

*Abstract.* The aim of this paper is to show that we cannot deepen our understanding of fiction, or of fiction operators, by appeal to fictional worlds. First, I show that there are many different fiction operators, with different truth conditions. (For example, “In *War and Peace*, there are real as well as purely fictional characters” is true, but “According to *War and Peace*, there are real as well as purely fictional characters” is false.) It follows that no one worlds-based account can be right for all of them. Secondly, I show that some fictional operators place specific requirements on the actual world, and so cannot be analyzed purely in terms of how things are in nonactual worlds. (Example: “Most readers of *Pride and Prejudice* find that Elizabeth Bennett is charming”.) Thirdly, I show that worlds-based accounts cannot avoid epistemic circularity: determining which worlds are appropriate requires first attaining an interpretation of the fiction.