

**PHILOSOPHISCHES SEMINAR  
DER GEORG-AUGUST-UNIVERSITÄT GÖTTINGEN**

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# **G A S T V O R T R A G**

**Mittwoch, den 13.07.2016  
18 Uhr c.t.**

**Prof. Garcia-Carpintero  
Universität Barcelona**

**Raum PH 20**

**spricht über das Thema:**

***„Norms of Fiction-Making“***

**Hierzu ergeht herzliche Einladung.  
Ich bitte, die Studierenden in den Lehrveranstaltungen  
auf diesen Vortrag hinzuweisen.**

Prof. Dr. Bernd Ludwig, Direktor des Philosophischen Seminars

# Norms of Fiction-Making

## Abstract

Under the influence of Walton (1990), several writers including Currie (1990), Lamarque & Olsen (1994), Davies (2007, ch. 3, 2012) and Stock (2011, ms) have proposed accounts of the distinction between fiction and non-fiction on which the former essentially involves an invited response of imagining or make-believe. Forcefully contesting these views in a recent series of papers, Stacie Friend (2008, 2011, 2012) argues for the claim that “there is no conception of ‘imagining’ or ‘make-believe’ that distinguishes a response specific to fiction as opposed to non-fiction” (2012, 182-3), recommending “that we give up the quest for necessary and sufficient conditions for fictionality” (2008, 166). Instead, Friend advances an account of fiction and non-fiction as genres – super-genres encompassing species such as the historical novel on the one hand or literary biography on the other. Following here another influential work by Walton (1970), she proposes a relational, historical, context-sensitive account of such genres. Friend (2012, 188) appeals to Walton’s distinction between standard, non-standard and variable properties; in particular, she counts prescriptions to imagine as a standard property of fiction. In thus relying on some relatively intrinsic properties, over and above the purely relational ones, her account is an impure version of genealogical-institutional accounts of kinds, thereby relevantly differing from the infamous account of art as a category conferred without constraints by “the Artworld” (2012, 193).

In my contribution, I will defend a version of the prescriptions to imagine account of fiction from Friend’s criticisms. Like Currie and the other writers, I propose to think of fictions as (results of) speech acts; unlike them, however, I take the normative characterization literally, assuming an Austinian account of such acts in contrast to the Gricean account in terms of communicative intentions that these authors rely on. Independently of the present dispute, a normative account fares better relative to the intentionalism/conventionalism debate about the interpretation of fictions, or so I argue. More to the present point, by separating the constitutive nature of fiction from the vagaries of context-sensitive genre classification, it allows us to grant the forceful points that Friend makes, while rejecting her main claim. On the suggested view, prescriptions to imagine are not mere Waltonian standard properties of fictions, but are constitutive of them, and thus imagining does distinguish a response specific to fiction as opposed to non-fiction. The historically changing, contextual features that Friend relies on have an important role to play; not in the determination of the fiction/non-fiction normative kinds, but rather of their applications to particular cases – i.e., in establishing when a work is to be evaluated as one or the other of those kinds, if this is a determinate matter at all.

## References

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