ON THE BODY OF LITERARY PERSUASION

JUKKA MIKKONEN

In this paper, the author argues that literary works have distinct cognitive significance in changing their readers' beliefs. In particular, he discusses 'philosophical fictions' and truth-claims that they may imply. Basing himself broadly on Aristotle's view of the *enthymeme*, he argues that a work of literary fiction persuades readers of its truths by its dramatic structure, by illustrating or implying the suppressed conclusion (or other parts missing in the argument). Further, he suggests that it is exactly this 'literary persuasion' which distinguishes literary works from merely didactic works prone to overt 'argumentation' and instruction.

Zum Wesen literarischer Überzeugung
Der Autor dieser Studie stellt die These auf, dass literarische Werke auf seine eigene Weise erkenntnisrelevant sind, wenn sie die Meinung ihrer Leser beeinflussen. Er widmet sich ins-besondere der sog. philosophischen Belletristik (*philosophical fiction*) und dem mit ihr verknüpften Wahrheitsanspruch. Indem er sich stark auf Aristoteles' Konzept der *enthymeme* stützt, argumentiert er, dass das literarische Werk die Leser von seinen Wahrheiten durch seine dramatische Struktur überzeugt, indem es einen nicht gezogenen Schluss (oder andere nicht argumentativ ausgeführte Teile) entweder illustriert oder impliziert. Außerdem vertritt er die Meinung, dass es eben diese 'literarische Überzeugung' ist, die literarische Werke von bloß didaktischen Werken unterscheidet, die sich auf eine unverhüllte 'Argumentation' und Belehrung beschränken.

I. INTRODUCTION

A common objection to the cognitive value of literary narrative fiction in the analytic philosophy of literature has been that literary works do not argue for the genuine truths they may contain.[1] The argument, known as the 'no-argument argument,' maintains that although literary works could make or imply humanly interesting truth-claims, the works do not reason or justify the claims and thus do not make significant contributions to knowledge.[2] Nevertheless, a glance at the literary practice shows that general readers approach literary works to obtain significant truths, and literary works actually persuade them of these. For instance, Freud found his psychological theories anticipated in Sophocles and Shakespeare;

I am greatly indebted to Noël Carroll and John Gibson for their insightful and thought-provoking studies on literary narratives and Päivi Mehtonen for her critical comments.

[1] By 'genuine' truths I mean extra-fictional truths, that is, truths of the actual world. Further, I maintain that at the literal level, literary works are, at least for the most part, fictive: their content is fictional and their mode of presentation is not assertive; nonetheless, I shall argue that at another level, the works may convey propositions which the reader is invited to assess as true or false.

[2] Theories of literary truth which have contributed to the topic of my paper are usually concerned with the substantive and interesting general propositions about human existence which literary works embody.

John Stuart Mill said that he had learnt from Wordsworth that 'there was real, permanent happiness in tranquil contemplation,'[3] and Wittgenstein recommended Tolstoy's *Hadji Murat* to his friend to help him get a proper conception of war.

In the philosophy of literature, various attempts have been made to explicate the way(s) literary works 'reason' their claims. Philosophers have appealed to illustration, 'showing-that', portrayal, *pathos*, thought experiments, the narrative form, and characteristics of literary language, to mention but some. Nonetheless, such explanations have not been philosophically satisfactory, or they are limited to a particular aspect of literary works, or they have revealed little of the cognitive gains of literature as literature, that is, how literary works persuade *qua* literary works.

In this paper, I shall argue that literary works have distinct cognitive significance in changing their readers' beliefs. In particular, I shall discuss 'philosophical fictions' and truth-claims (thematic statements considered to be authorial assertions) that they may imply. Basing myself broadly on Aristotle's view of the enthymeme,[4] I shall argue that a work of literary fiction persuades readers of its truths by its dramatic structure, by illustrating or implying the suppressed conclusion (or other parts missing in the argument).[5] Further, I shall suggest that it is exactly this 'literary persuasion' which distinguishes literary works from merely didactic works prone to overt 'argumentation' and instruction. The structure of the paper is twofold: in the first part, I shall introduce the discussion of the literature and argumentation in the analytic tradition by examining different formulations of the no-argument argument and presenting counter-arguments to them. In the second part, I shall sketch a view of literary persuasion in which literary works are considered enthymemes and thus out of the reach of the no-argument argument.

II. THE NO-ARGUMENT ARGUMENT

The proponents of the no-argument argument assert that although literary works could make or imply truth-claims, the works themselves do not reason or

---

[3]   John Stuart Mill, *Autobiography*, http://www.gutenberg.org/files/10378/10378-8.txt, accessed February 20, 2009.

[4]   I shall examine the notion of enthymeme in Section III.1.

[5]   Here, one should note that to consider a literary work (roughly analogous to) an enthymeme is to examine it as a product of an intentional action that aims to persuade the audience of a given view. In this paper, I do not argue that the cognitive value of literary fiction is limited to an enthymematic persuasion of views; instead, I will suggest that literary fictions of a 'conversational' or 'assertive' sort function akin to enthymemes. In arguing that enthymematic argumentation is the factor that distinguishes literary works from didactic works I do not, however, claim that enthymematic argumentation would be the only characteristic of literary persuasion. For instance, the role of *pathos*, appeal to the audience's emotions, and its relation to the enthymeme in literary persuasion, would be another subject of study.

justify the claims. Further, the no-argument argument generally connects to the 'triviality argument' which, in general, advances the view that literary works do not have significant cognitive value. The hybrid argument maintains that 'literary truths' always remain banal, because the works do not reason their claims.[6] The no-argument argument comes, however, in various flavours. Though many of these formulations often overlap in the discussion, I try to examine them separately in what follows. First, it has been suggested that without argumentation, literary works cannot separate the fictional and accidental from the real and essential (or probable from the improbable), and hence they do not signal what is true. Let us call this the *separation thesis*. Second, it has been claimed that without the possibility of resolving a contradiction there cannot be knowledge, and in literature there is no such possibility. Let us call this the *contradiction thesis*. Third, it has been argued that literary works do not provide genuine evidence for their truths; rather, the reader has to verify the truths outside the work, and then it is the world or the author's non-fictional writings from where the truths are derived, not the work. Let us call this the *no-evidence thesis*. Fourth, it has been argued that the lack of debate of 'literary truths' in literary criticism shows that there is no place for argument in literary practice. Let us call this the *critical practice thesis*. Fifth, it has been argued that in order to have significant cognitive value, literary works should convey knowledge and reason their claims in a distinctive manner, not subordinate to some other discourse. Let us call this the *uniqueness thesis*.

II.1. THE SEPARATION THESIS

The separation thesis maintains that in order to provide knowledge, literary works should signal their truths. After all, the natural assumption to read literary fictions, that is, works of imaginative literature, is not to take their content as being factual. Stein Haugom Olsen, for one, argues that (propositional) theories of literary truth do not make a distinction between understanding an utterance as information and the procedure of verifying it.[7] Likewise, R. M. Hare suggests that literary works do not separate that which is 'really likely to happen' from that which is not likely to happen, nor do they assess the 'probable frequency of

---

6   See Monroe C. Beardsley, *Aesthetics: Problems in the Philosophy of Criticism* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 2nd edn, 1981), 429 and also 418; Jerome Stolnitz, 'On the Cognitive Triviality of Art', *British Journal of Aesthetics* 32 (1992): 196–7; Christopher New, *The Philosophy of Literature: An Introduction* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), 120; see also Noël Carroll, 'The Wheel of Virtue: Art, Literature, and Moral Knowledge', *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 60 (2002): 6.

7   See Stein Haugom Olsen, *The Structure of Literary Understanding* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 63–5.

its occurrence'.[8] This line of argument maintains that although people can acquire true beliefs from literary works, they cannot distinguish the true beliefs from false ones, for the works do not manifest their truths.

Olsen and Hare are right in that literary works do not themselves separate the true from the false or the probable from the improbable. Indeed, locating the truths, that is, true thematic claims, in the work is a task of the reader, for whom it is in most cases easy to identify the claims the work makes or implies: the claims are construed in accordance with linguistic and literary conventions, *communis opinio*, and the like.[9] Moreover, the problems of instantiation and similarity – how to define which of a given character's properties are relevant from the 'cognitive point of view' and which are merely contingent –, for example, are philosophers' problems; general readers themselves identify or do not identify themselves with a given character or certain properties of the character, and know why they do so.

II.2. THE CONTRADICTION THESIS

The contradiction thesis, initiated by Jerome Stolnitz, maintains that the 'truths' derived from literary works may contradict each other, for the works do not provide any method for resolving the conflict. Moreover, Stolnitz claims that literature, without a method for confirming the truth and solving the contradiction, cannot provide significant truths.[10] Now, the accusation is actually complex, but fortunately Fire Captain Beatty, a character of Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451*, helpfully illustrates its different aspects. To begin with, Beatty reports to the protagonist Guy Montag a dream that he had while catnapping:

> You towered with rage, yelled quotes at me. I calmly parried every thrust. *Power*, I said. And you, quoting Dr. Johnson, said, 'Knowledge is more than equivalent to force!' And I said, 'Well, Dr. Johnson also said, dear boy, that 'He is no wise man that will quit a certainty for an uncertainty.'[11]

---

[8] R. M. Hare, *Freedom and Reason* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), 183. Hare also suggests, however, that fiction is in a sense subject to truth-conditions. For him, truth and falsehood 'are involved even in the exercise of the imagination', ibid., 182; see also idem, *Moral Thinking: Its Levels, Method and Point* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), 48.

[9] I shall use the term 'reader' throughout the paper to denote the actual reader of the work, an informed reader who has knowledge of literary conventions. Further, I shall restrict literary interpretation to a 'conversational' interpretation in which the reader looks for, or pays special attention to, the author's message or the worldly truths the work conveys (I discuss this approach elaborately in my essay 'Intentions and Interpretations: Philosophical Fiction as Conversation', *Contemporary Aesthetics* 7 (2009), http://www.contempaesthetics.org/newvolume/pages/article.php?articleID=526).

[10] Stolnitz, 'On the Cognitive Triviality', 196. Mary Sirridge has advanced a similar argument in 'Truth from Fiction?' *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 35 (1975): 469.

[11] Ray Bradbury, *Fahrenheit 451* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1953), 96.

Earlier in the conversation, Beatty has presented his view on the cognitive value of literature to Montag:

> 'Sweet food of sweetly uttered knowledge,' Sir Philip Sidney said. But on the other hand: 'Words are like leaves and where they most abound, Much fruit of sense beneath is rarely found.' Alexander Pope. What do you think of that, Montag? […] Or this? 'A little learning is a dangerous thing. Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring; There shallow draughts intoxicate the brain, and drinking largely sobers us again.' Pope. Same Essay. Where does that put you?[12]

Now, the quotations show that three questions can be seen embedded in the contradiction thesis: first, whether truth-claims may contradict each other in an author's works (Dr Johnson); second, whether truth-claims may contradict each other in the same work (Pope); and, third, whether truth-claims may contradict each other in literature in general (Sidney vs Pope). First of all, when it comes to contradicting truth-claims in different works by the same author, one may simply note that authors change their views just like, for example, philosophers. Akin to Dr Johnson in Beatty's interpretation, Wittgenstein, for example, advances different views in his *Tractatus* and *Investigations*. Here, the problem is that the Johnsonian assertions (that is, utterances applied as the author's assertions) have been taken out of their original dramatic contexts. Further, Captain Beatty's act of taking them out of their context ignores the fact that in the first place the assertions are advanced by fictional characters ('Imlac' in *The History of Rasselas, Prince of Abissinia* and 'Sophron' in the *Idler #57*), in order to examine them as Dr Johnson's assertions, one should pay attention to the overall design of the works (the nature of the characters who make the assertions, the dramatic context of the assertions, and the like).

Second, it has been suggested that a work of literary fiction could claim multiple contradicting truths. Moreover, it has been claimed that great works of literature, such as Dostoyevsky's *Brothers Karamazov*, employ multiple viewpoints and make incompatible truth-claims. The suggestion originates, however, from a loose use of the term 'truth'. Truth-claiming, that is to say, the advancing of assertions which the speaker holds true, must always be attributed to a human agent; the assertions of an implied or a fictional author are restricted to the world of fiction. Ergo, if a work claims truths, the truths must be claimed by the actual author.[13] Furthermore, when assertions in fiction are considered truth-claims, that is, assertions established by the author, it is difficult to see how

---

12 Ibid., 95.
13 I discuss the roles of the 'actual author' and the 'implied author' in literary communication acts in detail in my essay 'Truth-Claiming in Fiction: Towards a Poetics of Literary Assertion', *The Nordic Journal of Aesthetics* 38 (2009): 18–34.

contradicting assertions might be a serious and general problem in the literary assertion act. Given that a person cannot simultaneously believe and claim that *p* and not-*p*, apparent conflicts of assertions in literature are to be solved by investigating the tone and design of the work.

Third, Stolnitz's original formulation of the contradiction thesis maintains that literary truths could contradict each other in literature in general, for there is no method for solving the contradiction. As examples, Stolnitz gives the conflicting views of man's control of his fate in Sophocles' *Oedipus* and William E. Henley's poem 'Invictus'. Stolnitz's then argues that the works themselves do not provide reasons why, for example, the view proposed in 'Invictus' (that man can control his fate) should be preferred to the view in *Oedipus* (that man cannot control his fate). This formulation is, as I see it, the weakest one. What is it, after all, to say that there are conflicting truth-claims in literature? That when extracted from their context, truth-claims in literature are inconsistent. But they are inconsistent nearly everywhere. Nonetheless, both Sophocles and Henley can be seen to attempt to persuade their audience of their points (supposing they are those formulated by Stolnitz); they just advance different views.[14] Roughly put, both in literature and philosophy, for example, it is ultimately the actual reader who decides which one of the several alternative views provides the best grounds for believing in it. Moreover, one should note that argumentation alone is not a way to salvation; many Stolnitzian 'contradictions' can never be solved – consider philosophical debates, for example. Here's Captain Beatty again: 'And if they're nonfiction, it's worse, one professor calling another an idiot, one philosopher screaming down another's gullet.'[15]

II.3. THE NO-EVIDENCE THESIS

The no-evidence thesis maintains that literary works do not provide genuine (or empirical) evidence for the truth-claims they imply. After all, as Noël Carroll reminds one, the case studies in fiction are made up.[16] And because of not providing the evidence, the thesis maintains, the validation of truth-claims has to be achieved by referring to some independent source, such as the author's non-fiction or the state of affairs in the actual world.[17] Joseph Margolis, for one, suggests that if an assertion in fiction is considered the author's assertion, one has to 'go "outside" the story to provide for the author's reference', and then

---

[14]   One should also note that Sophocles' *Oedipus* and Henley's 'Invictus' do not comprehensively represent 'literature'; instead, it seems that Stolnitz has chosen examples that suit his purposes.

[15]   Bradbury, *Fahrenheit 451*, 57.

[16]   Carroll, 'The Wheel of Virtue', 5.

[17]   Stolnitz, 'On the Cognitive Triviality', 196–7.

it is not the fictional story in question anymore;[18] instead, the truth is derived from the non-fictional sources.

There are two matters here: the lack of evidence in literature, on the one hand, and the validation external to the work, on the other hand. Now, one should first note that the no-evidence thesis deals with empirical evidence. The former part of the thesis can be shown inadequate by noting that empirical evidence is not a necessary condition for the sort(s) of knowledge literary works generally provide (as Aristotle noted in the *Poetics*, literary works do not depict the actual but the possible). For instance, when literary works are considered to be roughly akin to philosophers' thought experiments, their lack of argumentation or empirical evidence does not make them cognitively banal.[19] When it comes to the latter part of the thesis, a reader may naturally appeal to external evidence, such as the author's non-fiction, to support her interpretation of the author's actual assertion, but such an act simply confirms the interpretation the reader has already produced, just as, to make another analogy with philosophy, one may justify one's interpretation of a philosophical work by referring to the philosopher's other writings. Finally, readers assess and validate not just literary works but all sorts of works, moral philosophy, for example, in accordance with their intuitions, personal experience, and beliefs.

II.4. THE CRITICAL PRACTICE THESIS

The critical practice thesis may reasonably be seen as an institutional variation of the no-argument argument and more comprehensive than the theses discussed earlier in this paper. The critical practice thesis advances the view that literature and philosophy, for example, are different social practices which have different aims and purposes, and advancing assertions and providing arguments for them is not a purpose of literature. E. R. Dodds, for one, argues that 'no work of art can ever "prove" anything: what value could there be in a "proof" whose premises are manufactured by the artist?'[20]

---

[18]   Joseph Margolis, *Art and Philosophy* (Brighton: The Harvester Press, 1980), 270. Beardsley, *Aesthetics*, 423, in turn, argues that 'in order to know whether a thesis of a novel is believed by the writer we must go outside the novel itself; and since the discovery that the thesis was, or was not, believed makes no difference to what is in the novel, it cannot be relevant to criticism.' One should, nonetheless, note that Beardsley is speaking of the role of the truth in literary criticism, that is, whether the author's belief in a given thematic claim affects the appreciation of the work.

[19]   For a comprehensive view of the similarities between literary works and philosophers' thought experiments, see Carroll's insightful article (Carroll, 'The Wheel of Virtue').

[20]   E. R. Dodds, 'On Misunderstanding the *Oedipus Rex*', in Sophocles, *Oedipus Tyrannus* (New York: Norton, 1970), 226.

Peter Lamarque and Stein Haugom Olsen claim that argument in defence of literary truths is absent not only in the literary works themselves but in the entire 'literary practice'. As they see it, the absence of debates on the worldly truth of thematic statements in the critical discourse implies that discussing the truth of thematic statements is not a feature of the literary practice.[21] Further, they argue that when a critic begins debating the worldly truth of a thematic statement, which they, however, think she is free to do, she moves from literary appreciation to philosophy.[22] Elsewhere, Lamarque suggests that 'literary criticism is not a practice in which philosophical or moral issues are debated for their own sake'.[23] He also claims that Kafka's *Trial* does not prove the thematic statement it implies, that 'Human beings are victims of impersonal and indifferent forces outside their control', but 'at best it illustrates it' –, 'and if we were to try to prove it we would need arguments from philosophy or sociology'.[24]

Here, it is first important to note Lamarque's specification 'for their own sake'. Admittedly, literature is not essentially a 'knowledge-seeking' practice (in the strict sense of the word 'knowledge'), and literary critics do not debate, *qua* literary critics, whether man can control his fate, for instance. Lamarque and Olsen make a much stronger claim, however, in asserting that as critical practice is the model for all literary interpretation (which they further restrict to appreciation) and as it lacks debates on the worldly truth of thematic statements, there is no place for such debates anywhere in the practice of literature. Lamarque and Olsen's thesis is misguided in that it takes the practice of literary criticism to determine the 'proper' way or core of reading literature (and further, that literary criticism would be equal to appreciation). Now, general readers' motives, aims and interests in reading literature vary: some read for aesthetic experience, some for education, some for entertainment, and, for many, such interests unite.[25] Peter Kivy, among others, notes that the place for analysis and argument in literary practice is in

---

[21] Peter Lamarque and Stein Haugom Olsen, *Truth, Fiction, and Literature: A Philosophical Perspective* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 332–3; see also Peter Lamarque, *Philosophy of Literature* (Malden and Oxford: Blackwell, 2008), 237. All proponents of the thematic approach do not, however, share this view. For instance, John Gibson, 'Cognitivism and the Arts', *Philosophy Compass* 3 (2008): 581, suggests that when speaking of 'critical cognitivism', critics reflect the 'epistemic status' and truth of fictions.

[22] Lamarque and Olsen, *Truth, Fiction, and Literature*, 336.

[23] Peter Lamarque, 'Cognitive Values in the Arts: Marking the Boundaries', in *Contemporary Debates in Aesthetics and the Philosophy of Art*, ed. Matthew Kieran (Malden: Blackwell, 2006), 135.

[24] Lamarque, *Philosophy of Literature*, 237.

[25] Here, see also Anders Pettersson's critique of Lamarque and Olsen's institutional theory for neglecting empirical evidence of the heterogeneousness of people's interest in literature, Anders Pettersson, 'Three Problematic Aspects of Analytical Aesthetics', *The Nordic Journal of Aesthetics* 35 (2008): 61–3.

the reader's minds:[26] although assessing the worldly truth of thematic statements is not practised by literary critics, it is commonly practised by actual readers in reading the works and after that. Moreover, Kivy suggests that the critic's task is rather to explicate the thematic statements the work implies to the actual readers who, in turn, evaluate them.[27] Furthermore, it is important to note that, unlike academic criticism, newspaper criticism often attends the debate on the worldly truth of thematic statements.

II.5. THE UNIQUENESS THESIS

Whereas the no-argument argument maintains that literary works do not have cognitive value because they do not argue for their truths, the uniqueness thesis advances the view that in order to have significant cognitive value, literary works should not only reason the claims they make but should do so in a distinct manner.

When discussing literature and argumentation, a distinction between argumentation in and through literature should first be made. *Argumentation in literature* refers to the arguments the characters of a work advance, whereas *argumentation through literature* refers to the ways used by the author in 'arguing' for the truths conveyed by the work. To begin with, one may easily find explicit arguments in literary works. Works such as Dostoyevsky's *Brothers Karamazov*, Mann's *Magic Mountain*, Barth's *Floating Opera*, Ionesco's *Hermit*, and Houellebecq's *Atomised*,[28] to mention some, contain extensive passages of explicit reasoning on philosophical matters. Arguments in literature, such as those employed in dialogues in *The Brothers Karamazov*, are not, however, themselves outright arguments through literature, that is, arguments Dostoyevsky advances in order to change his readers' beliefs. Naturally, a reader may be persuaded of a given character's view: just as she may adopt Thrasymachus' view of justice in Plato's *Republic*, she may be persuaded by Pavel Smerdyakov's view of life in *The Brothers Karamazov*.[29] But such views hardly represent the authors' views.

In particular, the uniqueness thesis maintains that 'cognitive practices', such as philosophy and history, have distinct methods and scopes of study; literature,

---

[26]   Peter Kivy, 'On the Banality of Literary Truths', *Philosophic Exchange* 28 (1997): 22. Moreover, one should note that readers' interests and responses and the reception of literary works, for instance, is studied in academic criticism.

[27]   Peter Kivy, *Philosophies of Arts: An Essay in Differences* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 122, 125.

[28]   Also translated as *The Elementary Particles*.

[29]   There might be author's arguments conveyed by a character's arguments, that is, put into the mouth of a character, but such cases are irrelevant when discussing the uniqueness of literary persuasion.

however, has none. The thesis maintains that literature's ability to transmit factual knowledge, for instance, is unlikely to illuminate the cognitive significance of literature *qua* literature. It has been argued, for example, that the propositional cognitive gains of a historical novel, conveyed through historical descriptions, is not distinctive of the work as a literary work; a history book does the same but more efficiently.[30] Thus, the uniqueness thesis advances the view that even if literary works could somehow warrant important true beliefs, they neither convey these beliefs nor reason them in any distinctive manner.[31] Moreover, Peter Kivy reminds one that there is another demand for uniqueness in knowledge-seeking practices: when arguing for philosophical truths, for example, the argument itself is expected to be unique. He suggests that for a hypothesis to be 'philosophically unbanal', it should be supported with a novel defence, or one at least more thorough and convincing than the earlier ones. As Kivy sees it, what makes a philosophical statement interesting is that it provides a deep and original defence.[32]

Although literary works state and imply truth-claims, the claims are not reasoned as in, say, philosophy. Of course, the novel, for instance, is a genre prone to mimic all sorts of discourses, including argumentative structures, as in the examples mentioned, but this does not reveal anything of the ways of persuasion characteristic of literature. Now, when speaking of morals of a story, W. B. Gallie notes:

> the sense of 'following' – following to a conclusion – that applies to stories is of an altogether different kind from the sense of following an argument so that we see that its conclusion follows.[33]

In turn, Christopher New suggests that when expressing truths, fiction 'works by imaginative suggestion, not logic'.[34] Likewise, John Gibson notes that, in general, literary fictional narratives have dramatic structures, whereas factual narratives, such as (most) philosophical works, have argumentative or 'evidentiary' structures.[35] As Gibson suggests, the cognitivist should not attempt to explain the cognitive function of literature by identifying literary works with other types of works that

---

[30] Not to mention that the author might have altered the historical facts to suit her artistic purposes.

[31] See Stolnitz 'On the Cognitive Triviality', 191–2, 196; see also T. J. Diffey, 'What Can We Learn from Art?', in *Art and Its Messages: Meaning, Morality, and Society*, ed. Stephen Davies (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997), 210.

[32] See Kivy, 'On the Banality', 20.

[33] W. B. Gallie, *Philosophy and the Historical Understanding* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1964), 24.

[34] New, *The Philosophy of Literature*, 121.

[35] John Gibson, *Fiction and the Weave of Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 4.

have cognitive value, but should seek to show that literary works have cognitive value even if the features commonly considered necessary in the pursuit of truth, such as argumentation, are absent.[36] Thus, my final answer to the no-argument argument is that literary works are not arguments; instead, when stressing their socio-cultural communicative function, they may be considered rhetorical arguments of a distinct kind.

III. THE PHILOSOPHY AND POETICS OF OMISSION

In this section, I shall discuss the enthymematic nature of literary persuasion. I use the term 'literary persuasion' rather than 'rhetorical argumentation' to emphasize characteristics of literary fiction that distinguish it from other sorts of discourse that makes use of the enthymeme, such as public political speeches.

III.1. THE ENTHYMEMATIC NATURE OF LITERARY PERSUASION

In the *Rhetoric*, Aristotle calls the enthymeme the 'substance of rhetorical persuasion'.[37] For him, the enthymeme is a rhetorical proof or demonstration and 'the most effective of the modes of persuasion'.[38] Further, Aristotle considers the enthymeme 'a sort of syllogism' or 'a rhetorical syllogism',[39] and suggests that it is a syllogism which 'must consist of few propositions, fewer often than those which make up the normal syllogism'.[40] In turn, in the *Prior Analytics*, he suggests that the enthymeme is a 'deduction from likelihoods or signs'.[41] In this paper, I shall consider the enthymeme in its modern general sense, a syllogism with either one of the premises or the conclusion omitted.[42]

---

36 Ibid., 8.
37 Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, trans. W. Rhys Roberts (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2004), I.1, 1354a15.
38 Ibid., I.1, 1355a5–6
39 Ibid., I.1, 1355a8, I.2, 1356b5. According to Aristotle, enthymemes are based upon Probabilities, Examples, Infallible Signs and Ordinary Signs (see ibid., II.25).
40 Ibid., I.2, 1357a17–18
41 Aristotle, *Prior Analytics*, trans. Robin Smith (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1989), B 70a10.
42 Nonetheless, the view of the enthymeme as a mere formally truncated syllogism has been widely criticized by both philosophers and rhetoricians. For instance, rhetoricians such as Bartolomeo Cavalcanti argue that the enthymeme can be defined neither by its matter nor form; see Eugene E. Ryan's study of Cavalcanti's *La Retorica*, Eugene E. Ryan, 'Rhetorical Argumentation in Bartolomeo Cavalcanti's *La Retorica*: the Enthymeme', *Rinascimento – Rivista dell'Istituto Nazionale di Studi sul Rinascimento* 34 (1994), 305–16. In turn, some rhetoricians suggest that enthymemes differ from dialectical arguments in that enthymemes are used in a different context (public political speeches, for example). For different philosophical views on the nature of the enthymeme, see, for example, Edward H. Madden, 'The Enthymeme: Crossroads of Logic, Rhetoric, and Metaphysics', *The Philosophical Review* 61 (1952), 368–76, and Eugene E. Ryan, *Aristotle's Theory of Rhetorical Argumentation* (Montreal: Bellarmin, 1984), 31–4. Moreover,

Roughly speaking, a literary work persuades its readers of its truths enthymematically, by implying the deliberately omitted conclusion: the unstated part of the argument is suggested by the work and filled in by the reader.[43] Noël Carroll, for one, suggests that Miller's *Death of a Salesman* functions as a rhetorical argument (enthymeme) which advances the view that the 'American Dream and its corresponding cult of appearances are ultimately destructive'.[44] Likewise, in a philosophical interpretation, works such as Sartre's *Nausea* and Camus's *Stranger*[45] depict events, feelings and thoughts, for example, which may be considered premises from which the reader is expected (by the author) to draw the conclusion, the thematic statement, or thesis of the work.[46]

Why would literary persuasion prefer the enthymeme? Roughly, there are four reasons for it. First, the omitted conclusion obviously follows from the premises, so there is no need to state it. Second, were the omitted proposition present, the argument would lose its rhetorical (or dramatic) force. Aristotle recognized both of these when suggesting that a (syllogistic) demonstration is more effective when everything needed for it is not explicitly stated; according to him, if any of the propositions is a 'familiar fact', there is no need to mention it, for the hearer will add it herself.[47] Third, the enthymeme is suited to those unfamiliar with complex and formal (syllogistic) reasoning, or, as Aristotle puts it, the enthymeme is used in addressing 'an audience of untrained thinkers',[48] and literary works are

---

some have suggested that the enthymeme is not simply a truncated syllogism but a consideration for a hearer to contemplate; M. F. Burnyeat, for one, proposes such a view based on the meaning of *enthumeosthai* ('to consider something'), from which the term is generally taken to be derived from, M. F. Burnyeat, 'Enthymeme: Aristotle on the Rationality of Rhetoric', in *Essays on Aristotle's Rhetoric*, ed. Amélie Oksenberg Rorty (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 92.

[43]   Both 'premises' and 'conclusion' should be considered here in a broad sense; in literature, the premises of an enthymeme may be constructed from complex sets of thought and attitudes, for example. For a similar view of broadly enthymematic structures in speeches, see Jeffrey Walker, 'The Body of Persuasion: A Theory of the Enthymeme', *College English* 56 (1994): 59.

[44]   Noël Carroll, 'Film, Rhetoric, and Ideology', in *Explanation and Value in the Arts*, ed. Salim Kemal and Ivan Gaskell (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 223.

[45]   The work is also translated as *The Outsider*.

[46]   The enthymematic view of literary persuasion is implicit in cognitivist views which maintain that literary works imply or suggest truth-claims; see, for example, John Hospers, 'Implied Truths in Literature', *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 19 (1960): 37–46, Morris Weitz, *Philosophy of the Arts* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1964), and Kendall L. Walton, *Mimesis as Make-Believe: On the Foundations of the Representational Arts* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1990).

[47]   Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, I.2, 1357a18–19; for roughly similar views applied to literature, see Wilbur Marshall Urban, *Language and Reality: The Philosophy of Language and the Principles of Symbolism* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1939), 499–500, and Hospers, 'Implied Truths in Literature', 39–40.

[48]   Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, I.2, 1357a3.

primarily intended for general readers.[49] In addition, there is a fourth, literary reason to truncate an argument: stating the omitted proposition may be seen as an artistic vice, for it makes the work look like a moral tale rather than a work of art.

Now, literary works put forward thematic claims or theses in roughly two ways, explicitly and implicitly. Some works, especially didactic ones, explicitly state their thesis, whereas most literary works convey their thesis by various forms of suggestion. Further, the author's implicit truth-claims may be roughly divided into those made in the work and those made by the work. *Implications in the work* can be identified with particular sentences (characters' assertions, for instance) and passages in the work (illustration, for example), whereas *implications by the work* refer to what the work, for example, an allegory or a satire, implies by its overall design. Admittedly, the distinction is arbitrary, for it is often difficult to separate implications made in the work from those made by the work.[50] When examining literary works as enthymemes, there may be several types of element which could be constructed as the premises or the conclusion.[51] Here, I shall illustrate literary persuasion by giving a rough account of 'omitted propositions,' such as illustrated and implied premises and conclusions, in literary enthymemes.

First, the thematic claim that a literary work makes is often supported by illustration,[52] and the claim is often the major premise.[53] In such cases, literary works function enthymematically by operating on the knowledge readers already possess:[54] literary works may, for instance, render probabilities or generally accepted opinions (*endoxa*) as 'truths' by applying them to particular (fictional) cases, and hence the works may 'clarify'[55] or 'fulfill'[56] knowledge.

---

49   Literary enthymemes and methodological arguments have thus different audiences: philosophical arguments, for example, are intended for a small educated group, whereas literary enthymemes are aimed at the general public.

50   For instance, implications in the work have to be examined in the light of the work as whole when attributed to the actual author. Moreover, implications made in the work may constitute the implication made by the work.

51   See, for example, Leona Toker, 'Narrative Enthymeme: The Examples of Laurence Sterne and James Joyce', *Partial Answers: Journal of Literature and the History of Ideas* 4 (2006): 164, 171–2.

52   R. W. Beardsmore, 'Literary Examples and Philosophical Confusion', in *Philosophy and Literature*, ed. A. Phillips Griffiths (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 59–69.

53   It has been suggested that illustration is similar to argumentation, see Peter Swirski, 'Literature and Literary Knowledge', *Journal of the Midwest Modern Language Association* 31 (1998): 18, or that literary works may make assertions by illustration, see D. H. Mellor, 'On Literary Truth', *Ratio* 10 (1968): 160.

54   See Carroll, 'Film, Rhetoric, and Ideology', 225–6; Carroll, 'The Wheel of Virtue', 8.

55   Carroll, 'The Wheel of Virtue', 8.

56   Gibson, *Fiction and the Weave of Life*, 11, 114–15.

Let us assume that *The Age of Reason* conveys Sartre's rhetorical argument for the broadly existentialist view that freedom is the ultimate aim of human existence and that is achieved by one's being nothing.[57] To begin with, when a reader considers an illustration, such as the protagonist's Mathieu's attaining ultimate freedom in the end, part of a literary enthymeme, she must first 'translate' the illustration into propositional form. Further, to comprehend the work comprehensively as a literary enthymeme, the reader must share the author's assumptions.[58] Now, as an enthymematic argument, *The Age of Reason* could be paraphrased as 'one achieves ultimate freedom by being nothing'. The unstated assumption (the major premise) would hence be that 'all those who are being nothing achieve ultimate freedom'. The novel portrays Mathieu as being nothing (the minor premise) and it illustrates Mathieu's achieving ultimate freedom (the conclusion). Thus, the work 'confirms' its background assumption which, in this interpretation, is its thesis.

What makes the thesis put forward by *The Age of Reason* (a work which, after all, depicts the life of fictional characters) persuasive is certain features characteristic to literature: detailed depiction of characters and their thoughts and emotions, plot, narrative points of view, and the like. Let us consider another example: Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* shows, among other things, that individualism becomes suppressed in totalitarianism.[59] The power of the thematic claim lies in Orwell's anxious dystopian vision; the claim gains a surplus of meaning from the theme of the work which it is a part of. Literary works, considered rhetorical arguments, are thus more efficient in changing the readers' beliefs than methodological arguments, because they appeal, for example, to the reader's emotions in the reader's imaginative engagement with the elaborate fictional world of the work.[60] Here, the keywords are persuasivness and plausibility: because authors produce their 'evidence' themselves, it is for the reader to

---

[57] This relatively standard philosophical interpretation considers *The Age of Reason* a literary counterpart of *Being and Nothingness* (*L'Être et le néant*).

[58] See Roger Seamon, 'The Story of the Moral: The Function of Thematizing in Literary Criticism', *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 48 (1998): 234; Tzachi Zamir, 'An Epistemological Basis for Linking Philosophy and Literature', *Metaphilosophy* 33 (2002): 327 (emphasis in original), makes a similar point when suggesting that "literary argumentation" is not simply legitimate nonvalid reasoning. It is, rather, a mode of rational establishing of beliefs that acknowledges the importance of *creating the state of mind* in which contingent claims and nonvalid moves can be sympathetically entertained'.

[59] See Matthew Kieran and Dominic McIver Lopes, 'Introduction', in *Knowing Art: Essays in Aesthetics and Epistemology*, ed. Matthew Kieran and Dominic McIver Lopes (Dordrecht: Springer, 2006), xii.

[60] As I have sought to illustrate in this paper, literary enthymemes may be roughly extracted from the work, but their schematic paraphrases will lack their rhetorical force based on their distinctively literary features.

consider whether the fictional scenario rendered by the author (somewhat like a thought-experiment) is apt; one has to ponder, for example, whether Sartre's or Orwell's characters act plausibly and whether the psychological insights in the works are credible, that is, whether the particular cases depicted in the works support general conclusions.

Second, in addition to illustrating or portraying a premise, a literary enthymeme may imply its premises by, say, allegorical situations. For example, Saramago's *Blindness* may be seen to imply that humankind has become spiritually blind and lost its sense of rationality, compassion, and communality. This view is, however, neither claimed nor really illustrated in the work. Instead, the 'propositions' of the literary enthymeme are implied by the work – for instance, the characters of the work stand for humankind, epidemic blindness for ignorance –, and have to be drawn from the narrative and constructed by the reader. Hence, the reader must, in a way, render the entire rhetorical argument by herself. Moreover, a literary work may make genuine implications (suggestions that the author makes) by implications in the work (gaps or blanks in the narrative). In such cases, the reader has first to infer what is true in the world of the work so that she may render what is genuinely implied by the work.[61]

Nevertheless, literary persuasion is by no means limited to 'confirming' generally accepted opinions or 'illuminating' truths. Another key reason to use the enthymeme is that the implied premise has been suppressed because it is dubious or disputable. Consider, for example, Mark Twain's enthymematic joke: 'There is no law against composing music when one has no ideas whatsoever. The music of Wagner, therefore, is perfectly legal', in which the dubious minor premise ('Wagner has no ideas') is implied. Likewise, many thematic claims in literature are disputable and thus smuggled into the reader's mind. Consider, for instance, the thematic conclusion of Houellebecq's *Atomised* which is generally constructed as 'The sexual and social revolution of the 1960s destroyed romantic love and caused a situation characterized by emotionless sexual encounters (and the only way for the humankind to achieve happiness is to alter its genetic code)'. Whether the reader accepts Houellebecq's thesis depends on whether she considers, say, the changes in attitudes and the nature of human action depicted in the work to be plausible psychological insights (or, rather, to be suggestive, since the work is hyperbolic in its style). Furthermore, a literary work may also aim to 'manipulate commonplaces'[62] or to make controversial views look

---

[61] Perhaps there are even cases in which both the premises and the conclusion are implied.

[62] Consider Carroll's view of enthymematic films that 'manipulate commonplaces' ('Film, Rhetoric, and Ideology', 229–30), see also Noël Carroll, *A Philosophy of Mass Art* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 397–8, on fictional narratives as 'narrative enthymemes'.

like commonplaces. After all, enthymemes, like rhetorical arguments in general, aim to persuade the audience; they are not evaluated as being valid or invalid but convincing or unconvincing.

III.2. ARGUMENTATIVE IMPLICITNESS AS AN ARTISTIC VIRTUE

A popular anti-cognitivist thesis advanced in the philosophy of literature maintains that the author's act of truth-claiming in a literary work downplays the literary value of the work; when argumentation begins, literature ends. W. B. Gallie, for one, argues that 'we can imagine almost any good story being presented, and probably ruined, as either a cautionary tale or the illustration of a moral homily'.[63] Likewise, Lamarque argues that didactic works, or works that are 'overt in their teaching aim', are generally valued low by critics. Lamarque argues that a 'novel like Dickens's *Hard Times*, for example, is frequently criticized for its overbearing moral message and its extremes in characterization aimed at drumming home the point'.[64] Further, he claims that 'literary works that are too overtly didactic, that too obviously are trying to impart a message, are seldom valued highly'.[65] As he sees it, 'One of the pleasures of a literary reading is to notice different ways that the content can be imaginatively construed, not necessarily focused on a single "message" or "thesis" to be conveyed'.[66]

The distinction between a literary work that has a 'conversational aim', or, say, a philosophically significant theme, and didactic fiction that advances a single thesis, is nonetheless difficult to draw. In general, the distinction is made by the design function or the value of the work (or both): the former, intentionalist view maintains that literary works are primarily intended to provide aesthetic experience, whereas didactic works mainly aim to instruct, advise, or impart information or a doctrine of morality or philosophy. In turn, the latter, evaluative, view maintains that literary works are works that possess a certain kind of value: not all works intended as literary works count as literature (if not considered valuable enough); on the other hand, works intended primarily non-literarily – Plato's dialogues or Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, for instance – may possess literary merit and be thus classified as literary works. However,

---

[63] Gallie, *Philosophy and the Historical Understanding*, 24.

[64] Lamarque, *Philosophy of Literature*, 253. For a similar view on explicitly stating a thesis already implied in the work, see Robert Stecker, *Artworks: Definition, Meaning, Value* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997), 281–2.

[65] Lamarque, *Philosophy of Literature*, 254. There are, however, plenty of works which 'obviously try to impart a message' and are nonetheless valued highly, such as Mayakovsky's poems or Solzhenitsyn's novels. Second, argumentation *in* fiction does not itself reduce the literary value of a work. Third, an explicitly stated thesis may often have a literary purpose (too); it may, for instance, structure the theme of the work.

[66] Ibid.

the difference between literary works and didactic fictions, or literary persuasion and instruction, is vague. Considered in the broadest sense, most allegories and satires which imply a moral, philosophical, or political view, or whose theme embodies the author's beliefs, may be regarded as didactic. Furthermore, the literary value of a work is not measured in zeros and ones, and the author's act of making a philosophical point does not turn a literary work into a philosophical treatise. Instead, I suggest that argumentation, instruction, or contemplation that gets in the way of the story, as, say, the meditation on the flaws of human nature in Olaf Stapledon's novel *Last and First Men*, is an artistic flaw in literature.[67]

In addition to the matters discussed in the preceding section, the uniqueness of literary persuasion stems from the detailed treatment of themes in literature. Because literary works explore (multiple) themes in detail, the reader may construct the thematic claim(s) the work makes in several correct, or apt or plausible, ways. For instance, the philosophical message of Sartre's *Age of Reason*, Saramago's *Blindness*, or Houellebecq's *Atomised* can be formulated in several acceptable ways – as long as it corresponds to the message that the author intends to convey, whereas the thesis of a didactic work, say, the anti-slavery moral of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, does not leave much room for interpretation, for it is repeatedly claimed in the work.[68] (Nonetheless, works may be overtly didactic even if they do not contain explicit thematic claims – consider Lamarque's notion of 'extremes in characterization [in *Hard Times*]', for example.) Finally, literary persuasion differs from instruction in that literary enthymemes are 'maieutic' by their nature: they invite the reader to participate in the act of truth-seeking and insight.[69]

---

[67]   I thank Professor Peter Lamarque for drawing my attention to this novel.

[68]   It has been argued that in order to be generally acceptable, thematic claims have to be rendered broadly; when rendered broadly, however, they are trivial. Here, one should note that the apparent triviality of thematic claims actually stems from the attempt to produce one-sentence restatements of the meaning of a complete work. This point is made in Richard Gaskin's review of Peter Lamarque and Stein Haugom Olsen's *Truth, Fiction and Literature* in *British Journal of Aesthetics* 35 (1995): 399, as well as Oliver Conolly and Bashshar Haydar, 'Narrative Art and Moral Knowledge', *British Journal of Aesthetics* 41 (2001): 110–11, 122, and Noël Carroll, 'Literary Realism, Recognition, and the Communication of Knowledge', in *A Sense of the World: Essays on Fiction, Narrative, and Knowledge*, ed. John Gibson, Wolfgang Huemer, and Luca Pocci (London: Routledge, 2007), 36, to mention but some.

[69]   Arthur C. Danto, *The Transfiguration of the Commonplace: A Philosophy of Art* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981), 179, maintains that an enthymeme, by its invitation to fill in the missing part, makes the hearer persuade herself more effectively than others could persuade her. Carroll ('Film, Rhetoric, and Ideology', 224) similarly suggests that the efficiency of the enthymeme lies in its engaging the hearer as a participant, and may thus blur the origin of the missing part of the argument.

IV. CONCLUSION

In this paper, I have discussed the way literary works persuade their readers of the truths they embody. I have first studied the so-called no-argument argument which maintains that literary works cannot have significant cognitive value, because they lack argumentative structures, and I then suggested that literary works function in a distinct way in persuading their readers of the interesting and substantive truth-claims they make or imply. I have argued that literary works may be considered enthymemes, that is, rhetorical arguments which invite the reader to fill in the omitted, illustrated, and implied parts of the argument. Moreover, I have argued that the enthymeme is the body of literary persuasion, and that literary features, such as illustration, should be considered parts of the enthymeme. I have also introduced characteristics of 'literary enthymemes' that distinguish them from enthymemes used in other discourses: literary enthymemes connect to themes, they elaborately depict feelings, emotions, and situations, they contain a plot, characters, and a narrative point of view, to mention but some. In addition, I have suggested that the use of literary persuasion distinguishes works of literary value from merely didactic fiction prone to overt 'argumentation'.

Jukka Mikkonen
Department of History and Philosophy,
FIN-33014 University of Tampere, Finland
University of Eastern Finland,
Yliopistokatu 2, PL 111,
FIN-80101 Joensuu, Finland
jukka.mikkonen@uta.fi

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Aristotle. *Prior Analytics*. Translated by Robin Smith. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1989.
––––––. *Rhetoric*. Translated by W. Rhys Roberts. Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2004.
Beardsley, Monroe C. *Aesthetics: Problems in the Philosophy of Criticism*. 2nd edn. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1981.
Beardsmore, R. W. 'Literary Examples and Philosophical Confusion.' In *Philosophy and Literature*, edited by A. Phillips Griffiths, 59–73. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984.
Bradbury, Ray. *Fahrenheit 451*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1953.
Burnyeat, M. F. 'Enthymeme: Aristotle on the Rationality of Rhetoric.' In *Essays on Aristotle's Rhetoric*, edited by Amélie Oksenberg Rorty, 88–115. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996.
Carroll, Noël. 'Film, Rhetoric, and Ideology.' In *Explanation and Value in the Arts*, edited by Salim Kemal and Ivan Gaskell, 215–37. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993.
––––––. *A Philosophy of Mass Art*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998.

——————. 'The Wheel of Virtue: Art, Literature, and Moral Knowledge.' *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 60 (2002): 3–23.

——————. 'Literary Realism, Recognition, and the Communication of Knowledge.' In *A Sense of the World: Essays on Fiction, Narrative, and Knowledge*, edited by John Gibson, Wolfgang Huemer, and Luca Pocci, 24–42. London: Routledge, 2007.

Conolly, Oliver, and Bashshar Haydar. 'Narrative Art and Moral Knowledge.' *British Journal of Aesthetics* 41 (2001): 109–24.

Danto, Arthur C. *The Transfiguration of the Commonplace: A Philosophy of Art*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981.

Diffey, T. J. 'What Can We Learn from Art?' In *Art and Its Messages: Meaning, Morality, and Society*, edited by Stephen Davies, 26–33. Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997.

Dodds, E. R. 'On Misunderstanding the *Oedipus Rex*.' In Sophocles, *Oedipus Tyrannus*, 218–28. New York: Norton, 1970.

Gallie, W. B. *Philosophy and the Historical Understanding*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1964.

Gaskin, Richard. Review of *Truth, Fiction and Literature* by Peter Lamarque and Stein Haugom Olsen. *British Journal of Aesthetics* 35 (1995): 395–401.

Gibson, John. *Fiction and the Weave of Life*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

——————. 'Cognitivism and the Arts.' *Philosophy Compass* 3 (2008): 573–89.

Hare, R. M. *Freedom and Reason*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980.

——————. *Moral Thinking: Its Levels, Method and Point*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981.

Hospers, John. 'Implied Truths in Literature.' *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 19 (1960): 37–46.

Kieran, Matthew, and Dominic McIver Lopes. 'Introduction.' In *Knowing Art: Essays in Aesthetics and Epistemology*, edited by Matthew Kieran and Dominic McIver Lopes, xi–xxiv. Dordrecht: Springer, 2006.

Kivy, Peter. 'On the Banality of Literary Truths.' *Philosophic Exchange* 28 (1997): 17–27.

——————. *Philosophies of Arts: An Essay in Differences*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Lamarque, Peter. 'Cognitive Values in the Arts: Marking the Boundaries.' In *Contemporary Debates in Aesthetics and the Philosophy of Art*, edited by Matthew Kieran, 127–39. Malden: Blackwell, 2006.

——————. *Philosophy of Literature*. Malden: Blackwell, 2008.

Lamarque, Peter, and Stein Haugom Olsen. *Truth, Fiction, and Literature: A Philosophical Perspective*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994.

Madden, Edward H. 'The Enthymeme: Crossroads of Logic, Rhetoric, and Metaphysics.' *The Philosophical Review* 61 (1952): 368–76.

Margolis, Joseph. *Art and Philosophy*. Brighton: The Harvester Press, 1980.

Mellor, D. H. 'On Literary Truth.' *Ratio* 10 (1968): 150–68.

Mikkonen, Jukka. 'Intentions and Interpretations: Philosophical Fiction as Conversation.' *Contemporary Aesthetics* 7 (2009), http://www.contempaesthetics.org/newvolume/pages/article.php?articleID=526.

——————. 'Truth-Claiming in Fiction: Towards a Poetics of Literary Assertion.' *The Nordic Journal of Aesthetics* 38 (2009): 18–34.

Mill, John Stuart. *Autobiography*. http://www.gutenberg.org/files/10378/10378-8.txt, accessed February 20, 2009.

New, Christopher. *The Philosophy of Literature: An Introduction*. London and New York: Routledge, 1999.

Olsen, Stein Haugom. *The Structure of Literary Understanding*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.

Pettersson, Anders. 'Three Problematic Aspects of Analytical Aesthetics.' *The Nordic Journal of Aesthetics* 35 (2008): 60–74.

Ryan, Eugene E. *Aristotle's Theory of Rhetorical Argumentation*. Montreal: Bellarmin, 1984.

––––––. 'Rhetorical Argumentation in Bartolomeo Cavalcanti's *La Retorica*: the Enthymeme.' *Rinascimento – Rivista dell'Istituto Nazionale di Studi sul Rinascimento* 34 (1994): 305–16.

Seamon, Roger. 'The Story of the Moral: The Function of Thematizing in Literary Criticism.' *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 48 (1989): 229–36.

Sirridge, Mary. 'Truth from Fiction?' *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 35 (1975): 453–71.

Stecker, Robert. *Artworks: Definition, Meaning, Value*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997.

Stolnitz, Jerome. 'On the Cognitive Triviality of Art.' *British Journal of Aesthetics* 32 (1992): 191–200.

Swirski, Peter. 'Literature and Literary Knowledge.' *Journal of the Midwest Modern Language Association* 31 (1998): 6–23.

Toker, Leona. 'Narrative Enthymeme: The Examples of Laurence Sterne and James Joyce.' *Partial Answers: Journal of Literature and the History of Ideas* 4 (2006): 163–74.

Urban, Wilbur Marshall. *Language and Reality. The Philosophy of Language and the Principles of Symbolism*. London: Allen and Unwin, 1939.

Walker, Jeffrey. 'The Body of Persuasion: A Theory of the Enthymeme.' *College English* 56 (1994): 46–55.

Walton, Kendall L. *Mimesis as Make-Believe: On the Foundations of the Representational Arts*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1990.

Weitz, Morris. *Philosophy of the Arts*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1964.

Zamir, Tzachi. 'An Epistemological Basis for Linking Philosophy and Literature.' *Metaphilosophy* 33 (2002): 321–36.