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Empathic Engagement with Narrative Fictions

There is still little consensus among scholars regarding how best to characterize the relationship between readers of fictional narratives and the characters in those narratives.¹ Part of the problem is that many of the explanatory concepts used in the debate—concepts like identification and empathy—are somewhat vague or ambiguous. In this article, I consider some recent relevant empirical research on text processing and narrative comprehension and argue for a pluralist account of character engagement, in which empathy plays an important role. In Section I, I review several empirical studies that strongly suggest that readers often adopt the perspective of one or more of the characters in fictional narratives. In Section II, I turn to the concept of empathy and provide an explanation of empathy based on models and research in empirical psychology. I focus in particular on self-other differentiation, a critical feature of empathy that has been underemphasized in the literature. Next I discuss two psychological phenomena that are closely related to empathy and often confused or conflated with it: emotional contagion and sympathy. In the final section of the paper, I employ the account of empathy developed in Section II to address Noël Carroll's objections to the view that readers typically empathize with fictional characters.

I. EMPIRICAL RESEARCH ON TEXT PROCESSING AND NARRATIVE COMPREHENSION

In spite of a growing trend in philosophical aesthetics to take seriously the work of cognitive scientists, much of the recent empirical research on text processing and narrative comprehension

has not yet been brought to bear on the philosophical debate regarding readers' relationships to fictional characters. In this section, I discuss several studies that examine the activities involved in narrative comprehension. This research provides an important source of empirical support for the claim that adopting the perspective of fictional characters typically plays an important part in our engagement with narratives.

Several recent empirical studies indicate that readers tend to adopt a position within the spatiotemporal framework of narratives that is based on the position of the protagonist.² In a representative study, Rinck and Bower ran a series of experiments on the focus of readers' attention.³ They had readers memorize the diagram of a building and objects located within it. Readers then read narratives describing characters' activities and movements in that building. While reading, they were probed with target sentences referring to memorized objects within the building's rooms. The consistent finding was that readers were able to process the target sentences describing objects close to the current location of the protagonist much faster than target sentences describing objects that were farther away from the protagonist or that had been visited by the protagonist earlier in the narrative. Based on this finding, Rinck and Bower concluded that readers were experiencing the narrative from the spatiotemporal standpoint of the protagonist. In other words, readers were mentally moving through the building with the protagonist.

Another study suggesting that readers typically take up characters' perspectives was conducted by Black, Turner, and Bower.⁴ Black et al. hypothesized that if readers adopt the point of view of a particular character early on

in a narrative, then sentences describing subsequent events from that character's point of view will be more easily processed and remembered than sentences describing subsequent events from an alternative point of view. To test this hypothesis, Black et al. had adult subjects read simple narratives, some of which maintained a consistent point of view and some of which did not. For example, early on in one set of narratives, readers read the following simple sentence: "Bill was sitting in the living room reading the paper." Bill is soon joined by another character—John—who is described moving into the living room. In some of the narratives, John's action is described in a way that is consistent with Bill's point of view—"when John **came** into the room"—while in others his action is described in a way that is inconsistent with Bill's point of view—"when John **went** into the room." According to the experimenters' hypothesis, if readers adopt Bill's point of view then they should be able to process and remember sentences of the first type (i.e., consistent with Bill's point of view) more easily. This is exactly what they found. Sentences consistent with the point of view of protagonists introduced early on in narratives were read more quickly and remembered more accurately. Readers also misremembered the sentences inconsistent with the protagonist's point of view more often, and they often misrecalled these sentences by substituting a verb consistent with the protagonist's point of view for one that was inconsistent. For example, they would misrecall the sentence "when John **went** into the room" as "when John **came** into the room." This substitution alters the sentence to make it consistent with Bill's point of view, which suggests that readers encode the narrative events from the point of view of the protagonist.⁵

Rall and Harris conducted a very similar study on young children and reached similar conclusions.⁶ After listening to familiar stories, children were much more likely to accurately recall sentences that were consistent with the point of view of a story's protagonist and were much more likely to misrecall sentences that were inconsistent with that point of view. Like the adults in Black et al.'s study, the children in Rall and Harris's study often misrecalled sentences by substituting verbs consistent with the protagonist's point of view for verbs that

were inconsistent with it. They too seemed to encode the narrative events from the point of view of the protagonist.

In Rinck and Bower's and Rall and Harris's studies, the narratives used in the experiments specified a particular point of view. However, Bryant, Tversky, and Franklin found that adults take up an internal perspective (i.e., a perspective within the framework of the story based on the position of the protagonist) even when the narrative does not specify any particular perspective.⁷ Research has shown that readers who are explicitly led to adopt an internal perspective judge the location of objects ahead of the protagonist more quickly than the location of objects behind the protagonist. In contrast, readers who adopt an external perspective make equally fast judgments for all objects, regardless of their relationship to the protagonist. Bryant et al. found that when subjects read narratives that leave open what perspective they should adopt, their patterns of judgment match those of readers who have taken up an internal perspective.

The research I have discussed so far provides important information on spatiotemporal perspective, but this is only one dimension of readers' and characters' overall points of view. Most of the philosophical questions regarding the relationship between readers and characters have focused more on the emotional dimensions of point of view. While it is likely that spatiotemporal perspective has some relationship to emotional perspective, more research needs to be done to determine what that relationship is.

While the majority of the work on text processing and narrative comprehension has concentrated on readers' processing of causal and spatial information, inferential reasoning, memory capacity, and the relevance of background information, there are some studies that examine how readers process characters' emotions.⁸

Gernsbacher, Goldsmith, and Robertson ran a series of experiments indicating that readers often process the emotional implications of narrative events from the standpoint of one of the protagonists.⁹ Subjects read narratives in which a central character was likely to feel a particular emotion due to events in the narrative. They were then probed with target sentences, which included emotion terms that either matched the

emotional state of the character, as implied by the narrative, or did not match it. Gernsbacher et al. hypothesized that if readers appraise narrative events from the character's perspective, then target sentences matching the character's emotions should be processed more quickly than sentences not matching it. This is exactly what they found.¹⁰

A study resulting in similar findings was conducted by Harris and Martin.¹¹ In this study, Harris and Martin gave readers three types of narrative dealing with some emotionally charged situation (e.g., a meeting to discuss the results of a brain scan): standard narratives, informed narratives, and uninformed narratives. In the standard narratives, the protagonist was about to have an emotionally charged meeting. In the informed narratives, the protagonist received crucial information prior to the meeting that dramatically altered its emotional implications (e.g., he was told that the brain scan ruled out any major problems). In the uninformed narratives, the reader had information that the protagonist did not (e.g., the reader was aware of the brain scan's results but the protagonist was not). All three narratives included sentences that attributed an emotion to the protagonist. Harris and Martin were interested in whether readers would focus on the objective situation or the protagonist's feelings, given the protagonist's uninformed point of view.

Harris and Martin found that with the standard and informed narratives subjects read the emotion attribution more quickly when it was consistent with the emotional implications of the objective situation. For example, with the standard narrative (e.g., the protagonist is about to have a meeting to find out the results of the brain scan), subjects read target sentences describing the protagonist as anxious more quickly than sentences that attributed some other emotion to him. This was consistent with the objective situation since the results of the brain scan were still unknown. With the informed narratives (e.g., the protagonist has received the reassuring results of the brain scan prior to the meeting), subjects read target sentences describing the protagonist as relieved more quickly than the others. With the uninformed narratives, the emotional implications of the objective situation did not match the protagonist's emotions since the protagonist lacked crucial information

available to the reader. With these narratives, subjects were quicker to read target sentences that attributed an emotion consistent with the protagonist's uninformed point of view than target sentences that matched the objective situation. Harris claims that a plausible interpretation of these results is that subjects "kept the point of view of the protagonist in mind as they read the narratives, even if that point of view ignored or ran counter to what they knew about the emotional implications of the objective situation."¹²

This research provides empirical evidence for the claim that readers' engagement with fictional narratives involves taking up the perspective of the characters. More research is needed, however, to determine the extent of this perspective-taking. While it is clear that readers process some of the emotional implications of narrative events from characters' points of view, the exact relationship between characters' and readers' emotions has not yet been thoroughly studied. Nevertheless, this evidence makes some psychologists optimistic that it will soon be possible to show that empathic perspective-taking is a standard part of readers' engagement with fictional narratives.¹³

II. EMPATHY AND RELATED PSYCHOLOGICAL PHENOMENA

A. *Empathy*

I understand empathy as a complex imaginative process involving both cognition and emotion. When I empathize with another, I take up his or her psychological perspective and imaginatively experience, to some degree or other, what he or she experiences.¹⁴ What I want to stress, however, is that as I do this I maintain a clear sense of my own separate identity. In other words, although I am deeply engaged in what he or she—the target of my empathy—is undergoing, I never lose my separate sense of self. I preserve a representation of myself that is distinct from my representation of the other.¹⁵

Empathy integrates cognitive and affective processes, creating a complex and dynamic psychological experience that draws on different capacities we have for connecting and responding to the world and those in it.¹⁶ The

cognitive component of empathy involves using the imagination to undergo a shift from one's own cognitive perspective to the cognitive perspective of the target individual. This process is often referred to in social and developmental psychology as "role-taking" or "perspective-taking."¹⁷ The emotional component of empathy involves the empathizer's imaginative adoption of the target's emotional state. Thus, when I empathize with another, I imaginatively experience his or her emotional states, while simultaneously imaginatively experiencing his or her cognitive states. It is not enough for me to experience emotions related to or triggered by the target individual's emotions. I must experience emotions that are *qualitatively the same* as those of the target, though I may experience them less intensely than the target does.¹⁸

The presence of self-other differentiation in empathy has a number of important effects. First, it prevents empathy-induced experiences from motivating the empathizer to act as though she is actually having the target's experiences. Second, it enables the empathizer to have her own separate experiences while simultaneously empathizing. Third, it enables the empathizer to observe the boundaries of the other as well as his- or herself and to respect the singularity of the other's experience as well as his or her own.¹⁹

It often gets assumed that when we engage another empathically we cannot do anything else, yet there is no reason why this has to be the case. We are complex creatures capable of doing more than one thing at a time, especially on the psychological plane. In the process of empathy, the empathizer simulates the target's experiences without losing the ability to simultaneously experience his or her own separate thoughts, emotions, and desires. He or she can also react to what is learned through empathizing and to information that he or she has access to that the target may not. This is not part of the empathic project, yet it occurs during empathy.

Let us consider a brief example to illustrate how this works. Suppose that I have a good friend Joe, and that he and I are on a panel together at an academic conference. Let us say that Joe has just delivered a paper that he has been working on for months when, during the question period, a famous and powerful philosopher begins ridiculing Joe's ideas. If I am empathizing with Joe, I will imaginatively

experience the thoughts and feelings that Joe experiences. In this case, the thoughts will most likely be of the variety "I can't believe this is happening to me," "This guy is a jerk," "He doesn't understand what I'm trying to say at all," and so on. The feelings that Joe experiences and that I imaginatively experience will probably include humiliation, embarrassment, and anger.

Although I empathize with Joe, imaginatively experiencing what he experiences, I am still aware of the fact that those experiences are Joe's and *not mine*. Consequently, I do not start to defend *myself* to the famous philosopher. Moreover, while empathizing with Joe, I can have my own separate set of experiences. For example, it is likely that I will pity Joe. After all, he is my friend, I care about him, and this situation is clearly distressing for him. But the pity I feel is not part of my empathy, even though it occurs at the same time. It is not something that Joe himself feels and that I am simulating. Rather, it is something I alone experience. This is possible because of self-other differentiation. Empathizing with another does not entail that I take myself to be identical to the other.

On my account of empathy, empathy requires the following four conditions: (1) the empathizer experiences psychological states that are either identical or very similar to those of the target, (2) perspective-taking—the empathizer imaginatively experiences the target's experiences from the target's point of view, (3) (1) is the case by virtue of (2), and (4) the empathizer maintains self-other differentiation. These four features are essential to empathy and help to distinguish it from related psychological processes that are often confused or conflated with it, such as emotional contagion and sympathy.

B. Emotional Contagion

Elaine Hatfield, John Cacioppo, and Richard Rapson define emotional contagion as "the tendency to automatically mimic and synchronize expressions, vocalizations, postures, and movements with those of another person and, consequently, to converge emotionally."²⁰ When emotional contagion occurs, emotions get transferred from one individual to another. It is as though one individual "catches" the emotion of another. He or she then experiences these

emotions as his or her own without realizing that they have originated outside of him in another individual. The experience is typically automatic, uncontrollable, and unintentional.²¹ Frans de Waal explains this with the example of newborn infants whose emotional states are highly influenced by the emotions of those around them:

In its simplest form, there is total identification without discrimination between one's own feelings and those of the other. It is unlikely, for example, that a human newborn crying with the rest of the nursery has any notion that she is responding to feelings that originated with someone else. Rather, she seems hooked up to a communication network of direct lines between individual experiences without relay stations to tell her where the calls originated. Infants seem to "lose" themselves in collectives of agony, joy, and sleepiness.²²

It is easy to see why people confuse emotional contagion and empathy since both involve one person sharing the emotional states of another. The mechanisms involved in emotional contagion may also be related to some of the mechanisms involved in empathy.²³ Hoffman considers emotional contagion to be a kind of immature empathy, something we experience before we are able to experience full-fledged empathy.²⁴ In cases of emotional contagion, however, there is little or no self-other differentiation, no integration of cognitive and affective processes, and no imaginative component. When we "catch" the emotions of another, they are not experienced *imaginatively*; we simply experience them as our own. And cases of emotional contagion involve boundary confusion. When we "catch" the emotions of another, it is as though we fuse with the other, losing our separate identity.²⁵ Thus, although empathy and emotional contagion may sometimes appear to be the same thing, there are at least three crucial differences between them: (1) emotional contagion lacks self-other differentiation, (2) emotional contagion is not an imaginative process, and (3) emotional contagion lacks perspective-taking.²⁶

C. Sympathy

Sympathy is another psychological phenomenon closely related to empathy that, like empathy,

involves clear self-other differentiation and some sort of cognitive and affective connection between the sympathizer and the target. Although scholars do not confuse sympathy with empathy as often as they do empathy and emotional contagion, they nevertheless often fail to appreciate important differences between relating to another sympathetically and relating to another empathetically.²⁷ This is particularly true of scholars working outside of psychology who frequently use the terms empathy and sympathy interchangeably. Although empathy and sympathy have a number of characteristics in common, they are distinct phenomena.

Sympathy involves caring about another individual—feeling *for* another. It does not as such involve sharing the other's experience. While sympathetic emotions are typically triggered by and related to a target individual's emotions, they need not be qualitatively the same. In her definition of sympathy, Nancy Eisenberg shows how it differs from empathy:

I define 'sympathy' as an emotional response that consists of feeling sorrow or concern for the distressed or needy other (rather than feeling the same emotion as the other person). Sympathy is believed to involve other-oriented, altruistic, motivation.²⁸

Sympathy means having concern for another's well-being, not imaginatively experiencing her mental states. This is an important difference. Just as I can sympathize with another without trying to imagine the world from her perspective, I can also empathize with another without experiencing concern for her well-being. As Peter Goldie explains, empathy is consistent with indifference: "you can imagine the other's suffering, yet simply disregard it, or you might empathize with a person who has committed a terrible crime, yet feel no sympathy for you think he thoroughly deserves his punishment."²⁹

Perhaps one of the reasons for the frequent conflation of empathy and sympathy is that they often occur simultaneously. There is also empirical evidence that supports the existence of a positive correlation between empathy and sympathy, or, to be more precise, between empathy and altruistic behavior, which is generally linked to sympathy. Nevertheless, a positive correlation in no way suggests that the two phenomena are identical.³⁰ Because sympathy

is a concern or feeling *for* another and his or her well-being, it typically involves an impulse or desire to help the other. This is what Eisenberg refers to as altruistic motivation. When we sympathize with another in distress, we typically feel compelled to help alleviate that stress. Empathy, however, does not in and of itself involve such an impulse.

Thus there are several important differences between empathy and sympathy. With empathy, we try to imagine the world from the target's point of view and simulate the target's psychological states. Although we maintain self-other differentiation, we also share the other's experience and become deeply engaged in it. With sympathy, our engagement is different. We are engaged by our concern for the other, not by sharing his or her experience. Sympathy also motivates us to help the other, while empathy need not.³¹

III. EMPATHIC ENGAGEMENT WITH NARRATIVE FICTIONS

I turn now to the issue of empathy's role in our engagement with narrative fictions. While I argue that empathy is typically an important dimension of our engagement with fictional characters, I do not want to suggest that it is the only psychological process involved. On the contrary, I think a pluralist account is necessary to explain the wide range of experiences we have when reading fictional narratives.³²

Much of the recent work on empathy with fictional characters has focused on simulation theory, which was developed in philosophy of mind as an alternative to theory theory, the dominant explanation of how we understand and predict others' mental states.³³ Although simulation theory was initially developed to address questions regarding theory of mind it is now being used to help clarify the nature of our affective responses, including our affective responses to fiction.³⁴

Susan Feagin elaborates the concept of simulation to explain the affective processes involved in empathy.³⁵ She explains that simulation of another's psychological states occurs when we adopt the perspective of that individual by using our own mind to model the target's mental activities under certain conditions. To perform a successful simulation, it is

not enough for us to experience the same emotions and thoughts as the target experiences; we must come to have these emotions and thoughts through similar processes. We do this by bracketing many—though not all—of our current thoughts, beliefs, and sensory inputs and substituting the target individual's thoughts, beliefs, and sensory inputs, which then “play roughly the same roles in the hierarchy of mental processes that the actual sensations [et cetera] would have played in that situation.”³⁶

In spite of the appeal of simulation accounts of empathy such as Feagin's, it is still an open question whether or not simulation theory can accurately explain empathy. One problem is that the term ‘simulation’ is ambiguous due to considerable disagreement about the nature of simulation and what capacities it explains.³⁷ In addition, there is an ongoing debate over whether or not any version of simulation theory provides a realistic alternative to theory theory.³⁸

Peter Goldie argues that simulation theorists have not adequately distinguished empathy from what Goldie refers to as “in-his-shoes imagining.”³⁹ The primary difference between the two is that empathy requires the empathizer to bring a characterization to bear on his or her imaginative process. This characterization will include facts about the target's character, emotions, moods, dispositional tendencies, and life experience, and will serve as a background to the imaginative project.⁴⁰

Unlike empathy, in-his-shoes imagining can involve a mixture of characterizations. Thus when I imagine being in the target individual's circumstances I am able to use a characterization that combines aspects of my own character, thoughts, and beliefs with aspects of the target's character, thoughts, and beliefs.⁴¹ The effects of in-his-shoes imagining will be different from the effects of empathy whenever characterization is relevant to a target's response, which Goldie points out will almost always be the case where emotional responses are concerned.⁴² In order to successfully empathize, I must not confuse what *I* would experience with what *the target* experiences so I must be careful not to let aspects of my own characterization influence the central imaginative task.

Goldie's discussion shows that we need to avoid equating empathy with simulation since not all simulations result in empathy. Moreover,

even if simulation turns out to be the best explanation of how empathy works, there is still need for greater conceptual clarity regarding exactly what empathy is.

The debate in the philosophical literature regarding the role of empathy in our engagement with fictions is problematic due to lack of a general consensus among scholars concerning the definition of empathy.⁴³ A further difficulty arises from the frequent association of the term 'empathy' with the term 'identification,' which is often used as a synonym for 'empathy.'⁴⁴ The problem is that identification itself is a highly ambiguous concept that gets used differently by different thinkers.⁴⁵ Whereas some thinkers use the term 'identification' to refer to the psychological process that I have labeled empathy, others use it to refer to emotional contagion.⁴⁶ The resulting confusion over what 'identification' means has led a number of scholars to avoid the term altogether.

It is in part because of the confusion in the literature regarding the meanings of these terms that I developed my account of empathy on the basis of models in psychology. While these models are not themselves entirely free from ambiguity, they derive from systematic empirical studies and thus in my view provide the best source we have for understanding the nature of reader psychology.

IV. CARROLL'S CRITIQUE OF EMPATHIC ENGAGEMENT WITH FICTIONS

The strongest objection to the claim that empathy plays a central role in our engagement with fictions has been developed by Noël Carroll. Carroll rejects the common view that our psychological states often mirror those of fictional characters. He argues that we do not typically take up characters' points of view or simulate characters' psychological states. Empathy is thus on his view not a central feature of our engagement with fictions:

We do not typically emote with respect to fictions by simulating a character's mental state; rather...we respond emotionally to fiction from the outside. Our point of view is that of an observer of a situation and not...that of the participant in the situation. When a character is about to be ambushed, we feel fear for

her; we do not imagine ourselves to be her and then experience "her" fear.⁴⁷

Carroll offers several arguments to support his position.⁴⁸ To begin with, readers' emotions have different objects from those of the characters. In the passage above, he explains that we feel fear *for* the character, which is different from simulating her fear. Whereas she feels fear because she is about to be ambushed, we feel fear for a character who fears being ambushed. In such cases, we experience strong emotions in relation to characters, but these emotions are not identical to those of the characters, nor are they based on our empathizing with characters. Another way of saying this is that we *respond* to the character's situation emotionally, but do not imagine *being* in his or her situation ourselves.

Another reason Carroll gives for the asymmetry between the emotions of readers and characters is that we as readers often have different information or more information than the characters do. He uses the opening sequence of *Jaws* to illustrate this, rightly pointing out that our emotions do not match those of the young woman on screen who is the shark's first victim. As she splashes about in the ocean, she experiences delight. But we know that a killer shark lurks beneath her (who can forget the eerie underwater shot of her legs kicking slowly back and forth—a shot we experience from the shark's point of view). Because we have information that the character does not, we have a different emotional experience. She is happy and carefree, while we are frightened and anxious.⁴⁹

A related point that Carroll makes involves the lack of symmetry between the characters' desires or preferences and those of readers. As a narrative progresses, readers develop concerns and preferences about possible outcomes, but these often run counter to the concerns and preferences of the characters, including the protagonists.⁵⁰ Carroll explains that, even when we care about the characters, we do not necessarily want them to get what they want. This can happen for a number of reasons: we may have information that the characters do not or thematic considerations may make us want the characters' desires to go unfulfilled (e.g., we do not want an unrealistic "happy ending"). Whatever the cause, when our desires and preferences run counter to

those of the characters, our psychological states do not match the psychological states of the characters.

Although Carroll rejects the view that empathy plays a major role in reader experience, he acknowledges that simulation can sometimes occur, though he holds that this happens infrequently.⁵¹ However, it is important to note that Carroll understands simulation as requiring only a "rough similarity" between the psychological states of readers and characters.⁵² But successful perspective-taking should yield something more than "rough similarity." Thus, Carroll's concession regarding what he calls simulation does not really allow for anything like empathy. Still, he acknowledges that certain genres lead to greater symmetry between characters' and readers' emotions. In the case of horror, for example, he says that the characters' emotions cue readers about how to feel and respond to the horrific entity.⁵³ Here Carroll accepts that there is a close connection between what readers and protagonists are feeling, but he is unwilling to attribute this to some kind of perspective-taking or simulation on the part of readers. He holds instead that the characters' emotions serve as a set of instructions for the reader.⁵⁴

I have explained the major reasons why Carroll argues against the view that readers imaginatively adopt the point of view of characters and simulate characters' mental states: (1) the objects of readers' emotions are not the same as the objects of characters' emotions and so those emotions cannot be said to be the same, (2) readers often have different or more information than characters and so experience different emotions than characters, and (3) readers often experience desires and preferences with regard to narrative outcomes that are different from the preferences and desires of the characters. For these reasons, Carroll argues that we cannot explain readers' emotional responses by reference to some process of empathy or identification. If such a process occurred regularly, Carroll reasons, then there would be greater symmetry between the psychological states of readers and characters than actually occurs.

Carroll's arguments against empathy and identification focus on the differences between the emotional states of readers and characters but Carroll mistakenly assumes that identifying

with a character requires readers to take themselves to be identical to that character. As I have shown, this is not the case. Carroll argues that readers' emotions have different objects from characters' emotions. But this is only partially correct. When a reader empathizes with a character, she simulates that character's experience, but at the same time maintains her own separate identity. This self-other differentiation allows the reader to simultaneously simulate the character's psychological states and experience her own separate psychological states. For example, if the reader empathizes with a character who is afraid, she can feel fear as a result of that empathy, but also feel pity for the character, as part of her own distinct response. In this case, the object of the reader's simulated fear is the same as the object of the character's fear.

Similarly, I can empathize with a character even when I have different or more information than he or she does. In fact, this is how empathy almost always works. Just because I *know* something that the target does not, it does not follow that I cannot *imagine* what the target experiences, given his or her limited knowledge. In such cases, I simply bracket what I know from my empathic project and imagine what I would feel if I had the same knowledge as the target. I will rarely know everything that a target individual knows but this just means that the accuracy of my empathic project will depend upon my level of knowledge.

What about desires and preferences? Carroll claims that readers' preferences and desires are often different from those of the characters. Again, this does not preclude the possibility of empathy. As long as self-other differentiation is maintained, I can imaginatively experience a character's desire, while desiring something different myself. When I empathize with people in everyday life, this is often the case. I desire one thing myself but imagine what it is like to be someone else desiring something else. As long as I do not confuse the boundaries between myself and the target individual, I can experience these conflicting desires simultaneously.

Through the experience of empathic engagement, readers are able to connect to characters while still remaining separate from them. In other words, readers can become deeply involved in characters' experiences without relinquishing their separate identities. Readers

can have a wide range of psychological experiences during engagement with a single narrative. The reader is neither fixed nor immobile; he is neither forced to mirror exactly the characters' experiences nor forced to observe the characters' experiences from the outside. Through the process of empathic connection, the reader simulates a character's experience, but because he simultaneously has his own thoughts, emotions, and desires, his overall experience involves more than just that simulation. The reader empathizes but also reacts to what is learned through empathizing and to information he has access to that characters may not. Often the reader experiences sympathy as well as his own thoughts and feelings about the overall themes and messages of a narrative. These experiences are not shared by the characters and are not part of the reader's empathic engagement, but can occur while he empathizes with the characters.

Just as the reader's experience is not limited by the experience of the character with whom he or she empathizes, so the empathy is not restricted to any one character. Throughout a narrative, it is possible for a reader to move in and out of different perspectives, those of different characters or different perspectives on the overall narrative. There is room in the experience of narrative engagement for the reader to undergo a great deal of psychological movement. Empathy does not interfere with this movement. Its requirement of self-other differentiation ensures that the relationship between readers and characters is not one of complete identity, even in imagination.⁵⁵

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1. Here and throughout the article I use the term 'readers' broadly, to refer to processors of both literary and film narratives.

2. See Mike Rinck and Gordon H. Bower, "Anaphora Resolution and the Focus of Attention in Situation Models," *Journal of Memory and Language* 34 (1995): 110-131; Mike Rinck, Pepper Williams, Gordon H. Bower, and Erin S. Becker, "Spatial Situation Models and Narrative Under-

standing: Some Generalizations and Extensions," *Discourse Processes* 21 (1996): 23-55; Daniel G. Morrow, "Prominent Characters and Events Organize Narrative Understanding," *Journal of Memory and Language* 24 (1985): 390-404 and "Spatial Models Created from Text," in *Naturalistic Text Comprehension*, ed. Herre van Oostendorp and Rolf A. Zwaan (Norwood, NJ: Ablex, 1994), pp. 57-78; Daniel G. Morrow, Gordon H. Bower, and Steven L. Greenspan, "Updating Situation Models During Narrative Comprehension," *Journal of Memory and Language* 28 (1989): 292-312; Daniel G. Morrow, Steven L. Greenspan, and Gordon H. Bower, "Accessibility and Situation Models in Narrative Comprehension," *Journal of Memory and Language* 26 (1987): 165-187; Arthur Glenberg, Marion Meyer, and Karen Lindem, "Mental Models Contribute to Foregrounding During Text Comprehension," *Journal of Memory and Language* 26 (1987): 69-83. Many of these studies have focused on situation models and spatial gradients. For an overview of this research, see Rinck, Williams, Bower, and Becker, "Spatial Situation Models and Narrative Understanding: Some Generalizations and Extensions."

3. Rinck and Bower, "Anaphora Resolution and the Focus of Attention in Situation Models."

4. John B. Black, Terence J. Turner, and Gordon H. Bower, "Point of View in Narrative Comprehension, Memory, and Production," *Journal of Verbal Learning and Behavior* 18 (1979): 187-198.

5. For a helpful discussion of this study, see Paul Harris, *The Work of the Imagination* (Blackwell, 2000), pp. 50-51.

6. Jaime Rall and Paul L. Harris, "In Cinderella's Slippers? Story Comprehension from the Protagonist's Point of View," *Developmental Psychology* 36 (2000): 202-208.

7. David J. Bryant, Barbara Tversky, and Nancy Franklin, "Internal and External Spatial Frameworks for Representing Described Scenes," *Journal of Memory and Language* 31 (1992): 74-98.

8. For a review of several studies relevant to readers' emotions, see Tammy Bourg, "The Role of Emotion, Empathy, and Text Structure in Children's and Adults' Narrative Text Comprehension," in *Empirical Approaches to Literature and Aesthetics*, ed. Roger J. Kreuz and Mary Sue Nealy (Norwood, NJ: Ablex, 1996), pp. 241-260.

9. Morton A. Gernsbacher, H. Hill Goldsmith, and Rachel R. W. Robertson, "Do Readers Mentally Represent Characters' Emotional States?" *Cognition and Emotion* 6 (1992): 89-111.

10. For a more detailed discussion of this study and its implications, see Bourg, "The Role of Emotion, Empathy, and Text Structure in Children's and Adult's Narrative Text Comprehension," pp. 243-247 and Harris, *The Work of the Imagination*, pp. 67-70.

11. Paul L. Harris and Laura Martin, "From Little Red Riding Hood to Othello: Empathizing with a Naïve Protagonist" (unpublished manuscript, University of Oxford, 1999).

12. Harris, *The Work of the Imagination*, p. 70.

13. See Harris, *The Work of the Imagination*, pp. 70-78; Bourg, "The Role of Emotion, Empathy, and Text Structure in Children's and Adult's Narrative Text Comprehension," pp. 246-257; and Rall and Harris, "In Cinderella's Slippers? Story Comprehension from the Protagonist's Point of View," pp. 206-207.

14. Rarely, if ever, would we be able to imaginatively experience everything that the other experiences since it

would be virtually impossible to have awareness of all of the target's unconscious thoughts, desires, beliefs, and so on. This does not mean, however, that we cannot imaginatively experience a close approximation of the dominant thoughts and feelings that the target experiences at a particular moment in time.

15. Although there is far more agreement in psychology than in philosophy regarding the definition of empathy, there is still debate over how best to define it. For a discussion of the history of the concept, including its varied usages, see Lauren Wispe, "History of the Concept of Empathy" in *Empathy and Its Development*, ed. Nancy Eisenberg and Janet Strayer (Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 17–37; Nancy Eisenberg and Janet Strayer, "Critical Issues in the Study of Empathy," in *Empathy and Its Development*, ed. Nancy Eisenberg and Janet Strayer (Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 3–13; Nancy Sherman, "Empathy and Imagination," in *Midwest Studies in Philosophy*, Vol. 22: *The Philosophy of Emotions*, ed. Peter A. French and Howard K. Wettstein (University of Notre Dame Press, 1999), pp. 82–119; Nancy Eisenberg, "Empathy and Sympathy," in *Handbook of Emotions*, ed. Michael Lewis and Jeanette M. Haviland-Jones (New York: Guilford Press, 2000), pp. 677–691. My definition is based primarily on research in developmental, experimental, and clinical psychology. See Eisenberg and Strayer, "Critical Issues in the Study of Empathy"; Eisenberg, "Empathy and Sympathy"; Janet Strayer, "Affective and Cognitive Perspectives on Empathy," in *Empathy and Its Development*, ed. Nancy Eisenberg and Janet Strayer (Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 218–244; Martin Hoffman, "The Contribution of Empathy to Justice and Moral Judgment," in *Empathy and Its Development*, ed. Nancy Eisenberg and Janet Strayer (Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 47–80, and *Empathy and Moral Development* (Cambridge University Press, 2000); Heinz Kohut, *The Restoration of the Self* (Madison, CT: International Universities Press, 1977), *The Search for the Self*, ed. Paul H. Ornstein (International Universities Press, 1978), *How Does Analysis Cure?* (University of Chicago Press, 1984), and "Introspection, Empathy and the Semicircle of Mental Health" in *Empathy I.*, ed. Joseph Lichtenberg, Melvin Bornstein, and Donald Silver (The Analytic Press, 1984), pp. 81–100; Carl Rogers, *Counseling and Psychotherapy* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1942), *Client-Centered Therapy* (Houghton Mifflin, 1951), and "Necessary and Sufficient Conditions of Therapeutic Personality Change," *Journal of Counseling Psychology* 21 (1957): 95–103; Donna Orange, *Emotional Understanding* (New York: Guilford Press, 1995); Ernest S. Wolff, *Treating the Self: Elements of Clinical Psychology* (New York: Guilford Press, 1988); Lauren Wispe, "History of the Concept of Empathy," and *The Psychology of Sympathy* (New York: Plenum Press, 1991). It should be noted that not all accounts of empathy make emotion an essential feature of it. See, for example, Peter Goldie, "How We Think of Others' Emotions," *Mind and Language* 14 (1999): 394–423, and *The Emotions: A Philosophical Exploration* (Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 176–219. Nevertheless, the overwhelming majority of psychologists and philosophers working on empathy define it as necessarily involving emotion.

16. In this paper, I do not attempt to explain the neural mechanisms involved in empathy at the subpersonal level.

Recent work that discusses those mechanisms includes Vittorio Gallese and Alvin Goldman, "Mirror Neurons and the Simulation Theory of Mind Reading," *Trends in Cognitive Science* 12 (1998): 493–501; Vittorio Gallese, "The 'Shared Manifold Hypothesis'—From Mirror Neurons to Empathy," *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 8 (2001): 33–50; Stephanie Preston and Frans de Waal, "Empathy: Its Ultimate and Proximate Bases," *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 25 (2002): 1–71; Michael A. Arbib, Aude Billard, Marco Iacoboni, and Erhan Oztop, "Synthetic Brain Imaging: Grasping, Mirror Neurons and Imitations," *Neural Networks* 13 (2000): 974–997; Laurie Carr, Marco Iacoboni, Marie-Charlotte Dubeau, John C. Mazziotta, and Gian Luigi Lenzi, "Neural Mechanisms of Empathy in Humans: A Relay from Neural Mechanisms for Imitation to Limbic Areas," *Proceedings of the National Academy of the Sciences of the United States of America* (2003): 5497–5502.

17. See, for example, George Herbert Mead, *Mind, Self, and Society from the Standpoint of a Social Behaviorist* (University of Chicago Press, 1934).

18. Eisenberg and Strayer, "Critical Issues in the Study of Empathy"; Eisenberg, "Empathy and Sympathy"; Kohut, *How Does Analysis Cure?*, p. 82. Not everyone, though, requires that the emotions of the empathizer and the target match. Martin Hoffman, for example, argues that merely experiencing emotions *congruent* with those of the target is sufficient for empathy. See Hoffman, *Empathy and Moral Development*.

19. There exists some disagreement in the psychological literature regarding the necessity of clear differentiation between self and other in empathy. Several developmental and experimental psychologists argue that empathy requires self-other differentiation, and this is the dominant view in the clinical literature. See, for example, Eisenberg and Strayer, "Critical Issues in the Study of Empathy"; Eisenberg, "Empathy and Sympathy"; Strayer, "Affective and Cognitive Perspectives on Empathy"; Norma Deitch Feshbach, "Studies of Empathy Behavior in Children," *Progress in Experimental Personality Research*, vol. 8, ed. Brendan A. Maher (Oxford: Academic Press, 1978), pp. 1–47; Rogers, *Counseling and Psychotherapy, Client-Centered Therapy*, and "Necessary and Sufficient Conditions of Therapeutic Personality Change"; Kohut, *The Restoration of the Self, The Search for the Self, How Does Analysis Cure?*, and "Introspection, Empathy, and the Semicircle of Mental Health"; Orange, *Emotional Understanding*. According to developmental psychologist Martin Hoffman, however, there are five different stages of empathy and only the fifth stage involves clear self-other differentiation. See Hoffman, *Empathy and Moral Development*, pp. 63–92. Others who do not make self-other differentiation a requirement include Preston and de Waal, "Empathy: Its Ultimate and Proximate Bases," and Evan Thompson, "Empathy and Consciousness," *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 8 (2001): 1–32. A number of philosophers working in ethics and moral psychology emphasize the importance of self-other differentiation for healthy social and moral interaction and for achieving genuine understanding of others' experiences. See Max Scheler, *The Nature of Sympathy* (New York: Routledge, 1954); Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development* (Harvard University Press, 1982); Lawrence Blum, "Compassion," in *Explaining Emotions*, ed. Amelie Oksenberg Rorty (University of California

Press, 1980), pp. 507–517, and *Moral Perception and Particularity* (Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 173–182 and 215–236; Cynthia Willett, *Maternal Ethics and Other Slave Moralities* (Routledge, 1995), and *The Soul of Justice: Social Bonds and Racial Hubris* (Cornell University Press, 2001); and Rudolf A. Makkreel, “How is Empathy Related to Understanding?” in *Issues in Husserl’s Ideas II.*, ed. Thomas Nenon and Lester Embree (Dordrecht, Netherlands: Kluwer, 1996), chap. 11, and “From Simulation to Structural Transposition: A Diltheyan Critique of Empathy and Defense of *Verstehen*,” in *Empathy and Agency: The Problem of Understanding in the Human Sciences*, ed. Hans Herbert Kogler and Karsten Stueber (Westview Press, 2000), chap. 7.

20. Elaine Hatfield, John T. Cacioppo, and Richard L. Rapson, “Emotional Contagion,” *Review of Personality and Social Psychology: Emotion and Social Behavior* 14, ed. Margaret S. Clark (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1992), pp. 153–154.

21. It is possible for one to experience emotional contagion and be aware that the emotion has originated outside of oneself. However, most of the research on emotional contagion has focused on rudimentary or *primitive* emotional contagion, which Hatfield, Cacioppo, and Rapson describe as “relatively automatic, unintentional, uncontrollable, and largely inaccessible to conversant awareness” (*Emotional Contagion* [Cambridge University Press, 1994], p. 5).

22. Frans de Waal, *Good Natured: The Origins of Right and Wrong in Humans and Other Animals* (Harvard University Press, 1996), p. 80.

23. See Hoffman, *Empathy and Moral Development*, pp. 63–92.

24. *Ibid.*

25. Wispe, *The Psychology of Sympathy*, pp. 76–77.

26. Much more can be said about emotional contagion and its relationship to empathy but such a discussion is beyond the scope of this paper. For helpful discussions, see Hatfield, Cacioppo, and Rapson, *Emotional Contagion*; Scheler, *The Nature of Sympathy*; Wispe, *The Psychology of Sympathy*, pp. 76–80; and Goldie, “How We Think of Others’ Emotions,” pp. 404–408.

27. See, for example, Carl Plantinga, “The Scene of Empathy and the Human Face on Film,” in *Passionate Views: Film, Cognition, and Emotion*, ed. Carl Plantinga and Greg M. Smith (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), pp. 239–255; and Simon Baron Cohen, *The Essential Difference* (New York: Basic Books, 2003).

28. Eisenberg, “Empathy and Sympathy,” p. 678.

29. Goldie, “How We Think of Others’ Emotions,” p. 420.

30. For a discussion of the correlation, see Hoffman, “The Contribution of Empathy to Justice and Moral Judgment,” and *Empathy and Moral Development*; Ervin Staub, “Commentary on Part I,” in *Empathy and Its Development*, ed. Nancy Eisenberg and Janet Strayer (Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 103–115; Eisenberg, “Empathy and Sympathy”; and Nancy Eisenberg and Paul Miller, “Empathy, Sympathy, and Altruism: Empirical and Conceptual Links,” in *Empathy and Its Development*, ed. Nancy Eisenberg and Janet Strayer (Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 292–316.

31. There is a great deal more to say about the relationship between sympathy and empathy. It should be noted that the terms have not been used consistently in philosophy and psychology. What Adam Smith and David Hume often refer to as “sympathy” is much closer to what we today call

“empathy.” For a discussion of the relationship between these two phenomena, see Wispe, “History of the Concept of Empathy,” and *The Psychology of Sympathy*; Goldie, “How We Think of Others’ Emotions”; Eisenberg and Miller, “Empathy, Sympathy, and Altruism: Empirical and Conceptual Links”; and Eisenberg, “Empathy and Sympathy.”

32. Thinkers who develop explicitly pluralist accounts include Gregory Currie, *Image and Mind: Film, Philosophy, and Cognitive Science* (Cambridge University Press, 1995); Berys Gaut, “Identification and Emotion in Narrative Film,” in *Passionate Views: Film, Cognition, and Emotion*, ed. Carl Plantinga and Greg M. Smith (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), pp. 200–216; Susan Feagin, *Reading with Feeling: The Aesthetics of Appreciation* (Cornell University Press, 1996); and Richard J. Gerrig, “Participatory Aspects of Narrative Understanding,” in *Empirical Approaches to Literature and Aesthetics*, ed. Roger J. Kreuz and Mary-Sue Nealy (Ablex, 1996), pp. 127–142.

33. See Alvin Goldman, “Empathy, Mind, and Morals,” in *Mental Simulation*, ed. Martin Davies and Tony Stone (Blackwell, 1995), pp. 185–208, “Interpretation Psychologized,” in *Folk Psychology: The Theory of Mind Debate*, ed. Martin Davies and Tony Stone (Blackwell, 1995), pp. 74–99, and “Simulation and Interpersonal Utility,” in *Mind and Morals: Essays on Ethics and Cognitive Science*, ed. Larry May, Marilyn Friedman, and Andy Clark (MIT Press, 1996), pp. 181–197; Robert Gordon, *The Structure of Emotions: Investigations in Cognitive Philosophy* (Cambridge University Press, 1987), “Folk Psychology as Simulation,” *Mind and Language* 1 (1986): 158–171, “The Simulation Theory: Objections and Misconceptions,” in *Folk Psychology: The Theory of Mind Debate*, ed. Martin Davies and Tony Stone (Blackwell, 1995), pp. 100–122, “Simulation Without Inference from Me to You,” in *Mental Simulation*, ed. Martin Davies and Tony Stone (Blackwell, 1995), pp. 53–67, “Sympathy, Simulation, and the Impartial Reader,” in *Mind and Morals: Essays on Ethics and Cognitive Science*, ed. Larry May, Marilyn Friedman, and Andy Clark (MIT Press, 1996), pp. 165–180; Paul Harris, “Imagining and Pretending,” in *Mental Simulation*, ed. Martin Davies and Tony Stone (Blackwell, 1995), pp. 170–184, “From Simulation to Folk Psychology: The Case for Development,” in *Folk Psychology: The Theory of Mind Debate*, ed. Martin Davies and Tony Stone (Blackwell, 1995), pp. 207–231, and *The Work of the Imagination*; and Gregory Currie and Ian Ravenscroft, *Recreative Minds* (Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 49–70.

34. See Feagin, *Reading with Feeling: The Aesthetics of Appreciation*; Currie, *Image and Mind: Film, Philosophy, and Cognitive Science*; Harris, *The Work of the Imagination*; Alexander Neill, “Empathy and (Film) Fiction,” in *Post-Theory: Reconstructing Film Studies*, ed. David Bordwell and Noël Carroll (University of Wisconsin Press, 1996), pp. 175–194; Murray Smith, *Engaging Characters: Fiction, Emotion, and the Cinema* (Oxford University Press, 1995); and James Harold, “Empathy with Fictions,” *British Journal of Aesthetics* 40 (2000): 340–355.

35. Feagin, *Reading with Feeling: The Aesthetics of Appreciation*. Feagin argues that there are important differences between empathizing with real people and empathizing with fictional characters. Nevertheless, she sees simulation as underlying both types of empathic project.

36. Feagin, *Reading with Feeling: The Aesthetics of Appreciation*, pp. 87–88.

37. Stephen Stich and Shaun Nichols have argued that the term 'simulation' should be retired because "the diversity among the theories, processes, and mechanisms to which advocates of simulation theory have attached the label 'simulation' is so great that the term itself has become quite useless" (Stich and Nichols, "Cognitive Penetrability, Rationality, and Restricted Simulation," *Mind and Language* 12 [1997]: p. 299). For an overview and critique of the different accounts of simulation theory, see Shaun Nichols, Stephen Stich, Alan Leslie, and David Klein, "Varieties of Off-line Simulation" in *Theories of Theories of Mind*, ed. Peter Carruthers and Peter K. Smith (Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 39–74; and Shaun Nichols and Stephen Stich, *Mindreading* (Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 131–142. For a recent defense of simulation theory, see Currie and Ravenscroft, *Recreative Minds*, chap. 3.

38. For a critique of simulation theory, see Stephen Stich and Shaun Nichols, "Folk Psychology: Simulation or Tacit Theory," *Mind and Language* 7 (1992): 35–71; Stich and Nichols, "Cognitive Penetrability, Rationality, and Restricted Simulation"; Nichols, Stich, Leslie, and Klein, "Varieties of Off-line Simulation"; and Nichols and Stich, *Mindreading*, pp. 131–142. For a discussion questioning the plausibility of simulation theory as an explanation for empathy, in particular, see Nichols, Stich, Leslie, and Klein, "Varieties of Off-line Simulation," pp. 59–67.

39. Goldie, "How We Think of Others' Emotions," pp. 411–413.

40. Goldie, "How We Think of Others' Emotions," p. 411.

41. Goldie, "How We Think of Others' Emotions," p. 412.

42. Goldie, "How We Think of Others' Emotions," p. 415.

43. Several conceptions of empathy are utilized in the following discussions of narrative engagement: Neill, "Empathy and (Film) Fiction"; Feagin, *Reading with Feeling: The Aesthetics of Appreciation*; Harold, "Empathy with Fictions"; Goldie, "How We Think of Others' Emotions"; Plantinga, "The Scene of Empathy and the Human Face on Film"; and Ed S. Tan, *Emotion and the Structure of Narrative Film: Film as Emotion Machine* (Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum, 1996). Tan's notion of empathy is broader than mine, and Plantinga uses 'empathy' to refer to a phenomenon that I would describe as a combination of empathy, sympathy, and emotional contagion. Neill, Feagin, and Harold, however, all use the term roughly as I do.

44. See, for example, Gaut, "Identification and Emotion in Narrative Film"; V. F. Perkins, *Film as Film: Understanding and Judging Movies* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1993); and Richard Allen, "Identification in the Cinema: A Conceptual Investigation" (unpublished manuscript, New York University, 2003).

45. Because of its ambiguity, scholars such as Noël Carroll and Richard Allen have argued for the elimination of the concept of identification. See Noël Carroll, *The Philosophy of Horror: Paradoxes of the Heart* (New York: Routledge, 1990), and Richard Allen, "Identification in the Cinema: A Conceptual Investigation." Berys Gaut, however, tries to rescue the concept by refining it. See Gaut, "Identification and Emotion in Narrative Film."

46. Gaut, "Identification and Emotion in Narrative Film." Gaut does not define identification as one thing; however, one aspect of his notion of "identification" corresponds to my notion of "empathy." Jean-Louis Baudry and other psychoanalytic theorists, however, use the term identification to refer to a kind of emotional contagion or fusion, in which there is little or no self-other differentiation. See Jean-Louis Baudry, "Ideological Effects of the Basic Cinematic Apparatus," and "The Apparatus: Metapsychological Approaches to the Impression of Reality in Cinema," both in *Narrative, Apparatus, Ideology*, ed. Philip Rosen (Columbia University Press, 1986), pp. 286–318.

47. Noël Carroll, *Beyond Aesthetics: Philosophical Essays* (Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 311–312. He develops this argument in several places. See Carroll, *The Philosophy of Horror: Paradoxes of the Heart; Interpreting the Moving Image* (Cambridge University Press, 1998); *A Philosophy of Mass Art* (Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 245–359; "Film, Emotion, Genre," in *Passionate Views: Film, Cognition, and Emotion*, ed. Carl Plantinga and Greg M. Smith (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), pp. 21–47.

48. Carroll never explicitly argues against the concept of empathy. He argues against the concepts of identification and simulation and suggests that empathy does not have the same problems. However, he uses the term 'identification' to describe a psychological phenomenon that I would label empathy. And his acceptance of the term empathy is based on his understanding of it as involving mere emotional congruity between the empathizer and the target. Borrowing from Mark Barnett, he explains that "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 for her" (Carroll, *A Philosophy of Mass Art*, p. 315, n. 30). This definition describes a case of sympathy, according to the models discussed in Section I, not empathy. Thus, what Carroll is accepting here is the phenomenon that I labeled sympathy. Based on his arguments against the claim that readers imaginatively adopt the point of view of characters, I understand him to be rejecting the idea that what I am calling empathy plays a central role in reader experience.

49. Carroll, *The Philosophy of Horror: Paradoxes of the Heart*, pp. 90–91.

50. Carroll, *Beyond Aesthetics: Philosophical Essays*, p. 231.

51. Carroll, *A Philosophy of Mass Art*, pp. 343–356.

52. Carroll, *A Philosophy of Mass Art*, p. 349.

53. Carroll, *The Philosophy of Horror: Paradoxes of the Heart*, pp. 88–96.

54. Ibid.

55. Earlier versions of this paper were presented at the NEH Summer Institute on Art, Mind, and Cognitive Science, Cal State Fullerton and Cal State Bakersfield. I would like to thank the audiences for useful comments and discussion. I am also grateful to Heather Battaly, Bryon Cunningham, Mary Gage Davidson, Richard Patterson, Cynthia Willett, an anonymous reader for the *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, and especially Jerry Levinson and Jenefer Robinson for their comments and support.