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Fictionality and ontology

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Introduction

'The struggle to define fictionality', Punday (2010: 55) claims, 'is an inherent part of the institutional construction of contemporary writing'. What he means by this is that the proliferation of the fictive in contemporary society, including ways in which the real itself is narrativised, makes the distinction between reality and fiction rather fluid. In his words, 'the traditional institutional and disciplinary boundaries separating news and entertainment, fiction and politics have become blurred' (2010: 11). Such enhanced permeation between actuality and virtuality in literature and culture makes fictionality a central issue for contemporary stylistics and narratology.

The focus of this chapter is a Text World Theory analysis of *Ulrike and Eamon Compliant* by Blast Theory, a group of artists who create stories using interactive media. *Ulrike and Eamon Compliant* is a mobile narrative, a genre hitherto unexplored in stylistics. Since participants engage with the story through mobile technology, the boundary between fiction and reality becomes increasingly convoluted.

Fictionality: style, ontology and readers

To consider fictionality using a stylistic method, it would be tempting to offer a taxonomy of linguistic features that mark a text as fictional. This is, in many ways, the approach taken by the narratologist Cohn (1990, 1999), who places linguistic style at the centre of fictionality. In a 1990 article, Cohn contrasts fictional narratives with historical narratives through the examination of three criteria: levels of narrative (story and discourse), narrative situations (voice, mode, and point of view), and narrative agents (authors and narrators). Cohn concludes that there

are qualitative differences in the form of generic features, for instance privileged access to characters' thoughts is a typical attribute of fiction.

Studying linguistic markers alone, however, would be a flawed approach, as Prince (1991) points out. He claims (1991: 546) that classical narratological investigations have been too text-driven and should instead consider truth values:

I could, after all, begin a biography of Napoleon or Richelieu (entirely consonant with the truth and written for children or intended to highlight the legendary nature of characters) with 'once upon a time.'

(Prince 1991: 546)

Prince advocates instead a modal logic or possible worlds model (Ryan 1991a) in which propositions are validated according to their truth conditions in relation to the fictional world(s). This therefore enables a spatialised ontological map of fiction(s).

Presenting disparate though not entirely polarised views, both Cohn's stylistic 'signposts of fictionality' and Prince's call to arms in the consideration of ontological spaces are useful for the stylistic analysis of fictionality, yet even together they still present an incomplete picture. In theorising fictionality, both approaches neglect the contextual interpretations of a reader or receiver of narrative. Working in the reader-response school of criticism, it is unsurprising that it is this readerly aspect of the fictional process that most interests Iser. In *The Fictive and the Imaginary*, he states:

The literary text is a mixture of reality and fictions, and as such it brings about an interaction between the given and the imagined. Because this interaction produces far more than just a contrast between the two, we might do better to discard the old opposition of fiction and reality altogether, and to replace this duality with a triad: the real, the fictive, and what we shall henceforth call the imaginary. It is out of this triad that the text arises. . .

(Iser 1993: 1)

For Iser, then, it is from the interaction between fiction and reality that the imagined world(s) of literary narratives emerge. A text is constituted through what he calls 'fictionalising acts'. There are three varieties: *selection*, *combination* and *self-disclosure*. Selection is concerned with setting the parameters of the text in social, historical, cultural and literary terms - selecting in other words from referential reality and literary compositional systems; combination is the organisation of the text into linguistic and semantic patterns, while self-disclosure occurs when the text reveals its own fictionality. All of these processes involve the crossing of boundaries (in terms of the ways in which they extend beyond the limits of fiction).

While Iser's approach draws on literary anthropology, it offers a valuable precedent to contemporary narratological and stylistic accounts of fictionality. Iser's triad is particularly important since it considers the

relationships between fictional, actual and reader-centric imaginary as well as gesturing towards the potential impact of this imagined world on the reader.

As the next section makes clear, the reader is at the heart of contemporary stylistic analyses of fictionality. These are interested in how the reader creates fictional text-worlds from the compositional fabric of the text, including integrating information from the actual discourse-world (style and cognition); how the reader experiences the landscapes of fictional text-worlds including the division between actual and virtual (ontology); and how the reader engages with characters in fictional text-worlds (psychological projection).

Metaleptic crossings and a stylistics of engagement

Stylistics has always been concerned with readers, but the growing interest in fictionality may, in part, be understood as a consequence of the increased fusion between fictive and real in contemporary narratives, discussed in the opening to this chapter. The idea of a 'semipermeable membrane' (McHale 1987: 34-5) between the actual discourse-world (reality) and the reader's text-world (in fiction) underlies many stylistic accounts of fictionality. Linguistically, this has often meant a consideration of narrative address, particularly metaleptic second-person address from a fictional text-world enactor to the reader in the discourse-world. Working within Text World Theory, Gavins (2007) argues that second-person address leads to one of two possibilities: if the reader shares the characteristics of the 'you' described in the novel, they may process the narrative assertions as being directly addressed to them. Thus, 'the text-world entity who is using the second-person pronoun to address the reader transcends the ontological boundaries of the text-world in order to enter the reader's half of the split-discourse-world' (2007: 85). However, readers may not identify with 'you' (either because the 'you' is not a descriptive match for the reader or through the reader's deliberate resistant reading) and as such engagement is one of projection into the second-person deictic centre without assuming a self-identical persona. More recently, Whiteley (2011a) has proposed three forms of narrative projection into addressee or character roles which develop in terms of the degree of a reader's psychological involvement: *deictic projection*, based on the linguistic mechanics of the text and involving a reader's deictic shift into the spatio-temporal parameters of the text-world; *perspective-taking projection*, in which a reader also fleshes out characters through the attribution of psychological characteristics; and *self-implication* or *identification*, whereby readers implicate their own personalities into the addressee or character role and thus their sense of self is involved in trans-world mapping between the actual discourse-world and fictional text-world.

David Herman's (2002) theory of *contextual anchoring* is also concerned with second-person narrative address. He suggests that, in some cases, narratives may offer concurrent deictic projections that are at once distinct and multiplex. He writes:

Contextual anchoring is my name for the process whereby a narrative, in a more or less explicit and reflexive way, asks its interpreters to search for analogies between the representations contained within the two classes of mental models [the story world and the reader's actual world].

(D. Herman 2002: 331)

Contextual anchoring is a cognitive process, triggered by the linguistic composition of the text, whereby the space-time parameters of the fictional text-world and the space-time parameters of the discourse-world in which reading takes place are seen to be simultaneously referenced and thus appear to coincide. In Herman's *doubly deictic you*, second-person address signals two deictic referents at once: a 'you' character internal to the fictional text-world and a 'you' external and thus present in the actual discourse-world. Such double referentiality blurs ontological clarity between fictional and actual, text-world and discourse-world, character and reader, leading to complex projection relations. In terms of psychological engagement then, projection relations with doubly deictic 'you' cannot be neatly classified. Readers self-implicate into the 'you' role which they feel apostrophically addresses them while also experiencing degrees of deictic projection, perspective-taking projection or indeed further self-implication, depending on their psychological engagement with the character in the context of the textual moment.

Multimodal, multimedial and hypertext fictions engender not only forms of psychological projection such as those encouraged by second-person address, but also actualised and physical responses from reader-users (see Alice Bell and Ensslin 2011; Ensslin and Bell 2012; Gibbons 2012a, 2012b). My own work, for instance, has considered the way in which multimodal and multimedial texts create double deixis when readers are required to perform concrete activities that are subjectively aligned with the actions of characters in the text-world. Such subjective resonance between text-world and discourse-world referents involves a similar superimposition in the form of doubly deictic subjectivity. Moreover, performative activity on the part of reader-users may create what I have called a *figured trans-world* (Gibbons 2012a) in which trans-world projection occurs between reader and character through an embodied and enactive resonance.

Breaches of the semipermeable membrane between fiction and reality, text-world and discourse-world, are ultimately illusory. The ontological planes of each remain intact, yet it is in the realm of the imaginary, in the reader's experience of the narrative, that the stylistics of fictionality shows up the complexity of reader-users' projection relations and the

ways in which these may lead to a powerful sense of psychological involvement. To demonstrate, in this chapter I present a Text World Theory analysis of a contemporary mobile narrative, with a particular focus on deictics.

Blast Theory's *Ulrike and Eamon Compliant*

Blast Theory's *Ulrike and Eamon Compliant* is a mobile narrative and a form of art installation: within the context of a city, participants are guided through the streets as the narrative unfolds. As in mobile narratives generally (see Raley 2010), communication is, for the most part, unidirectional. Through a mobile phone, a narrative voice addresses and instructs participants, although responses are required at key points. Discussing the innovative nature of mobile narratives, Benford et al. (2006: 427) state, 'Mobile experiences that take place in public settings such as on city streets create new opportunities for interweaving the fictional world of a performance or game with the everyday physical world.'

There are two key aspects of mobile narratives that are of interest in the stylistic analysis of fictionality. Firstly, since mobile narratives take advantage of the immediacy of spoken discourse and take place in real time and in real-world locations (e.g. city streets), the context in which the narrative is received is used as the backdrop or as a world-building element for the text. Secondly, the participant is not only the receiver of second-person direct address during mobile phone calls, they are required to respond physically (e.g. by following instructions). As Raley (2010: 303) puts it, 'Participating in a mobile narrative is . . . precisely that – physical participation that is also understandable as performance.' Raley's choice of the word 'performance' here is particularly telling, since it implies that while psychological engagement with literary narratives is understood in stylistics through the metaphors of readerly TRANSPORTATION and PERFORMANCE (Gerrig 1993), mobile narratives actualise such metaphors in ways that make projection relations between discourse-world participant and text-world enactors considerably involving, in terms of the degree of self-implication. As such, the very nature of *Ulrike and Eamon Compliant* as mobile narrative suggests that David Herman's (2002: 345) notion of contextual anchoring is at play with an 'ontological interference pattern'.

Ulrike and Eamon Compliant was originally commissioned for the 53rd Venice Biennale in 2009 and later taken to the Seoul International Media Art Biennale in 2010 and the international Sheffield Doc/Fest in 2011. (While the published script for the work refers to its original production, having participated in the mobile narrative during Doc/Fest any self-reflexive comments made during analysis are in reference to my own experience of the work in Sheffield). It is structured as a series of

telephone calls that lead participants through the city, addressing and engaging them in the second person and *as* a character in the narrative. There are two possible narratives, 'Ulrike' and 'Eamon', both based upon the real lives of two terrorists. The Ulrike narrative tells the tale of left-wing German radical Ulrike Meinhof, a leading member of the Red Army Faction committing various bank raids, shootings and bombings; the Eamon narrative focuses on IRA member Eamon Collins who, upon arrest and interrogation in 1982, gave details of IRA operations to the state, which he later retracted. While the two narratives differ in terms of character and content, over a 30-minute series of eight or twelve calls (depending on a choice made by the participant at a key narrative fork) they are structurally alike and therefore contain some overlapping text. In order to experience *Ulrike and Eamon Compliant*, participants must first choose between Ulrike and Eamon.

Call 1: Are you Ulrike or Eamon?

Starting *Ulrike and Eamon Compliant*, participants are given a mobile phone and must press the call button. A voice asks, 'Are you Ulrike or Eamon?' and gives the instructions to dial 1 for Ulrike or 2 for Eamon. This determines the choice of narrative and the character as whom the participant will be addressed. They are then directed out onto the streets; once they reach the instructed destination, they must call the narrator back. In the Ulrike narrative, the narrator answers 'Hallo Ulrike, thanks for coming', while Eamon's narrator utters, 'Hallo, it's me'. In both texts, the narrator continues (Blast Theory 2009):

You and I are going on a walk together but before we start, let's take a minute. Now stand in the middle of the bridge and turn to look at the church towers. Can you see them? If you can see them nod your head slowly.

Both narratives open with direct and immediate deictics. The fictional text-world is aligned with the discourse-world of the participant through definite spatial references ('the bridge', 'the church towers') that relate to the city in which the mobile narrative is taking place, and temporally through present tense (continuous and simple) and the adverb 'now'. Similarly, a sense of intimacy is quickly established with the pairing of the interpersonal pronouns in the construction 'You and I' and the adverb 'together'. A metaleptic illusion is therefore created in which the narrator appears to transcend the semipermeable membrane of the fiction in order to talk, via mobile phone, with the participant. Moreover, the deception of a shared world-space between narrator and participant is heightened in the question 'Can you see them?' and the conditional directive 'If you can see them nod your head slowly.' The implication of the latter statement is that the narrator is in fact observing the participant and their actions.

Participants who fulfil the directive by nodding are psychologically adopting the (false) premise of shared world-space. It is the first of many occasions throughout *Ulrike and Eamon Compliant* in which performative actions promote the participant's self-implication with 'you' and increasingly with Ulrike or Eamon also.

After this psychologically involving aperture, the narratives diverge briefly in terms of content, both providing biographical introductions to the main characters Ulrike or Eamon. In Eamon's narrative, the narrator instigates a deictic shift: 'Outside it's 1973, dark, cold. It's late and the young man has been drinking with friends. He's a legal student and is back home on the farm for the Easter break'. The participant's psychological involvement with narrative and character becomes more distal across temporal, spatial and perceptual deictic fields: it is a temporal shift into the past (1973), a spatial shift to a rural landscape in which the point of view is disconnected from the narrative action which is happening 'outside', and a perceptual shift from second- to third-person address with the introduction of 'the young man'. Alongside these deictic shifts, readers are thus moved from self-implication with 'you' to deictic projection into this scene. Despite the temporal shift to 1973, the narrative is in present-perfect continuous ('has been drinking') and present tense, maintaining a degree of immediacy. This is important since, as the narrative continues, the deictics become increasingly proximal: 'You know what lawyers can be like, right? Priggish little fools, some of them. This one smokes a pipe if you don't mind. Oh, you know the type alright. You know this one'. Second-person address returns, reconnecting narrator and participant. The colloquial register (rhetorical question, relational deixis, conversational collocations) suggests an intimate knowledge about 'you' on the part of the narrator. Moreover, the utterance 'Oh, you know the type alright. You know this one' implies that that 'the young man' is well known to 'you', that in fact it is 'you'. The narrative resumes, 'You walk up the street toward the door or the house. One hand on the latch and you see. . .', thus marrying the deictic co-ordinates of 'the young man' with a textual 'you'.

The effect of these deictic shifts from distal narrative to a narrative adjacent with 'you' is to encourage the participant's identification with 'you' as Eamon (though, at this point, projection is likely to involve perspective-taking). Similar linguistic strategies are employed in Ulrike's narrative. *Ulrike and Eamon Compliant*, therefore, initially enables self-implication through contextually anchoring the discourse-world as setting for the prominent text-world. The introduction of the main characters, however, starts distally yet is increasingly brought closer to the 'you' in order to aid the participant to project not only into an apostrophic 'you' role (as in the beginning) but to also accept the deictic and psychological positioning of the 'you' character of Ulrike or Eamon.

In the first telephone call, Blast Theory has one more tactic to secure the participant's psychological engagement with character. In both narratives, Call 1 ends in the following way:

As everyone moves past you as you stand on the bridge, I would like to know how you describe your ability to make decisions. Are you a decisive or a hesitant person Ulrike/Eamon?

Now please record your answer. Start by saying 'My name is Ulrike/Eamon' and then tell me, are you a decisive or a hesitant person?

When you have finished your recording, hang up. I'm going to start recording now.

In deictic terms, the spatio-temporal co-ordinates are returned to the participant's here and now, on the bridge, yet they continue to be addressed not only in second person but as Ulrike/Eamon. The act of speaking and recording is significant in terms of participant engagement. The initial act of nodding the head was a performance which signalled the acceptance of shared world-space, contextually anchoring the prominent fictive text-world within the participant's discourse-world reality. The act of recording takes such contextual anchoring even further through a performative act that signals the acceptance of a trans-world identity: the participant identifies with and self-implicates into the character role. They must utter, 'My name is Ulrike/Eamon. I am a decisive/hesitant person'. The first assertion ('My name is Ulrike/Eamon') is a locutionary act that marks the participant's adoption of the character, while the second ('I am a decisive/hesitant person') enables the participant to map their own subjective personality traits onto Ulrike or Eamon. Thus while the biographical narratives instigate world-switches, such switches occur as definite temporal and spatial shifts. Perceptually, the reader is involved in a gradual strengthening of projection relations with Ulrike/Eamon, from deictic to perspective-taking to a doubly deictic self-implication whereby they maintain their own identity as 'you' in the discourse-world and psychologically integrate it with 'you' as Ulrike/Eamon of the text-world.

The participant's verbal utterance as a performative act signals trans-world identity and double deixis through the phenomenological conflation of 'you' as participant in the discourse-world in which *Ulrike and Eamon Compliant* is taking place (e.g. Venice, Sheffield) with the 'you' character of Ulrike or Eamon in the story world. It therefore works to generate what I have called a *figured trans-world* (Gibbons 2012a: 79–80). A figured trans-world emerges when a participant's performative actions in the discourse-world map onto characters in the text-world and are indicative of active involvement. Such acts are concrete performances that create subjective resonances with characters and blur the boundaries between text- and discourse-world.

By saying 'My name is Ulrike/Eamon. I am a decisive/hesitant person', the participant effectively enters into a contract with Blast Theory.

They commit to the narrative and to positioning themselves double deictically as Ulrike or Eamon. They maintain their own identities in the discourse-world walking around the city while simultaneously accepting the Ulrike/Eamon identity. The semipermeable membrane between fiction and reality in *Ulrike and Eamon Compliant* is exactly that – semipermeable. Text-world and discourse-world appear to have been compressed and the ontological distinction is troubled in experiential terms.

Calls 2–3: I see you; who do you see?

After an initial greeting, the second phone call starts with walking directions and the narrator assuring participants, ‘I’ll stay on the line while you walk’. The notion that the narrator has the participant in eye-line is sustained with the instructions, ‘Keep your eyes open, act natural’. Both narratives in phone call 2 offer details of an act of insurgency. In Eamon’s narrative, it is the 1981 murder of Major Ivan Toombs of the Ulster Defence Regiment, which Eamon Collins was directly responsible for planning; in Ulrike’s narrative, it is a violent protest against the Shah of Iran outside the Berlin Opera House in 1967.

The stylistic construction of Ulrike’s tale is particularly interesting since, while a deictic shift occurs into Ulrike’s past, the narrator’s words simultaneously serve to remind the participant of their discourse-world location. The narrator relates:

I see you in the crowd at the Opera House when the Shah visits. I see you behind the police and Iranian Secret Agents. The Shah and his wife go inside. Within seconds, the Iranians turn on you with long wooden clubs and start to smash heads. Blood flows while the cops stand and do nothing. And when they finally rouse themselves they don’t help: they join in with smashing the demonstrators. I see you split and run with the others. I see the policeman draw his pistol. I see Benno Ohnesorg shot in the back of the head from half a metre away...

The repetition of the phrase ‘I see you...’, and later ‘I see...’ at the violent climax of the narrative, functions on one hand to suggest the vivacity of the (supposedly shared) memory. However, it also works to foreground the participant’s self-awareness: can the narrator *really* see them? Blast Theory collected participant feedback from *Ulrike and Eamon Compliant* on their microsite and many of the comments demonstrate that suspicion about being under observation is a significant part of the experience. Several comments mention ‘paranoia’ while one participant admits, ‘I felt watched constantly.’ Such responses suggest that a sense of surveillance in mobile narratives may serve to make the experience psychologically intense in terms of heightening their self-consciousness in the discourse-world context.

At this point in Call 2, the participant is faced with a decision. The narrator states, 'Now if you want me to carry on just stay on the line. But if you want to take a different turn hang up now.' In Ulrike's narrative, the narrator underlines this, 'Right now'. In Eamon's narrative, the narrator instead says, 'I'm going to count to ten. If you are still on the line when I get to ten then I'll know where I stand.' The counting, however, additionally narrates the violent climax to Eamon's tale of Major Toombs's murder:

- One: the two killers ride into Warren point on a motorbike.
- Two: they switch the engine off allowing the bike to glide the last 20 metre so as not to raise the alarm.
- Three: once inside, Iceman goes down the corridor into Toombs' office.
- Four: he takes up a firing position with arms outstretched.
- Five: his gun jams giving Toombs enough time to reach for his own weapon.
- Six: Iceman leaps onto him and the two men struggle.
- Seven: The second gunman comes running down the hall and shouts 'Stand back.'
- Eight: Iceman lets go and the second man fires several shots into Toombs.
- Nine: Iceman clears his weapon.
- Ten: he pumps several more rounds into Toombs as he lies dying.

The participant must choose whether to stay on the line or to hang up either immediately after (Ulrike) or during (Eamon) a violent description. Their decision therefore becomes somewhat loaded, since it appears to imply either acceptance of the act or condemnation. For participants who stay on the line, the narrator responds, 'Ok I understand. In which case, you and I can speak freely.' As such, this decision suggests complicity on the participant's part with Ulrike or Eamon as characters and with their actions. It is, in other words, another performative act that binds participants psychologically closer to characters. Moreover, the detail in both narratives in terms of world-building elements and function-advancing propositions point to the fact that these accounts are stylised representations of real-world events. Not only does this add a further sense of slippage in terms of the narrative's fictional status, it adds sombre weight to participants' potential connivance with the actions of Ulrike Meinhof or Eamon Collins.

There are two different versions for Call 3 of each narrative, differing only in opening depending on whether participants previously stayed on the line or hung up. Unbeknown to participants, then, their decision makes very little difference. Crucially in terms of narrative engagement, the act creates a false impression of control – that the participant is empowered and their actions have some bearing on the narrative. This is

important since it makes *Ulrike and Eamon Compliant* seem more of a dialogue than it actually is. Participants who continued to listen receive assertive greetings:

Hallo Ulrike

You are clear, you are direct. I know you can hear it all and I can tell it all.

Hallo Eamon.

Ivan Toombs is dead. The first successful IRA kill of 1981. It's a lot to think about.

Both greetings exhibit strong epistemic certainty on the part of the narrator, through the use of categorical assertions and epistemic verbs ('know', 'think'). Coupled with the sense of compliance felt by the participant having stayed on the phone, the narrator's words suggest confidence in the participant as Ulrike/Eamon. Alternatively, participants who hung up hear the following:

Hallo Ulrike.

So, you hung up? Some things are hard to hear. Some things are hard to say. That's why we're here isn't it?

You hung up.

Second thoughts, eh? They'll be plenty of time for those, don't you worry about that.

Again, both narratives have similar functions. Both start with acknowledgement of the participant's choice and both aim at emotional provocation. The rhetorical questions 'That's why we're here isn't it?' and 'Second thoughts, eh?' both imply that, by hanging up, the participant made a cowardly choice, attempting to hide from a truth that they need to confront.

At the end of Call 3, the narrator commands:

Now I want you to pick a person as they walk past you. Choose someone and give them a name. Look carefully at them before they go. Now think about their home. Think about a treasured possession that they may have on their shelf.

Who is it that they love? Stare down at the canal and hold that person in your mind for a short while.

In this series of directives, the narrator asks participants to imaginatively construct a narrative for a passing stranger. It is an act of perspective-taking by which the participant's empathy for the stranger is evoked through the personal investment of subjective imaginings. Creating an identity for the stranger begins with the act of naming and through the imagining of concrete objects (home, treasured possession, their loved ones). The reference to 'their home' creates a deictic shift whereby the participant moves in imaginative terms from the city streets into that person's home. In my own experience of *Ulrike and Eamon Compliant*, this moment was very powerful. The deictic shift into their home felt almost like a breach of personal space. Moreover, the prepositional phrase 'on their shelf' offers specificity (although hedged with the epistemic

modal 'may') to the treasured possession, making such imaginings seem strikingly vivid and thus more real.

This exercise of make-believe is another of Blast Theory's tactics to evoke empathy from participants. The artist's group have already exploited your feelings of identification and compassion with their central characters. Here, they offer only guidance: it is the participant's own subjective storytelling which creates the felt sense of subjective connection. Indeed, this layering of empathetic relationships is deliberate. As artist Matt Adams admits in interview (2009):

How attuned and sensitive can you be to the people around you in the world without losing a sense of focus or perspective? If you're able to empathise with a dictator or a mass murderer, at what point does that blur your ability to discriminate and think clearly?

Psychological engagements such as this act of perspective-taking projection with a stranger in the real world show up the fragility of fictionality and of the border between fiction and actuality. The imaginary identities of these strangers are no more real than those of characters in a novel. Yet, for participants, the personalisation of this act makes the subjective experience startlingly sincere and affecting.

Call 5: What is it that you can do?

In Call 5, the narrator warns: 'In a moment, I'm going to ask you to make a recording for me', after which the participant hears another tale from Ulrike or Eamon's past, both of which feature situations in which the characters are forced to contemplate how their actions can be used for the progression of their causes. The narrator then says:

Now you need to tell me this: as you sit looking at the windows and the alleys, what is it that you can do right now for the people around you? Don't be shy; it's a question we all have to answer from time to time. And today, here on this bench, it's your turn. What can you do for the people around you?

When you have finished your recording, hang up. There's no rush at all. I'm going to start recording now.

Deictically, the narrative has shifted back (Ulrike was in Frankfurt, Eamon in Northern Ireland) to the participant's discourse-world with the repetition of the temporal adverb 'now', definite spatial references ('the windows', 'the alleys') and the locative adverb and prepositional phrase 'here on this bench'. Recording the message, though, raises questions as to exactly *who* the participant is supposed to speak as – themselves or Ulrike/Eamon? Indeed, in my own response, I found myself using emotive and politically charged lexis (such as 'freedom') not dissimilar from that I'd been hearing throughout the narrative. The tactics employed by Blast

Theory have had a powerful effect. They have created a doubly deictic alignment so strong that it becomes difficult to divide the text-world and discourse-world identities of 'you'. In making the recording, participants are therefore both speaking as themselves, through self-implication with the 'you' of the text-world that has been contextually anchored in the discourse-world, and as Ulrike/Eamon through either perspective-taking projection or further self-implication. Contextual anchoring, the participant's actualised responses, and the creation of a figured trans-world have ultimately worked to problematise the participant's recognition of the narrative's fictionality. In experiential terms, the division between their discourse-world and text-world identities appear to have collapsed; the deictic positioning from which they speak as they record their message is double.

Calls 7+: Now you need to make a very important choice

Call 7 provides the central deciding moment for participants in terms of how the narrative will end. The narrator urges:

Now you need to make a very important choice. You can head for the room where questions get asked. Or you can take the easy way out and head home. . . .

If you hang up within the next 30 seconds then I will know that you have taken the easy route and are ready to quit. If you want to quit, hang up right now. I will sit quietly while you decide.

But if you stay on the line then your state of mind is clear to me.

[PAUSE FOR 25 SECS]

This is an intense moment for participants and the importance of their decision is stressed by the narrator through clear deontic modality ('need') and the intensifier 'very'. The narrator's words are also emotionally charged: the repetition of 'easy' in the colloquial collocations 'easy way out' and 'easy route' and of 'quit' in the verb phrases 'ready to quit' and 'want to quit' imply that hanging up represents an inferior choice.

If a participant does hang up, they receive one final call (7b) in which they are directed back to their starting location, where they return the mobile and the narrative ends. During the walk, the narrator first reacts to the act of hanging up and then completes the story. Participants in Eamon's narrative initially hear: 'So, there is not much more to say. You've taken the easy route. You spilled your guts to the British. Names, dates, details. Everyone who ever came near you got fingered by your evidence.' In this sequence of categorical statements, the narrator's tone has certainly changed. It is accusative, using 'easy' to reinforce the inferiority associated with hanging up. Additionally, the repetition of the second person in subject position is used to apportion blame, setting a pattern from which it then deviates in order to cast the new grammatical subject

'Everyone' as your victims. In Ulrike's narrative, participants are similarly berated: 'Ok, you have chosen to say nothing. I'm disappointed. What are our actions if we cannot explain them? And once the actions are over – once no more action is possible – what, then, are we left with Ulrike?' The narrator poses a series of emotive rhetorical questions. Still addressed to Ulrike, they are designed to make the participant question whether they have made the right choice. Moreover, the use of inclusive first-person 'we' suggests that, in hanging up, the participant has 'disappointed' not just the narrator but a larger subjective group – all of the people around you for whom you said in your recording there was something you could do to help in some way, including the person with the treasured possession and their loved one.

In the remainder of this final call, participants are told of Ulrike's/Eamon's death. This is an eerie experience and one which becomes too incompatible with the participant's own circumstances in order to maintain doubly deictic alignment. Participants in Eamon's narrative are told: 'When they found your body it was so battered that they thought you'd been hit by a car. It was only later that they could establish that your attackers had used hammers to kill you', while participants in Ulrike's narrative hear: 'You are 41 years old when you tear a towel into long thin strips, weave them into a rope, thread them through the bars in your cell and tie them around your neck. Then you kick away the stool. It is May 9th 1976. Mother's Day.' Although both narratives continue to use second-person address, they foreground a past temporality which eases participants out of such strong connection with character. In Eamon's narrative, this is the first consistent use of past tense whereas in Ulrike's narrative, despite maintaining the historical present tense, the date is explicitly mentioned as is Ulrike's age which is likely to differ from the participant's thus allowing the mismatch to aid in the process of disidentification. Nevertheless, I suggest that, since the participant has been subject to an intense process of psychological projection through doubly deictic self-implication and perspective-taking, the deaths of these characters is nevertheless poignantly felt.

The room: what would you fight for?

Participants who choose, at the end of call 7 to stay on the line, are warned at the start of Call 8: 'Ulrike?/Eamon? You've made your choice. I hope you're sure about this.' Over calls 8–12, they hear more stories from Ulrike and Eamon's lives and are directed to a new location where they meet with a stranger (from the *Ulrike and Eamon Compliant* team) who leads them into a concealed wooden room. This is when the interview begins. Blast Theory describe this interview in the introduction to the narrative's text in the following way:

The interviewer invites you to sit down and asks you their first question: 'What would you fight for?' They do not refer to you using the name Ulrike or Eamon. Over the next few minutes they explore whether you would kill. They may ask, 'what would you do if people came into your area and killed your friends and neighbours?' or 'are your beliefs rational or emotional?' They probe for inconsistencies in your stance and the gap between your ideas of social engagement and the reality of your lifestyle. The last question they ask is, 'are you a hesitant or a decisive person?'

The interview is unsettling, for it once again causes conflict for participants in terms of whether they should speak as themselves or in character. This ambiguity is deliberately exploited by Blast Theory, as is evident in the fact that the interviewer does not address participants by name (character or otherwise). Having enlisted your compassion for, even self-implication and empathy with, a militant terrorist, the interview compels participants to reflect upon the morality and ethical implications of this identification.

For participants who struggle to detach the doubly deictic alignment of their own identities with the character of Ulrike or Eamon, this interview is therefore highly disconcerting. For instance, I found myself at times repeating phrases from Ulrike's narrative, words she (I?) had supposedly said: 'If you set fire to a car, it's a crime. If a hundred cars are set on fire that's political.' I recall trying to utter these words with conviction yet found myself experiencing misgivings, doubts. Reflecting on the purpose of this final stage of *Ulrike and Eamon Compliant*, Adams (2009) comments that in the context of the narrative it is designed to

engage you in thinking about your relationship to these two extreme characters and invite you into a world or into a place where it's inherently complex and uncomfortable. You know, you cannot either disregard them as complete psychopaths nor can you in any way condone the choices they've made in their lives. And so you have to try to position yourself in relation to them, and for us [Blast Theory] that's a very interesting thing to do personally and politically.

Ultimately, then, in *Ulrike and Eamon Compliant* Blast Theory plays with the boundaries between text-world and discourse-world, with the participant's anchoring and investment of self and with their (non-)recognition of the fictionality of the mobile narrative not simply to provide an aesthetically absorbing and interactive experience. On the contrary, their aesthetics are inherently political. They are testing your compliance. Thus, the final question, 'Are you a hesitant or decisive person?' does not merely recall the narrative's opening for neat stylistic symmetry. The act of answering reminds you just how compliant you are.

Conclusion

As with all approaches to fictionality, stylistic accounts are concerned with the ability to distinguish between the fictive and the real. Crucially, stylistics is able to explore fictionality not merely as a state created by linguistic devices or ontological borders. It acknowledges these and more. A stylistics of fictionality considers the ways in which readers interpret textual structures in order to create fictive worlds, including their ontological borders. By focusing on readers' contextual understandings, stylistic accounts are able to recognise how such fictional worlds are not only experienced but how closely related or how far divorced those fictional worlds seem to be from readers' realities.

The semipermeable membrane of fiction has always allowed for readers to feel transported into fictional worlds or to feel as though narrators or characters transcend fiction's limits in order to escape into conversation with readers in the discourse-world. These illusions, however, are more striking in texts (such as multimodal, multimedial or hypertextual works) where readers must engage physically with the narrative. Mobile narratives set in real-world locations and in which readers seemingly respond through embodied actions to the text and/or its narrators make this deception all the more convincing. This analysis of *Ulrike and Eamon Compliant* has shown the ways in which second-person metaleptic address can be utilised in order to contextually anchor the fictive text-world within the participant's discourse-world.

Blast Theory cleverly overlay text and context in order to disguise much of *Ulrike and Eamon Compliant's* fictionality. In doing so, the narrator appears to breach the semipermeable membrane in order to share the reader's world-space while the reader forges such a strong doubly deictic identity with character that they appear to both remain in the discourse-world and penetrate the text-world. Blast Theory artist Matt Adams claims (2009: 'What participants experience') that 'by crossing that threshold and by putting yourself into this world where you're exposed to some degree, you have a very powerful relationship. And what that means is that the work is heavily tailored to you as an individual.' If, in participating in an interactive mobile narrative, you feel as though you are part of the fictional world, a stylistics of fictionality, unlike other approaches to fictionality, is capable of showing you how you got there.