

METAPHOR WARS

The study of metaphor is now firmly established as a central topic within cognitive science and the humanities. We marvel at the creative dexterity of gifted speakers and writers for their special talents in both thinking about certain ideas in new ways, and communicating these thoughts in vivid, poetic forms. Yet metaphors may not only be special communicative devices, but a fundamental part of everyday cognition in the form of “conceptual metaphors.” An enormous body of empirical evidence from cognitive linguistics and related disciplines has emerged detailing how conceptual metaphors underlie significant aspects of language, thought, cultural, and expressive action. Despite its influence and popularity, there have been major criticisms of conceptual metaphor. This book offers an evaluation of the arguments and empirical evidence for and against conceptual metaphors, much of which scholars on both sides of the wars fail to properly acknowledge.

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CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS IN HUMAN LIFE

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I dedicate this book to my dear friends and colleagues in the former research collective known as the “Pragglejaz Group.” The members of “Pragglejaz” included the following:

Peter Crisp

Raymond W. Gibbs, Jr.

Alice Deignan

Graham Low

Gerard Steen

Lynne Cameron

Elena Semino

Joe Grady

Alan Cienki

Zoltán Kövecses

Pragglejaz met each year for a decade to discuss our mutual interests in metaphor. We created “MIP,” a “metaphor identification procedure,” which provides a reliable method for determining the metaphorically used words in discourse.¹ The other members of this group are brilliant, passionate scholars whose research and writings have had a profound influence within the multidisciplinary world of metaphor studies. My times with Pragglejaz were some of the most intellectually and socially stimulating moments in my entire life. I am incredibly grateful to all these people for their support, arguments, and friendship as we explored the complexities, and celebrated the beauties, of metaphor in human life.

I adore each of my Pragglejaz colleagues and view them as ideal examples of why some of the very best people on earth study metaphor.

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