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**Just My Imagination? – Creation for Creationists
(Abstract)**

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In the debate on the ontology of fictional entities realists claim that fictional characters exist. Some fictional realists are Platonists. They claim that fictional characters are abstract entities that exist necessarily and are non-spatial and timeless. It seems that the author's job is just to discover these entities. Other realists claim that fictional characters are abstract artefacts. Obviously these abstract artefacts do not have much in common with platonic entities. »Abstract« means, according to this creationistic account, that these artefacts are non-spatial entities. But as artefacts they are created and thus depend on someone who creates them and on the act of creation. Surprisingly, those realists do not say much about this process of creation. This article proposes an addition to the realist account at this point, focusing on the question of how fictional characters are created. However, my proposal is only concerned with the creation of fictional characters within the framework of fictional stories told by means of linguistic utterances. Therefore my question is: how can authors create fictional entities by telling fictional stories? I will begin by discussing whether an utterance act or a mere mental action, namely someone's imagining something, is necessary or sufficient for the successful creation of fictional entities. I will distinguish two different interpretations of the claim that a person creates entities by imaging something and I will argue that realists should reject both versions of this claim. Constructively, I will go on to emphasize similarities between fictional entities and social entities like contracts and marriages. This is important because realists in the debate about social entities provide more detailed descriptions of the creation of social entities, details which can be adapted in order to describe the process by which fictional entities are created. I emphasize that this process, namely the fictional story telling, is a social practice. The social character of this practice will be shown in mainly two aspects: Firstly, I will argue that similar to the creation of other social entities for the creation of fictional characters there has to be a collectively recognised institution, namely the institution of fictional story telling. Thus, collective intentionality plays a crucial role in the process of this creation. As such an institution plays a decisive role I will go on to claim that the creation of an abstract artefact requires the performance not only of a mere utterance act, but of a successfully executed illocutionary act. By following Austin and Searle I will finally argue that only utterance tokens which in the specific situation are necessary to realize the illocutionary point or purpose can count as performances of illocutionary acts. In order to perform an illocutionary act successfully, the utterance must bring about an illocutionary uptake in the recipient/hearer, i. e. she must understand the utterance. Therefore, illocutionary acts can in general not be performed successfully without a hearer/recipient. Thus, to understand fictional story telling and the creation of fictional characters as a social practice means that the creative process cannot be explained exclusively in terms of imaginings. This does not mean that imagination does not play any role in producing or reading fiction. But creationists need more than imagination to explain how fictional characters are created. The aim of this paper is to take a step forward towards an explanation of the creation of fictional characters and thus to rendering the creationist's account more plausible in (1) naming necessary conditions for successfully telling a fictional story, (2) describing it as a social praxis and (3) explaining the role collective intentionality plays in this practice, we have.

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