

how does it work? Have you any idea why Jesus speaks in parables? What is the relationship between parable, analogy, and metaphor? Is the plugged-in violinist a parable?

2. Discuss Thomson's use of analogies and metaphors. Which of her analogies do you find most effective? Which least effective?
3. There are several ways to counter the use of analogy in argument. One is by offering a better analogy that supports a counterargument. Another is by examining the analogy critically, pointing out the "unused" or suppressed features of the analogy so as to weaken or negate its argumentative thrust. One may also attack the logic of the argument—but we are not really concerned with the logic of argumentation at the present time. We suggest, therefore, that you produce a response to Thomson's views in terms of your own values. You should examine critically the "unused" portions of the analogies she uses, and you should also try to develop an alternative to the analogy of the plugged-in violinist that supports your own position.
4. Consider some controversial subject of the moment—either local or national—and present a position on that subject, basing your presentation on an analogy that you develop for the occasion, such as Thomson's image of being plugged into a violinist. Use your analogy as the basis for explaining your own position on the issue you have chosen to discuss.

Metaphor and Metonymy: Advertising

Metaphor plays a major role in one kind of text that we encounter every day: advertising. To analyze the role of metaphor in advertising we will need one more technical term: *metonymy*. We have been using the term *metaphor* to cover all the ways of talking about one thing in terms of another, but actually we can make an important distinction between metaphor proper and another metaphorical device. This device is called *metonymy*. Metaphor proper is based upon some resemblance between the two things that are brought together in the metaphor. Robert Francis can speak of poetry and baseball in the same language because a poet and a baseball pitcher share certain attributes (pp. 74-75). There is an analogy between the two elements of the metaphor.

We use metonymy, on the other hand, whenever we speak of one thing in terms of another that is usually associated with it. When we say "The White House says . . ." we don't mean that the building actually spoke but that the person who lives there, the president, has taken the position attributed to the building. Cartoonists use this same metonymy whenever they draw a picture of the White House with words coming out of it. A frequently used type of metonymy called *synecdoche* is the substitution of part of something for the whole of it. If we asked a rancher "How many cattle do you own?" he might reply, "Seven hundred head." Obviously, he owns the rest of the beasts also, not just the heads. You can keep clear the difference between metaphor and metonymy by remembering these examples: (1) *head of beer* is a metaphor, based on resemblance, and (2) *head of cattle* is metonymy, based on association—in this case synecdoche, a part for the whole.

In advertising, metonymy or association is very important. When a celebrity endorses a product, an association is formed between them. When a basketball player endorses a basketball shoe, we have a natural metonymy. Such shoes are already associated with the player. What the advertiser wants, however, and will sometimes make very explicit, is to have this metonymy interpreted as a metaphor. That is, the maker of basketball shoes wants us (subconsciously or consciously) to attribute the quality of the player to the shoe. But it would be a courageous maker of baseball gloves who hired Bob Uecker, who has a well-established image as having been a *not* very good player, to endorse his product. Uecker instead advertises beer. Most beer commercials establish a metonymic connection between good times and beer, hoping that the

viewer will accept a further metaphorical connection and finally a cause-and-effect connection: the beer is good and a cause of good times.

Some ads make a very skillful use of metaphor and metonymy to push their products. You owe it to yourself to understand exactly how they are trying to manipulate you. We provide analyses of three ads here and then invite you to do some analytical work of your own.

"Light My Lucky"

At this point we would like to describe an advertisement for Lucky Strike cigarettes, because cigarette ads are among the cleverest and most technically perfect that one can find, and because their use raises interesting moral problems about the functioning of advertising in general. We assume that you have seen enough Lucky Strike ads so that you will be able to follow our description without too much trouble. (Originally we intended to reprint the ad, but the company denied us permission to do so.) The ad is very simple. It presents a photo of a young woman (perhaps 23 or 24 years old) in a sweater, in a field or meadow, wearing a scarf, with one hand in her pocket and the other resting lightly on her wind-blown hair, holding an unlighted cigarette. She gazes straight out of the frame. The words "Light My Lucky" appear in quotation marks, very prominently displayed, starting just below her chin and extending across to the right margin of the page. In the lower right corner of the frame, also superimposed over the photographic image of the woman, is a large image of an opened package of Lucky Strike Lights. At the bottom of the frame, on the left, is the well known warning from the Surgeon General, which says: "Smoking By Pregnant Women May Result in Fetal Injury, Premature Birth, and Low Weight." You can visualize the ad, we are sure, or find a comparable ad in a current magazine.

The young woman in the ad is very beautiful. She is outdoors and dressed in outdoorsy clothing, a thick scarf and a heavy sweater. The background is blurred, but it looks like a field or wooded area. What has all this got to do with cigarettes? She is holding an unlighted cigarette in a hand that rests on top of her windblown blonde hair. She looks serious, or perhaps sultry. We read the written phrase in quotation marks as what she says, though she does not appear to be speaking—what she might say, perhaps, but certainly what she wants: "Light My Lucky."

The woman is lightly but carefully made up: an unobtrusive lipstick, delicate but effectively applied eye makeup. The ad makes her the central figure in a cluster of metonymic associations: woman/cigarette/outdoors.

"This is a healthy, vigorous woman. The makers of the ad expect some of these positive healthy values to attach themselves (in the reader's subconscious mind) to the cigarette."

The woman is also extremely good-looking. Asking someone for a light is a classic sexual approach, presented in countless films, and turned into a metaphor for sex itself in rock songs like "Light My Fire." The phrase in the ad—"Light My Lucky"—quite deliberately suggests these other texts that are now part of our cultural memory. We call this sort of allusion *intertextuality*. (The concept will be presented more fully in the next chapter, but we should note at this point that intertextuality is, like metaphor and metonymy, a way of presenting two or more things at the same time in the same text.) The ad thus associates the cigarette with beauty, health, and erotic pleasures. These metonymies are deliberate: the cigarette is meant to acquire the associations as permanent attributes.

It is worth noting that the word *light* is used in a punning way in the ad, and that a pun, like metaphor and metonymy, is a way of bringing two meanings together in a single place—in a single word, in fact. *Light* is used as a verb to mean set on fire: light my cigarette, light a fire. By a common metaphorical extension it means "inflame" or "arouse," as in "light my fire." But *light* (as opposed to heavy) is used in our weight-conscious and health-conscious society to mean "free from bad ingredients." Light beer has fewer calories; light cigarettes have less tar and nicotine. These uses are slightly metaphorical in themselves. The "light" in "Light My Lucky" thus refers to both the classic sexual approach and the relative healthiness of the "light" cigarette, just as the image of an attractive woman in outdoor clothing refers to the same two things. Always, in such ads, the hope is held out that the desirable qualities metonymically connected to the product will come to the reader if he or she uses the product. Do you want to be healthy and attractive, and experience erotic pleasure? Smoke Lucky Strike Lights.

The "Surgeon General's Warning" that appears in the corner of the ad refers to pregnant women. But the woman in the ad is anything but pregnant. She is as emphatically unattached as she is positively healthy. The Surgeon General associates smoking, pregnancy, and ill-health. The ad associates smoking, sex, and good health. The idea that smoking is unhealthy is obliterated by these contradictory messages, leaving only pregnancy connected to ill health. This is an extremely clever and well-made ad.

“Finally, Life Insurance as Individual as You Are”

The Prudential Life Insurance Company logo, visible at the bottom of the ad, is a stylized image of the Rock of Gibraltar. By selecting the physical object as their company symbol, the Prudential Company obviously hoped for a metaphorical transfer of qualities from the Rock to the company in the mind of the consumer. Rocks are an ancient symbol of strength and solidity. In the Gospel of Matthew (16:18) Jesus says to Peter, “Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church.” In saying these words, Jesus is playing upon a pun in the name Peter, which means rock (*petrified*, for instance, means turned into stone). The qualities of a rock—strength, solidity, firmness—are to be extended metaphorically to the institution of a church by means of a man whose character can be described metaphorically in terms of those rocky qualities.

The Rock of Gibraltar is in fact a rocky mountain that looms over the harbor of Gibraltar, on the southern tip of Spain at the gateway to the Mediterranean Sea. A harbor of enormous strategic importance, it is almost impregnable because the Rock makes attacking it from the land side difficult. It has been a major outpost of the British empire for over a century, and thus can stand metaphorically for power and stability beyond any ordinary rock. The viewer doesn’t have to know any of these details, of course. He or she has only to perceive the company in terms of the qualities signified by this enormous rock. So Prudential chose the Rock for its symbol, its logo, and has used it in dozens of ads and TV commercials.

The company, like many other insurance companies, faces another advertising problem. If potential customers feel that it is big, strong, safe, and stable, they may also feel that it is enormous, cold, and indifferent. In making the ad we are examining, Prudential needed to find something that would indicate its concern for the individual. The company might be a rock, but it is a delicate, precise, *caring* sort of rock, who treats everybody as a person rather than a number.

What is unique about each one of us? Physically speaking, the handiest method of establishing each person’s uniqueness is through the use of fingerprints. Our fingerprints are in fact indexical signs of each one of us, powerful metonyms that can, for instance, indicate that we were present at the scene of a crime. Because each one of us has his or her own set of prints, the fingerprint can function as a metaphor for uniqueness and individuality. Thus, the Prudential Company can use fingerprints to symbolize individuality. By shaping its rocky symbol *out of a fingerprint* in



FINALLY, LIFE INSURANCE AS INDIVIDUAL AS YOU ARE.

With Prudential offering more types of life insurance than any other insurance company, we're confident we have a policy that's designed to meet your individual needs.

For instance, we have one policy for people who want high interest on their contract fund while taking life easy with a fixed premium schedule.

There's another policy that earns high interest while giving you high premium flexibility.*

There are also two kinds of policies* that let you invest in one or more of five accounts—stock, bond, money market, an aggressively managed account and a conservatively managed account.** All these products offer you guaranteed lifetime protection.

In addition, Prudential offers competitively priced Term insurance schedules based on today's higher interest rates.

Of course, whichever life insurance matches your lifestyle, you know it is from The Prudential, one of the world's largest, most trusted financial institutions.

Let a Prudential/Pruco Securities representative review your need to help you put your finger on the one policy that is unmistakably yours.

*These products are offered through Prudential Insurance Company of America, Newark, New Jersey. For more complete information, contact your Prudential agent or write to Prudential Insurance Company of America, Newark, New Jersey. Interest rates may vary from year to year.

The Prudential
Life Insurance

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this ad, it hopes to add individuality to the other qualities that are metaphorically signified by the rock.

However, metaphors are not mathematical, and it is not easy to add them together and reach a predictable result. At this point we ask you to stop and make your own interpretation of the metaphors in the Prudential ad. What do the images of rock and fingerprint, taken together, mean to you? What associations or connotations do they arouse in your mind? Compare your reactions to those of your classmates in trying to assess the effectiveness of the use of metaphors in this ad. Whatever you decide, these two ads taken together, help to illustrate some of the ways in which advertising and poetry draw upon the same aspects of language for their power. One further example should show how important figurative language can be in advertising.

VISTA

Though it may not appear so in our black and white reproduction of it, the VISTA ad is visually striking. The tanned diver is dressed in red trunks and teshirt. The water in the foreground is very shallow and transparent, showing the brown sand under it. The sea is green with bright whitecaps. The upper half of the picture is all bright blue sky, without a cloud. The diver is plunging into no more than two or three inches of water. It is a dramatic, arresting picture, and it arrests the viewer's eye as well. What is going on here, we wonder, and what will come of it? Why would anyone dive into two inches of water, anyway?

For answers, we must go to the small white sentences printed over the blue sky in the upper left of the frame. What they tell us is that we shouldn't read the picture literally. It is not about diving but about things for which such a dive may be a metaphor. The printed text picks up these metaphors from the visual image and interprets them in such a way as to connect them to the product being advertised. It says,

When you dive into a client presentation.

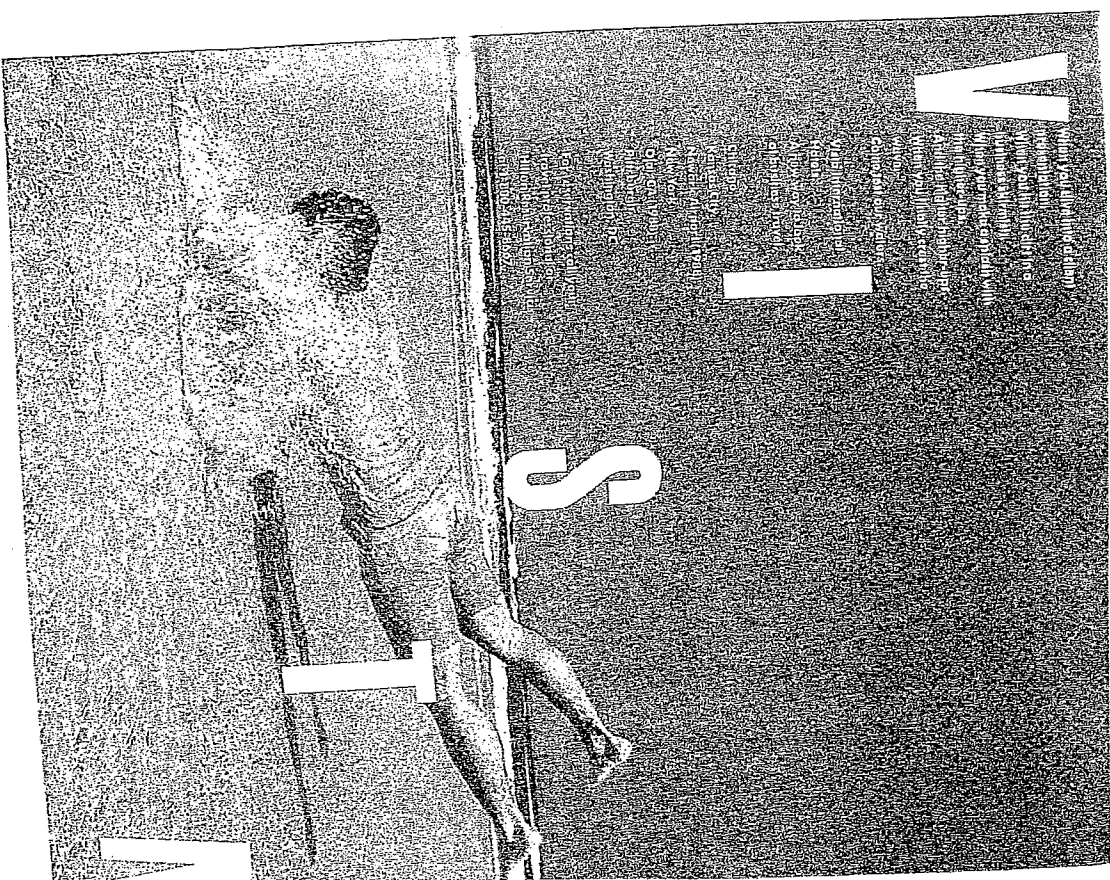
When you hit the dirt in a business skirmish.

When you make a splash with the higher-ups.

And the higher higher-ups.

When you finally crest the wave.

Come test our waters.



After this it introduces the product, a chain of hotels seeking businessmen as customers. The ad takes a collection of dead or inert metaphors that have come to function as clichés about business, and revitalizes them by connecting them to a single, startling visual image. What image does it take them literally—dive, hit the dirt, make a splash, crest the wave, test our waters. It shows someone doing all these things—

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almost doing all these things. After all, it is not easy to hit the dirt and make a splash at the same time. This sounds, in fact, like a clumsily mixed metaphor, but the picture shows how one can indeed hit the dirt and make a splash at the same time. You just dive into two inches of water. This whole process does many of the same things that poems do. It revives inert metaphors that have become clichés; it gives you metaphors where you expect literal meaning and literal meaning where you expect figures of speech. It is also a little bit like a riddle or puzzle on the order of Sylvia Plath's poem "Metaphors." Is it a good ad? Will it sell the product? It is hard to say but it certainly is an attention-getter, and the visual image does indeed lead us to look at the text to find out what is going on here. For our purposes, of course, it also demonstrates once again how poetry and advertising often employ the same dimensions of language for their different purposes.

For Discussion and Writing

1. Even without the example of these discussions before you, you know a lot about advertising because you see many ads every day. Find two different full-page ads for a particular type of product such as designer perfume, cigarettes, bran cereal, or luxury automobiles. (We suggest a slick magazine designed for a general audience, such as *Sports Illustrated*, *The New Yorker*, *Esquire*, or *Vogue* as your best source of skillfully done ads.) Write an essay in which you compare and discuss the metaphoric and metonymic qualities of the two ads. Try to reach some conclusions about how and why certain things work in advertising.
2. Knowing what you know about the workings of advertisements, you should be able to design an ad that works the wrong way. Imagine, for instance, replacing the sultry, outdoorsy blonde in the "Lucky" ad with an obviously pregnant woman. Given the "Surgeon General's Warning" that appears in the ad, this would be a disaster—even if the woman were as lovely and healthy in appearance as the woman now in the ad. Your task is to take an existing ad and make a substitution or two that will ruin the ad for its intended purpose. You should not be too blatant or obvious in your changes nor make too many of them. Just do something that spoils the intended result as you understand it.

In the previous two chapters we have examined aspects of language and textuality that have been considered important since Aristotle's time. At this point, however, we begin to shift our attention to things that have been the special concerns of modern literature and recent literary theory. As you might expect, from here on, things get more complicated. Our principles, however, remain the same. We will continue to share with you the theory that we have used to shape our presentation of ideas and materials. We will also continue to offer you opportunities to grasp this theory by actual application of it to textual situations.

Our emphasis in this chapter, as you will soon see for yourself, is on the way that texts are always related to and dependent upon other texts. In our culture we have tended to stress "originality" as a supreme value in writing. The pressure to be "original" has often worked to inhibit writers—especially student writers—and thus to prevent them from actually developing their ideas. One of our purposes in this chapter is to reduce the anxiety of originality.

Once you realize that all texts are reworkings of other texts, that writing comes out of reading, that writing is always rewriting, you can see that the desirable quality we call "originality" does not mean creating something out of nothing but simply making an interesting change in what has been done before you. One develops as a writer by playing with material already in existence. The "new" emerges as a function of this play. With this in mind we invite you to enter the world of intertextuality—where you have actually lived all along.

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