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# Replies to Hill, Kim, Tuna, and Van Leeuwen

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I am enormously grateful to Christopher Hill, Hannah Kim, Emine Hande Tuna, and Neil Van Leeuwen for their perceptive and challenging commentaries. They have helped me to clarify my thinking on several matters and have pushed me to discover and develop new arguments I wouldn't have found on my own.

*On Parsimony*

I begin by replying to Van Leeuwen's claim that my reductive approach is "pennywise yet pound foolish." His basic charge grants that my reductive view may be more parsimonious than non-reductive views in doing without a *sui generis* state (or a "distinct cognitive attitude") of imagination. However, according to Van Leeuwen, the costs of adding the imaginative state to one's ontology are sufficiently low, and the explanatory difficulties of doing without it sufficiently high, to make this parsimony a poor trade. In *Explaining Imagination* (2020), I was on the fence about how much value to give the apparent parsimony of my view (see, e.g., p. 30, 46-48, versus p. 129). My considered view is that, while parsimony is in fact a virtue of my approach, it is a mistake to see it as the main selling point. I will explain the latter point first and then return to defending the penny *and* pound-wisdom of my view's parsimony.

Considerations of relative parsimony come to the fore when two theories otherwise explain the same phenomena. It is true that both I and those who posit a distinct cognitive attitude of imagination seek to shed light on *many* of the same phenomena—including conditional reasoning, pretense, daydreaming, fiction-consumption, creativity, and the like. However, there

remains a significant phenomenon I aim to explain that the others do not: *imagination*. Indeed, imagination is the *main* thing I am trying to explain. Given that non-reductive views lack a theory of imagination itself, there is no meaningful comparison of parsimony to be made.

Now, those who posit a "distinct cognitive attitude of imagination" of the sort Van Leeuwen recommends do not think that they offer *no* theory of imagination. And they are right, to an extent, if only because there is no bright line between a theory and a messy set of platitudes.[1] Nevertheless, there is gaping hole in every non-reductive approach to imagination now on the market that vitiates any claim it might have to being a substantive theory. The hole is implicit in Van Leeuwen's complaint that the that the kind of flexible, free-wheeling "cognitive play" associated with imagination is incompatible with the "normatively loaded attitudes" to which I reduce imagining. The attitudes to which I appeal—belief, desire, and intention—are normatively loaded in the sense that our ascriptions of such states to an individual place normative constraints on that person's psychology and behavior. Given that someone is in those states, and that those states have certain contents, there are certain things they ought, and ought not, to do. This is why ascribing such states provides a powerful means for predicting and explaining behavior.

By contrast, the positive claims made in non-reductive views of imagination pull in opposite directions in ways that prevent translation into substantive norms. As Van Leeuwen explains, an imagining may be suitably constrained to guide action in "ways that resemble how beliefs do." Yet, imaginings are only so constrained "in certain practical settings." At other times, our imaginings are untethered from any associated norms, being entirely "commitment-free," and thus able to feature in unregulated "play." Further, while some imaginings are like beliefs in tracking reality, others are "developed through a voluntary process"—i.e., they are just *made up*. And while some imaginings generate new beliefs (e.g., during conditional reasoning), others unfold "without affecting the background body of beliefs."

These platitudes add up to a single type of state with many capacities but *no intrinsic norms.* We don't know what an imagining will do…until it does it. What we have, then, is not a theory but a

[1] The fullest such account, in my estimation, is from Nichols & Stich (2003)—yet it is applied only to some cases of imagination, and their black box "Script Elaborator" posit papers over the deepest questions about imagination (as I remark in *Explaining Imagination* (p. 175)).

*wish-list* for a theory: we would like to know *how* a mental state or process can play so many different, seemingly incompatible roles. These are the kinds of questions I try to answer in *Explaining Imagination*, finding room for the intuitive "freedom" of imagination within an account that nevertheless reduces imagination to distinct mental states that have well-defined functional roles and substantive attached norms.

*On epistemic safety*

Van Leeuwen notes several aspects of imagination that he thinks are not well captured by my account. These are what generate the high alleged cost for doing without *sui generis* imaginings. The first is epistemic safety. As noted in the précis, I introduced the notion of epistemic safety as part of an intuitive characterization of Attitude Imagining—one aimed at picking out the phenomenon to explained in a theory-neutral way. I defined A-imagining as rich, elaborated, epistemically safe thought about the unreal, fictional, possible, pretend, and so on. The inclusion of "epistemically safe" functioned to distinguish imagination from, say, the formation of florid delusions or conspiracy plots, which could also be understood as elaborated thought about the fictional, possible, and so on. The term is supposed to capture the sense in which we are not epistemically *at fault* when imagining non-actual situations.

Van Leeuwen observes that, insofar as I reduce some imaginings to beliefs, those imaginings are not *completely* epistemically safe, insofar as the beliefs in question could be false, thereby lowering one's epistemic standing. While this is correct, A-imaginings remain epistemically safe on my account in the following crucial sense: imagining that *p* does not violate any rational norm, or decrease one's epistemic standing, *merely in virtue of one's believing that not*-p, or *merely in virtue of not-p*. That is, believing or knowing that not-p will not in itself generate any epistemic difficulties for concurrently imagining that *p*, even if imagining that *p* could, in other ways, decrease one's epistemic standing.

So, for instance, on my account, a case of imagining that it is raining (where *p* = 'it is raining') might consist in the formation of a judgment that, if it were raining, the streets would be getting wet, people would be taking out umbrellas, traffic would be building up, and so on. My forming such a judgment is quite compatible with my believing (and knowing) that it is not raining (i.e. not-*p*). Now, it's true that, if the conditional belief itself is false, my epistemic standing is decreased. So be it. There is no reason to think there should never be *any possible* epistemic

risk to imagining. All we should ask for is a vindication of the basic platitude that one can (without incurring epistemic damage) imagine that *p* while believing that not-*p*. This is smoothly provided by my account. It is the contrasting inclination to hold that there is never *any* sort of epistemic risk in imagining that creates the above-noted hole in non-reductive accounts. Admittedly, these matters were not as clear as they should have been in *Explaining Imagination,* and I thank Van Leeuwen for prompting me to be more forthright on the matter.

*On asking oneself a question and "testing" for possibility*

The second gap Van Leeuwen finds in my account relates to the temporal dimension of imagining. Very often, imagining involves an extended sequence of mental states, which may (or may not) culminate in a judgment. Van Leeuwen thinks that I've left out this extended component—what he terms "play"—and have collapsed the entire process into a single concluding state (such as a judgment in favor of a conditional). Christopher Hill raises much the same worry in highlighting the role of imagination in *testing* for possibility: "many A-imaginings are closely related to beliefs about possibilities," he grants, "but I would have thought that they are part of a process of *testing* for whether beliefs about possibilities are warranted, and that they therefore precede and cause such beliefs." For instance, we might test "whether there can be true justified belief without knowledge by trying to imagine a case of the former that is not a case of the latter," which seems "flatly incompatible with the idea that imaginings are *constituted* by such beliefs."

My focus on reducing imaginings to other types of mental states may have created the impression that I always suggest a one-to-one match, where to imagine (or suppose) that *p* is equivalent to a single belief or judgment—such as the judgment that if *p,* then *q, r, s*, or that *it's possible that p*. However, my view is that the imagining that occurs in such cases is constituted at least in part by the many states whose activation and inferential interaction *leads up to* such a judgment. The key point is that—just as in ordinary cases of (non-modal) deliberation—these mediating states, too, are reducible to beliefs, desires, and intentions. The fact that I include them as proper parts of the imagining is (I now see) too easily missed in my most general statements of the view. However, I offer numerous examples in Chapters 5 and 6 (on conditional reasoning) and Chapter 8 (on pretense) where the specific sequence of beliefs and decisions that constitute an imagining are mapped out, and where it is shown how they lead to a belief in a

conditional (or in a possibility). Included among these is an account of the (belief-only) reasoning at work in philosophical thought experiments (Section 6.9.2), including a Gettier case (p. 142).

Van Leeuwen reproduces one of these accounts in his commentary, where I describe steps in the thought processes that leads to a conditional judgment about where sheep have gone, if they've broken out of their pen (here I was mirroring an example Williamson (2016) uses in a non-reductive account of imagination's role in conditional reasoning). Van Leeuwen agrees with me that someone who engages in this kind of reasoning needs to bring to mind whatever background beliefs they may have about the sheep's proclivities. What he sees lacking in my approach is an account of how—if not by using a *sui generis* imagining or supposition—one is able to focus on the proposition of sheep breaking out of the pen for an extended period in order to rustle one's memory of any relevant information.

While I anticipated this challenge and addressed it in several places (Ch. 5, fn. 7; Ch. 6, fn. 10; and, esp., Ch. 8.8), those explanations were perhaps more buried than was advisable. The key point is this: in the kind of cases being considered, I grant that an individual needs a means of focusing on a subject-matter so as to bring to mind any relevant information they have stored. This is part of what it is to imagine. I capture this by noting that this process will involve a person *asking themselves a question*, where this self-directed query serves to make related knowledge available for reasoning. As I emphasized in the book (pp. 176-7), this is a very general capacity—at work in countless contexts not associated with imagination—that doesn't have anything specifically to do with imagination or supposition.

Certainly, I allow in the book:

> The process of asking oneself a question—so as to rustle memory or engage reasoning on a topic—is a cognitive ability that, like most, we would like to better understand. Yet, like the states of belief, desire, and intention, it is a folk psychological kind to which all sides are committed, independent of any debates surrounding pretense or imagination. For that reason, it is the right sort of piece with which to explain pretense and imagination (*ibid.*).

In retrospect, I should have specified from the outset of *Explaining Imagination* that, in addition to belief, desire, and intention, the capacity to ask oneself a question is one of the ingredients for my reductive recipe. This would have allowed me to foreground the point that the capacity for attention-focusing self-queries is exercised well outside of contexts commonly associated with supposition or imagination and thus is the right sort of ingredient with which to explain those notions. However, I think it only became clear in the context a reductive account of imagination that many (implicitly) associate imagination not merely with a capacity to *represent* certain states of affairs, but also with capacities for *remembering and attending* to subject-matters. Once we separate out the representational role of imagination from its (alleged) self-querying and attention-focusing roles, we see that there is no reason to view the latter as an irreducible feature of imagination alone.

These remarks serve also as a response to Hill's idea that (a *sui generis* attitude of) supposition is required for planning and practical problem-solving—such as, in his example, deliberating about how things would go if one rented Fred's cabin at Squam lake. According to Hill, a person doing this planning has "an associative network with nodes standing for Squam Lake, Fred's cabin, Fred's dock, sailing, boat liveries on Squam, Sam Edwards, and so on." Supposition enters when "the planner primes other nodes in this network by making an initial supposition, and these other nodes, once activated themselves, activate still other nodes," rendering supposition "an essential part of the planning process." Now, presumably, this "associative network" realizes a set of background beliefs on these topics (if it does not, better not rely on it in planning). One's supposition then functions to prime this network, and these beliefs, so they are available for reasoning. Here supposition can again be seen as an instance of a more general capacity for asking oneself questions—in this case, questions about Squam lake, Fred's cabin, and what typically goes on there.

Apart from planning, Hill also emphasizes the role imagination (and, relatedly, conceiving) plays in testing for the possibility of a proposition. For Hill, such testing involves something irreducible to belief—a *sui generis* state of conceiving or imagining, where to conceive a proposition "involves forming a conceptually structured representation…and holding the representation in mind, without affirming its veridicality in any way." Hill clarifies, however,

that this sort of *pure* conceiving is not a good test of possibility. Rather, we first must conceive of a proposition and then consider whether the proposition is compatible with, say, the laws of logic (if it is logical possibility that interests us).

While my discussion of this point is underdeveloped in the book, a reductive approach to possibility testing is available if we replace the act of "pure conceiving" with the capacity to ask oneself a question, mentioned above. The self-posed question will in this case be whether a certain proposition is compatible with the laws of logic, or (for metaphysical possibility) with the deep nature of the world, as one understands it.

To get the flavor, compare how we reason about more mundane modalities, such as what is possible at the neighborhood pool. Let's suppose I want to know whether I can hold a footrace on the pool deck. I ask myself whether holding such an event is compatible with the pool rules, and this leads me to remember the all-caps sign: NO RUNNING! Knowing that a footrace will inevitably involve running, I judge that "I hold a footrace on the pool deck" is incompatible with the pool rules. As the French would say, holding this footrace "is not possible." I don't think we'd say that, to arrive at this quasi-modal judgment, I needed to conceive (or imagine) that I am holding the footrace. I have "tested for the possibility of a footrace at the pool" using only my beliefs about the pool rules and the ability to ask myself a question. We may, in a similar fashion, ask ourselves whether some arbitrary proposition is compatible with what we believe to be the laws of logic (or, for metaphysical possibility, the deep nature of things), substituting the "conceiving" step for the asking oneself a question step. While this is obviously *not* the received view of what it is to test for possibility, it has the virtue of explaining why our modal judgments are fallible: garbage in, garbage out.

It may seem problematic that this view requires new modal beliefs to be inferred from already existing modal beliefs. But, as I explain in Section 6.9.2 of *Explaining Imagination*, interesting philosophical thought experiments typically do their work by unearthing conflicts in already standing modal beliefs. For instance, pre-Gettier, most philosophers had the following two (modal) beliefs: Necessarily, all true, justified beliefs are knowledge. And, necessarily, no beliefs that (roughly) are only coincidentally true qualify as knowledge. "Conceiving of a Gettier case" leads one to judge that there is a conflict here: there seem to be justified true

beliefs that are only coincidentally true. The reason the new modal belief feels substantive is that its adoption requires revising one previously held.

*Proofs on paper and proofs in the head*

However, Hill raises additional worries about my reductive treatment of supposition that require a very different reply. The methods of conditional proof (CP) and *reductio ad absurdum* (RAA) in systems of natural deduction involve "suppositional" steps—steps of the proof that occur as a kind of sidebar to the main premises (as premises "assumed true for CP or RAA"), but which nevertheless provide necessary warrant the proof's subsequent premises and conclusions. These sidebar steps are commonly called "assumptions" or "suppositions." In *Explaining Imagination,* I argue that we fall prey to a kind of illusion (we are bewitched by language!), when we infer, from the validity of these methods in formal logic, that there are closely corresponding *psychological* states of supposition and/or imagination that are replied upon to carry out such reasoning "in the head." As Hill accurately recounts, I try to make this case in a couple of ways: first, by noting how poorly humans fare, in general, in abiding by the strictures of systems of natural deduction; second, by sketching plausible alternatives for the psychological states involved in such inferences that only involve beliefs.

Hill is not convinced that the kinds of alternative accounts I want to offer are always available and notes the considerable problems this gap would create, given the importance of CP and RAA to mathematics, and the reliance of most sciences on mathematics in turn. I won't rehash my earlier arguments here, as I now want to venture a pithier and more decisive reply. First, it is important to note a distinction I also draw in the book, between, on the one hand, the methods of conditional proof (and of natural deduction generally) *considered as extra-mental formal proof systems, the steps of which may be written on a page*, and, on the other, the *psychological states and attitudes required for a person to make use of such a proof system.* I certainly do not deny the validity and utility of logical and mathematical proof systems that make use of CP and RAA, understood as ways of getting to an answer on a page by following the appropriate steps. In the same way, I don't deny the validity and utility of the method of long division, conceived as a stepwise set of procedures for writing numbers on a page that brings you the correct answer concerning a multi-digit division problem. Yet, of course, one can accept the value and validity

of the (extra-mental) method of long division, without having any theory about what goes on psychologically when it is carried out. Likewise, we can accept the value and validity of CP and RAA—and the sciences that presuppose them—without committing to any views about the psychological states we undergo when writing those steps on a page.

Importantly, once we have separated the question of what is done on the page from what occurs in the head, plausible accounts of what occurs in the head that appeal only to beliefs suggest themselves—for both long division and CP and RAA. Let's begin with long division. When I use long division to divide 3846 by 7, I begin by asking myself how many times 7 goes evenly into 38 and then write that number (5) above the '8' in '3846'. I next write '35' below the '38' portion of 3846 and do subtraction to get 3. I then "bring down the 4" from 3846 to get 34, which is the next number I try to divide evenly by 7…and so on. At each step, I simply rely on my memorization of small digit multiplication and my beliefs about where to write things (and in which order) to arrive at the answer.

Making use of CP and RAA—while writing out a proof on paper—can likewise exclusively involve beliefs. After all, the nice thing about a deductive proof system is that, like long division, you can teach someone how to use it through explicit instructions. You just need to teach them the acceptable inference rules and procedures—the very things taught in a class on formal logic (and indeed the very rules that a computer program for deduction stores in its memory). Someone setting out to do a proof involving CP or RAA will consult just these beliefs in deciding which lines to write where. In some cases, this will lead them to write $A$ after a line showing $A\&B$; in others, it will lead them to write $A$ indented to the right (as an "assumption for CP") after having written $A \rightarrow B$ on a previous line. Crucially, no assumptions or suppositions must occur *in the mind* in order to know what can be written where. On the contrary, at each step, in deciding what to write next (and where), one *ought* to rely only on one's beliefs about acceptable procedures for the proof system.

But what about our ability to do CP and RAA entirely "in the head"? Does this not implicate a distinct attitude of supposition? We can see that it does not when we consider the role that written marks play when we do proofs partly on paper. What is written on paper serves a

mnemonic function. Given the limits of working memory, we simply can't remember what we've been doing at each step of the proof, so we write it down to keep track of where we are and what we've done (similar points apply to our use of long division). But this simply shows that the paper can be removed (and we can do it all in the head) as long as we can always remember what we have put in the assumption column versus what is in the main proof, as we move forward adding lines. In short, there is no need to "assume p" (if this involves taking a non-belief attitude toward *p*) when doing a proof in the head, so long as you can remember which propositions are in which column and can apply the rules of the system.

Granted, this account of things makes appear difficult to carry out proofs entirely in the head. That's a good thing, as it *is* quite difficult for most people to do proofs in that way—just as long division entirely in the head is challenging for most.

*Developing Fictions*

Hill and Van Leeuwen both find a gap in my account of how we experience the details of fictions we are enjoying. They allow that we form beliefs about what is happening in the fiction as it occurs but hold that these are insufficient to explain the ways in which we imaginatively develop fictions beyond what is explicitly written or shown.

My main responses to these charges are in the book (see, esp., Section 9.3.3): in the many cases where we represent fictional things as being some way, yet without believing them to be that way in the fiction, we can be understood as making decisions about how to experience the fiction for ourselves. In keeping with my broader views where mental images can be proper parts of beliefs, desires, and decisions, we can understand these as image-involving decisions to experience the fiction *like so* (where *like so* is a linguistic stand-in for a content-bearing image). Finding a role for decisions about how to experience the fiction (regardless of what is strictly-speaking *true* in the fiction) helps to capture the collaborative, interactive aspect of fiction-consumption. We do not, in reading a fiction, simply *take in* what is said; we also *produce* novel and idiosyncratic representations in return. Orthodox accounts of fiction-consumption assign

both the receptive and creative roles to an undifferentiated imaginative state. It is a virtue of my account that it pulls these apart.[2]

Kim raises a related challenge concerning the phenomenon of "deep incompleteness," where an author purposely leaves a fiction indeterminate concerning some important matter (e.g. whether, in *Bladerunner,* Deckard is a human or android). Here it would be wrong to form a judgment that thus and so is the case in the fiction, or even to decide to develop, for oneself, the fiction in just one way. Nevertheless, such cases don't present a serious challenge to my approach. When encountering this important kind of indeterminacy, we might form a belief that, in the fiction *F*, it is indeterminate whether p or q; and we may further judge that the author wants us to appreciate this ambiguity about an important point. This might lead to further conditional reasoning of different kinds, where we consider what else would be true along each route. In so doing we may "dwell in uncertainty." Simply saying, as Kim proposes, that we imagine these indeterminacies in the same way we imagine everything else about the fiction offers no leverage on the interesting psychological phenomenon she has highlighted.

*Applications of Operators and Truth in Fiction*

In my account of fiction consumption (Chapters 9, 10, 11), I assign much of the work standardly set out for imagination to judgments that, in the fiction, thus and such. In many cases, these 'in the fiction' operator-involving judgments constitute the relevant imaginings. Kim challenges my appeal to such judgements on several fronts. She begins by questioning an account I provide of truth in fiction. To set the context: there is an historical debate between intentionalists and non-intentionalists concerning what determines which propositions are true in a fiction. The question gets going when we notice that, intuitively, there are many truths in a fictional world that are not explicitly commented on by the author—such as that Sherlock Holmes has a thumb on each hand. Intentionalists, such as Stock (2017), hold that these truths depend somehow on the

[2] Van Leeuwen objects to my appeal to decisions on the grounds that "often the images just occur without a decision to have them." Yet note that, on my view, the images in question are *proper parts* of our decisions. Insofar as we do not, in general, decide to make our decisions, we likewise don't decide to have these images. Rather: we decide to expand on the fiction in a certain way, and these decisions indeed "just happen" as part of our being competent and engaged consumers of the fiction with goals and interests of our own.

intentions of the author—specifically, an intention that the reader imagine the proposition in question. Anti-intentionalists, such as Lewis (1978), deny the relevance of authorial intentions in this domain. While I side with the anti-intentionalists (as explained in the first part of Chapter 9), I also wanted to show that, even if one were attracted to intentionalism as an approach to truth in fiction, my reductive account of imagination could still serve purposes. Intentionalists think (roughly) that a proposition *p* is true in fiction *F* only if the author prescribes that the reader imagines that *p.* In Chapter 9, I point out that such an intentionalist could equally well hold that a proposition *p* is true in *F* iff the author prescribes that the reader judges that, in the fiction *F,* p. After all, there will be no propositions that the author prescribes one to imagine, in response to the fiction, that the author doesn't also prescribe one to judge true in the fiction.[3] In this way, the sort of imagining that intentionlists appeal to in order to explain truth in fiction can be reduced to judgments of a kind, in keeping with my larger project.

Kim objects that such an account of truth in fiction "seems circular," as the notion of "truth in a fiction *F*" occurs within my explanation of what determines whether *p* is true in a fiction *F*. This charge misses the mark, however. The point of the analysis I provided—and of analyses of truth in fiction generally—is not to explain what we mean by 'true in the fiction *F,'* such that anyone who was puzzled by this phrase could gain understanding. All sides understand well enough what is meant by '*p* is true in the fiction'—viz., that the fiction says or implies that *p.* It is based on this understanding that they offer competing deeper analyses of *what determines* whether some proposition is true (or false) in a particular fiction *F.* In the context of answering this latter question, there is no circularity in saying that *p* is true in *F* only if the author prescribes the reader to judge that, in *F*, *p.* For those attracted to intentionalism (which, again, is not me), it provides a way to respect the idea that the author's intentions are what matter for determining truth in fiction, while allowing for imagination to be reduced to judgments of a kind.

A second issue Kim raises with my appeal to 'in the fiction' operators is that there are sentences comparing fictions to reality, or fictions and other fictions, where they seem to fail. Building off Kim's example, to believe that, in *Crime and Punishment,* Raskolnikov is angstier than Hamlet,

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[3] I set aside here situations where a fiction is temporarily misleading about what is true in the fiction, as these are special cases to be dealt with separately by all intentionalist accounts.

is to have a false belief, as Hamlet does not appear in *Crime and Punishment*. This is not a serious problem, however, as the content of such a belief can instead be understood along the lines of: Raskolnikov, of *Crime & Punishment,* is angstier than Hamlet, of *Hamlet*. Kim suggests that any such rephrase will require an implausible "conceptual sophistication" on the part of the comparison maker. Yet it is hard to see how such a judgment is more sophisticated than other dual-operator judgments such as: according to Sally, Bill is at the pool, while, according to Jim, Bill is at the beach. Nevertheless, Kim favours an account from Crimmins (1998), according to which such statements are pretenses of a kind—in particular, pretenses "that there are particular persons with characteristics that we can refer to." Yet, on the face of it, the comparative claims in question are offered with full sincerity; nothing is being expressed that is not believed. This makes them poor candidates for pretense. Further, whether or not a pretense is afoot, the person who makes such a comparative claim clearly has *some* belief about how the characters compare. All sides owe an account of its content. I have provided one, consonant with my reductive approach. What will Kim's be?

*Imaginative resistance*

Kim and Hande Tuna raise several challenges to my (admittedly brief) treatment of "imaginative resistance" in *Explaining Imagination*. The account I offered of why we at times fail to judge something true in a fiction, despite the fiction's claiming it to be true, was that we don't really *get* what the fiction is talking about, insofar as we suddenly don't know how to fill out the fictional world with additional, related truths. The feeling of imaginative resistance is at bottom a feeling of confusion. Favouring, as I do, Lewis's account of how we determine fictional truths, we need to know things about the nearest possible world where the fiction is told as known fact to fill out a fictional world and follow along. The sentences that generate resistance make us feel lost in modal space: we are no longer sure what, if anything, in what we have been assuming true about the fictional world is correct. Either we must reject what the author has said as true in the fiction or accept it and decide that the rest of the fictional world may not be at all as we imagined it. This, I claim, is the feeling of imaginative resistance.

Kim's first complaint with this is that "most, if not all, examples of imaginative resistance aren't long enough to lull us into the realist framework only to spring a surprise on us." Yet there is no lulling needed. From the first sentence of a fiction, we implicitly surmise a nearest possible world where the fiction is told as known fact and thereby judge many other things to be true in the fiction. The one-sentence fiction, "Jim and Sally were driving on the freeway," for instance, generates beliefs about innumerable fictional truths, including that Jim and Sally have heads, are driving a car, are not caterpillars, and so on. It does so defeasibly, until a subsequent sentence alerts us to a miscalculation. Thus, if we add to this fiction a bizarre second statement, such as "They believed, correctly, that female infanticide is morally good," we suddenly have no idea what is going on in the fiction. If *that's* true in the fiction, how do we know they are even human? *Do* they have heads? Could they just as likely be caterpillars? Voilà resistance.

Kim further objects that, if the account I offer is correct, it should be possible to overcome resistance given enough added context. Yet, in her view, "those who encounter imaginative resistance just don't think female infanticide can be the right thing *anywhere*." However, it seems that resistance *can* be waived in this case, and for precisely the reasons I've suggested. Suppose we add to the two-sentence fiction above: "This is because an evil demon had a policy of killing three living girls for every female infant allowed by her parents to live." (Apologies for the example, I didn't start this industry!) Now we know where we are in modal space. Accordingly, we no longer experience resistance to judging what the narrator says to be true in the fiction.

Hande Tuna devotes some of her commentary to developing her own approach to imaginative resistance. According to Tuna, the key disputants in these debates—the Cantians and Wontians—are largely talking past each other, not realizing that they are simply describing different "modes" (but not different types) of imagining, namely, "selective imagining" and "panoramic imagining." During selective imagining, Tuna explains, we attend to "local bits of consistency and coherence, while relinquishing concerns for global consistency," while panoramic imagining "involves imagining all the propositions we apprehend and believe to be true in the fiction." When Cantians say they can't imagine certain propositions, what they really mean, according to Tuna, is that they cannot panoramically imagine them; and, when Wontians say they *can* imagine

those propositions, what they really mean is that they can selectively imagine them. Tuna thinks the Wontians would agree with the Cantians that they cannot panoramically imagine them.

I won't comment on the merits of Tuna's approach, other than to note that the characteristics she ascribes to "selective imagining" bear an uncanny similarity to those associated with (the more familiar) supposition. Swapping 'supposition' for 'selective imagining' leaves the existing disputes intact. More important for present purposes is Tuna's use of the selective/panoramic distinction to situate her view with respect to mine. While she grants that "panoramic imagining can be reduced to belief," in the ways I propose, she finds it "less likely that selective imagining can be similarly reduced." Her main concern seems to be this: on my account, much (but not all) of fiction-consumption amounts to forming judgments about what is true in the fiction. Further, these judgments are largely (but not entirely) guided by our thoughts about what is true in the nearest possible world where the fiction is told as known fact. Tuna is fine with all this involving inferential relationships among our beliefs. Yet, in cases where we need to overlook an inconsistency in what is true in the fiction—e.g., where we would need to imagine an impossibility—this approach hits a wall, as we are not able to construct a coherent world where all that is said or implied by the fiction is true. Because, according to Tuna, we can nevertheless selectively imagine these (resistance-inducing) propositions, there are some imaginings that do not reduce to judgments in the way I propose.

Tuna is especially concerned with works of "magical realism, absurdism, or surrealism." We need a way to imagine these worlds and, it seems, the method of determining the nearest possible world where they are told as known fact will falter, as there may be no such possible world. However, many (perhaps most?) absurd or surreal fictions involve no *logical* inconsistencies. In those cases, we *can* think of a possible world where things are as the fiction claims them to be. In other cases, we may simply fail to register a deep inconsistency in the world we are imagining, as often occurs in the appreciation of time travel narratives where someone changes the past. Plausibly, such narratives succeed in part by obscuring the impossibilities they imply. Here the normal strategy of forming judgments about what is true in a fiction by considering a certain possible world will enable us to have imaginings about the fiction—at least up to the point where we focus on what is logically incompatible in the situation, where resistance may

kick in. In Tuna's terms, all these judgments would be "selective imaginings," as they do not represent the fictional world *in its entirety*; however, I am inclined to think that nearly all imagining in response to fiction is selective imagining in *this* sense, insofar as we rarely if ever keep in mind all aspects of a fictional world (and their entailments) at once.

Yet Tuna also has in mind a quite different phenomenon where we imagine in response to a fiction yet where there are no reader-independent fictional truths. According to Tuna, in cases where there are multiple interpretations of a text (such as Lewis Carrol's *The Snark*) "readers construct their own versions of fictional truth." This example is a non-sequitur, however, as there can be differences in what we take the allegorical meaning or symbolic intent of a text to be, while there remains consensus concerning what is strictly true in the fiction. Nevertheless, it must be granted that not all our engagement with fiction is about recovering fictional truth. This is especially evident when we consider our appreciation of other artforms—such as poetry, music, and painting—where the question of what is "true in the poem" (or song, or painting) is often misplaced, as there may be no expectation of a single truth, and where the work need not be making any claims about a fictional world at all. We will want to say that we imagine in response to these works, yet what this imagining consists in must be something other than judgments about what is true in a fiction.

Admittedly, this is not a topic I addressed in *Explaining Imagination*, and indeed it seems underexplored in the philosophy of imagination generally. There certainly remains work to be done for a reductive account of imagination on this score. My general view is that there are many different things that go on, psychologically, when we enjoy artworks of different kinds. In keeping with my overarching view in this area, I think we say little of interest *simply* in remarking that our imagination is at work in such cases, precisely because what we are doing is so different from case to case.

Finally, Kim provides some welcome emendations to the (brief) account I offered of what it is to be a work of fiction. I proposed that a fiction is "a set of sentences *S*, put forward by an author with the expectation that readers will believe that much, if not all, of what is said and implied by *S* is not true" (p. 208). Kim rightly notes that this definition only applies to *textual*

works of fiction, and, further, that I should countenance additional "formal features *FF*" (such as italicized portions) which, in addition to the sentences *S,* are likewise put forward by the author in ways that say or imply things. More substantively, Kim objects to defining fiction in terms of the author's expectation that most of what is implied will not be believed, citing cases where an author is writing non-fiction but, expecting prejudice in their readers, anticipates disbelief. This wrinkle can be ironed, however, by scaling "expect" back to "hope." Yet Kim thinks a more radical solution is required. "The important criterion is not what authors expect readers to do," she writes, "but what readers expect authors to have done." On her reader-first alternative, a text is a fiction if it is "read with the expectation that much, if not all, of what is said, implied, or formally conveyed…is not true." Yet this criterion seems to fare worse in the very situations Kim describes. Readers can turn what an author intended as nonfiction into fiction simply by expecting (perhaps due to prejudice) that the author is just the sort to make lots of untrue claims. Making a work's status as fiction or non-fiction dependent on readers rather than writers introduces a profound relativism we'd do best to avoid.

*Closing remarks*

I thank my esteemed commentators once again for the opportunity to repair, clarify, and expand on my account. As I noted in *Explaining Imagination,* my aim with this work has been to encourage new approaches to imagination—approaches that break it into better-understood, better-behaved pieces. I hope the book and my replies here will encourage others to embark on a similar path toward a better understanding of imagination.[4]

[4] Special thanks to Stacie Friend, Christopher Gauker, Christopher Hill, Daniel Munro, and Neil Van Leeuwen for helpful discussion of issues raised in these replies.

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