

From the moment when the New World first captured the European imagination, artists sought to personify the strange, portentous, new culture which came to be known as "America." Their efforts are well documented in the graphic and decorative arts. These arts reflect five stages in the evolution of the allegorical figure used to represent "America" and that part of America which became the United States. (First paragraph of the article.)


Literary analysis takes many forms, depending on the critical approach adopted. Critical theories vary in the ways they accommodate the three components of literature—the writer, the reader, and the text. At one extreme are those theories that focus almost exclusively on the text itself, such as formalist or structuralist approaches; at the other, those that focus on the writer (biographical, psychoanalytical) or the reader (reader response); and then there are approaches that fall somewhere between, adopting elements of more than one component (historical, cultural). Each approach has its strengths and weaknesses in illuminating the nature and role of literature in a given society.

A cognitive linguistic approach to literature provides a methodology by which the insights of these literary theories may be reconciled. Because cognitive linguistics is concerned with the conceptual workings of the embodied mind, all aspects of human experience and behavior, whether from the perspective of the writer, from the perspective of the reader, or from the perspective of the text itself, are relevant and are integrated into a cognitive understanding of the literary experience. In addition, cognitive linguistics further contributes to literary studies by revealing the extent to which the imaginative powers that both create and comprehend literary works reflect the general workings of the human mind. (First two paragraphs of the article.)


Despite our traditional view of the body and mind as divided, one figurative way for representing the two in our thought and in our language is the unified method of metaphor. For example, because we have easier access to bodies than to minds, our everyday notion of body language means we "map" from the body to the mind to interpret the behavior of others. As Simon Baron-Cohen has argued,
this normal psychological mapping provides us with a "theory of mind" that some autistic children appear to lack for successful social cognition. We may not be fully aware of such mappings, but they conceptually link the body to the mind, making the body indexical of the mind in a way that closely integrates them and nearly negates dualism. Apart from these non-verbal mappings, mappings from the body to the mind in language, according to Eve Sweetser, motivate how physical verbs like grasp take on mental meanings like "know" during a language's evolution. As we would imagine, these connections between mind and body, between the mental and physical, also appear in literature, particularly in bodily descriptions, the language of emotions, and the use of mind or body metaphors. W. H. Auden is one case in point since he was forever writing about the mind and the body in his poems. Usually, Auden depicts body and mind in general via metaphor and personification in particular. What makes Auden's mind and body personifications strange, however, is that they are unlike the imaginary abstractions we often associate with personification. (Introductory paragraph of the article.)


THE CLASSIC TEXT, highly instrumental in sparking cognitive linguistics, cognitive poetics/rhetoric, and the multidisciplinary interest in metaphors and other tropes. Here is a review by Peter Norvig, UC Berkeley (http://norvig.com mwlb.html):

Wayne Booth [Booth] has written that, judging from the recent jump in interest in metaphor, if we extrapolate to the year 2039, there will be more students of metaphor than people. Linguists, philosophers, and psychologists have been quick to jump on the metaphorical bandwagon, but so far AI researchers have not. Lakoff and Johnson's "Metaphors We Live By" (henceforth "MWLB") is an important contribution to the study of metaphor that presents a number of controversial points. Investigating these points provides a good backdrop for presenting the state-of-the-art of metaphor in AI work.

First of all, "Metaphors We Live By" is an accessible and thought-provoking source of examples demonstrating the range of metaphor in everyday language and thought. This is not a technical book; it is aimed at a general audience. There is very little terminology, nary a greek letter, and no lists of `starred' ungrammatical sentences. Instead, the arguments are stated simply, and are illustrated by examples which are usually phrases one has heard, or at least could imagine someone actually saying.

The examples show that metaphor is not just a rhetorical device of poets. It is metaphor to speak of arguments in terms of battles, as in "I demolished his
argument" or "his claims are indefensible." It is metaphor to use spatial prepositions to describe non-spatial relationships, as with "Harry is in love" or "Harry is in the Elks" or "Harry is in trouble." It is metaphor to personify, as when we say "Cancer finally caught up with him."

After demonstrating the pervasiveness of metaphor, the second contribution of Lakoff and Johnson is in showing a small number of highly productive metaphor schemata that underly much of language understanding. As an example, one particularly pervasive and productive metaphor is Michael Reddy's conduit metaphor, which underlies the understanding of communication. The conduit metaphor has three constituent metaphors: IDEAS ARE OBJECTS, LINGUISTIC EXPRESSIONS ARE CONTAINERS, and COMMUNICATING IS SENDING. The metaphor is expressed in phrases like "it's hard to get that idea across," "it's difficult to put my ideas into words," or "his words carry little meaning." Another example of a systematic metaphor schema is MORE IS UP, which leads to expressions like "the deficit is soaring" or "his income fell." Such schemata are motivated, but not predicted. It is easy to see why MORE IS UP is a better metaphor than MORE IS DOWN, but one still has to learn which of the many reasonable metaphors are actually used within a culture. Once the metaphor schema is learned, it is easy to generate new instances of it. Lakoff and Johnson present about fifty basic metaphor schemata, with many examples of each.

To Lakoff and Johnson, metaphors are not just matters of language, but are used extensively in reasoning and understanding. Typically, an abstract domain is understood metaphorically in terms of a more concrete domain. To a large degree, they argue, the human conceptual system is metaphorical. This is very different from the classical model of metaphor, which claims that metaphors are artifacts of language use, and have nothing to do with meaning or understanding. It is also very different from most AI models of knowledge representation and language understanding.

The classical theory of metaphor also says that metaphors arise from objective similarity. Thus, we can speak of `digesting an idea' because the mental action of attending to the expression of an idea, reasoning about it, and coming to understand it is objectively similar to the physical action of ingesting food, breaking it into nutrients, and absorbing them into the system. Lakoff and Johnson argue against the idea of a priori objective similarity. They claim metaphors do not just point out similarities that are objectively true; they create the similarities. The notion of digesting an idea is coherent only within the context of other metaphors, such as IDEAS ARE OBJECTS and THE MIND IS A CONTAINER. These basic metaphors both create similarities of their own and allow for the creation of further similarities in the IDEAS ARE FOOD metaphor. The second half of MWLB is not really about metaphors at all; it is a comparison of the traditional objectivist theory of semantics with a new view they call the experientialist theory of meaning.
AI Models of Metaphors

While little has actually been done with metaphor in existing AI systems, it has been recognized as a problem. Wilks [Wilks] calls metaphor ``central to our language capabilities,'' Hobbs [Hobbs] states ``metaphor is pervasive in everyday discourse,'' Carbonell [Carbonell] agrees that metaphors ``pervade commonly spoken English,'' and Rumelhart [Rumelhart] says ``metaphor is natural and widespread in our speech.''

There is some existing AI work on metaphor which could be greatly improved by an understanding of MWLB. For example, Winston's [Winston] Tranfer Frame system is primarily intended as a model of analogical reasoning, but Winston has used it to try to understand metaphors. The system interprets sentences such as ``Robbie is like a fox'' to mean `Robbie is clever.' It does this by adhering to the strict objectivist position that foxes really are clever (and have almost no other characteristics). There is no provision for metaphors that create similarities, only an algorithm for finding pre-defined similarities, which consists solely of counting the common features and relations. A casual glance at the range of examples in MWLB shows that Winston's approach could never be extended to cover the full range of metaphorical usage.

A more interesting approach is that taken by Hobbs and by Rumelhart. They both argue that metaphor interpretation is not only basic to language understanding, it should be indistinguishable from literal language interpretation. This challenges the traditional view of semantics, in which meaning is derived by a simple composition of the meanings of the individual lexemes in the sentence. This literal meaning may differ from the conveyed meaning according to certain rules, such as Gricean maxims. Metaphor interpretation is treated as a secondary process that follows literal interpretation, in this view. Hobbs notes that an expression can pass from a novel metaphor to a frozen idiom to a tired cliche, but at each stage the interpretation process is much the same. Thus, he argues there is no sense having separate mechanisms for `literal' and `metaphorical' interpretations. Rumelhart considers the interpretation of sentences like ``The policeman raised his hand and stopped the car.'' This uses no metaphors, but it requires a complex interpretation process that must identify knowledge structures having to do with traffic cops, drivers, brakes, and cars. This interpretation goes well beyond a simple composition of the literal meanings present in the words, and is similar to the type of interpretation that is done in processing metaphors.

Jaime Carbonell has been the most accepting of Lakoff and Johnson's ideas of anyone in AI. He has been the only one to suggest that the existence of a small number of powerful metaphors means that a good strategy for a language understander would be to try to classify inputs as instances of one metaphor or another, rather than trying to interpret them on general principles. Carbonell presents the start of a process model for language comprehension [Carbonell], but unfortunately
he retreats from Rumelhart and Hobbs’ position and calls for a two-step process that does literal interpretation first, and metaphorical interpretation only if that fails. Carbonell’s suggestion has not yet been implemented.

It is an open question whether the experientialist model of semantics is a good one for AI work. On the one hand, the model is grounded in bodily experiences. The metaphor schema HAPPY IS UP, according to Lakoff & Johnson, is motivated by the fact that people have more erect postures when happy. Other metaphors are based on similar perceptions, none of which can be handled directly with current AI technology. On the other hand, the model stresses a knowledge-rich approach, where much of the burden of understanding is handled by known metaphor schemata. This ‘strong method’ approach seems more in line with current AI research, and more promising than the ‘weak method’ of metaphor understanding based on general principles of similarity.

A weakness of MWLB in terms of AI is that they have no developed process model of understanding, and no theory that relates metaphor comprehension to other comprehension tasks. The AI researcher who is looking for a theory he can immediately implement will be disappointed. The book is useful for its examples and for its questions about the nature of truth and reality, but not for a complete set of answers to these questions. For example, MWLB will tell you that, given AN ARGUMENT IS A CONTAINER and that a container has a deepest part, one can conclude that an argument has a deepest part. We are not told why, given that AN ARGUMENT IS A CONTAINER, a container is a physical object, and a physical object has a color, it is not the case that an argument has a color.

Another problem with MWLB stems from one of its strengths: its non-technical approach makes it widely accessible, but also means that much detail is left out. For those who are skeptical of the approach, the remaining detail may be unconvincing. Similarly, those who are excited by the approach will wish for more references, an index, more formal arguments, and more detailed explication of fine points.


Promotional blurbs from the publishers website:

"The authors restore metaphor to our lives by showing us that it’s never gone away. We’ve merely been taught to talk as if it had: as though weather maps were more 'real' than the breath of autumn; as though, for that matter, Reason was really 'cool.' What we’re saying whenever we say is a theme this book illumines for anyone attentive." — Hugh Kenner, Johns Hopkins University

"In this bold and powerful book, Lakoff and Turner continue their use of metaphor to show how our minds get hold of the world. They have achieved nothing less
than a postmodern Understanding Poetry, a new way of reading and teaching that makes poetry again important." — Norman Holland, University of Florida

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More on Traditional Views


Literary personification has long been taken for granted as an important aspect of Western narrative; Paul de Man had given it prominence as "the master trope of poetic discourse." James Paxson here offers a critical and theoretical appraisal of personification in the light of developments in poststructuralist thought. He reassesses early theories and examines the allegorical texts of Prudentius, Chaucer, Langland and Spenser to show how personification works as a complex artistic tool for revealing and advertising the problems and limits inherent in poetic or verbal creation.


While mythological characters of ancient history and legend glorify the medieval prince, the female Figures of Classical personification allegory carry the weight of moral exhortation and political advice in medieval political discourse. The Tournament of Vices and Virtues staged by Chaillou de Pesstain in the expanded version of the Roman de Fauvel in Paris, Bibliothique Nationale MS fr. 146 (ca. 1317) is a showy political admonitio addressed to Philip V. Music, miniatures, and text are manipulated within the spatial values of a dynamic nine-folio page layout to represent a moral and political spectacle within a well-delineated framework of space and time. Details of jousting protocol and armor appealed to contemporary taste for chivalric feats while the armed female Virtues and Vices recall other representations of women knights. Inversion of gender roles, moreover, takes on moral meaning in the context of the Fauvel, where hybrid forms symbolize the opposition of right and wrong. Represented
as despicable Figures in other sections of the Paris fr. 146 Fauvel through stock images of moral discourse, the Vices are recast in the tournament as impressive chivalric warriors to convey political counsel. Historical reference is suggested by selection of specific vices and contextualization of the Tournament of Vices and Virtues in Paris and in 1316; it is confirmed by compilation in Paris fr. 146 of the Fauvel with topical poems by Geoffroi de Paris and an anonymous metrical chronicle for the years 1300-1316. Personification allegory thus joins historical circumstance to moral generalization to display the legitimate foundations of political power.


If a zone of convergence is emerging between literary studies and the cognitive sciences, then a fundamentally new understanding of figurative language marks its epicenter.1 The study of rhetorical figures, especially metaphor, became a key research area for cognitive linguists, computer scientists, and cognitive psychologists soon after the cognitive revolution began in earnest.2 Their interest was inspired in no small part by the notable failures of early artificial intelligence programs to handle figurative utterances that human speakers readily took in stride. One early text-processing program (called FRUMP), fed a news article beginning "The death of the Pope shook the world," issued the following summary: "There was an earthquake in Italy. One person died" (Abelson 39). Why was it so unlikely, almost unimaginable, for any native speaker to make such an error? What did the effortless and automatic interpretation of rhetorical figures say about the architecture of human cognition and the widespread, perhaps universal properties of natural languages? Once consigned largely to rhetoric, itself increasingly seen as a minor subdiscipline of literary scholarship, the study of figurative language suddenly became a topic of great moment for cognitive science. (Introductory paragraph of the article.)


Allegory is a Mount Everest for critics. It drives some to renounce theory and descend to particulars, while inspiring others to new heights. Northrop Frye's work on allegory "obstinately adhered to a much larger theoretical structure" (vii), and so became Anatomy of Criticism. Allegory was the paradigmatic figure for the semiological theory of rhetoric Paul de Man envisioned for deconstruction. I suggest we can assess aspiring frameworks by how they meet the challenge of allegory, and that cognitive rhetoric fares better than most.
Mark Turner calls Death is the Mother of Beauty a "modern rhetoric which makes use of insights from contemporary cognitive science and linguistics" to analyze the whole mind of the audience—"conceptual systems, social practices, commonplace knowledge, discourse genres, and every aspect of a common language, including syntax, semantics, morphology, and phonology" (3-4). Like Frye and de Man, he seeks to extend new discoveries about language, and trace out far-reaching ramifications for the understanding of the mind. Allegory has been a shaping force in the growth of blending theory, too. A typical allegorical scene runs against the expectations of the conceptual theory of metaphor that was Turner's springboard in two related ways: abstract sources structure concrete targets, and many source-domains structure single scenes. (First two paragraphs of the article.)


Francesco Sansovino, in his Venetia Cittdnobilissima . . . of 1581, gives the following description of Paolo Veronese's 'Allegory of the Battle of Lepanto' in the Sala del Collegio in the Doge's Palace, Venice: "In faccia del qual soffitto (of the Collegio) a puto al di sopra al Trono, vi efigurata per Venetia una bellissima Regina coronata, la qual corona col corno Ducale, Sebastiano Veniero, che l'e dinanzi in ginocchioni vestito di bianco ..." In other words, he describes Venier's coronation by Venice personified as a queen. The painting as we see it today (Pl. 64a) In the Sala del Collegio, however, represents Sebastiano Venier, commander of the Venetian ships which formed part of the fleet of the Holy League in the great victory over the Turks at Lepanto in 1571, kneeling before Saint Justine, accompanied by Fides and Saint Mark while the figure of Venice holding the cor~ ducale is only seen in the background. (First paragraph of the article.)


The Greeks began interpreting their national epics allegorically at an early date.' In the face of the intellectual assault upon Homer and the other poets which was launched by Xenophanes, Pythagoras, Heraclitus of Ephesus, and their comppeers during the sixth century, certain Greeks, regarding the Iliad and Odyssey as almost sacred books and desiring to vindicate their author from the charges of immorality which were being lodged against him by the philosophers, had recourse to various types of allegorical interpretation of his works. Theagenes of Rhegium, for example, attempted to explain the battle of the gods in Iliad 20 as a veiled presentation of certain physical and ethical truths; Anaxagoras regarded the poems of Homer as handbooks of morality; and Metrodorus of Lampasacus, his pupil, interpreted them as texts in physiology and natural philosophy. According to Metrodorus, Demeter personified the liver, Apollo the gall, Dionysus the spleen; Helen was the air, Agamemnon the earth, Hector the moon, and Achilles the sun. Other philosophers, such as Diogenes of
Apollonia and Democritus, attempted to justify Homer's ancient reputation for sophia by sundry other systems of symbolic interpretation. Now all these early allegorists have this, at least, in common: to a man, they view the Iliad and Odyssey as works which convey a other than and in addition to the literal, a meaning which, we need hardly add, was surely not present to the poet's mind when he wrote his epics. They have, in fact, "imposed" allegory upon Homer, just as certain mediaeval theologians--e.g. Bernard of Clairvaux--, out of their affection for the Scriptures, imposed allegory upon the Song of Solomon. But how did the notion of allegorical interpretation occur to Theagenes and his successors? Very likely it was suggested to them by the fact that the Iliad and the Odyssey, like Hesiod's Theogony and Works and Days, undoubtedly contain not a few genuine allegories, not imposed, not merely excogitated by the poet's over-zealous defenders, but intended by him and actually implicit in his own words. It is with the interpretation and evaluation of some of these genuine allegories that the present paper is concerned. (First two paragraphs of article.)

Editors of Horace have amused themselves by speculating why the lady to whom this ode is addressed bears the name of Leuconoe. (It is assumed that the name is not the real name of a real person.) ... as if such a poem was addressed in English to 'Miss Wan-wit' or 'Miss Blankwit.

"Having lately received Information that an Elegant Building is now erecting for the Philadelphia Library, an Idea immediately struck me, that if it would not be thought presumptuous, I should esteem myself very happy to have the honor of presenting a Painting to the Company that would be applicable to so noble, and useful an Institution .... 1 With these respectfu l words Samuel Jennings, a Philadelphia painter residing in London at the close of the eighteenth century, began a correspondence which eventually brought to the Library Company in his native city an allegory he had painted in its honor. Some years ago I published a brief account of this picture (Fig. 1), which seems to have been the first antislavery painting by an American artist.2 Subsequently, the late Arthur J. Sussel of Philadelphia acquired a smaller version of the allegory, and this in turn was purchased for Winterthur at an auction sale held after Mr. Sussel's death in 1958 3 (Fig. 2). The two versions of the subject, which is entitled Liberty Displaying the Arts and Sciences, are almost identical, the only difference being the introduction in the small one of a British shield among the symbolic objects surrounding the figure of Liberty. (First paragraph-and-a-bit of the article.)

This interesting and substantial book might be described as a scholarly excursion to a
critical discussion. That discussion, from which it starts and to which it returns,
involves the characterization of certain Shakespearean villains, with particular
reference to Iago. The excursion follows the slippery course of the Vice through
the range of pre-Shakespearean drama, surveying ground already familiar to
students with a freshly sharpened awareness of continuities. Thus Professor
Spivack is able to offer an historical answer to the psychological question posed
when Coleridge spoke of 'motiveless malignity'. The underlying assumption is
that 'the family of Iago', which comprises Aaron the Moor, Richard III, and Don
John, differs categorically from Shakespeare's 'intelligible criminals'. Whereas
the latter seem to be plausibly motivated, the former delight in mischief for its
own sake, have the habit of didactic commentary, and tend toward
demonstration rather than participation in their relationships with other
characters. These traits, it is argued, are survivals from the tradition of the
morality, where the basic plot was a psychomachia and the instigator was evil
personified. What seems unintelligible or implausible in Shakespeare need not
be psychologized or rationalized; it may well be traced back to embedded
convention or intractable material; and Mr. Spivack is merely acknowledging the
debt of our generation when, at an early stage of his own inquiry, he cites with
approval the work of Schlicking and Stoll. (from a review by Harry Levin

Contents: Iago -- The family of Iago -- The psychomachia -- The morality play --
Emergence of the vice -- Moral metaphor and dramatic image -- Change and
decline in the morality convention -- The hybrid play -- The hybrid image in farce
-- The hybrid image in serious drama -- The hybrid image in Shakespeare --
Iago revisited.


IN THE DIVINE COMEDY a woman traditionally identified as Pia de'
Tolomei declares, "Siena mi fe',"."Siena made me" (Purgatorio 5.134). The city,
preampting nature and family, calls the character into being and establishes her
identity. But this Siena capable of making citizens was also made up of their individual
differences and riven by social and political conflict. How could the ideal
of civic unity be legitimated and reconciled with the fact of insistently particular
identities and interests? This was a crucial question for all the city-republics of
medieval Italy, but the Sienese response was played out in a series of artifacts that
contend with the high tensions of a republican culture.
In this essay I want to show how these tensions come to light, if not to rest, in
the fresco cycle painted by Ambrogio Lorenzetti in the "Room of Peace," the Sala
dei Nove or meeting hall of the Nine, the chief citizens' council of the Sienese
republic between 1287 and 1355. (The first paragraph-and-a-bit of the article.)

If much adverse criticism has been spent on [Milton's] allegorical figures of Sin and Death," the blame lies less with the poet or his critics than with time—with the evolution of poetic theory and its inevitable corollary, the relativity of critical standards. The principles underlying the composition of Paradise Lost are by no means identical with those by which the poem has been judged. In the case of much neo-classical criticism, this disparity is particularly significant, as its basic assumptions are often so close to Milton's that one overlooks their actual divergence. Whereas Milton's theory of the epic had been based, in large part, on the critical thought of the Italian Renaissance, the theory of his neo-classical successors bore the hallmark of seventeenth-century France. This fundamental difference is most glaring in the very point of greatest similarity between them—their common acknowledgement of classical authorities. Milton's conception of Horace and Aristotle is strongly influenced by "the Italian commentaries of Castelvetro, Tasso, Mazzoni, and others," whereas Addison interprets the Poetics and Ars Poetica largely in the light of "the French critics" and Johnson in terms of Le Bossu. The "Rules of Epic Poetry" which Addison, following "Aristotle's method," applies to Paradise Lost are by no means identical with "the rules of Aristotle" as Milton had understood them. They are as dissimilar as the Arno and the Seine. (First two paragraphs of the article.)


The author examines the medieval literary tradition of allegory and relates it to contemporary advertising. Allegory is characterized by the use of metaphor, personification, and moral conflict. This tradition is the basis of advertisements that use fear to convey didactic instruction to mass audiences. The author describes the use of allegory in advertising strategy in terms of message appeal, product benefits, target audience, and media design. Five areas for future research are suggested: content analysis of allegorical advertisements, cross-cultural implications, fear and guilt appeals, taxonomy of personifications as presenters, and effects of metaphors and symbols on advertising recall and comprehension.


Literary concepts from genre studies of classical allegory are adapted to analysis of advertising formats. Two classical forms--reification and typology--are discussed, and their importance for advertising summarized. Four basic allegorical elements are described to distinguish the forms, and two advertisements are analyzed to reveal the function of each in relation to product class, message appeal, copy structure, and media selection. Advertising consequences are proposed in terms of brand strategy appropriate to message type (informational or transformational), executional appeal (nostalgia and bizarre), and desired response (attention or empathy). Future research issues are suggested.

The central thesis of Dr Van Dyke's Fiction of Truth is that allegory properly understood does not consist of two discrete levels, fictional and real, but of two continuously interacting levels, in each of which there is a relationship between sign and signified:

If a text says one thing it also means that thing: we cannot separate speech from meaning. Thus if it says one thing and means another, it both says and means two things. And unless we are linguistic schizophrenics or are willing to ignore half of what we read, a text that says and means two things must say and mean one complex thing. (p. 42)

Following the classical rhetoricians, we can distinguish between the proper and transferred senses of an allegory. But the complexity of the allegorical process is such that, as Dr Van Dyke herself notes (p. 18), there is a lack of stability in the application of the term 'literal' to both these senses. Indeed the term 'literal' seems especially favoured in reference to the allegorical fiction itself (see, for example, pp. 26, 28, 77, and 209-I i). Such a usage ought to have been resisted by Dr Van Dyke for it obscures understanding of the essential validity of her thesis. Indeed, linguistic stability is vital to the development of a complex argument. We could perhaps begin by agreeing not to apply the term 'literal' to the proper sense of an allegorical fiction. It is the great insight of Aquinas that in the allegory of poets the literal is not the figure, but that which is signified by the figure, namely the transferred sense (ST, ia I.10 ad 3). Thus he resists the descent from allegory into allegoresis (pp. 44-5). The true metaphoric status of allegory is preserved, and at the same time its essential doubleness. Allegory is not the Other (pp. 15-22), but the One and the Other. The case of personification allegory is not essentially different, as Dr Van Dyke is eventually led to observe (p. 201), for a personification is simply a rhetorical figure and takes its place naturally in an allegorical fiction as Dr
allegorical fiction. It is the great insight of Aquinas that in the allegory of poets the literal is not the figure, but that which is signified by the figure, namely the transferred sense (ST, ia I.10 ad 3). Thus he resists the descent from allegory into allegoresis (pp. 44-5). The true metaphoric status of allegory is preserved, and at the same time its essential doubleness. Allegory is not the Other (pp. 15-22), but the One and the Other. The case of personification allegory is not essentially different, as Dr Van Dyke is eventually led to observe (p. 201), for a personification is simply a rhetorical figure and takes its place naturally in an allegorical fiction. (From a review by Gerald Morgan in The Review of English Studies.)


THIS IS A BOOK YOU CAN TAKE OUT FOR A BEER. At its best, it is wry, witty, opinionated and gossipy. You can't always trust it to pay its own way but every so often the prose itself picks up the tab. Trouble is, the book wants to be treated like a Royal Academician. It flaunts its research like Jane Russell's cleavage, thrusting data under your nose with voluptuous abandon. This would be O.K. if it weren't for the recurring clues that the bodice is padded. If you are impressed by this sort of aggressive pedagogy, the book will give you what you deserve. It will blow smoke in your face—elegant spirals of fumy scholarship, but smoke nonetheless.

The purpose of Monuments & Maidens is to examine how women's identity has been defined, since classical times, by symbolic uses of the female form. The book is an intricately contrived, extravagantly documented tour de force which is more convincing in its asides than in its axioms and lines of argument. In the rare moments when she forgoes the postures of the don for the prerogatives of the essayist, Warner is a gifted observer capable of flavorful irony and grace. She is also an inspired scavenger. Some of the book's most commanding portions are to be found in its quotations and paraphrases: William Gass on monuments ("The monumental monument tends to be, in this way, an open emblem. It tends to be FOR RENT"); Robert Musil on the invisibility of statues; Edith Wharton's description of Lily Bart posing as a painting by Reynolds; the precis of Svetlana Alpers's meditation on Vermeer. (From a review by Maureen Mullarkeya, posted at Studio Matters.)


Fielding's purpose in retelling the story of Jonathan Wild, as he himself makes clear in the Preface to the Miscellanies, is to allegorize the quality of human "greatness," not to write the history of a famous thief. "Roguery, and not a rogue, is my subject," he writes, and the tale which follows, in spite of its irony, has all the simple directness of a medieval morality play, in which Wickedness meets its downfall and Goodness triumphs. Yet the triumph of goodness has been widely accepted as represented in the person of Thomas Heartfree, the foil to Wild,
whereas it can be shown, I believe, that the moral allegory involves conscious reference to the limitations of Heartfree's passive goodness as well as to the evil of Wild's immoderate greatness. It will be the purpose of this study to examine the character of Heartfree in the light of the eighteenth-century ethical thought. (First paragraph of the article.)


Philip Pullman's His Dark Materials trilogy is one of the most popular fantasy works of our time. Both the trilogy and a new movie based on it are being marketed chiefly as YA (young adult) fare. But Leonard F. Wheat shows in this fascinating analysis that His Dark Materials is far more than a YA tale. At a deeper level it is a complex triple allegory--a surface story that uses 231 symbols to tell three hidden stories. As such, it is among the most profound, intellectually challenging, and thoroughly adult works ever written. Wheat brings the hidden stories to light. He demonstrates how Pullman retells two prominent works of British literature--C. S. Lewis's The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe and John Milton's Paradise Lost. Pullman's aim is to counter Lewis's pro-Christian allegory with his own anti-Christian allegory. Pullman does this in his second allegory by turning Paradise Lost upside down. Satan and his daughter, Sin, along with Adam's murderous son Cain, become heroes; God and Jesus become villains. This retold story depicts our society's warfare between knowledge (symbolized by Dust) and religious superstitions (symbolized by Specters). Pullman adds an original third hidden story featuring Christian missionaries, Charles Darwin, agnostics, and atheists. Wheat's intriguing interpretation of Pullman's work is the first to point out the many allegorical features of His Dark Materials and to highlight the ingenious ways in which Pullman subtly attacks religious institutions and superstitions. Pullman fans as well as readers interested in fantasy or concerned about religious coercion will find Wheat's book not only stimulating but overflowing with surprises. (Amazon product description.)


The allegory of Sin and Death, which appears toward the end of book 2 of Paradise Lost and reappears in book 10, and which eighteenth-century critics considered an aesthetic flaw, has become for the modern critic mainly a hunting ground for sources. In the present study I hope to show how the search for sources of ever-increasing obscurity has led critics away from what seems to be the most obvious and most readily available model for the episodes involving Satan, Sin, and Death, and has, in fact, prevented a proper understanding of some portions of the poem, and second, I hope to explicate in doctrinal terms a portion of what Toole has interpreted so well in terms of image and structure.

Donatello's Dovizia (ca. 1430), a heroically scaled allegory that stood atop a column in the Mercato Vecchio, was most probably a Communal commission. An idealized female figure in forceful movement with a large basket of fruit atop her head and a cornucopia on one arm, she is related in iconography to contemporary writings by Leonardo Bruni and other humanists which suggest that she embodied the new concept of the interrelationship between Civic Wealth and Florentine Civic Charity. Created at a time of financial instability and change, the Dovizia was calculated to express the stability and beneficence of the Florentine Commune.


No one can complain that either now or in the past the literary phenomenon of allegory has been neglected by scholars and critics. Some have commended it, St. Paul and Philo Judaeus, the first popularizers of the term; Dante and Spenser, who both advance the allegorical nature of their great works as a selling point. Some have condemned it, Coleridge and Hazlitt, the latter of whom counsels the reader not to meddle with the allegory of the Faerie Queene and it will not meddle with him. So the critic who would understand the miscellaneous heap of medieval works generally labelled allegorical can plead no dearth of critical consideration. He can, however, complain of a lack of clarity and practical guidance. Too often he reads in one critic that the Vita Nuova or the Pearl is allegorical, in another that they are not. Regretfully he comes to the conclusion that the two critics are not talking about the same thing. The Pearl is allegorical because it has a secondary, concealed meaning; it is not allegorical because it has no personification. (First two paragraphs of the article.)


In medieval Western Europe, allegory was used in a variety of literary works. Romances, miracle and mystery plays, and spiritual treatises all used allegory in some way to elucidate didactic propositions by the personification of abstract vices, virtues, or ideas. Medieval Russia, on the other hand, offers very few examples of allegory. To be sure, knowledge of allegory as a figure of speech existed in Russia as early as 1073, when a translation of a Greek treatise on rhetoric, which included a section about allegory, was inserted in a miscellany compiled for Prince Svjatoslav of Kiev. Though the influence of this treatise cannot be ascertained, copies of it can be found up to the fifteenth century. Influenced by the allegorical exegesis of the Church Fathers, ecclesiastical writers such as Cyril of Turov wrote excellent sermons which frequently employed allegorical imagery. The Song of Igor's Campaign abounds in extended metaphors which may be considered allegorical in nature. And finally, a widely acknowledged political allegory entitled Skazanie o Magmete-Sultane was written by Ivan Peresvetov (?) about 1547 and is thought to have been
intended for the instruction of Ivan IV (see Cizevskij, 279-83). Thus, allegorical tropes were known and used in medieval Russia; however, except perhaps for Peresvetov's work, none were structured as an extended allegorical narrative. One work which may join Peresvetov's as an exception is the anonymously authored seventeenth-century Tale of Misery and Ill Fortune (Povest' o Gore i Zlocastii). (First paragraph of article.)