Today

- HW3
- Reading presentations next Weds (2/9)
- Friday, Feb 4
- Ambiguity

Ambiguity

- Entire utterances are often ambiguous, in several ways

    - Syntactic ambiguity
        - I'm watching her duck.
        - All I have are five dollar bills.
        - Old French teachers are hard to understand.
        - Save the old men and women first!

    - Lexical ambiguity
        - They gave him a hand.
        - The cameras at the Super Bowl followed the tight ends.

Ambiguity

- Over the course of incremental processing, with only partial information, the part of an utterance you've already processed is almost always ambiguous

  What did he say that she took offense to?

Ambiguity

- Sometimes ambiguities reveal something about how people process language
  - Whether they build up expectations
  - What information they use
  - When they do this stuff

- How do people resolve these ambiguities?
  - What information do they use? Linguistic, contextual, encyclopedic?
  - When do they use it? Early and often? Late and conclusively?

Information used in processing sentences and resolving ambiguity

- Syntactic preferences
- Lexical factors (e.g. frequency)
- Combinatorial probability of words, grammatical structures
- Goodness of fit of expressed concepts
- Context