s responses to Dorothea’s conduct.16

The Second Argument against Exceptionality; or, the Accessibility of Everyday Minds

The theory- and simulation-based accounts thus dispute the Exceptionality Thesis by suggesting that making sense of fictional minds requires readers to use the same sorts of heuristics that they rely on to interpret others’ minds in the world at large. Recently, however, analysts have called into question both theory- and simulation-based models of folk psychology, pointing up the need for new approaches to studying the interfaces between narrative and mind. This work brings us to the second argument against the Exceptionality Thesis. The second argument disputes the claim that only narrative fiction affords direct experiences of others’ minds and that in all other contexts in interacting with others we must at best “theorize about an unseen belief” or “mind-read” (Gallagher 2005, 212).

Both theory theory and simulation theory are premised on the assumption that another’s (and possibly also one’s own) mind cannot be directly known or experienced, but rather must be theorized about or modeled via simulation routines. By contrast, philosophers such as Gallagher (2005) and Zahavi (2007) have drawn on the work of phenomenologists like Merleau-Ponty, Gurwitsch, and Scheler, as well as on Wittgenstein and other commentators, to reject the assumption that it is impossible for humans directly to “experience other minded creatures” (Zahavi 2007, 30; see also Butte 2004). As Zahavi puts it, “affective and emotional states are not simply qualities of subjective experience, rather they are given in expressive phenomena, i.e., they are expressed in bodily gestures and actions, and they thereby become visible to others” (30). Hence, under “normal circumstances, we understand each other well enough through our shared engagement in this common world, and it is only if this

INTRODUCTION 15
pragmatic understanding for some reason breaks down, for instance if the other behaves in an unexpected and puzzling way, that other options kick in and take over, be it inferential reasoning or some kind of simulation” (38). Along similar lines, Hobson (2002), focusing on children’s psychological development, argues that “infants perceive and respond to people’s bodies [in contrast with objects that are not person-like] in very special ways”; specifically, infants appear to “apprehend feelings through the bodily expressions of others” (243). Extrapolating from the developmental process to the more general business of making sense of the minds of others, Hobson draws on Wittgenstein’s ideas (see also Strawson 1959) to suggest that “we have a kind of direct route into the minds of others. We do not perceive a smile as an upturned configuration of the mouth and by an intellectual process decide that this configuration means the person is happy” (244).

At the same time, work questioning theory- and simulation-based approaches takes issue with the privileging of third-person over second-person contexts in research on folk psychology, which has led to the assumption that making sense of others’ minds is a detached or “spectatorial” affair (cf. Hutto 2008, 1–21). As developmental research going back to Vygotsky (1978) suggests, crucially formative experiences for children are direct, second-person encounters with caregivers (cf. Hobson 2002, 2007)—these encounters being ontogenetically prior to third-person contexts like those often discussed in formal studies of folk psychology. And Gallagher (2005) argues that subsequent deployments of folk-psychological abilities follow suit, contending that “only when second-person pragmatic interactions or our evaluative attempts to understand break down do we resort to the more specialized practices of third-person explanation and prediction” (Gallagher 2005, 213).

Consider the structure of the passage from Middlemarch in light of these arguments for the accessibility of everyday minds. Prima facie it appears that Celia’s assessment of Dorothea’s reasons for acting does involve detached or spectatorial attributions of mental states, as she considers her sister’s conduct toward
Sir James Chettam. Recall, however, that Celia is not distanced from but rather closely involved in the situation, insofar as she is party to Chettam’s visit with the Brookes and insofar, too, as Dorothea mistakenly thinks that Celia is the object of Chettam’s romantic regard. Recall, further, that Celia’s assessment derives both from her conversation with Dorothea immediately prior to the scene at issue and also from a much longer history of direct, face-to-face interactions with her sibling. These interactions inform Celia’s understanding of Dorothea’s attitude toward Chettam specifically, her more general diagnosis of Dorothea’s lack of tolerance for divergent perspectives (and its bearing on Dorothea’s prospects for marriage), and her analysis of the role of religion in Dorothea’s life vis-à-vis her family. In portraying how these characters draw on a variety of contextual and interactional resources to make sense of one another’s minds, Eliot’s text models methods of folk-psychological reasoning that do not centrally involve theorizing about or simulating invisible, internal mental states. Instead, the emphasis is on how minds are lodged in the structure of social interactions. The passage thus accords with research suggesting that the I-originarity of others is accessible across various types of encounters and that such accessibility therefore cannot serve as a criterion for distinctively fictional minds.

Indeed, Celia’s intimate familiarity with Dorothea’s life course, and the manner in which she undoubtedly draws on her familiarity with that larger context to assess probable reasons for her sister’s actions, points to the plausibility of another way of characterizing the relationship between narrative discourse and folk psychology. This other perspective inverts the approach used by analysts who argue that folk-psychological competencies are needed for people to be able to make sense of stories, and instead suggests that storytelling practices are at the root of folk psychology itself (Bruner 1990; Hutto 2008; Herman 2009b). On this account, Celia is engaged in story-based procedures for action modeling; that is, Celia uses her own evolving sense of Dorothea’s life story to construct a model of how the actions Dorothea performs are situated in time and (social) space, and
of how they emerge from and impinge upon the larger pattern of actions that constitutes her life course. Accordingly, it is not that folk-psychological abilities support the construction and interpretation of a story of self or other; instead, the construction of the story facilitates reasoning about one’s own and others’ mental states, in fictional as well as real-world scenarios, by allowing those states to be intermeshed with broader contexts for acting and interacting.

This subsection has provided only a bare sketch of some of the key issues bound up with research on folk psychology and how it bears, in turn, on studies of the structure of fictional minds. But my larger point is that what I have termed the Exceptionality Thesis can be questioned from two directions: on the one hand, by arguing that encounters with fictional minds are mediated by the same heuristics used to interpret everyday minds (call this the Mediation argument); on the other hand, by arguing that everyday minds can be experienced in ways that the Cartesian premises of commentators like Hamburger and Cohn disallow (call this the Accessibility argument). Furthermore, the questioning of the Exceptionality Thesis is in a sense the starting point for all the approaches to fictional minds outlined by the chapters in this volume—approaches that diversify the routes along which both the Mediation and Accessibility arguments can be pursued. In the following subsection, I therefore provide a synopsis of the chapters viewed as contributions to a more general case against Exceptionality. I should stress that the authors themselves do not cast their analyses in these terms. Nonetheless, I believe that linking their chapters to the issues under discussion may help highlight interconnections among the contributors’ framing assumptions, interpretive procedures, and conclusions.

A Synopsis of the Chapters

The two chapters in part 1 of the volume, “Representing Minds in Old and Middle English Narrative,” provide support for both Mediation and Accessibility. Leslie Lockett’s chapter explores how folk models of mind circulating in the broader culture can both inform and be buttressed (or else undercut) by fictional and other
narratives. More specifically, Lockett argues that the Old English narratives that she discusses are grounded in a nondualist, corporeal conception of mind. Previous scholars have sought to use conceptual metaphor theory to characterize Old English representations of the mind as metaphoric projections of the source domain of bodily, physical processes into the target domain of mental phenomena. According to these accounts, conceptual metaphors facilitated the interpretation of the nature, causes, and signs of mental distress—for example, by affording a construal scheme based on the mechanisms of heat energy. By contrast, Lockett suggests that Old English narratives were shaped by and in turn helped shape folk understandings of the mind as literally corporeal, or localized in and inextricably interconnected with the body. Such folk models predated and conflicted with “Neo-platonic philosophy and early Christian anthropologies that emphasize the ontological and moral opposition between the fleshly body and the soul.” Not only are pre-Christian representations of fictional minds mediated by the corporeal model, then; what is more, those represented minds helped consolidate the model itself and make other minds legible—accessible—via observed bodily processes and behaviors.

Monika Fludernik’s chapter on Middle English narratives likewise gives support to both the Mediation and Accessibility arguments. She extends Palmer’s (2004) critique of the verbal bias of the speech-category approach, arguing that the heuristics used to make sense of representations of speech in medieval narratives need to be supplemented with other strategies when it comes to interpreting Middle English methods for presenting fictional minds. But at the same time, Fludernik’s approach points up how the mind-relevant heuristics straddle the divide between fictional and nonfictional contexts. For example, basic and general folk-psychological abilities are needed to parse fictional presentations of—as well as ordinary encounters with—gestures and bodily movements indicative of emotional disturbance; the same goes for the discourse cues used by medieval writers to prompt inferences about collective or group minds. The folk-psychological abilities activated by such cues are argu-
ably trans-situational, and hence support Mediation while also accounting for the Accessibility of everyday minds.

Meanwhile, in an interesting twist on both arguments against Exceptionality, F. Elizabeth Hart, in the first of the two chapters contained in part 2, “Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Minds,” suggests that the spread of literacy had by the 1500s created a new, “reading-based consciousness,” leading to new possibilities for immersion in storyworlds such as those evoked by the late sixteenth-century romances Hart discusses. In turn, these unprecedented narrative engagements led to new strategies for representing human interiority; characters now exhibited mental traits and aptitudes that were encountered for the first time (on a large scale) by early modern readers, thanks to the cognition-extending and-enhancing nature of written language itself. On Hart’s account, then, engagements with fictional minds, far from being Exceptional, afforded prototypes for emergent forms of mental activity, while the written texts in which those fictional consciousnesses were presented afforded a new form of scaffolding for memory and for thinking—and thus new routes of access to the everyday mind. Bradburn’s approach, too, is at odds with the Exceptionality Thesis. Drawing on the cognitive-linguistic work on conceptual metaphors, to which Lockett also alludes, Bradburn’s chapter explores how fictional texts from the seventeenth century deploy, at multiple levels, imagery deriving from humans’ embodied experience—specifically, imagery allowing the mind to be construed, across any number of discourse environments, as a body moving in space. Representations of fictional minds, in other words, are mediated by the same body-anchored and -oriented imagery as representations of minds circulating in other, nonfictional contexts. What is more, by allowing for the sustained elaboration of conceptual metaphors and in-depth exploration of their semantic entailments, fictional narratives like the ones Bradburn discusses extend and strengthen the semiotic web in which our own and other minds can be situated, both within and outside of the domain of fiction.

Part 3 of the volume turns to eighteenth- and nineteenth-century methods for presenting fictional minds. Zunshine draws
explicitly on the theory-based approach to folk psychology characterized earlier in this introduction to explore ubiquitous scenes of triangulated mind reading in contexts of benefaction; such scenes, in eighteenth-century narratives as well as other texts, involve constellations of more or less deeply layered attributions of mental states by givers, receivers, and observers. Zunshine’s approach is anti-Exceptionalist not only because it uses a general account of folk-psychological competence to investigate fictional representations of characters engaged in efforts to read other minds, but also because it combines this approach with a historicist argument that “the fictional hierarchy of mental complexity involving the giver, the receiver, and the observer was co-implicated in eighteenth-century constructions of class boundaries and social mobility.” Fictional minds must be read via the same folk-psychological abilities used to attribute mental states to nonfictional minds; in turn, those abilities both shape and are shaped by sociocultural situations in which they are more or less commonly exercised.

The two chapters devoted to nineteenth-century representations of fictional minds develop other strands of the Mediation argument. David Vallins suggests that in contrast with realist narratives, where characters’ physical environments color but do not constitute their subjectivities, in Romantic storyworlds landscapes and the moods they evoke are mutually implicated in one another, such that experiences of the natural world afford an indissoluble nexus of perceptual and affective states. Hence, following up on Lockett’s and Bradburn’s analyses of the links between metaphor and mind, Vallins points to complex metaphorical equations between landscapes and psychological states, in which the mind is at once tenor and vehicle. Engaging with Romantic minds requires engaging with the landscapes for action and interaction—and vice versa. Nicholas Dames, meanwhile, shows how narrative representations of interiority later in the nineteenth century were influenced by emergent materialist or physiological understandings of the mind-brain. Here the Mediation argument doubles back on an extreme form of the Accessibility argument. Demonstrating how physiological psychology
impinged on novelists’ strategies for representing fictional minds, Dames’s chapter also explores ideas that contributed to the development of behaviorist models in the early twentieth century, in which mental states are evacuated—as merely epiphenomenal, of no explanatory value, vis-à-vis observed conduct. 20

Part 4 of the volume, finally, focuses on models of the mind in modernist and postmodernist narratives, with my own and Alan Palmer’s chapters outlining anti-Exceptionalist approaches to fictional consciousnesses created from 1880 to 1945 and from 1945 to the present, respectively. My chapter disputes accounts of modernism based on the claim that early twentieth-century writers participated in and radicalized an “inward turn,” a movement away from the external, material world into an internal, mental domain. 21 Rather, taking issue both with internalist or cognitivist conceptions of the mind and with efforts to align modernist narratives with such internalist models, my chapter explores parallels between early twentieth-century texts and “enactivist” theories of mind premised on tight linkages among action, perception, and cognition. In a way that offers support to both the Mediation and Accessibility arguments, I contend that, like enactivist theories, modernist narratives foreground “action loops” (Clark 1997, 35) that arise from the way intelligent agents are embedded in their surrounding environments. Per Accessibility, minds are lodged in, knowable from, what people do; per Mediation, the quality or character of fictional minds, like that of everyday minds, is a function of how they are understood to be situated in broader contexts of action and interaction. Finally, Palmer’s discussion of postmodern fictional minds uses attribution theory—or the study of “how narrators, characters, and readers attribute states of mind to others and to themselves”—to explore instances of “attributional unreliability” in texts marked by ontological playfulness, or a foregrounding of issues related to the making and unmaking of worlds. Rooted in part in theory-based approaches to folk psychology, Palmer’s concern with procedures for attributing mental states provides direct support for the Mediation argument. At the same time, his emphasis on the dis-
cursive contexts of attribution, or how minds are grounded in certain ways of producing and interpreting discourse, also connects up with the Accessibility argument.

From Synchronic to Diachronic Approaches

In the previous section, I emphasized how the volume features a number of different approaches to the study of fictional minds—though those approaches are arguably linked by shared presuppositions about the structure of such minds and by shared aims when it comes to explicating them. Yet the volume foregrounds another important issue facing theorists who seek to outline new directions in the study of fictional minds. Along with intratextual variation of the kind discussed in my earlier use of Cohn's ideas to analyze the passage from *Middlemarch*, in which different sorts of mind-evoking cues are employed in different parts of the same text, and along with differences in methods of presenting minds that may obtain among different narratives (e.g., different narrative subgenres) produced during the same time period, scholars of story also need to consider changes in methods of mind representation that have occurred over time, across texts written in different epochs. Here the distinction between synchronic and diachronic methods of analysis, originally proposed by Saussure in the context of linguistic study, can be brought to bear. Synchronic approaches, which have predominated in the study of consciousness representation up to now, focus on the range of narrative strategies for representing minds available to writers at a given time; such approaches thereby seek to capture the state of (this aspect of) the narrative system at a specific phase of its emergence. In turn, by characterizing the set of options for mind representation that are available at that phase, the analyst can specify which options were chosen from a broader constellation of possibilities and with what (meaning-generating) effects. But approaches of this sort need to be complemented with diachronic study of the historical development of the system in question. A diachronic perspective focuses on the evolution, or changing distribution, of the strategies for
mind representation that are built into narrative viewed as a system for worldmaking. At issue is whether the system has been used differently, at different times, to build storyworlds populated with minds.

Diachronic research, then, allows the methods of mind representation found in a given text to be compared with those used in earlier and later narratives; the focus is now on commonalities and contrasts among narratives from different epochs and any trajectory of change that the narratives might reveal when examined together. Over the longer term, story analysts will need to employ—and ideally combine—many kinds of investigative tools to study patterns of change of this sort. Some of relevant tools are those being developed as part of quantitative, corpus-based research that uses large, often multimillion-word narrative corpora either to test or to generate hypotheses about the structure of stories—including hypotheses about changing distributions of mind-evoking cues in stories written at different times. Also relevant are tools of the kind deployed by contributors to the present volume. Rather than involving calculations of the rates of occurrence of targeted features in large collections of narrative data, these tools have been developed as part of qualitative approaches based on in-depth examinations of case studies. Such approaches and the tools developed under their auspices can help model how communities of readers (as represented by the analyst) typically engage with or experience fictional minds; identify which textual cues bear most saliently on that process of engagement; and thereby create a broader framework for inquiry in which the quantitative methods just mentioned can also be rooted—as a means for testing and refining concepts that grow out of the phenomenology of reading.

Reading the chapters of this volume in sequence will afford a sense of how qualitative approaches grounded in a small cluster of sample narratives can help generate new research questions for studying the development of techniques for representing fictional minds. These research questions can be probed more fully either through further elaboration of the models in which
they were formulated or by expanding the corpora under consideration and using quantitative methods to test the robustness of the patterns of constancy and change identified on the basis of qualitative analysis. Hence, taken together, the volume’s chapters provide the foundation for an entire program for research, or several such programs, focused on mapping trajectories of change in narrative methods for mind presentation. In order to crystallize just a few of the issues at stake, the passage from Middlemarch, which I reproduce here as passage B, can be compared with the following two excerpts. Passage A is from a text published about 125 years before Eliot’s: namely, Henry Fielding’s 1749 novel Tom Jones; passage C is from a narrative published 135 years later: namely, Ian McEwan’s 2007 novel On Chesil Beach. Taken from chapter 3 of Fielding’s narrative, passage A registers the reaction of Deborah Wilkins, Squire Allworthy’s servant, to the initial discovery of the foundling (Tom Jones) in the squire’s bedroom. Passage C is the final paragraph of McEwan’s text. In this part of the novel, set some four decades after the disastrous attempt at sexual intercourse on their wedding night that effectively ended Edward and Florence Mayhew’s marriage, Edward reevaluates events associated with that night and his own subsequent response to those events.

Passage A: [1] It will not be wondered at that a creature who had so strict a regard to decency in her own person, should be shocked at the least deviation from it in another. [2] She therefore no sooner opened the door, and saw her master standing by the bedside in his shirt, with a candle in his hand, than she started back in a most terrible fright, and might perhaps have swooned away, had he not now recollected his being undrest, and put an end to her terrors by desiring her to stay without the door till he had thrown some cloathes over his back, and was become incapable of shocking the pure eyes of Mrs Deborah Wilkins, who, though in the fifty-second year of her age, vowed she had never beheld a man without his coat. [3] Sneerers and prophane wits may perhaps laugh at her first fright; yet my graver reader, when he considers the time of night, the summons from her bed, and the situation in which she found her master, will highly justify and applaud her conduct, unless the prudence which must
be supposed to attend maidens at that period of life at which Mrs Deborah had arrived, should a little lessen his admiration. (Fielding 1861 [1749], 56–57)

Passage B: [1] Celia thought privately, “Dorothea quite despises Sir James Chettam; I believe she would not accept him.” [2] Celia felt that this was a pity. [3] She had never been deceived as to the object of the baronet’s [Sir James Chettam’s] interest. [4] Sometimes, indeed, she had reflected that Dodo would perhaps not make a husband happy who had not her way of looking at things; and stifled in the depths of her heart was the feeling that her sister was too religious for family comfort. [5] Notions and scruples were like spilt needles, making one afraid of treading, or sitting down, or even eating. (Eliot 1910 [1872], 25)

Passage C: [1] When he thought of her, it rather amazed him, that he had let that girl with her violin go. [2] Now, of course, he saw that her self-effacing proposal [Florence’s unorthodox but well-meant suggestion that they remain married but that Edward sleep with other women] was quite irrelevant. [3] All she had needed was the certainty of his love, and his reassurance that there was no hurry when a lifetime lay ahead of them. [4] Love and patience—if only he had had them both at once—would surely have seen them through. [5] And then what unborn children might have had their chances, what young girl with a headband might have become his loved familiar? [6] This is how the entire course of a life can be changed—by doing nothing. [7] On Chesil Beach he could have called out to Florence, he could have gone after her. [8] He did not know, or would not have cared to know, that as she ran away from him, certain in her distress that she was about to lose him, she had never loved him more, or more hopelessly, and that the sound of his voice would have been a deliverance, and she would have turned back. [9] Instead, he stood in cold and righteous silence in the summer’s dusk, watching her hurry along the shore, the sound of her difficult progress lost to the breaking of small waves, until she was a blurred, receding point against the immense straight road of shingle gleaming in the pallid light. (McEwan 2007, 202–3)

Compared with passage B’s treatment of Celia Brooke, passage A features assessments of Deborah Wilkins’s responses
that are more detached from her vantage point on and stance toward the unfolding events. As mentioned before, sentence b5 anchors a generalized or gnomic sentiment about religious “notions and scruples” in Celia’s own take on Dorothea’s attitudes and behaviors. By contrast, in sentence a1 narration of Deborah’s response is subordinated to the statement of a general maxim about how people tend to be shocked in direct proportion with the degree to which they hold themselves to a strict regimen of conduct—and, by implication, the degree to which they are anxious about deviating from that regimen themselves. Sentence a2, spanning ten clauses, redescends into the particulars of the situation and the characters’ reactions to it. The sentence moves from an event sequence involving Deborah’s action (opening the door to Squire Allworthy’s bedroom), perception (seeing Allworthy in his nightshirt), and emotional response (starting back in fright), to a report of the Squire’s own reaction via a counterfactual statement; this statement highlights what might have happened had Allworthy not recalled his state of undress and requested that Deborah wait outside the door till he could clothe himself more fully. But even here the final three clauses of a2 detach themselves from the characters’ vantage points, ironizing Deborah’s response by alluding to her “pure eyes,” despite her relatively advanced age. Sentence a3 continues this movement away from reporting the specifics of the characters’ perceptions, inferences, and emotional reactions. The first part of the sentence contrasts the mocking reactions of “sneerers and prophane wits,” who are likely to laugh at Deborah’s elaborate show of modesty, with the approving reactions of “graver readers,” who are likely to view her conduct as warranted by the circumstances. But the rest of the sentence then appeals to broader social norms regarding “prudence,” thereby aligning the evaluative standpoint of the narration more closely with that of the prophane wits than that of the graver readers. More generally, whereas sentence b5 restricts the scope of its assessment of religion and its effects, embedding that evaluation in Celia’s attitudinal stance, sentence a3 subordinates the narrated events to broader social frameworks for evaluating them.
But does passage C continue the trajectory that can be discerned in the movement from passage A to passage B? In other words, when the excerpt from McEwan is compared with the passage from Eliot, are storyworld events—and assessments of those events—anchored even more firmly in standpoints situated within the world of the narrative? The first part of the passage does ground the worldmaking process in Edward’s vantage point on events. Sentences c1 and c2 exemplify what speech-category theorists would call thought report, though the phrase “of course” in c2 is ambiguous in scope: does it reflect Edward’s own sense of how far he has come in his understanding and evaluation of the events involving Florence, or is this assessment relatively detached from Edward’s thought-processes, growing out of the narrative report of that mental activity? Sentences c3–c5 continue to anchor the narration in Edward’s retrospective evaluation of the events of his wedding night, with discourse cues included in c4 functioning especially overtly as markers of Edward’s subjectivity. Relevant here is the use of the counterfactual, “if only” construction, embedded in another, larger counterfactual statement. The “if only” clause underscores the ongoing regret that Edward can be assumed to feel about this unactualized combination of traits (love plus patience). Then the subsequent use of the hedge “surely” affixes a degree of doubt to the supposition that that same combination of traits, if Edward had possessed them both simultaneously when he was married to Florence, would in fact have seen the newlyweds through any difficulties.

But with sentences c6 and c7 the excerpt’s center of gravity begins to shift. True, the generalized diagnosis, in c6, that an entire life course can be changed by inaction, is followed in c7 by further counterfactual statements of what Edward himself might have done on Chesil Beach that night so long ago. Yet sentence c8 detaches itself from Edward’s vantage point, using more counterfactual constructions to report what he did not know (or would not have cared to know) about Florence’s own state of mind on that occasion. Here readers learn that the sound of Edward’s voice would have been a deliverance to Florence, and that
Finally, in sentence c9 the first part of the report provides an externalized evaluation of Edward’s “cold and righteous silence”; arguably this assessment issues neither from Florence’s standpoint on their wedding night nor from Edward’s retrospective standpoint four decades later. As the sentence proceeds, however, the narration is again tied to Edward’s mental activity, specifically to his past visual and auditory perceptions when Florence walked away, on her route back to the hotel and then out of Edward’s life altogether.

Overall, then, no direct, linear trajectory of change describes the variation in methods of mind presentation used in passages A, B, and C. Excerpts A and C both deploy modes of narration in which generalized reports or assessments become detached from characters’ vantage points on the storyworld, meaning that the degree to which the narratives are perspectively grounded does not, in these three excerpts, increase steadily over time. And a different pattern characterizes the changes in the amplitude of variation within each passage. To synopsize: passage A reveals considerable variation in the degree to which parts of the narration are grounded in characters’ perceptions and evaluations; passage B, less variation on this score; and passage C, even wider variation than A when it comes to shifts in the degree to which reports are tied to characters’ standpoints.

Clearly, the foregoing comments about trajectories of change are impressionistic, based on three short excerpts taken from a very limited corpus of stories from a comparatively narrow temporal span of narrative discourse in English. Hence the patterns just outlined are of dubious robustness; they may not bear up when subjected to further scrutiny through a wider sampling of mind-representing passages from these three texts or through cross-comparisons between these texts and the many other narratives that can be used as data points—both within the time span at issue and also across a wider range of periods. These brief remarks nonetheless indicate the kinds of questions that can be asked, and potentially translated into quantitative, corpus-based procedures of analysis, when one adopts a diachronic perspec-
tive on consciousness representation. My discussion also sug-
gests why this book is more than just the sum of its parts. Each
of the chapters that follows contributes to the larger, collabora-
tive project of building a corpus of period-typical mind represen-
tations and using that corpus to try to understand better what
(fictional) minds are and how they have evolved.

Notes

I would like to express my gratitude to Jan Alber and Henrik Skov Nielsen for their
astute comments on an earlier draft of this introduction.

1. There is of course an extensive philosophical literature devoted to con-
sciousness as an aspect or dimension of mind, sometimes characterized in
terms of mental states that one is aware of or that involve raw sensory feels
(see van Gulick 2009 for fuller discussion). This research supports Palm-
er's (2004) claim that “the mind refers to much more than what is normally
thought of as consciousness or thought” (19). Nonetheless, I here use the
terms “mind” and “consciousness” more or less interchangeably—for exam-
ple, in locutions such as “methods for presenting minds” and “techniques
of consciousness representation.” I alternate between these expressions
partly for the sake of variety and partly because previous narrative scholars
have used the term “consciousness representation” to refer globally to
all aspects of the portrayal of mental experiences in stories.

2. In Jucker's (2008) account, the aim of historical pragmatics is “to un-
derstand the patterns of intentional human interaction (as conditioned by
society) of earlier periods, the historical [development] of these patterns,
and the principles underlying such [development]” (895). Meanwhile, Kern
(2004) exemplifies work in intellectual history that extrapolates from writ-
ten narratives (among other sources) to make claims about broader cul-
tural developments.

3. As this formulation suggests, the scope of this volume encompasses
both the structure of the minds evoked in (English-language) narrative dis-
course from 700 to the present and the techniques or discourse strategies
used to evoke those minds. Thus the term “representation,” as it is used in
the subtitle of the book, refers both to what is being represented (fictional
minds) and to how interpreters are cued to reconstruct that “what” (via
narrative strategies and techniques). Indeed, whereas a reviewer of an ear-
lier version of this volume drew a sharp line between “mind or conscious-
ness as literary theme” and techniques for evoking minds, and suggested
that properly narratological treatments should limit their focus to tech-

30 DAVID HERMAN
niques for consciousness representation, my own working assumption is that the study of mind as theme or narrative topic and the study of strategies used to portray minds are interdependent areas of inquiry. Techniques for consciousness representation are rooted in and shaped by conceptions of what the mind is and how it works, while, conversely, understandings of the mind cannot be studied in isolation from the methods by which they are figured in fictional and other narratives. See Alan Palmer’s chapter for a parallel argument: namely, that considering how fictional minds are presented in narratives (at the discourse level) entails considering their structure and contents (at the story level). See also note 8 below.

4. For an especially rich treatment of issues of speech and thought representation from a cross-linguistic and cross-disciplinary perspective, see Tammi and Tommola (2006).

5. For her part, Maria Mäkelä (2006) questions what she views as a “referential bias” both in earlier research on consciousness representation and in later reassessments of the research that adapt ideas from the cognitive sciences. As Mäkelä puts it, “recent cognitive approaches tend to regard fictional and actual minds as being based on precisely the same cognitive schemata” (231). In developing her critique (see also Alber et al. 2010, 119–24), Mäkelä articulates a version of what I term the “Exceptionality Thesis,” or the claim that readers’ engagements with fictional minds are different in kind than their engagements with minds outside the domain of narrative fiction. In what follows I sketch counterarguments to this thesis.

6. As discussed in F. Elizabeth Hart’s contribution to this volume, “storyworlds” can be defined as the worlds evoked by narratives, while, reciprocally, narratives can be defined as blueprints for a specific mode of worldmaking. For an account of narrative as a system for creating, transforming, and aggregating storyworlds, see Herman (2009a, 105–36).

7. Here I follow other commentators (e.g., Fludernik 1993, 227–79; McHale 1978; Toolan 2001 [1988], 130–40) in acknowledging the role of context in decisions about what counts as an instance of free indirect discourse. Furthermore, I should note that in suggesting that free indirect speech, though couched as a narrative report, also contains expressivity markers that point to the speech patterns of a particular character, my comments resonate with the “dual-voice hypothesis” disputed by Banfield (1982, 2005). Arguing that “certain sentences of fiction do not occur in the spoken language and cannot be said to be enunciated by a narrator” (2005, 396; cf. 1982, 183–89), Banfield takes issue with the assumption that narrative fiction is a form of communication. Instead, she subdivides fictional narratives into two kinds of sentences, “both distinct from sentences of discourse [which are in fact
governed by a logic of communication]: sentences of narration *per se* and sentences which represent consciousness” (1982, 143). Drawing on the ideas of Hamburger and the linguist Emile Benveniste, Banfield contends that sentences of third-person narration present events without the mediation of a narrator, their “tenses . . . anchored to no *now*” (164). Sentences of free indirect thought are similarly speakerless, or not governed by the rules of communicative discourse, because for Banfield it is impossible for a speaker’s discourse and another’s subjectivity or “self” to co-occur (1982, 94). Though I will not take up Banfield’s arguments in detail in what follows, I do see them as harmonizing with the Exceptionality Thesis regarding fictional minds—a thesis against which this volume I think militates.

8. For further discussion of the geography of mind at work in this tradition of research—that is, the assumption that modes of thought representation can be arranged along a scale corresponding to degrees of distance from the interior domain of the mind—see my chapter in this volume. Note, too, that this scalar model exemplifies the entanglement of the “what” and “how” aspects of mind representation, as described earlier. The scale at issue, like the claim that particular narrative techniques occupy increments upon it, is interlinked with a conception of the mind as situated on the proximal end of an axis that stretches between the realm of individual consciousness or subjectivity “in here” and the realm of the larger social and material world “out there.”

9. Daniel Dennett characterizes such folk-psychological rules of thumb in the following way: “very roughly, folk psychology has it that *beliefs* are information-bearing states of people that arise from perceptions and that, together with appropriately related *desires*, lead to intelligent *action*” (1987, 46). In my discussion the term “folk psychology” is meant to refer in a generic way to the heuristics used to make sense of the conduct of self and other. By contrast, the term “theory of mind” effectively predecides the nature of the heuristics at issue by suggesting that they have the same structure as (scientific) theories. But as Jens Brockmeier pointed out in a personal communication, the term “folk psychology” carries potentially problematic connotations of its own. Specifically, it may be used to draw an invidious distinction between a properly scientific psychology, on the one hand, and everyday understandings of how actions relate to reasons for acting, on the other hand (see, e.g., Stich 1983). In contrast with pejorative usages of this sort, I construe the concepts, classifications, and reasoning procedures bound up with folk psychology as comparable to those at work in a broad range of folk-taxonomic systems, ethnobotanical, ethnolinguistic, and other (cf. Herman 2007). Like these other systems, ethnopsychology,
as it might be called, comprises methods for interpreting minds that need to be studied in parallel with—rather than viewed as a deficient precursor to—the methods of interpretation that have been developed in scientific or academic psychology (see also Sorrell 1991, 147–48).

10. Nor am I suggesting that interpreters of fictional narratives adopt the same stance toward the situations portrayed in those texts that they adopt toward situations in narratives that make a claim to fact. Rather, as analysts such as Doležel (1998), Cohn (1999), Pavel (1986), and Ryan (1991) have argued, interpreters orient differently to stories that evoke what is taken to be a (falsifiable) version of our more or less shared, public world than they do to fictional narratives, which evoke what Doležel (1998) terms “sovereign” worlds. In connection with the autonomous, stand-alone worlds of fiction, it simply does not make sense to try to confirm or falsify reports about what goes on, in the way that a prosecuting attorney seeks to corroborate via the testimony of multiple witnesses a version of what happened during the commission of a crime. Hence it would be a category mistake to attempt to characterize as true or false the events surrounding Dorothea Brooke’s marriage with Edward Casaubon in Middlemarch; any additional retellings of these events would, rather than provide corroborating or disconfirmatory evidence vis-à-vis what happens in Eliot’s narrative, instead create new fictional worlds. However, acknowledging the ontological autonomy or nonfalsifiability of storyworlds like Eliot’s does not provide warrant for the further claim that only fictional narratives afford access to the l-originarity of another. Granted, fictional narratives have the power to stipulate as true reports about characters’ mind-contents. But the onus is on Exceptionalists to demonstrate that readers have to use different interpretive protocols to make sense of such stipulated mental states and dispositions, in comparison with the protocols they use for construing actual minds. Again, then, I stress the need to disentangle questions about the authentication of reports about minds from questions about how to interpret those reports in order to gain access to the minds at issue.

11. Thus, Richardson (2006) argues that “the trajectory of recent literary practice” reveals “extreme narrators and acts of narration [that] have continued to move ever further beyond the established boundaries of realism, humanism, and conventional representation, and these new works pose severe problems for narratological models that are solely based on mimetic works” (138). Earlier, Richardson describes as follows the conventions for representing minds in texts he characterizes as mimetic: “A first person narrator cannot know what is in the minds of others, and a third person narrator may perform this, and a few other such acts, but may not
stray beyond the established conventions of depicting such perceptions: the thought of one character may not be lodged within the mind of another without any intervening plausible explanation” (6–7). I would argue by contrast that, in light of the research on folk psychology that I discuss in this section, the modes of narration that Richardson characterizes as unnatural or “anti-mimetic” converge with present-day understandings of how minds actually work. Especially pertinent in this connection are accounts of the accessibility of others’ minds via the embodied, socially situated practices in which they are lodged.

12. Hence the volume seeks to avoid the unidirectional borrowing—that is, the importation of ideas from the cognitive sciences into traditions of narrative study but not vice versa—that Sternberg (2003) rightly characterizes as problematic.

13. As Sodian (2005) puts it, Premack and Woodruff “argued that the ability to attribute mental states to oneself and others requires theoretical knowledge because mental states are unobservable and are inferred, like theoretical terms in the sciences. Because the attribution of mental states improves our predictions and explanations of human behavior, the conceptual system underlying these attributions has the explanatory power of a theory” (95).

14. I am grateful to Dan Hutto for discussions about some of the ideas developed in this paragraph. For more details about the two accounts of folk psychology, see Gallagher (2005), Hutto (2008), Hutto and Ratcliffe (2007), Nichols and Stich (2003), Slors and Macdonald (2008), and Zahavi (2007).

15. For more on the concept of attribution and the way attributions play out in narrative contexts, see Alan Palmer’s chapter in this volume.

16. Currie (2004) argues that, although engagement with narrative fiction requires simulation of some kind, and often involves imaginative projections into the situation of characters (species of simulation for which Currie reserves the term “empathy” [179–88]), simulative responses can also sometimes be of a more impersonal sort. In such impersonal simulation, I will, while interpreting a narrative like Eliot’s, engage in “belief-like imaginings” or “desire-like imaginings” but without simulating a specific character’s mental state. For example, having encountered Casaubon prior to the passage I have excerpted, readers (especially rereaders of the novel) may experience desire-like imaginings that Dorothea not fall under Casaubon’s spell—imaginings that extend beyond Celia’s desires, for example.

17. Stawarska (2007) characterizes this bias as follows: “received thinking about folk psychology . . . privileges a third-person approach towards one’s fel-
low beings, about whom one needs to theorize or whom one needs to model by means of simulational routines, to the exclusion of the second-person approach, where the interaction is a direct source of mutual understanding” (79). That same bias is evident in Wimmer and Perner’s (1983) classic study of false beliefs. In one version of the study children observe, from a distanced position, others engaging in activities that require a modification of the observer’s beliefs about what the observed parties believe.

18. Compare here Bruner’s remark: “Only by replacing [a] transactional model of mind with an isolating individualistic one have Anglo-American philosophers been able to make Other Minds seem so opaque and impenetrable” (1990, 33).

19. Hart bases her analysis, in part, on Donald’s (1991) account of the development of written language as an especially powerful support system for, and transformer of, cognitive processes and abilities. Along the same lines, Clark (1997) has argued that the use of linguistic and other props as tools for thinking provides grounds for a view of the mind as extended or criss-crossing between intelligent agents and their surrounding environments: “Just as a neural-network controller for moving an arm to a target in space will define its commands to factor in the spring of muscles and the effects of gravity, so the processes of onboard reason may learn to factor in the potential contributions of textual offloading and reorganization, and vocal rehearsal and exchange” (214).

20. See Herman (2010) for further discussion of the place of this extreme form of the Accessibility argument in the broader context of recent research on the mind.

21. Indeed, this understanding of modernism and the Exceptionality Thesis are mutually reinforcing, with the thesis positioning narratives of the period as paradigmatically concerned with otherwise inaccessible psychological depths and the narratives of the period ostensibly foregrounding the experiences of interiority that are taken, by Exceptionalists, to be the hallmark of readerly engagements with fictional minds. See Cohn (1978, 8–9) and, for counterarguments, my chapter in this volume.

22. For an analysis of focalization strategies along these lines, see Herman (2003b, 310–17).

23. As Palmer (2004) puts it, “the diachronic study of fictional minds might . . . suggest some answers to the following two questions: What are the features of the fictional-mind constructions of a particular historical period that are characteristic of that period and different from other periods? What are the similarities in fictional-mind constructions that obtain across
some, most, or all periods?” (240–41). See also Fludernik’s (2003) suggestive account of the benefits of the “diachronization of narratology.”

24. See Herman (2005) and Salway and Herman (2011) for further discussion of the possibilities and limitations of quantitative methods of this sort, including both top-down or hypothesis-driven methods, and bottom-up or data-driven methods. For a corpus-based approach to thought (and speech) representation specifically, see Semino and Short (2004). For more general discussion of the qualitative/quantitative distinction itself, see Johnstone (2000). To paraphrase Johnstone’s account, whereas qualitative methods address questions about how and why data have the particular character that they do, quantitative methods address questions about how much (the degree to which) and how often (the frequency with which) those data display a given property or set of properties.

25. The contributors’ chapters can be read in tandem with wider-scope accounts of the development of consciousness representation, such as Lodge’s (2002) and Wood’s (2008, 139–68). These commentators’ bird’s-eye perspectives complement the finer-grained, more historically localized analyses presented here.

References


**INTRODUCTION**

Buy the book


Contributors

Elizabeth Bradburn is associate professor of English at Western Michigan University, specializing in seventeenth-century British literature. She has published articles on cognitive theory, John Milton, and George Meredith. Her essay on Shakespeare and Cognition will appear in the forthcoming Oxford Handbook to Shakespeare.

Nicholas Dames is Theodore Kahan Associate Professor in the Humanities at Columbia University. He is the author of Amnesiac Selves: Nostalgia, Forgetting, and British Fiction, 1810–1870 (2001) and The Physiology of the Novel: Reading, Neural Science, and the Form of Victorian Fiction (2007). He is currently working on a history of the chapter, from manuscript bibles to the modern novel.

Monika Fludernik is professor of English at the University of Freiburg in Germany. Her publications include The Fictions of Language and the Languages of Fiction (1993), Towards a “Natural” Narratology (1996), and An Introduction to Narratology (2009). She has edited several special issues of journals as well as a number of collections of essays, including Postclassical Narratology: Approaches and Analyses (2010, with Jan Alber); In the Grip of the Law: Prisons, Trials, and the Space Between (2004, with Greta Olson); Diaspora and Multiculturalism (2003); and Hybridity and Postcolonialism (1998).

F. Elizabeth Hart is associate professor of English at the University of Connecticut, Storrs. She has authored essays on cognitive approaches to literature and culture in Mosaic, Philosophy and Literature, and Configurations and recently coedited (with theater historian Bruce McConachie) a volume on Performance and Cognition: Theatre Studies and the Cognitive Turn (2006). Her essays on
Shakespeare have appeared in *Shakespeare Quarterly* and *Studies in English Literature*, and she is currently working on a book about the character sketch in seventeenth-century English literature.

**David Herman** teaches in the Department of English at Ohio State University. The editor of the Frontiers of Narrative book series as well as the new journal *Storyworlds* (also published by the University of Nebraska Press), he is the author, editor, or co-editor of a number of studies in the field, including *Story Logic* (2002), *Narrative Theory and the Cognitive Sciences* (2003), the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Narrative Theory* (coedited with Manfred Jahn and Marie-Laure Ryan, 2005), *The Cambridge Companion to Narrative* (2007), and *Basic Elements of Narrative* (2009).

**Leslie Lockett** is an assistant professor in the Department of English at Ohio State University, where she specializes in Old English and Medieval Latin literature. Her forthcoming book, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies in the Vernacular and Latin Traditions*, explores the relationships among conflicting concepts of mind that coexisted in Anglo-Saxon England. She is currently working on a book that traces the history of Latin retrograde verse (that is, poems that can be read both backward and forward) from the classical era through the early modern period.

**Alan Palmer** is an independent scholar living in London. His first book, *Fictional Minds* (2004), was a cowinner of the MLA Prize for Independent Scholars and also a cowinner of the Perkins Prize (awarded by the Society for the Study of Narrative Literature). His second book, *Social Minds in the Novel*, was published by the Ohio State University Press in 2010. His articles have been published in the journals *Narrative*, *Semiotica*, and *Style*, and he has contributed chapters to a number of edited volumes. He is an honorary research fellow at the Department of Linguistics and English Language, Lancaster University.

**David Vallins** is a professor in the Graduate School of Letters at Hiroshima University and has taught at universities in Britain.
and Hong Kong. He is the author of *Coleridge and the Psychology of Romanticism* (2000) and the editor of *Coleridge's Writings: On the Sublime* (2003). His essays on Akenside, Coleridge, Mary Shelley, Emerson, Virginia Woolf, and other authors have appeared in a number of books and journals, including *Journal of the History of Ideas, ELH, Modern Philology, Prose Studies*, and *Symbiosis*.