

Pretence Problems and Make-Believe Emotions

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In my dissertation I try to defeat Kendall Walton's claim that pretence has to be regarded as explanatorily basic for representational interaction. If we accept Walton's claim, we lose both a poignant notion of the imagination as well a convincing answer to the question how exactly visual representations mandate the kind of pretence they do. Walton's alluding to mere automatic imaginative strategies is unconvincing and deserves elaboration.

Borrowing ideas from Kant's empirical schematism, as well as Husserl's reflections on representational consciousness, I suggest that we can cash out these pretence demands in terms of the concept-based anticipatory structure with which object recognition goes along. Assuming that concepts are rules for syntheses, we can assume the following: It is by allowing to be synthesised according to the concept the representational content exemplifies that representations can be recognised; it is by violating the rule of spatio-temporal objectivity in a specific way that representational contents appear as nothing but representational contents. Thus, it is by exploiting our recognitional and perceptual capacities the way they do that representations mandate pretence.

I call this position non-inferior illusionism (NII). NII holds that perceptually recognising a representation's content is not only compatible with but indeed mandates non-thetic responses and thus some form of make-believe. NII suggests that a recognitional account of representational interaction can be formulated which does not require us to inflate our ontology. Unlike Dominic Lopes' recognitional account, NII works for both fictive and non-fictive pictures (in Lopes' sense), thereby being true to Walton's broad notion of fictionality. Just like Walton, I regard representations – I say nothing about photography – as essentially opaque and our perceiving them as essentially conceptual and judgemental.

NII is suggested as not only an answer to the question of how we can perceptually individuate and identify representational contents but also to the question why we are justified in *somehow* self-ascribing genuine perceptual states when interacting with representations. NII holds that we are justified in self-ascribing a perceptual state in so far as we self-ascribe a state that takes as its content the content of the representation in its being no more than a representation's content.

Furthermore, NII supplies us with an answer to the so-called paradox of fiction. If we regard emotions as not presupposing evaluative judgments, but themselves being something like such judgments, we can regard the problem of our emoting towards fictions as tantamount to the question of how we can be in something like perceptual contact with these contents. If representations can display recognition-relevant aspects they can also display emotion-relevant aspects, due to which these objects merit the response they elicit.

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