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Free indirect discourse (FID) is a narrative technique in which the narrator’s third-person voice is infused with the first-person voice of the character without indicators, such as "she said" or "I thought." In her novel *Persuasion* Jane Austen uses FID to challenge narrator authority, enhance verisimilitude, and overcome alterity. In *Persuasion*, Austen charts the psychological lives of her characters and depicts the disparity between what they feel and what they say or do that informs her broad social commentary. She weaves threads of thought--both spoken and unspoken--throughout the fabric of the plot, examining issues of female agency, and revealing a tension that underlies the division between public and private spheres of social interaction.

This poster will focus on volume two, chapter eight of *Persuasion* and reflect my idea that FID functions to counter alterity by paving the way for perspective taking. Few scholars have empirically explored how FID encourages empathy. As recent advances in cognitive science and psychology expand our understanding of the relationship between the body and the brain, some studies do suggest a positive correlation between empathic and spatial perspective taking, implying they share an underlying cognitive mechanism. Future research at the intersection of literary studies and science should investigate how FID aids our ability to imagine the empathic and spatial perspectives of others in fiction and whether that process mirrors our ability to do so in everyday life. Considering the relationship between emotional and spatial perspective will reveal how fictional narratives can encourage empathy in everyday life.