Mapping Metaphor with the *Historical Thesaurus*

Wendy Anderson, Ellen Bramwell, Rachael Hamilton
All the world’s a stage
And all the men and women merely players.
They have their exits and their entrances,
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages. At first the infant,
Mewling and puking in the nurse’s arms.
Then the whining schoolboy with his satchel […]

Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, Act 2, Scene 7
Metaphor

Juliet is the sun. *Romeo and Juliet*, Act 2, Scene 1

Compare:

What **light** through yonder window breaks?
Arise, **fair sun**, and kill the envious moon.
A grave – O no, a **lantern**, slaughtered youth
And never from this pallet of **dim night** / Depart again.
Theory of Conceptual Metaphor

• Metaphor is a feature of everyday language
• Metaphor is a matter of thought as well as language
• Metaphor is systematic

The classic work on conceptual metaphor is:
G. Lakoff and M. Johnson (1980) *Metaphors We Live By*
• I’ll take my chances
• The odds are against me
• I’ve got an ace up my sleeve
• He’s holding all the aces
• It’s a toss-up
• If you play your cards right, you can do it
• Where is he when the chips are down?
• He’s bluffing
• Let’s up the ante
• That’s the luck of the draw
LIFE IS A GAMBLING GAME

- I’ll *take my chances*
- The *odds are against me*
- I’ve got an *ace up my sleeve*
- He’s *holding all the aces*
- It’s a *toss-up*
- If you *play your cards right, you can do it*
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- That’s the *luck of the draw*
**Life is a Gambling Game**

Systematic links

A game/card player → A living person
Playing a card → Making a choice in life
High card/ace → Advantages / opportunities
Winning a game → Succeeding in life
Dealing cards → The hand of fate
LIFE IS A GAMBLING GAME

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### All the World’s a Stage...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Systematic links</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stage</td>
<td>Stage</td>
<td>The world</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actors</td>
<td>Actors</td>
<td>People</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrances / exits</td>
<td>Entrances / exits</td>
<td>Birth / death</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acts</td>
<td>Acts</td>
<td>Ages / stages in life</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mapping Metaphor with the *Historical Thesaurus*

Funded by the AHRC
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**Principal Investigator:** Wendy Anderson  
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Several **student volunteers**
Initiated by Professor Michael Samuels

Published as:

Historical Thesaurus of English

Level 1
The External World; The Mental World; The Social World

Level 2
26 major categories (e.g. Matter, Aesthetics, Leisure)

Level 3
354 categories (e.g. Liquid, Beauty, Sport)

Levels 4 – 12
797,000 lexical items
236,000 categories and subcategories in all
Methods

The External World
A01 World, the
A02 Region of the earth
A03 Geodetic references
A04 Land

The Mental World
I08 Love
I09 Hatred/enmity
I10 Indifference

The Social World
Z07 Performance arts
Z08 Sport
Z09 Sport, types of
Z10 Dance
Metaphor and language change

The development of *branch*

A portion or limb of a tree or other plant  a1300
Genealogical tree  a1400
A division of a subject (*branch of study*)  1509
The human arm (*rare*)  1594
A local office of business (*branch of bank*)  1817

All dates from online *Oxford English Dictionary*
One goal of the project is to produce an online resource showing connections within the data. This ‘metaphor map’ will be created later in the project, but will cover every category and every connection identified by the coders. Here are some connections in Light and Darkness...
Light and Darkness

Some clear symmetries have emerged from grouping the data, e.g.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Light</th>
<th>Darkness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intelligence is Light</td>
<td>Virtue is Light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ignorance is Dark</td>
<td>Moral evil is Dark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive emotion is Light</td>
<td>Cleanliness/purity is Light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative emotion is Dark</td>
<td>Lack of cleanliness/purity is Dark</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Light and Darkness

Intelligence is Light

Ignorance is Dark
Light

Made using Gephi: www.gephi.org
Light

Mapping Metaphor with the Historical Thesaurus
Intelligence is Light

**Strong connections:**

- H07  Perception/cognition
- H10  Intelligence, cleverness
- H18  Intelligibility
- H20  Knowledge
- W01  Communication
- W05  Information

**Weaker connections:**

- H03  Consciousness
- H06  Thought
- H08  Imagination, faculty of
- H22  Conformity with what is known, truth
- U01  Education
- Z01  Leisure/entertainment
Intelligence is Light

reflection, vivid, enlightened, light, luminary, shine, lustre, glaring, clear, gleam

1688 Bunyan *Jerus. Sinner Saved* (1886) 17 The text is as clear as the sun; for it saith, ‘Begin at Jerusalem’.

1690 Locke *Hum. Und. ii. i.* § 4 By Reflection then, · · · I would be understood to mean, that notice which the Mind takes of its own Operations, and the manner of them.

1732 Berkeley *Alciphr. i.* § 9 The select spirits of this enlightened age.

1854 H. Rogers *Ess. II. i.* 2 Like the other great luminaries of philosophy and science, Locke has shone on with tolerably uniform lustre.
Intelligence is Light

BUT – *too much* light obscures intelligence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C01</td>
<td>Physical sensibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E22</td>
<td>Prosperity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H23</td>
<td>Secrecy, concealment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H25</td>
<td>Disbelief and uncertainty</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1643 J. Milton *Soveraigne Salve Pref.* Rhetorick may dazle simple men.

Mapping Metaphor
with the Historical Thesaurus

Metaphors of Dark
Ignorance is *Darkness*

**Strong** connections:

- H13 Understanding, lack of
- H14 Stupidity, dullness of intellect
- H18 Intelligibility
- H19 Memory
- H21 Want of knowledge, ignorance
- Z06 Literature

**Weaker** connections:

- H16 Weakness of intellect
- H17 Stupid/foolish/inadequate person
- H20 Knowledge
- H22 Conformity with what is known, truth
- H29 Unimportance
- U01 Education
- W05 Information
- W14 Correspondence and telecommunication
Ignorance is **Darkness**

darkness, dark, shade, unilluminated, darksome, murk, dim, dull, dullness, dullish, opaque, clouded, obscure, black-out, bedim

**1531** Tindale *Exp. 1 John 15* All that lyue in ignoraunce are called darknesse.

**1596** Bacon *Max. & Uses Com. Law Ded.*, The more ignorant and obscure time undertooke to correct the more learned and flourishing.

**a1729** J. Rogers *Serm. (J)*, The understanding is dim, and cannot by its natural light discover spiritual truth.

**1858** H. Bushnell *Serm. New Life 100* The unilluminated and superficial speculations of our times.
Light and Darkness
Mapping Metaphor

with the
Historical Thesaurus

intransitive verb, OE-

shine < scinan

shine

adjective, OE-1633 + 1748– poet.

sheen < sciene

bright

adjective, c1450–
radiant

emitting rays

nucle 1549 Scots + 1596–
lustre

brightness

intransitive verb, OE–

shine < scinan

be splendid/radiant

adjective, c1205-1460

sheen < sciene

beautiful

adjective, 1509–
radiant

radiance/brilliance

noun, 1602–
lustre

radiance/brilliance
Mapping Metaphor

DARKNESS

adjective, OE–
dark < deorc
dark/without light

darkness

adjective, 1393–
black
dark/dusky/dim

Black

adjective, 1589–
shady
lying in shade/abounding in shade

Shady

adjective, c1586–
pitchy
intensely dark

Pitchy

adjective, 1581–
dark < deorc
evil/dark

Evil

adjective, 1581–
black
evil/dark

Evil

adjective, 1612+1810
pitchy
evil/dark

Evil
love-bird

noun, 1595–
genus Agapornis/love-bird

love-bird

noun, 1911–
one who loves/a lover

duck < duce

noun, OE–
subfamily Merginae/duck

termsof endearment

kiss

transitive verb, 1398–a1529
touch with bill as caress

kiss

transitive verb, 1969–
kiss perfunctorily

peck

transitive verb, 1382–

peck
Mapping Metaphor

**HEARING**

*adjective, c1386–*

**shrill**

*shrill (of sound)*

*noun, 1654–*

**symphony**

*assemblage/body of sound*

*noun, 1866–*

**colour**

*quality of sound*

*adjective, 1602–*

**screaming**

*scream/shriek*

**COLOUR**

*adjective, 1973*

**shrill**

*garish*

*noun, 1874–*

**symphony**

*harmony*

*noun, c1290–*

**colour**

*a colour*

*adjective, 1883–*

**screaming**

*scream/shriek*
PRIMATES  IMITATION

noun, 1530–
monkey
monkey

noun, OE–
ape < apa
monkey

noun, 1699–
ape
family Pongidae/ape

transitive verb, 1859–
monkey
ape/mock/mimic

adverb, 1923–
monkeyishly
with silly/apish imitation

transitive verb, 1632–
ape
ape/mock/mimic

adjective, 1579–
apish
apish/mock/mimicking
Mapping Metaphor
with the
Historical Thesaurus

**REPTILES**

- *adjective*, 1849–
  - reptilian
to reptiles

- *noun*, 1526–
  - viper
venomous snake

- *noun*, 1300–
  - slough
skin/scale

- *adjective*, c1420–
  - serpentine
of/pertaining to snake

**BEHAVIOUR**

- *adjective*, 1859 + 1888
  - reptilian
ill-willing

- *noun*, 1591–
  - viper
spiteful, malicious

- *noun*, 1583–
  - slough
a habit/usual feature cast off

- *noun*, c1510
  - serpentine
instance of spite/malice
www.glasgow.ac.uk/metaphor

http://blogs.arts.gla.ac.uk/metaphor/  Twitter: @MappingMetaphor

Image from Thomas Wright: *An original theory or new hypothesis of the universe*. London, 1750. Courtesy of University of Glasgow Library, Special Collections.