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A Poetics of Unnatural Narrative

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ALICE BELL is Senior Lecturer in English Language and Literature at Sheffield Hallam University (UK). She is Principal Investigator of the *Digital Fiction International Network* (founded with funding from The Leverhulme Trust) and of *Ontological Metalepsis and Unnatural Narratology*, a collaborative research project undertaken with Jan Alber (University of Freiburg), which was funded by The British Academy. She is author of *The Possible Worlds of Hypertext Fiction* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2010) and has published articles on digital fiction, stylistics, and narratology in *Contemporary Stylistics* (Continuum, 2007); *New Narratives: Stories and Storytelling in the Digital Age* (University of Nebraska Press, 2012); *Narrative* (2011); and *Storyworlds* (2012).

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STEFAN IVERSEN is Assistant Professor in the Department for Aesthetics and Communication at Aarhus University in Denmark. He has coedited the anthologies *Why Study Literature?* (Aarhus University Press, 2011) and *Strange Voices in Narrative Fiction* (de Gruyter, 2011) and has written “‘In flaming flames’: Crises of Experientiality in Non-Fictional Narratives” (2011) and “States of Exception: Decoupling, Metarepresentation and Strange Voices in Narrative Fiction” (2011). With Alber, Nielsen, and Richardson, he coauthored “Unnatural Narratives, Unnatural Narratology. Beyond Mimetic Models” (2010). Iversen is the author and coauthor of articles and books in Danish on subjects such as narrative theory, early modernism, narrative rhetoric, and literature of testimony. He wrote his thesis on decadence and narrative structures in the works of Johannes V. Jensen. Together with Henrik Skov Nielsen, he edits the series *Modern Literary Theory* (*Moderne litteraturteori*), and he also hosts and leads the Intensive Programme in Narratology (www.ipin.dk), an international summer school in narrative theory held annually in Aarhus since 2009.

MARIA MÄKELÄ is Senior Lecturer in the School of Language, Translation, and Literary Studies at the University of Tampere in Finland, where she teaches Comparative Literature. She is the author of a Finnish PhD thesis, *Uskoton mieli ja tekstuaaliset petokset: kirjallisen tajunnankuvauksen konventiot narratologisena haasteena* (*Textual Deceptions and the Unfaithful Mind: Conventions of Literary Consciousness Representation as a Narratological Challenge*, Tampere University Press, 2011). She is coeditor of the collection *Narrative, Interrupted: The Plotless, the Disturbing and the Trivial in Literature* (with Laura Karttunen and Markku Lehtimäki, de Gruyter, 2012). Mäkelä has published several articles on classical and postclassical narratology, consciousness representation, intermediality, literary romance and adultery, and realism. Her latest articles appear in collections that are published by or forthcoming with Cambria Press, de Gruyter, and the University of Nebraska Press.

BRIAN McHALE is Distinguished Arts and Humanities Professor of English at The Ohio State University. He is one of the founding members of Project Narrative at Ohio State and served as president of the Association for the Study of the Arts of the Present (ASAP) in 2010–11. The author of three books on postmodernist fiction and poetry—*Postmodernist Fiction* (Methuen, 1987), *Constructing Postmodernism* (Routledge, 1992), and *The Obligation toward the Difficult Whole: Postmodernist Long Poems* (University of Alabama Press, 2004)—he has also published many articles on modernism and postmodernism, narrative theory, and science fiction. He is coeditor, with Randall Stevenson, of the *Edinburgh Companion to Twentieth-Century Literatures in English* (Edinburgh University Press, 2006); with David Herman and James Phelan of *Teaching Narrative Theory* (The Ohio State University Press, 2010); with Luc Herman and Inger Dalsgaard of the *Cambridge Companion to Thomas Pynchon* (Cambridge University Press, 2012); and with Joe Bray and Alison Gibbons of the *Routledge Companion to Experimental Literature* (Routledge, 2012).

HENRIK SKOV NIELSEN is Professor in the Scandinavian Institute at the University of Aarhus in Denmark. He is the author of articles and books in Danish on narratology and literary theory. His dissertation, *Tertium datur—on literature or on what is not*, is on digression and first-person narrative fiction. Nielsen has authored and coauthored articles in the *Amsterdam International Electronic Journal of Cultural Narratology*, the *Oxford Literary Review*, *Narrative*, and others. He has also contributed to several edited collections and is the editor of a series of anthologies on literary theory. Nielsen is currently working on narratological research projects on the relation between authors and narrators and on unnatural narratology in the context of the research groups NRL (<http://nordisk.au.dk/forskning/forskningscentre/nrl/intro/>) and “Unnatural Narratology” (<http://nordisk.au.dk/forskning/forskningscentre/nrl/unnatural/>). Most recently he was appointed head of the Centre for Fictionality Studies at Aarhus University.

JAMES PHELAN is Distinguished University Professor of English at The Ohio State University. In numerous essays and books, he has been working on developing a comprehensive rhetorical theory of narrative. Key installments in this work can be found in the following six books: *Worlds from Words: A Theory of Language in Fiction* (University of Chicago Press, 1981), *Reading People, Reading Plots* (Chicago, 1989), *Narrative as Rhetoric* (The Ohio State University Press, 1996), *Living to Tell About It* (Cornell University Press, 2005), *Experiencing Fiction* (Ohio State, 2007), and *Narrative Theory: Core Concepts and Critical Debates* (Ohio State, 2012) (with Peter J. Rabinowitz, David Herman, Brian Richardson, and Robyn Warhol). In addition, he is the editor or coeditor of seven collections of essays on narrative and narrative theory, including most recently *Teaching Narrative Theory* (2010) (with David Herman and Brian McHale), *Fact, Fiction and Form: Selected Essays of Ralph W. Rader* (2011) (with David H. Richter), and *After Testimony: The Ethics and Aesthetics of Holocaust Narrative* (2012) (with Jakob Lothe and Susan R. Suleiman). Since 1992, Phelan has been the editor of *Narrative*, the journal of the International Society for the Study of Narrative, and, since 1993, coeditor of The Ohio State University Press series *Theory and Interpretation of Narrative*. The essay in this volume is part of a larger study of the rhetoric and ethics of narrative communication.

BRIAN RICHARDSON is Professor in the English Department of the University of Maryland, where he teaches modern literature and narrative theory. He is the author or coauthor of three books: *Unlikely Stories: Causality and the Nature of Modern Narrative* (University of Delaware Press, 1997); *Unnatural Voices: Extreme Narration in Modern and Contemporary Fiction* (The Ohio State University Press, 2006, Perkins Prize winner); and *Narrative Theory: Critical Concepts and Current Debates*, with David Herman, James Phelan, Peter Rabinowitz, and Robyn Warhol (Ohio State, 2012). Richardson has edited two other anthologies, *Narrative Dynamics: Essays on Time, Plot, Closure, and Frames* (Ohio State, 2002) and *Narrative Beginnings: Theories and Practices* (University of Nebraska Press, 2008), and has guest edited special issues of *Style* on Concepts of Narrative (34.2, 2000) and on The Implied Author (44.1, 2011). He has published articles on many aspects of modernism, postmodernism, and narrative theory, including plot, time, character, narration, reflexivity, and reader response theory. In 2011 Richardson was president of the International Society for the Study of Narrative. He is currently completing a book on the theory and history of unnatural narratives from antiquity to postmodernism.

WERNER WOLF is Professor and Chair of English and General Literature at the University of Graz in Austria. His main areas of research are literary theory (aesthetic illusion, narratology, and metafiction in particular), functions of literature, eighteenth- to twenty-first-century English fiction, as well as intermediality studies (relations and comparisons between literature and other media, notably music and the visual arts). His publications include, besides numerous essays, the monographs *Ästhetische Illusion und Illusionsdurchbrechung in der Erzählkunst* (Niemeyer, 1993) and *The Musicalization of Fiction: A Study in the Theory and History of Intermediality* (Rodopi, 1999). He is also coeditor of volumes 1, 3, 5, and 11 of the book series *Word and Music Studies* (1999–2010) as well as of volumes 1 and 2 of the series *Studies in Intermediality: Framing Borders in Literature and Other Media* (Rodopi, 2006) and *Description in Literature and Other Media* (Rodopi, 2007). He is currently conducting a project financed by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF) on “Metareference—a Transmedial Phenomenon,” in the course of which he has also edited *Metareference Across Media: Theory and Case Studies* (Rodopi, 2009) and *The Metareferential Turn in Contemporary Arts and Media: Forms, Functions, Attempts at Explanation* (Rodopi, 2011) as volumes 4 and 5 of the series *Studies in Intermediality*. A volume, coedited by him, *Immersion and Distance: Aesthetic Illusion in Literature and Other Media*, is currently in preparation.