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Reasoning and Rhetoric: Conceptual Blending in Political and Religious Rhetoric
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It's been said that logic is what ought to persuade, while rhetoric is what *actually* persuades. In this paper I will suggest that many instances of political rhetoric draw not on the human deductive reasoning capacity, but rather on a set of imaginative processes for information integration. These processes, known as conceptual blending, operate in the creative construction of meaning in analogy, metaphor, counterfactuals, concept combination, and even the comprehension of grammatical constructions. Blending processes depend centrally on projection mapping and dynamic simulation to develop emergent structure, and to promote novel conceptualizations, involving the generation of inferences, emotional reactions, and rhetorical force. This paper will introduce conceptual blending theory and show how these processes operate in political rhetoric. I begin with an introduction to the theory and follow by discussing several examples of blending at work, including political cartoons, political advertisements, and solicitations for monetary donations.

1. Conceptual Blending Theory

In 1993, Mark Turner, a literature professor had a conversation with cognitive scientist Gilles Fauconnier about the cognitive demands of personification. Although the technique is widely used in literature, Turner suggested that its cognitive underpinnings had gone unremarked by researchers in cognitive science. For instance, consider Disney creation Mickey Mouse: Mickey has some of the properties of a mouse, such as having a squeaky voice, but, he also has many human properties, such as wearing clothes and speaking human languages. Turner wondered whether the sort of creative concept combination that apparently goes on in cases of personification might be evident in areas outside of literature.

During their conversation – soon to be one of many in the course of their ensuing collaboration – Fauconnier suggested that perhaps the same sort of concept combination, or *conceptual blending* as it is now called, was needed to understand the semantics of analogical counterfactuals such as (1).

(1) If Clinton were French, no-one would have cared about Lewinsky.

One way of interpreting this statement is that if Clinton were a French national, he couldn't legally be a United States president, and so the public wouldn't have cared *what* he did. But, in fact, most speakers understand this sentence as pointing up a disanalogy between French and American culture relevant to Clinton's situation. To explain the meaning construction operations that underlie examples such as these, Fauconnier (1997) proposed that the speaker creates a blend between a French politician and Bill Clinton and then imagines the reaction of the French populace to his extra-marital affair.

If Mickey Mouse has been personified, our French politician has been Clintonized! Turner went on to publish his ideas about personification in his 1997 book *The Literary Mind*. Fauconnier published his ideas about analogical counterfactuals in his 1997 book *Mappings in Language and Thought*. More importantly, the two began to work together on these issues, a collaboration that continues to this day. Fauconnier & Turner (1994; 1998; 2002) have shown how hybrid cognitive models (referred to as "blends") occur in a wide variety of cognitive phenomena and have developed an elaborate theory of conceptual integration, or blending, to explain the representation of composite descriptions.

1.1 Mental Space Theory

Conceptual blending theory grows out of the field of cognitive semantics, an approach to semantics that locates meaning in conceptual structure. Three key concepts in cognitive semantics include *mental spaces*, or partitions in speakers' working memory where cognitive models are activated, *mappings*, or correspondences between elements and relations in different cognitive models, and *conceptual blending*, which is a set of processes for integrating concepts from different domains. Mental spaces (Fauconnier, 1994) can be thought of as temporary containers for relevant information about a particular domain. A mental space contains a partial representation of the entities and relations of a particular scenario as construed by a speaker. Spaces are structured by *elements* that represent each of the discourse entities, and simple frames to represent the relationships that exist between them. *Frames* are hierarchically structured attribute-value pairs that can either be integrated with perceptual information, or used to activate generic knowledge about people and objects assumed by default. Finally, *mappings* are abstract correspondences between elements and relations in different spaces.

When speakers produce language, listeners use that linguistic input along with background and contextual knowledge in order to set up simple cognitive models in mental spaces. For example, if we heard (2) in the course of a discussion about the greatest basketball players of all time, we would set up two mental spaces to represent the information in the sentence (see Figure 1).

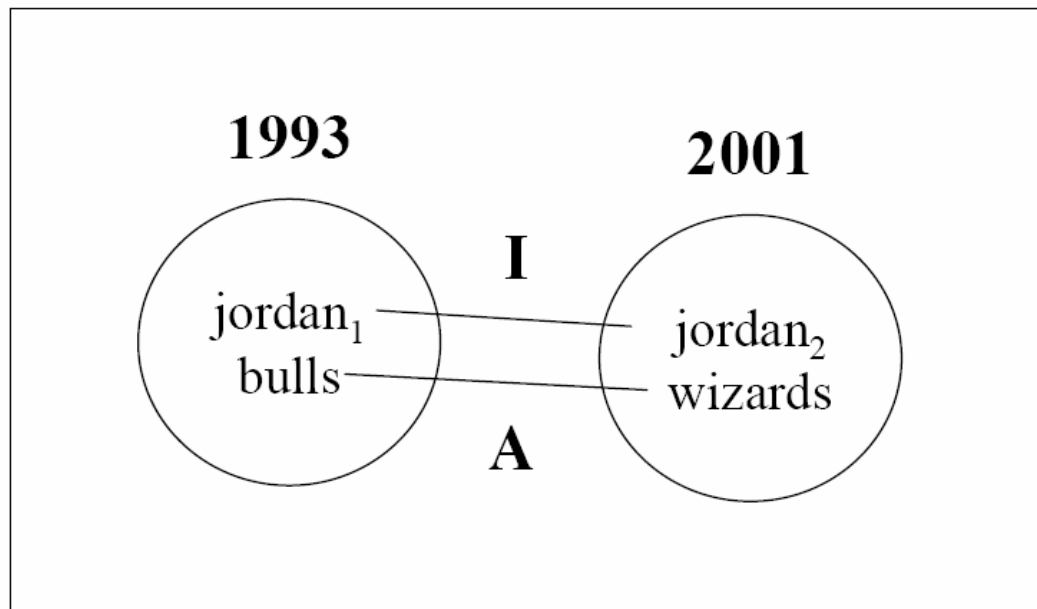


Figure 1

(2) In 1993, Jordan played for the Bulls; in 2001, he played for the Wizards. By employing two spaces, one for each year mentioned, mental space theory allows us to capture the different properties of Jordan in 1993 and in 2001. The 1993 space has a cognitive model of a young star who plays for the Chicago Bulls, and in the 2001 space is a model of an older guy who plays for the Washington Wizards.

Because mental space theory involves constructing multiple mental models of the same thing, it creates a need to establish mappings between different spaces. Mappings are simply correspondences between elements and relationships in different mental spaces. For instance, there's a correspondence between the Michael Jordan in the 1993 space ($jordan_1$) and the Michael Jordan in the 2001 space ($jordan_2$), in that both are the same person. Although they each have different properties (each plays for a different team, for instance), the 1993 Jordan and the 2001 Jordan are understood to be the same man. This commonsense understanding is captured in mental space theory by saying that there is an *identity mapping* between the two elements. In Figure 1, this mapping has been represented as a line between $jordan_1$ and $jordan_2$. Moreover, there is an *analogy mapping* between the Bulls in the 1993 space, and the Wizards in the 2001 space.

In sum, mental spaces can be thought of as containers or folders where speakers set up partial cognitive models of the discourse event. Mental spaces can be used to represent both real and imagined scenarios. One can use mental spaces to represent cognitive models of actual events, hypothetical events, counterfactual events, the contents of wishes, beliefs, and representations such as pictures. For instance, if I point to a picture of Michael Jordan and say, "This is Michael Jordan," I will prompt my listeners to construct two mental spaces, one for the picture and one for reality, and expect that they will set up a mapping between Michael Jordan in the picture and the real-life Michael Jordan. Mental spaces are very useful for representing discrepancies between truth and belief, and for cases where an individual's properties change over time.

1.2 Conceptual Blending

Conceptual blending is a set of processes for information integration, first proposed by Fauconnier & Turner (1994). Because this is a theory of cognitive semantics it operates at the level of conceptual structure and so is thought to underlie meaning in the interpretation of language, thought, and action. Conceptual blending is when partial structures from two or more mental spaces are dynamically combined in a blended mental space. One genre where conceptual blending is quite obvious is in editorial cartoons. For example, consider a cartoon by Henry Payne originally published in 2001 in the *Detroit News*. The cartoon depicts Michael Jordan, wearing a shirt labeled "The Legend", alongside an image of the Michael Jordan of 2001, almost 40 years old, and coping with serious knee problems. In the cartoon, the two Michael Jordan's (an old one and a young one) are playing basketball with each other. The caption reads, "You can't stay with me, old man," where "stay with me" is a colloquial expression a basketball player might say to his opponent to imply that the speaker is a better player and that his opponent will be unable to beat him.

Blending processes unfold in an array of mental spaces known as a *conceptual integration network*. A canonical integration network consists of two *input spaces*, each of which represents a cognitive model that contributes to the blend, a *generic space* that represents abstract commonalities in the inputs, and the *blended space* that has some structure from each of the inputs as well as novel emergent structure. In Payne's cartoon, for instance, one input space has a cognitive model of Michael Jordan in 2001, the other input has a cognitive model of Michael Jordan in his prime in the early 1990s. The generic space contains a cognitive model of a basketball player. The blended space inherits some of its structure from each of the inputs and develops novel structure of its own. In this case, the Michael Jordan in each input space is projected onto a separate element in the blended space. Consequently, Jordan can play basketball against himself. Although the event in the blended space is quite impossible, it provides the context for inferences about the relationship between the cognitive models in the two input spaces. In this case, one can infer that the elder Jordan is not the player he once was, because he loses to Jordan "The Legend" in the basketball game in the blended space.

Conceptual blending processes proceed via the establishment and exploitation of mappings, the activation of background knowledge, and frequently involve the use of mental imagery and mental simulation. Blending processes are used to conceptualize actual things such as genetic engineers, fictional things such as Mickey Mouse, and even impossible things such as a French Bill Clinton. Interestingly, even though cognitive models in blended spaces are occasionally bizarre, the inferences generated inside them have long-term consequences for information in memory.

2 Conceptual Integration Networks

Although conceptual blending theory was motivated by creative examples that demand the construction of hybrid cognitive models (as in the French Bill Clinton), the processes that underlie these phenomena are actually widely utilized in all sorts of cognitive and linguistic phenomena (see Coulson, 2000 for review). At its most abstract level, conceptual blending involves the projection of partial structure from two or more input spaces and the integration of this information in a third, blended, space. When the information in each of the input spaces is very different from one another, this integration can produce extremely novel results. However, there are many cases that involve the projection of partial structure and the integration of this information that yield predictable results. While many theorists object to calling the latter "blends" (e.g. Gibbs, 2000), Fauconnier & Turner (2002) have argued that it is useful to appreciate the continuity between creative blends and more conventional instances of information integration.

Fauconnier & Turner (2002) suggest a typology of blends that vary in complexity as a function of the type of integration network they require. The simplest sort of integration network is the *simplex network*. One input in a simplex network is a frame with unfilled roles. The other represents unfilled values. Once you understand the mapping between the elements and the roles, the blend inherits the frame from one input and integrates it with the unfilled values from the second input. Even though these blends are pretty basic, there are still aspects of the integrated concept that aren't strictly predictable from the inputs. For example, when integrating *eating* with *chow mein*, background knowledge allows one to complete the frame with chopsticks. So while various instantiations of the eating frame have abstract commonalities, the actual details of the actions involved in eating (say) chow mein as opposed to a hot dog are very different.

Another sort of conceptual integration network is the *frame compatible network*, a network for integrating two frames that are completely compatible with one another. To understand the sentence, "Al Gore is a moderate Democrat," the network has one frame that represents *moderate* as an abstract concept, as in "a moderate amount of exercise," where *moderate* marks a position on a scale; the other input has a

frame for *Democrat*. The blend involves locating Al Gore ever so slightly to the left of the center on the political scale.

A third type of network is the *single scope network*, important for framing, analogy, and many metaphors. In a single scope network, each input space is structured by a different frame and the blended space inherits the relational structure, or predicates, from one input and the objects, or values, from the other. For instance, we can use a single scope network to represent the following quote from Peter Maguire, "Military tribunals are a preemptive act, a slap in the face of human rights groups, the United Nations and international criminal courts," [quoted in Goldin, 2001]

To represent the concepts conveyed by this quotation, we need a single scope network in which the relational structure comes from the slapping frame, but the topic comes from the politics frame. The predicate in the blended space comes from the slapping input, but all of the participants come from the politics space. If slapping someone is a sign of disrespect in the original slapping input, it's also a sign of disrespect in the blend, and in the political input which is the target domain of the analogy.

However, the most complex blends arise in *double scope networks*. In these networks, as in single scope networks, each input is structured by a different frame. But, instead of one input determining all of the important relationships, the blended space has some relational structure from each input frame, as well as some values from each input. For example, it is necessary to construct a double scope network to comprehend the following quote where "Shephard" refers to the mother of hate crime victim Matthew Shephard, a young man who was brutally murdered for being open about his homosexual lifestyle.

"The Bush campaign's response to Shephard's question is the greatest Texas dance since the two-step and shows a wanton display of political maneuvering," said HRC political director Winnie Stachelberg. "It is amazing that the Bush campaign can't answer the simple question of whether they support sexual orientation being added to current federal hate crimes law." [Press release by the Human Rights Campaign, October 17, 2000]

The phrase, "the greatest Texas dance since the two-step," sets up an image of Bush doing a 'Texas dance' around the hate crimes issues, and yields the inference that Bush does not want to make his position on this issue known to the public presumably because he expects people to object to it. The inputs to the blend are politics and dancing, where politicians discuss their views on issues with the public in the politics space, and people dance with one another in the dancing space. In the blend, an element from the politics space (George Bush) dances around another element from the politics spaces (the hate crimes issue).

Given that the relational structure (in this case the dancing) comes from one space, and the elements (George Bush and the hate crimes issue) come from another, one might consider this to be a single scope blend. However, the logic of the blend does not come from the dancing space as it would if this were really a single scope blend. After all, dancing doesn't imply anything about one's attitude to objects in the dancing environment. The inference that the hate crimes issue is something Bush doesn't want to discuss comes from the politics space. The difference between a single-scope and a double-scope blend is that the inferences in a single-scope blend result from one of the input spaces (as in a conventionalized metaphor), while those in a double scope blend involve both inputs to a certain extent.

In fact, the Texas dance blend seems to work because of a conventionalized mediating blend (viz. a metaphor) in which politicians *avoid issues* – something construed negatively and in contrast to another blend where politicians *confront issues*. The Texas dance blend also makes use of the conventionalized expression *dancing around an issue*. In this expression, dancing is interpreted as a sign that the politician intentionally diverts viewers' attention away from the issue. Of course, if a person really were dancing around an object, it would result in directing others' attention *towards* the object in the middle rather than away from it. Thus the conventionalized metaphor *dancing around an issue* is also a double-scope blend.

2 Blending in Political Rhetoric

Conceptual blending is often involved in political rhetoric, perhaps because it can be used to change the way that people conceptualize the input concepts. For example, a cartoon by James Margulies that appeared in *The Record*, a New Jersey newspaper, in November 2001, depicts the window of a department store called "Ashcroft's" advertised as being open "Since 2001". The window has a sign that says "Fabulous Holiday Savings!" and a sticker on a giant version of the Bill of Rights that reads "Reduced 60%." Although it purports to advertise a sale at a department store, the cartoon is to be understood as alluding to American attorney general John Ashcroft's policies in the aftermath of the September 11th terrorist attack in the U.S.

Because Ashcroft instituted a number of anti-terrorist policies that significantly infringed on Americans' (and non-Americans') civil liberties, he was criticized by many political commentators. This cartoon represents one such critical perspective.

Political cartoons directly represent the contents of the blended space and invite the viewer to unpack it into its inputs. In the case of the Ashcroft's cartoon, the structure in the blend maps to some items in each input. In this case, the two inputs are a department store, presumably by analogy to Macy's, and the justice department headed by John Ashcroft. The blended model in the blended space maps to some items in each of the spaces. In order to make this juxtaposition of concepts cohere, it is necessary to activate background knowledge. Note that the logic of the blend is a bit bizarre in that selling the Bill of Rights would not necessarily have any consequences for Americans' civil rights. Nonetheless, the cartoon ultimately suggests that Ashcroft's justice department policies would have negative consequences.

It does so because we're able to see that the Justice Department counterpart of the price reduction on the Bill of Rights is the infringement of civil liberties. Thus while understanding this cartoon involves some analogical reasoning, it is not an analogy in the normal sense. In an analogy, one understands a novel domain by projecting concepts from a better-understood domain. However, to understand the cartoon, one does not understand the Justice Department in terms of department store concepts. Rather, we exploit a few particular department store concepts in order to negatively frame events pertaining to Ashcroft's Justice Department.

The Ashcroft's Holiday Sale cartoon can also serve to illustrate the processes of conceptual blending that can result in novel, emergent content in the blended space. First, *composition* involves the juxtaposition of information in different spaces as when we filled the **Goods** slot in the department store frame with the Bill of Rights. That is, from our general knowledge of department stores we know that they sell various kinds of goods. Juxtaposition of this knowledge structure with the Bill of Rights in the blended space results in the inference that one of the goods at Ashcroft's department store is the Bill of Rights. *Completion* occurs when information in the blend matches a concept stored in memory. A close enough match will lead to the activation of that concept. For example, in the Ashcroft blend, one might invoke completion to infer that John Ashcroft owns Ashcroft's department store because businesses are often named after their owners. *Elaboration* is an extend form of completion that involves mental simulation, as when we imagine a sale in which the Bill of Rights is reduced 60%.

For example, there is a double scope blend in a cartoon by Blake Carlson that appeared in *The Arizona Republic* in November 2001 – around the time of the American Thanksgiving holiday where it's customary to have a Turkey dinner. In the cartoon, American president George W. Bush stands at the head of a dinner table about to carve a turkey labeled "Afghanistan". Seated at the table are a number of men in Turbans with name-cards that read the names of Afghani ethnic groups (e.g., Uzbeks, Tajiks, Pashtuns, Hazara). Carving knife in hand, Bush says, "Look, I'm doin' my best here, but there are only two of them. You can't ALL have a drumstick!!"

The cartoon presents the viewer with the blend and invites her to unpack the input spaces in the network. The inputs in this case are Thanksgiving dinner and the Taliban overthrow in Afghanistan. Part of understanding this blend involves appreciating analogy mappings between Dad carving the turkey on Thanksgiving, Bush carving the turkey in the cartoon, and Bush dividing the control of Afghanistan. Children compete over turkey legs in the Thanksgiving input, the Afghans compete over turkey legs in the blended space, and Afghans compete over control of Afghanistan in the Taliban overthrow input.

One interesting facet of blending in political cartoons is that some of the actors in the blend play themselves. While some of the mappings between the blend and the Taliban overthrow space involve analogy mappings (between the turkey and Afghanistan), a lot of them involve identity mappings (Bush maps to himself, the Pashtuns to the Pashtuns, the Tajiks to the Tajiks, etc.). Presumably, by restricting the need to make an analogical inference to one key concept (in this case, competition over a limited resource) and utilizing identity mappings between the actors in the cartoon and the actors in the political arena (i.e. having Bush carve the turkey in the cartoon), the cartoonist facilitates appreciation of the cartoon. Political cartoons and rhetorically motivated discourse prompt us to construct blended cognitive models and, in *effective* cases of rhetoric, desired inferences are analogically projected from these blended cognitive models to the target domain.

3 Truth and Consequences

A cartoon by Kevin Siers published in 1998 in the *Charlotte Observer* pictures then-President Bill Clinton seated at a desk next to the American flag. As if addressing the media and his constituents, Clinton says, "I've had an inappropriate relationship with the truth!" This cartoon alludes to discrepancies in Clinton's

public statements about an alleged affair with one-time White House intern Monica Lewinsky. In January of 1998, when first confronted with the issue, Clinton vehemently denied he had had a sexual relationship with Lewinsky. However, as time went on, Kenneth Starr, the independent counsel who zealously pursued the case, managed to amass evidence from a number of White House insiders, including Clinton's private secretary, Secret Service agents assigned to guard the president, and Monica Lewinsky herself. In August 1998, lawyers led by Starr questioned Clinton for over five hours in the White House while a grand jury watched via a live video link.

Later that evening, Clinton publicly addressed the nation and admitted he had indeed had a relationship with Lewinsky that was "not appropriate," but asserted that statements he had made about the matter in the course of a sexual harassment suit filed by Paula Jones had been "legally accurate." Although Clinton refused to answer direct questions about intimate details of the affair, testimony by Lewinsky revealed the basis for his defense. She testified that their relationship had included oral sex, but not sexual intercourse. Moreover, because the definition of "sex" in the sexual harassment suit was formulated from an agentive perspective, it was suggested that though Lewinsky had had sex with *Clinton*, he had not had sex with *her*.

The dialogue in Siers' cartoon thus involves a blend of the two topics of Clinton's grand jury testimony: his sexual dalliance and his honesty. Clinton, of course, never actually admitted to an adulterous affair with Lewinsky, only an inappropriate relationship. He did not admit to lying, either, only to misleading those around him. In fact, both issues remain to this day, somewhat equivocal. Moreover, the ambiguity is not primarily due to an absence of knowledge about the facts, but, rather, resides in our very understanding of what constitutes a "lie." Clinton's statement that he did not have sexual relations with Lewinsky is precisely the sort of utterance that motivates the need for a prototype semantics of "lie."

Coleman and Kay (1981) note that when asked to define the word "lie," most people respond, "a false statement." However, when asked to categorize various utterances as lies, people's "lie" judgments were consistent only in cases where first, the statement was, in fact, false; second, the speaker *believed* the statement to be false; and, finally, that the speaker uttered the statement in order to deceive the listener. In cases where only some of these conditions held, for example if the speaker actually believed the statement to be true, judgements of whether a "lie" had been told were more variable. Moreover, the supposedly essential condition of being a false statement, proved the *least* important of the three conditions to people's judgments about whether particular utterances should count as lies.

Sweetser (1987) suggests that this paradox can be resolved by understanding word meaning as occurring against the background of culturally shared frames, or *cultural models*, which structure social activity. She shows how the simple definition for the word *lie*, that is the one offered by Coleman and Kay's informants, depends on the use of a simplified model of communication. In Sweetser's simplified speech act world, people speak in order to communicate potentially helpful information; their beliefs are adequately justified (and, as a result, are true); finally, people say what they believe. When the assumptions of this cultural model obtain, the definition of lie as a false statement serves to clearly delineate lies from truths. However, when people's communicative behavior does not conform to that laid out in the cultural model, the definition of "lie" does not apply.

Thus while cultural models are widely shared among culture members, they need not correspond in a realistic way to the external world. We know that people do not always say what they believe; nor do they always speak with the intention of providing helpful information. Nonetheless, the simplified speech act world is an efficient representation for reasoners to use in the definition of speech acts that *don't* fit the model. For example, the word *mistake* marks a deviation from the norm in which the speaker's beliefs turn out to be untrue. Moreover, the term *lie* does not apply in speech act contexts (such as joking and storytelling) that diverge from the informational context defined by the model.

Thus Siers' cartoon, in depicting Clinton uttering words he never actually uttered, is not a case of misrepresentation. After all, it is just a cartoon. Nonetheless, the point of the cartoon itself is that the real Clinton had made a number of statements that were deceptive, if not full-blown lies. Unfortunately for Clinton, while speakers consider deception to be less insidious than a bald lie, their listeners do not (Sweetser, 1987). Of course, in deception, the listener's own inferences render him an unwitting co-conspirator. However, in a lie, the blame falls squarely on the speaker.

4 Read My Lips

Blending Clinton's scandal with another notorious presidential untruth, Mike Ritter depicts Clinton saying, "Read my lips...." Moreover, in this cartoon published in 1998, Clinton's mouth is surrounded by lipstick markings. The statement, "Read my lips," was made famous by former U.S. President George Bush

(the father of George W. Bush, the 43rd U.S. president), who then followed by promising, “No new taxes.” When taxes were subsequently raised, the remark was heralded as an emblem of the untrustworthiness of the politician’s pledge. In the visual blend set up in the cartoon, Bush’s counterpart Clinton has assumed his role and uses his words. However, both the lipstick marks and contextual knowledge about the Lewinsky affair suggest Clinton’s remarks pertain to his own sex scandal rather than to taxes.

In fact, Ritter’s cartoon is a hyper-blend, since the expression “read my lips” is itself a blend. The appropriate time to use this idiom is when someone asks you a question, you answer, and then, not believing your answer, they ask the same question again. From the questioner’s perspective, the repeated question is meant to indicate that the respondent’s answer was not believable. From the respondent’s perspective, however, the repeated question indicates a failure of the questioner to attend to, and/or understand the initial answer. In saying, “read my lips,” the respondent suggests that the questioner cannot *hear* the answer to his own question, and therefore should resort to lip-reading. But, while the hyperbolic blend intended by the speaker emphasizes the interviewer’s deficiencies as a listener, the ultimate meaning of the expression acknowledges the real intent behind the interviewer’s repeated question: suspicion of insincerity.

The understanding of the expression as marking the speaker’s intended sincerity results from the fact that it is understood as a blend of both perspectives. The interviewer believes that the respondent’s first utterance was a lie, while the respondent believes (or pretends to believe) the interviewer did not hear or understand the first utterance. In the blend, the words “Read my lips,” get their relevance from the respondent’s perspective where the questioner simply did not hear the first response. However, they are understood as the respondent’s assurance of sincerity because the questioner’s question repetition counts as a tacit *accusation* that the respondent is not being sincere. “Read my lips,” then, involves an allusion to a somewhat unbelievable statement, a tacit accusation of insincerity, and the speaker’s attempt to allay suspicion.

The blend in the cartoon capitalizes on this by evoking the particular scenario associated with Bush in which the speaker ultimately proved to be untrustworthy. Thus one way of unpacking this blend is to set up parallel structure in the two input spaces. In the Bush space, the president says, “Read my lips: no new taxes,” and subsequently raises taxes. In the Clinton space, the president says “I never had sexual relations with that woman, Ms. Lewinsky,” and subsequently admits to a relationship with her. Moreover, the generic space includes a conception of an utterance offered in a show of sincerity, which proves to be false. The blend, too, involves an utterance offered as a show of sincerity, which proves obviously false. Unlike the input spaces, however, the blend depicted in the cartoon compresses the amount of time between the initial utterance and the proof of insincerity, evidenced by the lipstick marks on Clinton’s face.

The point of the cartoon, presumably, is that the remark in the blend is self-referentially falsifiable. Besides evoking knowledge about former-President Bush, “Read my lips,” provides the viewer with a cue to find the evidence to substantiate Clinton’s reputation as a womanizer. Thus the blend differs crucially from the inputs in this respect. The proof of Bush’s lie wasn’t on his mouth, nor was the proof of Clinton’s on his. Presumably, the cartoon-Clinton means the remark in precisely the way Bush did, as an assurance of sincerity. However, only the blend provides a context in which the untrustworthiness of such an assurance can be graphically depicted, and in such a way that it coincides temporally with the original utterance.

Many accounts of analogy and metaphor have emphasized the importance of abstract relational structure over features. In contrast, note here how seemingly incidental structure – the fact that lip-reading involves scrutinizing the speaker’s mouth, that the speaker has lipstick marks on his mouth, and the knowledge that it is at least remotely plausible that a man might have lipstick marks on his face after a sexual encounter with a woman – has been exploited in a novel way in the cartoon to reinforce a negative framing of Clinton. Besides metonymically evoking the sex scandal, the lipstick on cartoon-Clinton’s face is meant to indicate how transparent the real Clinton’s lie was. Moreover, since it’s completely implausible that someone could unknowingly have lipstick *all* over his face, the cartoon exaggerates the extent to which Clinton had been caught in a lie.

Ritter’s cartoon exemplifies some general characteristics of conceptual blending. Firstly, it presents the initial utterance, the assurance of sincerity, and the proof of the utterance’s falsity as an integrated scenario. Second, the cartoonist uses hyperbole to convey his message. Moreover, while hyperbole here is part of what makes the cartoon funny, hyperbole in and of itself does not comedy make. For example, George Bush’s original use of the hyperbolic phrase “read my lips,” was not at all funny. Perhaps one contribution to the comic appeal of this cartoon is Ritter’s clever exploitation of incidental structure to convey his message.

5 Historical Conversations

A cartoon by Chip Bok points up a contrast in Clinton's alleged behavior and that attributed to his 18th century political counterpart George Washington. On the left-hand side of the cartoon, George Washington says, "I cannot tell a lie." Addressing Washington from the right-hand side of the cartoon, Clinton says, "If everyone's on record denying it you've got *no* problem." In some ways, Bok's cartoon is similar to a blend discussed by Fauconnier and Turner (1996) in which a modern-day philosopher engages in an imagined debate with Immanuel Kant. In the Kant blend, the professor projects Kant into the modern era so that he can get the esteemed German's reactions to ideas composed after his death.

In Bok's cartoon, however, both Washington's and Clinton's lines were allegedly uttered by the parties in question. Washington's lines come straight from the historical record, while Clinton's were attributed to him by his former mistress, Gennifer Flowers. As for Washington, legend has it that when he was a boy, he chopped down a cherry tree on his father's farm. When Washington's father discovered what had happened, he went, furiously, to his family and demanded to know who had chopped down the tree. Knowing that he would likely receive a spanking for his efforts, Washington stood up and said, "I cannot tell a lie. It was I who chopped down the cherry tree."

On the other hand, Flowers attributed the remark in the right-hand panel of the cartoon to Clinton in her declaration in the Paula Jones harassment suit against him. Worried about whether people would perceive her relationship to then-Governor Clinton as contributing to her successful career in Arkansas state government, Flowers approached him to discuss whether she should admit to their adulterous affair. Flowers' declaration suggests Clinton told her to deny it, and that he said, "If everyone's on record as denying it, you've got no problem."

The composition of the two men's utterances in the blend results in the activation of a conversation frame and provides a context in which George Washington and Bill Clinton can interact. The mere juxtaposition of the two statements points up a contrast between the two presidents: Washington claimed to be incapable of dishonesty, while Bok portrays Clinton as someone all too willing to lie. Moreover, knowledge that Clinton's remark was originally addressed to Gennifer Flowers allows the reader to set up a mapping between Washington in the blend, and Flowers in the Clinton input. This makes Clinton look bad because it reinforces the idea that he's told people to lie in the past, and, further, it suggests that he would attempt to corrupt someone as upstanding as George Washington.

Moreover, it is only in the blend – where Clinton addresses Washington rather than Flowers – that Clinton's remark can evoke a misunderstanding of Washington's chestnut. While "I cannot tell a lie," was presumably intended to mean that the guilt he would experience from lying precludes him from doing so, Clinton's remark suggests a different interpretation. Rather than guilt over lying, Clinton believes Washington fears reprisal for being *caught*. By offering Washington advice on how to lie without getting caught, the cartoon Clinton presents himself as someone likely to behave (and likely to have behaved) in accordance with his own advice. Consequently, it prompts retrospective projections to Clinton's input space, framing denials of the real Clinton's misdeeds as fabricated, and further framing him as untrustworthy. Though the cartoon is probably motivated by the disanalogy between the reputation enjoyed by each of the two political counterparts for honesty, the interactive frame set up in the blend provides a context in which unique structure can arise.

6 The Cherry Tree

A cartoon by Jeff MacNelly published in 1998 in the *Chicago Tribune* also exploits Clinton's and Washington's shared political role in a double-scope blend of the cherry tree story and Clinton's statements on the Lewinsky affair. In one input we have the historical tale about George Washington; in the other, the more recent account of Clinton's sex scandal. The blend is first suggested by the title, "William Washington Clinton and the Cherry Tree," which inserts Washington's surname in the place usually filled by Clinton's own middle name "Jefferson," which also happens to be the name of a former U.S. president (Thomas Jefferson), and like Washington, a 'Founding Father'.

In the cartoon we see a toppled tree and Clinton, dressed in Colonial garb, wielding an electric chainsaw. He says, "When I denied chopping down the cherry tree I was legally accurate." The blend places Clinton in a counterfactual scenario structured both by knowledge about Bill Clinton and by the tale of George Washington and the cherry tree. The Clinton in the cartoon is not a clear-cut inhabitant of either the colonial era nor our own. His clothes and hat clearly evoke the former, but the electric chainsaw suggests the modern era. The name in the title banner, "William Washington Clinton" also suggests non-trivial fusion of George Washington and Bill Clinton.

In this blend, the beginning of the story (involving the misdeed and the accusation) comes from knowledge about George Washington, while the end (involving the denial and the nature of the denial) comes from knowledge about Bill Clinton. Moreover, by putting Clinton in for Washington, it allows us to contrast how Clinton would perform in Washington's situation. In this respect, the blend is similar to the sentence, "In France, Watergate wouldn't have harmed Nixon." initially proposed by Fauconnier (1997).

As discussed above, this analogical counterfactual requires the construction of a blended space in which an event from American history is blended with knowledge of the French political system. Similarly, the William Washington Clinton blend projects structure to its inputs so as to point up the contrast between Washington's admission of guilt and Clinton's denial. In fact, the mapping between chopping down a tree and the relationship between Clinton and Lewinsky only arises out of a larger mapping between speech acts surrounding the respective incidents. The commonality, that is, the structure in the generic space, is a story of committing a misdeed, being accused of committing a misdeed, and responding to the accusation. Though the plot involves *some* action, this blend is primarily a tale of speech acts.

Processes of conceptual blending here afford event integration so that all aspects of the scenario are brought together in one scene. Unlike our knowledge about the affair between Clinton and Lewinsky, the relationship between William Washington Clinton and the felled cherry tree is easily inferred from information present in the cartoon. Cartoon Clinton's placement in front of the fallen tree, the saw in his hand, and his indirect reference to the event all suggest his guilt. Further, the manner in which William Washington Clinton has apparently felled the tree is evident from both the chainsaw in his hand and the fact that the tree-stump is completely smooth.

While the manner of felling the tree was of little importance in the original story about George Washington, the chainsaw takes on a key role in the blend. Besides linking Clinton to the modern era, it enables the legalistic distinction that links us to the Clinton space. The contrast between *this* manner of felling the tree and chopping it down, of course, are what the phrase "legally accurate" refers to in the blend. The verbiage, though, as well as the concept it refers to, has been inherited from the topic space of modern American politics. There is no conception of a legally accurate remark in the Washington input, and, in fact, the idea of a legally accurate response to the query about the cherry tree is more than a little absurd. This absurdity in the blend gets projected back onto the Clinton input, and reinforces and extant framing of Clinton's statements about the Lewinsky affair.

7. Hedges

Clinton's phrase, "legally accurate," is a hedge, a linguistic expression that marks the meta-linguistic status of its utterance. For example, Kay (1987) suggests "loosely speaking" is a hedge which qualifies the utterance in which it appears in particular ways. It can reflect an incoherent description, as in (3), a coherent but wrong description, as in (4), the presence of an unintended presupposition, as in (5), or a combination of these factors, as in (6) (Kay, 1987).

(3) Strictly speaking, one can't really talk about "the first human beings," but loosely speaking, the first human beings lived in Kenya.

(4) Strictly speaking, we can only talk of the first human population known to science, but loosely speaking, the first human beings....

(5) Loosely speaking, in Kenya; strictly speaking, in the place now called Kenya.

(6) Loosely speaking in Kenya. Strictly speaking, we are dealing here with a complex situation involving sites mainly in Kenya, but also in Tanzania and Uganda, and with a set of fossils which may not all represent the same species...

Kay argues that *loosely speaking* appeals to a folk model of truth in which words represent objects with feature sets that either do or do not match the properties of objects in the world. Moreover, in this model, the meanings of individual words are combined systematically to refer to complex objects and scenarios in the world. When a speaker precedes her utterance with the phrase, "loosely speaking," she marks its deviance from this model. Thus specifying the meaning of *loosely speaking* requires an appeal to the speaker's cultural models of language use.

In contrast to the Fregean concept of utterances that can be *strictly speaking* true or false, *technically* appeals to a folk model of language which has been dealt with more formally by Putnam. In the cultural model underlying *technically*, the meaning of words often relies on the existence of expert knowledge (e.g. chemistry in the definition of *gold*, or botany in the definition of *elm tree*) that the individual speaker need not possess. Contrasting (7) and (8), (his 9a and 9b), Kay argues that (7) is pragmatically odd, because *varmint* is a colloquialism, and thus falls outside the domain where expert judgments are required for naming.

(7) Technically, that's a rodent.

(8) # Technically, that's a varmint.

Interestingly, (8) is fine as a joke, and seems to be a *meta-meta-linguistic* comment on the need for expert naming conventions for the creature, or perhaps the need for expert naming conventions full stop.

Cartoon Clinton's use of *legally accurate* appeals to a cultural model similar to that employed in *strictly speaking*, but bearing some similarity to the meaning model Kay associates with the hedge *technically*. In the *legally accurate* model, words and phrases represent objects and actions in the world via sets of necessary and sufficient conditions. However, the exact set of these conditions is subject to legal negotiation. For example, a New Yorker who is one-sixteenth Cherokee might call herself a Native American and be "legally accurate," while her half-brother, raised on a reservation in Oklahoma, but only one-thirty-second Cherokee, could not. Moreover, if the law that defines Native American as one-sixteenth were revised or overturned, it's quite possible that our New Yorker's claim would no longer be "legally accurate."

Like *loosely speaking* and *technically*, the acceptability of this hedge depends on the applicability of the underlying cultural model of meaning. For example, if squirrels are defined by law to be rodents (and thus subject to things like extermination), (9) would be acceptable but (10) would not.

(9) To call it a rodent would be legally accurate.

(10) # To call it a varmint would be legally accurate.

Of course, if there were no legal definition of *rodent*, (9) would also be pragmatically odd.

Because there was no legal dispute in the cherry tree legend, the blended Clinton makes an inappropriate appeal to the *legally accurate* hedge which gets projected back to the Bill Clinton input. This is somewhat curious as the *legally accurate* model is slightly more applicable in the Bill Clinton space since there was, in fact, a legal dispute. However, the blend also highlights the mappings between the incident (felling the tree with a chainsaw) and the accusation (felling the tree with an ax) and their consequences (a dead tree) and projects parallel structure to the Bill Clinton space. The point of course is that the veracity of the denial has almost no bearing on the morality of the act itself.

8 Sex, Lies, and Blending

Lewis (1989: 34) writes, "humor embodies values not by virtue of its content alone but as a consequence of what it does with its materials. To get a joke we must resolve its incongruity by retrieving or discovering an image or idea that can connect its oddly associated ideas or images." Indeed part of the appeal of humorous examples is the fun of getting the joke. The cartoon presents itself as a puzzle for the viewer to solve. The challenge it seems is to activate the appropriate information in response to the imagery and the verbal cues, and to integrate it with abstract narrative structure. Unpacking the blend and structuring the input spaces allows the viewer to solve the puzzle, and the cartoonist to make his point.

Because the cartoonist must provide the viewer with just enough information to reconstitute the input spaces, humorous examples necessarily depend on viewers having relevant knowledge and shared understandings about these domains. Knowledge of entrenched metaphoric and metonymic mappings are routinely exploited in the comprehension of political cartoons. Moreover, they recruit blending processes of completion and elaboration. Completion occurs when we activate relevant bits of world knowledge given sparse clues. For instance, the utterance "Read my lips," in Ritter's cartoon discussed in section 4, is enough to activate a schematic representation of the scenario that involves George Bush and the U.S. tax code. Elaboration is the ability to animate eclectic models built with pieces from disparate domains. In Bok's cartoon where Clinton advises Washington about the political risks of dishonesty, the interactive frame set up in the blend provides a context that allows us to directly compare two presidents from different eras. Even more spectacularly, it allows us to observe Clinton's attempts to corrupt George Washington.

Hofstadter and Gabora (1989) insightfully compare the input frames in humorous blends to the notion of figure and ground in a piece of art. Thus the elements contributed by one frame can be interpreted against the ground of the other. MacNelly, for instance, projects Bill Clinton back in time and inserts him into the legend of George Washington and the cherry tree. This seems to be a general function of blending in these examples: to project people into new contexts where the cartoonist's point can be clearly illustrated. Political cartoons are a testament to our ability to derive meaningful information from partial, non-systematic correspondences in structure, and even, to exploit accidental characteristics of the input frames.

While there does seem to be a certain entertainment value in blending for its own sake, the humorous effect of these blends goes beyond their formal properties. Rather, it involves the role that frames and cultural models play in structuring our actions, reactions, and interactions in an ever-changing world. As Freud noted, joking provides a relatively safe arena for expressing aggressive, insulting, or otherwise socially unacceptable utterances. Blending and the cognitive abilities that support it, are crucial in this

respect by enabling us to frame taboo topics in terms and domains which are not taboo. It is far more acceptable, for example, to discuss why William Washington Clinton did not chop down the cherry tree than to debate the actions of his real world counterpart.

However, even if the social implications of statements made in jokes are somewhat muted, the content of the emergent structure of humorous blends is important nonetheless. For the way that humor “embodies” values is by inviting the viewer to construct a particular framing of a current event. Because our construals of particular current events derive their social significance from the larger cultural models they evoke, framings implicitly reinforce the status of those models as interpretive resources. In the examples discussed above, the cartoons concern our cultural models of communication and seem to negotiate the import of the relationship between lying and authority.

Cultural models of the simplified speech act world underlie our actions as well as our words. They provide the context for both semantic distinctions between lies and mistakes, and moral distinctions between lies and deception. Besides framing Clinton’s linguistic behavior as ridiculous, one function of these cartoons is to demarcate the limits of the application of the folk model of meaning that underlies *legally accurate*. Indeed one aspect of the Clinton sex scandal is that his linguistic gymnastics are only possible because his behavior with Lewinsky diverged from that specified in idealized cultural scripts for intimacy. Not only did this motivate the “misleading” utterances, it problematized the use of evaluative frames.

Because we rely on cultural models for the interpretation of both words and actions, it creates social pressure for people’s behavior to conform at least somewhat, and in certain restricted circumstances, to the guidelines laid out in the cultural models. When models cannot be exploited our word meanings cease to function effectively. Moreover, Goffman (1974) suggests that when the legitimacy of a frame is challenged it can undermine its role in the structuring and interpretation of social activity. Because social reality is in some sense constituted by the use of these frames to organize experience, undermining a frame is no small matter. Thus the cartoons discussed above can be seen as part of the larger social negotiation of *which* cultural models are to be allowed to apply *when*.

9 Purple Point of Contact

Coulson & Oakley (in press) discuss an elaborate invitation to support a church group that Todd Oakley actually received via the U.S. postal service. It is a very complicated message that includes a letter, a prayer page to send with donations, a return envelope for the prayer page, and a purple sealed envelope bearing a message from Jesus Christ. The letter urges its recipient to perform a number of concrete actions in order to show her faith, and be blessed by Jesus. In particular the reader is instructed to:

1. Place the purple sealed envelope under his or her pillow
2. Sleep on this “purple point of contact just like the children of Israel did when God instructed them to do so (Numbers 15:38,39)”
3. Mail back the prayer page with a donation to the Ministry.
4. Open the purple sealed envelope to receive the “purple point of contact blessing.”

This package is a rich piece of persuasion, the success of which depends on the reader’s willingness to construct a number of blends outlined below. These include the metaphoric construal of making a donation as sowing a seed, and on how the reader is invited to construe her own actions as fulfilling the purple point of contact. Analysis points to an important role for blending in understanding commonalities between performative aspects of language and the social construction of reality. In performative language (as when a justice of the peace pronounces a couple “man and wife,” and ritual (as when Italian parents carry their child up a set of stairs to ensure his success in life), actions in one space or domain, serve to effect changes in another (Sweetser, 2000). Sweetser suggests that in *depictive* language, the content of the reality space causes the content of the representation space; in *performative* language, the representation (i.e. the speech) actually brings about a new state of reality, and thus the content of the representation space causes the content of the reality space.

In fact, Sweetser has pointed out that it is quite possible that the earliest hominid representations had a performative function, as cave drawings of buffalo may have been intended to evoke real buffalo for future consumption. Regardless, the symbolic activity in ritual is a clear-cut case of performativity as actions in rituals are often thought to have causal significance for present and future events in the real world. Considering a hunting ritual, Sweetser (2000) shows how understanding ritual involves appreciating a conceptual blend. The inputs include one mental space for the unframed concept of the activity and one mental space for the symbolic significance of the ritual. In a hunting ritual for instance we have the physical action input with a cognitive model of one man running around with a deer hide and another with a spear. The other input is a future event space with a cognitive model of a deer and a hunter. In the blend we

interpret the man with the deer hide as a deer who happens to have the visual properties of a man in a deer hide, and interpret the man with the spear as a hunter. Moreover, actions in the ritual space are understood to cause events in the future.

However, performativity only occurs when the scenario fulfills particular sociocultural conditions that license conceptual integration. For example, the metaphoric significance of the act of carrying the child up the stairs is confined to the execution of the ritual. Though entrenched connections between vertical ascent and success are always available, the everyday act of taking the child upstairs to bed is *not* construed as contributing to the child's success in life. The import of the action in the course of the ritual thus stems from its status as an entrenched blend in which the action and the metaphor have been integrated such that the physical actions are construed as *causing* metaphoric effects. In the case of, "I now pronounce you man and wife," the utterance is fully integrated with the marriage frame only when it is uttered by an individual with the proper social authority (a judge, a minister, a priest, etc.), preceded by the appropriate sequence of utterances, and, perhaps, followed by a kiss.

Similarly, in the purple point of contact letter, the solicitation succeeds only if the reader believes that her actions of putting the purple envelope under her pillow and mailing in the donation will result in a blessing. In the case of marriage, the integration is licensed (largely) by the social authority of the speaker. In the present case, the integration is licensed by the authority of God, and the extent to which the St. Matthew's Church Ministry is construed as acting with the authority of God. Consequently, much of the text of the letter is aimed at establishing the religious legitimacy of the Ministry, framing the act of donation as an act of faith, and constructing a blend in which the act of donation (and fulfilling the other instructions contained in the letter) can be conceived of as causally connected to the receipt of the blessing.

9.1 Let's have church here in your home

A number of aspects of the letter seem to be aimed at promoting the religious authority of St. Matthew's Church Ministry, and the construal of reading the letter and following its instructions as religious acts. For example, the fact that the organization ("St. Matthew's Church Ministry") contains the words "church," "ministry," and the name of a New Testament saint, all suggest a legitimate connection to Christianity. The letter is peppered with quotations from the Bible and accompanying citations of chapter and verse. Moreover, on the first page of the letter we find the following invocation:

Our dearly beloved in Christ, turn to page two and let's have church here in your home.

The reader is thus invited to integrate her activity of reading the letter with her conception of attending church. Normally reading a letter (particularly a solicitation from an unknown organization) is construed as a secular, and, often private, activity. Moreover, attending church involves leaving one's home to go to a place of worship with others in a public space. Aspects of each input domain are selectively projected into the blend, so that reading the letter is construed as a religious activity, and the church service is construed as occurring in the home. The letter-church blend is helped along by strategic modes of address (e.g., "our dearly beloved in Christ,") that one might expect to hear at a religious ceremony.

In this blend, the minister does not speak to the congregation from the pulpit. Rather, the Ministry communicates with the reader via the letter. Constructing the blend thus involves establishing cross-space mappings between the Minister in a church and the writers of the letter (viz. the St. Matthew's Church Ministry), and between the members of a congregation and the reader of the letter. In turn, completion from background knowledge about church yields inferences about the relationship between the reader and the writers of the letter. In particular, the letter writers in the blend are construed as possessing a Minister's knowledge and wisdom, as well as his moral authority over his congregants.

9.2 Testimony

One of the interesting facets of this communication is the extent to which it functions generically as a blend between an epistle and a chain letter, where the reader is entreated to send some small amount of money to various people on a list with the expectation that it will lead to exponential returns when subsequent recipients send money to the reader. In the purple point of contact letter, we learn almost from the outset that the blessing God will give us for fulfilling the instructions in the letter has a distinct financial component. The letter starts with the following testimony from a woman named Priscilla:

I was a sinner and drank real heavy and had a lot on my mind. I remember some of the scriptures that you had written to me and ...I felt God speaking to my heart saying, "My daughter, your sins are forgiven." I felt so good inside, for I knew God had saved my [soul]. Rev., I haven't drank another drop from

that day. I wrote you a letter and joined the Gold Book [Seed Harvest Prosperity] Plan, and it seemed like heaven just opened up my life. I didn't have transportation, but now since I have been a member of the ...Plan God has really been blessing [me]. I have a new Ford and Cadillac. Not only that, but I have never been broke.

Note that the persuasive character of this testimony depends crucially on the congruity of the reader's worldview and that advocated by the St. Matthew's Church Ministry. For example, the writer presumes that the biblical faith is a part, or, at least, a potential part of the reader's construal of reality. In other words, the writer presumes that the reader believes in God, as well as in the divinity of Jesus. Rhetoricians have argued that all arguments ultimately rest on shared facts, beliefs, presumptions, and values, which they call *objects of agreement* (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969). If the reader does not share the presumption of religious faith, and appreciate the value of the proposed blessing, persuasion will simply not occur.

Given these objects of agreement, Priscilla's testimony is aimed at promoting a conception of God as an entity willing to grant monetary favors. Moreover, readers are invited to map sister Priscilla's speedy transformation from a poor sinner to a prosperous disciple onto our won casee – provided, of course, that we are willing to see ourselves as downtrodden sinners. In Perlmanian terms, this is also an object of agreement, as we will not do what the letter bids unless we see ourselves as sinners who might potentially benefit from the blessing.

The inputs to the blend involve one set of spaces to represent the scenario described by Priscilla, first, a troubled past, second, joining the plan, and finally, the resolution of her problems; and, another set of spaces to represent the reader's own troubled present, and desired future. The blend inherits its causal structure from the Priscilla domain, and its elements from the reader's domain. Thus the reader imagines herself joining the plan, and construes this act as causally mediating a transformation from her own troubled present to her own desired future.

9.3 Sowing the seed of \$5, \$10, or \$20

The letter repeatedly appeals to a metaphoric construal of making a monetary donation as sowing a seed. For example, towards the end of the letter proper, that is, the part of the letter addressed to the reader (rather than the part of the letter addressed directly to the Lord), we read:

We believe you are going to sow a seed so **God can bless you with a harvest**. God said, "Give and it shall be given unto you..." Luke 6:38. We pray that you will sow \$5.00, \$10.00, \$20.00 or more. Let God lead you. Our prayer is that, by faith, what you sow will start being returned to you before the seventh day of next month, as **God sees** fit. He knows best how and when to let it begin. Let us pray over this last page and purple sealed word. Let us bow our heads in prayer – shall we? [all emphasis in original]

Broadly, sowing the seed maps onto sending a donation, and the harvest maps onto the money that the sender receives in return. Mappings in the network are set up by a conventional metaphoric connection between agriculture and investment, which maps the metamorphosis of a seed into crops for harvest onto the difference between the initial investment and its return. The inputs of the seed-sowin blend thus include one space we might call the Agriculture space, and another we might call the Material space. The mapping between the seed and the money is cued explicitly by the statement, "We pray that you will sow \$5.00, \$10.00...." Grammatical prompts also signal the mapping between the harvest and the monetary returns, in "Our prayer is that, by faith, what you sow will start being returned to you..." Since the letter reader will presumably sow money, she can expect money to be returned to her.

However, the structure in the blend differs from conventional conceptions of agriculture in several ways, especially in its recruitment of structure from a third input which we might dub the Spiritual space. For example, on the prayer page which the reader sends in with her donation is written "I am sowing," [followed by a list of potential dollar amounts], "as my seed unto the Lord, in faith." Thus unlike real seeds, the seed of \$5 is not planted in the earth; and, unlike a conventional investment, it has not been used for its purchasing power. Further, unlike most agricultural endeavors, the relationship between the initial sowing of the seed and the final harvest is not mediated by farming activity. Incontrast to default knowledge about managing investments, the transformation from seed to harvest here occurs "by faith."

Because it is a seed of faith, the coming harvest depends on receiving a blessing from the Lord. Moreover, receiving the blessing depends in turn on following the instructions to achieve the purple point of

contact: mailing in the donation, sleeping on the purple envelope, and opening the purple envelope after sunset the following day.

9.4 The purple envelope, please

Inside the envelope is an image of Jesus from religious art, His hand raised in a generic blessing gesture. At the top of the picture is a quote from the New Testament, "...If two of you shall agree...it shall be done..." Matthew 18:19. At the bottom of the picture, the caption reads, "Jesus, my letter is in the mail on its way to the people of God who will pray over it for me." But perhaps the most striking, is that the text is divided by a line drawing of a woman's hand, holding a letter up towards Jesus – as if for Him to bless it.

The image prompts the reader to unpack the blend (i.e., reconstitutes the roles, relations, and inferences in each input space), mapping the picture of Jesus onto the savior, the unidentified hand maps onto the reader, and the envelope maps onto the one the reader presumably mailed to the St. Matthews Church Ministry. Importantly, in the picture, although the reader holds the envelope in her hand, the stamp on the envelope has already been cancelled. This suggests it is no longer in the reader's actual possession, but is being processed by the postal system. Thus in one input (derived from the original piece of religious art), Jesus issues a generic blessing with no specific target. In the other input, metonymically evoked by the envelope with the cancelled stamp, the reader sends in her prayer page with donation.

The information represented in the two input spaces constitute two separate events, which need not be construed as integrated. People mail letters every day and rarely consider the spiritual implications of their acts. Similarly, Jesus can be construed as blessing any number of objects and actions in the world, with no preference given to the transactions of the U.S. postal system. However, given the background knowledge set up by excerpts such as "**Lord, keep Your eyes upon this very envelope until...** it is returned back to this little 47 year old church ministry. Lord, **bless this dear one** as they open this purple Sealed Word **after sunset** and **after they have mailed their prayer page back to us** [emphasis original]," the visual image prompts the reader to construe the disparate input spaces as a unified event structure. Jesus blesses the prayer page as it passes through the postal system, and blesses its sender as she opens the sealed purple envelope.

With this image, the writer employs what Aristotle refers to as *energia* or bringing-before-the-eyes, in which the reader witnesses in the present all that is supposed to have occurred up until that point (Aristotle, 1994). In blending theory, this phenomenon is called *compression*. Compression is a tendency in blends for objects from related spaces to occur together. For example, a cause often occurs with its effect, the same person can be viewed in different stages of his life, or an object from the present can be viewed with an analogous object from the past.

The phenomenon of compression is evident in many of the examples discussed above. For example, the cartoon that depicts Michael Jordan the legend playing basketball with his contemporary (aged) self compresses two different time periods into the same space so that Michael Jordan can play basketball with himself. The Ashcroft's cartoon discusses a long, complicated series of events in the political realm into what Fauconnier & Turner (2002) might refer to as a human-scale event, a sale at a department store. Similarly, in the Afghanistan turkey carving cartoon, a long series of political negotiations are compressed into a human scale event -- a dinner. In addition, we have a compression Fauconnier & Turner (2002) refer to as many-to-one in which a single Afghani individual at the dinner table stands for a whole group of people, such as the Uzbek tribe. In the hunting ritual, there is compression of cause and effect where the ritual is simultaneously a performative representation of the cause and a depictive representation of the effect. Finally, in the purple point of contact letter we have a compression of past and present action (the past mailing of the letter and the present divine blessing that is presumed to occur).

The ritual associated with the purple point of contact letter involves a blend with at least three input domains as outlined in the following table.

Material	Spiritual	Agriculture
Reading Letter	Attending Church	
Mail Prayer Page w/donation	Make Offering	Sow Seed
Sleep on Purple Envelope	Commit Act of Faith	Cultivate Seed
Receive Money	Receive Blessing	Reap Harvest

Further, while the letter clearly establishes the mappings between sending the money, sowing a seed, and making an offering to God, establishing the blend goes further. Without the blend (or, at least without some sort of a blend), there is no way that anyone would believe that sending off \$5, \$10, or \$20 could ever result in a new car. Similarly, the reader will not carry around the purple envelope or sleep on it unless she or he

believes the action will have the spiritual and/or the monetary results implied in the blend. To reiterate, anyone who performs the actions described in the letter will do so, because they have adopted the blend where mailing \$5 *is* sowing a faith seed, sleeping on the envelope *is* an act of faith, and that the ultimate result of these actions will be a monetary blessing from God. In fact, the difference between someone who does and someone who does not carry out the instructions has little to do with the mappings (presumably anyone can figure out what one is supposed to do and why), and everything to do with *integrating* the structure in the blended space.

10 All over again

Coulson & Oakley (2000) discuss a rhetorical example whose persuasive power derives from the conceptual integration of information presented visually in a television commercial with information presented in the voice-over. The analysis concerns a television advertisement sponsored by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People that ran during the 2000 presidential campaign in the United States (a race between George Bush and Al Gore). The advertisement showed a truck dragging a chain with a voiceover that read, "I'm Renee Mullins, James Byrd's daughter. On June 7, 1998 in Texas, my father was killed. He was beaten, chained, then dragged three miles to his death all because he was black. When Governor George W. Bush refused to support hate crimes legislation, it was like my father was killed all over again." At the time it created quite a controversy. The question is why? Coulson & Oakley argue that the rhetorical force of this advertisement depends crucially on conceptual blending.

Ostensively, the speaker in this quote sets up a parallel between two upsetting events in her life, one the murder of her father and the other Bush's refusal to support certain hate crimes legislation. The turning point in this text is the statement, "When George W. Bush refused to support hate crimes legislation, it was like my father's death happened all over again." With this statement, two spaces are evoked, one with Byrd's murder and one with Bush's political inaction. Moreover, the language prompts us to set up an imaginary scenario in which two events are causally related to one another.

As diagrammed in figure 2, the listener sets up one array of mental spaces to represent the historical events, and a parallel array in which Bush's political action causes a recreation of Byrd's murder. Construed rationally, this is completely implausible. There are, nonetheless, frames that the listener can draw on to make the scenario more coherent, such as the notion that perhaps hate crimes legislation prevents hate crimes so that not signing the legislation would lead to an increased number of such crimes. However, what makes the ad offensive is that viewers are invited to make a mapping that is not cued linguistically between Bush and the murderer of James Byrd.

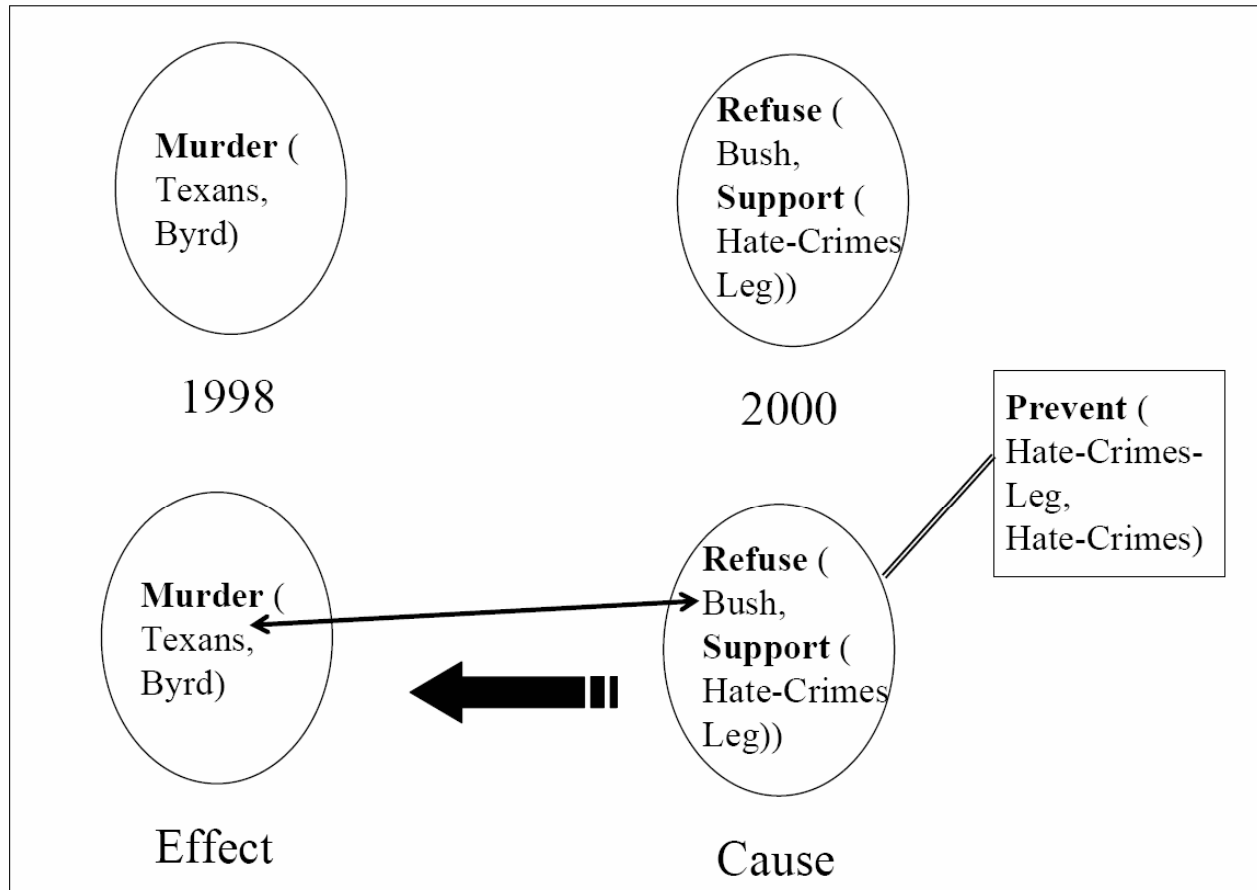


Figure 2

Although the speaker does not say that Bush murdered James Byrd (or anyone else for that matter), her description of her father's murder followed by her reaction to Bush's legislative action is indeed conducive to that construal. As noted above, mentioning that she felt like her father's death happened *again* prompts the viewer to create a construal in which the murder and the political events are related to one another. Moreover, Byrd's description of her father's murder almost exclusively employs the passive voice, thus downplaying the identity of the murderers. In contrast, Byrd's description of Bush's political action employs the active voice. Presumably, it is because of Bush's agentive role in the political frame that makes it quite natural to map him into the driver's seat of the truck in the blend.

Conclusion

Deliberative rhetoric is the primary means of getting human beings to think and act according to the expectations of others without recourse to violent coercion. Deliberation recruits elaboration as blends animate mappings in a way that makes them compelling. Because persuasion depends crucially on objects of agreement, rhetorical blends are aimed at promoting the perception of this agreement. Moreover, the binding force of blends that motivate action thus depends as much on the ontology supported by our cultural values and practices as on the structural correspondences between the representations in the different domains. For example, the success of rhetorical efforts to reify a blend like sowing a faith seed will depend in a complex way on the character of their appeal to social roles and previously established cultural practices. While conceptual integration does indeed account for the mental operations needed to incite action, it is clear that the roots of action extend beyond the individual's nervous system as conceptual blends are intimately intertwined with human doings.

We have seen that humorous examples, especially in political cartoons, often have a serious rhetorical agenda. Did Clinton lie or merely deceive? Was the “legally accurate” remark a cover-up or a hedge? Indeed cartoons such as those described above often play on frames that share abstract structure but differ in the social and/or emotional responses they elicit. By projecting prominent personalities into new contexts, cartoonists can show us the ridiculous side of a serious situation, or, (as in many of the examples discussed above), the serious side of the ridiculous. Cartoons promote particular construals of events and personalities, they reinforce the availability of cultural models, and perhaps even police their use. Moreover, in exploiting the fortuitous structure that arises in blended spaces, humorous examples allow us to test the flexibility of our conceptual system, navigate the space of possible construals, and explore the radically different social and emotional consequences they can trigger.

Persuasion often occurs when one integrates an ambiguous scenario with a morally or culturally compelling frame. This paper has argued that persuasive rhetoric depends on a number of cognitive abilities. For example, political cartoons recruit the viewer’s ability to exploit identity as well as analogy mappings in the interpretation of a blended scenario. Persuasive rhetoric also recruits the blending processes of composition, completion, and elaboration. It uses compression to make the political personal. Finally, it depends on pre-existing beliefs, values, and practices.

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