

The Allegorical Impulse

Raymond W. Gibbs, Jr.

University of California, Santa Cruz

Allegory is a cognitive action in which people apply a metaphoric mode of understanding to situations and discourse that typically does not contain metaphorical language per se. My claim is that *allegoresis* is not a specialized mode of interpretation, but a fundamental human impulse to draw diverse connections between concrete and more abstract experience. I describe several empirical findings from psycholinguistics, anthropology, and literature that demonstrate people's facility to be allegorical, including individuals' consistent ability to see allegory in various texts and real-life situations. I conclude by arguing that allegory is cognitive, not as an abstract, purely mental stance or strategy, but because it relies on embodied simulations for its expression and understanding, much as do many other aspect of cognitive behavior.

THE ALLEGORICAL IMPULSE

One of people's ordinary tendencies in life is the desire to draw connections between many of their daily actions and larger symbolic themes. Consider, for example, a retired high school art teacher, now in his late 70s, who has a daily hobby of walking back and forth along a 14 foot long tight wire secured in his living room, suspended several feet above the ground (Retired Teacher Finds Balance, 2009). He commented on this daily obsession, "It's all about balance. Basically, we are all walking a tight wire, and when you are on the wire, you have to be focused . . . So many things affect your balance. If you're tired, depressed, impetuous, unfocused, irritable, hungry, it shows up immediately on the wire."

My quick reaction to this these comments, when I first read them, was that the teacher spoke directly about my life seeming, in many instances, to be a matter of me walking along the tight wire of life, sometimes desperately trying to stay balanced, especially during those many moments when I too felt tired, depressed, impetuous, unfocused, irritable, hungry and so on. Walking along a tight wire, where there is always some danger of losing balance and falling into a unknown chasm, beautifully captures the essential metaphorical idea, "*LIFE IS A JOURNEY*," and gives this metaphor a precise realization that both makes sense and feels like how life is for me, and surely others.

Consider another example of allegorical thinking in everyday life by imagining a cartoon in *The New Yorker* magazine (August 25, 2008, p. 78) depicting a baseball player, dressed in uniform and with glove, lying on a psychiatrist's couch, with a very Freudian-looking therapist

sitting behind taking notes. The caption reads, “My life is a powerful blast to center field easily snagged on the warning track.” Readers will need to know something about the game of baseball to understand and appreciate some of the complex meanings evoked by this cartoon. People must understand that a batter can initially appear to hit the ball very hard and possibly far yet still have the ball slow down and be easily caught by a fielder before it goes over the homerun wall (where the “warning track” indicates that one is coming close to the wall or fence). But given some knowledge of baseball, this cartoon evokes a metaphorical, allegorical tale of a poor baseball player confessing his plight to a psychiatrist, as he conceives of his life as just another routine out (e.g., the ball being “easily snagged”) in the game of life, again despite early appearances of great promise (e.g., “a powerful blast”). Most of us feel empathy for this person because we too have had moments in life where actions we initiate start well yet end in inglorious failure.

Both of the above examples illustrate *allegoresis*, the “allegorical impulse” that is fundamental to human cognition, in which we continually seek to connect, in diverse ways, the immediate here and now with more abstract, enduring symbolic themes. The evocation of these symbolic themes creates diverse, rich networks of meaning that are both metaphorical and often deeply embodied. Using and understanding allegory is different than just using metaphorical language per se. We must distinguish between the processing of metaphorical language (i.e., interpreting specific, easily identifiable instances of metaphoric language) and the idea of metaphor processing as a more general strategy (i.e., where one applies a metaphoric reading to some instance of language or a situation to obtain allegorical meaning). My aim in this article is to explore some of the ways that everyday language reflects the allegorical impulse, as a general mode of understanding, and to offer some empirical evidence from psycholinguistics that suggests people’s unreflective abilities to draw allegorical connections. I end by offering a different vision of what it means to say that allegory, more generally, is cognitive, by linking allegoresis to new developments in cognitive science on embodied simulation and its role in both ordinary and spectacular language and thought.

MINI ALLEGORIES

Although the study of allegory has typically focused on its presence in art and literature, a closer examination of even the most clichéd aspects of speech indicates allegorical thinking. For example, simple idiomatic expressions have various forms and express different types of figurative meaning. Some idioms appear to have rather distinct literal and figurative meanings, such as “kick the bucket,” “beat around the bush,” and “spill the beans,” in that the literal interpretation of “kick the bucket,” for instance, expresses something quite different than what the phrase figuratively conveys (i.e., “to suddenly die”). But there is a group of idioms whose literal and figurative meanings appear to be highly connected or isomorphic, such as “go out on a limb,” “skate on thin ice,” and “get away with murder.” Isomorphic idioms, like these, when used literally (e.g., “John went out on a limb” referring to John crawling on a tree branch) also immediately induces their figurative interpretations (e.g., when John goes out on a tree limb he is also figuratively in a dangerous position; Mueller & Gibbs, 1987). The fact that phrases referring to certain literal acts give rise to broader symbolic themes suggests that isomorphic idioms are like “mini allegories” (i.e., allegories that are evoked by short, clichéd expressions). Note that they frequently implicate mini-narratives and that they even evoke journey motifs (“go out,” “get away;”); some of them, too, implicate topography (trees, ice) in a way that recalls the classic Medieval allegories.

Many proverbial expressions reflect “reversed mini allegories.” Consider, for instance, a brief exchange in which one speaker says that she is about to invest all her limited savings into a scheme to extract crystals from some newly discovered South American mines, to which a listener responds with the advice, “You may not want to put all your eggs in one basket.” Understanding the proverbial phrase here involves drawing an inference from our knowledge of the specific physical/literal interpretation of proverb (e.g., the pros and cons associated with placing all of one’s eggs, a kind of valuable resource, into only one container or location) back to recognizing the allegorical nature of the discourse situation (i.e., the dangers associated with placing all of one’s limited funds as an investment in a precarious “get rich” scheme). This inference is not a matter of detecting some relationship between a general figurative meaning and a specific literal one. Instead, people must tacitly recognize a complex set of metaphorical mappings where eggs map onto individual, desired, precious entities, and, in this case, further onto a generalized abstract notion of something like “substantial capital”; a basket maps onto place to store one’s valuable possessions, and further onto a specific abstract “investment”; and where the placing of all of one’s eggs gets mapped onto the idea of engaging in a risky action that could potentially result in the substantial reduction of one’s capital resources. The power of proverbial speech across cultures is strong testimony to people’s facility with allegorical thinking about many of life’s situations, with proverbs offering concrete solutions to these dilemmas.

INFERRING ALLEGORICAL MEANINGS IN POETRY

One of the reasons poetry offers us meaningful insights about our lives is because they, too, often allude to enduring allegorical themes. But how good are ordinary people at detecting the allegorical content of some poetry? One psycholinguistic study employed a talk out loud method to examine the role of metaphorical thought in people’s interpretations of allegorical meaning in poetry (Gibbs & Boers, 2005). Participants read one of two poems and describe their thoughts about its meaning as they read. One poem was the well-known work by Robert Frost (1969) titled “The Road Not Taken”:

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
 And sorry I could not travel both
 And be one traveller, long I stood
 And looked down one as far as I could
 To where it bent in the undergrowth;
 Then took the other, as just as fair,
 And having perhaps the better claim,
 Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
 Though as for that, the passing there
 Had worn them really about the same,
 And both that morning equally lay
 In leaves no step had trodden black.
 Oh, I kept the first for another day!
 Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
 I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
 Somewhere ages and ages hence;
 Two roads diverged in a wood, and I –
 I took the one less traveled by,
 And that has made all the difference.

Scholars have long debated the ways that Frost may have intended this work as an allegorical comment on the difficulties one encounters along life's many journeys (metaphorical and otherwise). The general hypothesis explored in this study was that readers should be able to detect broad metaphorical themes in this, and one other poem (titled "Ars Poetica: A Found Poem" by Maxine Kumin), despite the fact that neither one contained specific metaphorical utterances. Thus, readers should recognize that different segments of each poem, and the poems overall, refer allegorically to ideas, beliefs, or concepts not mentioned literally in either piece. The textual elements, therefore, serve as the source domains for unstated target domains. If this idea is true, then people should give metaphorical interpretations to literally stated text elements significantly more than they give simple literal readings to these elements.

This hypothesis was tested by asking college students to read and write interpretations of the above poems when these were presented in different three-line segments. The poems were presented in three line segments with each segment printed on a separate page. The participants were asked to read the first three lines and then write down their thoughts about the poem's meaning up to that point. They were encouraged to write as much as they could about the poem's meanings, including what the author was trying to communicate and what they thought was the poem's broader meaning. Participants did this for the first three lines, then turned the page and read the next three lines, and did the same thing again, and so on through the rest of the poem.

After the participants wrote down their interpretations for all segments of the poem, they turned the page and saw the complete poem. The participants were asked to read the poem one more time, keeping in mind the idea that poets often have broader themes in mind when they create poems, sometimes referring to ideas and concepts that are not explicitly mentioned in the poem. Participants were instructed to reread the poem carefully (noting that they may have missed points or ideas when they first read the poem) and at the end write down what they now thought the poem was about and what the poet was trying to communicate in writing it.

Participants' written interpretations for each three line segment, as well as the poems' overall interpretations, were analyzed as belonging to at least one of 14 categories. For the present purposes, I focus on the extent to which people noted various metaphorical themes as they read, especially those that reflected their understanding of enduring conceptual metaphors. There are several points worth making about these data in this regard.

First, the participants provided extremely few personal associations to the different segments, which clearly suggests that people focused on the poems', and poets', messages. This shows that interpreting poetry, at least in these college students' view, is not a matter of radical deconstruction, but is significantly constrained by textual and/or authorial meaning.

Second, although readers mentioned mundane events about the simple topics in the poems, they mostly offered metaphorical and more general allegorical interpretations (72% for Frost poem, and 47% for the Kumin poem). This difference in the amount of metaphorical interpretations between the two poems is mostly attributed to the fact that the allegorical theme to which

Frost's poem refers to concerns a common conceptual metaphor, "*LIFE IS A JOURNEY*," while the other poem referred more obliquely to the craft of writing poetry.

Readers' metaphorical understandings of the two poems were easy to discern. For example, evidence of a general metaphorical theme is seen in one reader's thoughts about the first three lines of Frost's poem: "The traveler, in making this tough decision, contemplates for a long time which path to follow. This could be interpreted as a struggle or challenge in one's life, where one must decide which is the better path or way to go." A different student gave a specific interpretation of the metaphorical meaning of these same three lines: "In a forest, which represents life, there are two roads. It is not possible to take both of these roads and so this person must make a choice. When the writer says 'long I stood' this shows me that this man or woman is pondering which one to take. . . . The word 'traveler' tells me that this man is on a journey. . . . How they will conduct their life."

Finally, consider one example where a reader gave a specific metaphorical reading of the same three lines, and also articulated a broader understanding of the allegorical theme implicit in the poem. As this reader wrote: "This part of the poem is dealing with the choices we have to make in life. The two roads represent different pathways in life that one may or may not choose to take. Frost is saying that as a singular entity, you may only have a singular history which is comprised of the choices you have made. Different choices, or trying to clear a new road between the two existing ones (indecision) would result in a new person. The last line deals with the hesitancy to make a life changing decision. Options must be weighed carefully."

In general, there is excellent evidence that the university students, who were studying psychology, not literature, were quite adept at inferring both specific metaphorical readings of the different three-line segments (especially for the Frost poem) and the poems' overall metaphorical meanings. Students could readily infer that different poems referred to unstated allegorical themes. More specifically, the talk-out-loud protocols clearly demonstrated how various concrete terms in the poems served as source domains for people thinking about, and talking about, metaphorical target domains. Students could, therefore, immediately engage in metaphor processing on language that was not marked by metaphor. Ordinary readers' ability to adopt a metaphorical stance leads them to infer both concrete and more general allegorical meanings. The fact that virtually every student gave evidence of some ability to engage in metaphoric processing suggest that this talent is not exclusively linked to students of literature. Allegoresis is not just a special literary strategy only employed by certain readers when interpreting texts.

UNDERSTANDING ALLEGORICAL THEMES IN SATIRE

Our ability to detect allegorical themes in language is also evident when reading more complex narratives where authors aim to communicate a variety of ideas through satire. To take one example, consider the following opening paragraphs from a story titled "The Three Politically Correct Pigs" which is part of a series of tales known as *Politically Correct Bedtime Stories* that place a twist (for some, a comic twist) on classic fairy tales (Garner, 1994):

Once there were three little pigs who lived together in mutual respect and in harmony with their environment. Using materials that were indigenous to the area, they each built a beautiful house. One pig built a house of straw, one a house of sticks, and one a house of dung, clay, and creeper vines

shaped into bricks and baked in a small kiln. When they were finished, the pigs were satisfied with their work and settled back to live in peace and self-determination.

But their idyll was soon shattered. One day, along came a big, bad wolf with expansionist ideas. He saw the pigs and grew very hungry, in both the physical and ideological sense. When the pigs saw the wolf, they ran into the house of straw. The wolf ran up to the house and banged on the door, shouting, "Little pigs, little pigs, let me in!" The pigs shouted back, "Your gunboat tactics hold no fear for pigs defending their homes and culture." But the wolf wasn't to be denied what he thought was his manifest destiny. So he huffed and he puffed and he blew down the house of straw. The frightened pigs ran to the house of sticks, with the wolf in hot pursuit. Where the house of straw had stood, other wolves bought up the land and started a banana plantation. At the house of sticks, the wolf again banged on the door and shouted, "Little pigs, little pigs, let me in!" The pigs shouted, "Go to hell, you carnivorous, imperialistic oppressor!"

What is point of this story? As is the case with many other famous instances of literary satire, this particular story may evoke a variety of different responses in readers. Pfaff and Gibbs (1997) examined whether college students' interpretations of stories like these were influenced by their often unconscious assumptions about authorial intentions. But we were also interested in the extent to which students recognized the allegorical nature of these stories. In one study, participants read a series of the politically correct stories, and for each one, wrote out a description of "what is the point" of that story. An analysis of people's responses revealed that the vast majority of interpretations alluded to some allegorical theme (65%), which was significantly greater than any other response, including cases where people stated that the point of a story was to write politically correct satire (23%). When students were also asked to reflect on "what the author was trying to do?" in each story, 67% of all the allegorical responses stated that the author was explicitly endorsing the theme that political correctness is "good." One possibility for this latter result is that people's own preferences for political correctness may have shaped their readings of these tales and what they assumed about authorial intentions.

A different study provided students with hypothetical descriptions of the author as being conservative, liberal, or neutral in his/her political beliefs. Not surprisingly, students matched their perceptions of the stories with the supposed political beliefs of the author. Thus, for the "conservative author" students made comments like "The point was that feminism is silly," or "The point is to make fun of political correctness." For a "liberal author" students wrote, "The point is that native people should be respected," or "American imperialism is wrong."

Most generally, these data on students' readings of *Politically Correct Bedtime Stories* demonstrate, again, that ordinary readers, at least those with some university education, readily perceive allegorical themes in narratives, even if the exact interpretations of what those themes may vary considerably from what some authors perhaps intended to communicate.

ALLEGORY IN CROSS-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

Allegory has often been studied as a literary and artistic phenomenon, as it is in other contributions to this special issue (by Oakley and Crisp, and by Kasten and Gruenler), and it has often been seen as very much tied to Western intellectual traditions, especially in certain historical time periods. But the allegorical impulse is a fundamental characteristic of human cognition, and thus should be seen in various aspects of language and thought across a variety of cross-cultural

contexts. Consider a typical example of the indirect discourse style seen in the Managalese of Papua New Guinea (McKellin, 1990). In this narrative, a speaker has gone to another village to retrieve his niece who has run off with a boy who had earlier been visiting with the speaker's family:

Before, I raised many dogs when I lived in Jinebuina. I raised many dogs, went up to the mountains, caught game, brought it back, and ate it. Then a little while ago, we fought, went down there to Kavan and my dogs died. Because I was living down there, I didn't see that a big wind came and blew a tree over. So I thought, I might go and get some black cane (for a weaving belt), prepare it, and maybe catch some game. . . . So I went up the path but the path was blocked (by a fallen tree), so I stopped, got some game to eat and went back home, found another cane, prepared it, and used it in my weaving and came up here.

There is nothing in this narrative that explicitly mentions the speaker's niece, the boy who took her away to another village, or the speaker's attempt to find and retrieve the girl. But the references to "dogs," who are typically seen as dishonest and thieves, the attempt to get some "black cane," a valuable resource that may stand for the niece, and the fact that the "path was blocked," referring to the obstacle of the boy's family now keeping the niece in their protection, all represent allegorical understandings of the entire event. By talking in this indirect manner, as is the custom in many non-Western cultures, especially when disputes arise, a speaker can make his claims, yet do so without directly offending anyone, and yet also do so in a way that touches on broader themes in nature (i.e., the temperament of certain dogs, the blocking of paths by fallen trees) that are easily understandable and can help clarify why the speaker argues as he does. Once more, the allegorical impulse is widely seen in many cultures and surfaces routinely in many daily interactions.

INFERRING ALLEGORY WHEN NONE IS INTENDED

The impulse to think allegorically is also wonderfully illustrated in cases where people interpret language as allegorical when a speaker had no intention to communicate such meaning. A famous literary instance of this kind of endemic allegoresis is seen in the novel *Being There* by Jerzy Kosinski (1970), which describes the incredible story of a man, called Chauncey, a plain, quite literal-minded gardener whose simple remarks are often over-interpreted as expressing allegorical meanings. For example, in the following excerpt, Chauncey is asked a question by a successful businessman and responds in a completely literal way (p. 48):

"It's not easy sir," he said, "to obtain a suitable place, a garden in which one can work without interference and grow with the seasons. There can't be too many opportunities left anymore." . . .

Mr. Rand leaned across the table to him. "Very well put, Mr. Gardiner—I hope you don't mind if I call you Chauncey? A gardener! Isn't that the perfect description of what a real businessman is? A person who makes a flinty soil productive with the labor of his own hands, who waters it with the sweat of his brow, and who creates a place of value for his family and the community. Yes, Chauncey, what an excellent metaphor! A productive businessman is indeed a laborer in his own vineyard!"

The businessman's allegorical interpretation of Chauncey's literally intended remarks shows how people sometimes can't help but draw allegorical connections between what is said and broader themes though metaphorical processing.

A final example of finding allegory where it is not intended, or perhaps not wanted, is seen in popular American television commercials with the “Caveman” for the Geico insurance company. The overt premise of these commercials is that signing up for insurance on Geico’s website is “so easy, a caveman can do it.” Yet the commercials show various vignettes of contemporary cavemen (e.g., “We are still around, you know”) being very upset with their portrayal (i.e., many of the cavemen are sophisticated and successful but are depicted as, well, stereotypical cavemen). These concerns cause despair for some of the cavemen as they yearn for their proper place in society against the incredible prejudice of others around them.

The success of the Geico cavemen commercials led to a short-lived television program featuring the cavemen, which many thought were not as funny as the series of 30 second commercials, but which were also widely characterized as “allegorical” in suggesting how the cavemen’s plight represents broader themes regarding people struggling against discrimination, including racial discrimination. But the producers of the comedy show protested that the cavemen program was not at all intended to address broader themes about social justice. One wrote, “If the show works, it will work because people care about these three guys under a lot of makeup and ... can relate to their problems and find them charming,” “The show isn’t designed to be an ambitious allegory about race or racial stereotypes. There was no intention to have the Cro-Magnons represent any minority group.”

It could very well be that the cavemen producers didn’t wish for their show to be seen as having political/social commentary for fear that this would alienate ordinary viewers who may not enjoy TV comedies with such content. But, once more, the fact that many people readily drew allegorical connections between the cavemen’s ordinary actions and broader social and political themes shows the allegorical impulse in action.

CONCLUSION: HOW IS ALLEGORY “COGNITIVE”?

Allegory may be hard to resist, and a deep impulse within our everyday lives, because it is a prominent part of the cognitive unconscious. But what exactly does it mean to argue that allegory is “cognitive”? One typical response to this question suggests the following. Imagine reading Frost’s poem “The Road Not Taken.” We recognize that the literal scene described in this poem also makes indirect reference to broader life themes, primarily because the specific, physical journey activates the common “*LIFE IS A JOURNEY*” conceptual metaphor such that we draw an allegorical connection between the text world and an unstated source domain. Doing so allows readers to retrieve a complex set of metaphorical/allegorical relations between the taking of physical journeys (e.g., wondering which path to take) and the leading of one’s life (e.g., the larger decisions we make about the direction of our life). In this general way, cognitive structures of the mind (e.g., entrenched conceptual metaphors) are essential elements in our ability to speak and reason allegorically.

There is plenty of empirical work from cognitive linguistics and experimental psycholinguistics to endorse this general picture of how allegory may generally arise in mind because of the metaphorical nature of human cognition (Gibbs, 1994, 2008; Lakoff & Johnson, 1999). But one of the newer advances in cognitive science that has great relevance for understanding the allegorical mind is the empirical research on cognition as embodied simulation. The study of “embodied cognition” has led to a vast number of empirical findings showing how perception, memory,

problem-solving, mental imagery, emotion, and consciousness are fundamentally tied to the particular bodies we have and the ways humans move and act in the world (Gibbs, 2006a). Language use and understanding, despite being traditionally seen as symbolic and disembodied, may have enduring connections to bodily experience, with people imagining themselves as participating in actions the language describes, even in cases where the actions depicted are abstract and physically impossible to perform (Gibbs, 2006b). Psycholinguistic research has demonstrated in different ways that experiential simulations motivate people's use and understanding of many kinds of metaphoric language (see Gibbs, 2006b). These experimental studies indicate that people's recurring embodied experiences play a role in how they tacitly make sense of why many words and phrases have the specific meanings they do, as well as in people's production and processing of some verbal metaphors. More importantly, these studies demonstrate that people appear to simulate the actions described in metaphorical sentences, even when these actions are physically impossible to perform.

For example, Gibbs, Gould, and Andric (2005–2006) demonstrated how people's mental imagery for metaphorical phrases, such as "*tear apart the argument*," exhibit significant embodied qualities of the actions referred to by these phrases. Thus, participants imagined the "argument" as a physical object that when torn apart no longer persists, and saw themselves as physically grasping the objects and tear it to pieces. In a different set of experiments, Wilson and Gibbs (2007) showed that the time people take to read metaphorical phrases like "grasp the concept" are facilitated when they first make, or imagine making, in this case, a grasping movement. Once again, people appear to conceive of a "concept" in metaphorical terms as an object that once grasped, could be controlled, examined, and understood. Imaginative bodily processes enhance the construction of simulation activities to speed up metaphor processing, an idea that is completely contrary to the traditional notion that bodily processes and physical meanings are to be ignored or rejected in understanding verbal metaphors.

Experimental findings like these emphasize that people may be creating partial, but not necessarily complete, embodied simulations of speakers' metaphorical messages that involve moment-by-moment "what must it be like" processes, such as grasping, that make use of ongoing tactile-kinesthetic experiences (Gibbs, 2006b). These simulation processes operate even when people encounter language that is abstract, or refers to actions that are physically impossible to perform, such as "*grasp a concept*," precisely because people can automatically conceive of a "concept" in metaphorical terms as an object that can be grasped. One implication of these empirical findings is that people do not just access passively encoded conceptual metaphors from long-term memory during online metaphor understanding, but perform online simulations of what these actions may be like to create detailed understandings of speakers' metaphorical messages (Gibbs, 2006b).

My major claim is that understanding allegory involves embodied simulations of what certain actions, including source-to-target domain mappings, must be like or feel like. The process of running these simulations and what they produce represents our understandings of allegories. We read "The Road Not Taken" and imagine ourselves engaging in actions as the protagonist and experience full-bodied sensations and thoughts that enable us to understand various things about what the poem can mean through this activity. We do not first understand the poem through abstract, purely symbolic means and then react to this (i.e., emotionally and aesthetically). Rather, allegory emerges from simulation processes, and is "soft assembled" in the moment of experience depending on state of person, environment and task. Allegoresis is our imaginative projection into other minds and worlds, and is "cognitive" precisely because much abstract cognition is inherently embodied and imaginative.

REFERENCES

- Frost, R. (1969). *The poetry of Robert Frost*. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston.
- Garner, J. (1994). *Politically correct bedtime stories*. New York: Wiley.
- Gibbs, R. (1994). *The poetics of mind: Figurative thought, language, and understanding*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Gibbs, R. (2006a). *Embodiment and cognitive science*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Gibbs, R. (2006b). Metaphor interpretation as embodied simulation. *Mind & Language*, 21, 434–458.
- Gibbs, R. (Ed.). (2008). *Cambridge handbook of metaphor and thought*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Gibbs, R., & Boers, E. (2005). Metaphoric processing of allegorical poetry. In Z. Maalej (Ed.), *Metaphor and culture*. Tunis, Tunisia: University of Manouba Press.
- Gibbs, R., Gould, J., & Andric, M. (2005–2006). Imagining metaphorical actions: Embodied simulations make the impossible plausible. *Imagination, Cognition, and Personality*, 25, 221–238.
- Kosinski, J. (1970). *Being there*. Toronto, Canada: Bantam.
- Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (1999). *Philosophy in the flesh*. New York: Basic Books.
- McKellin, W. (1990). Allegory and inference: Intentional ambiguity in Managalese negotiations. In K. Watson-Gegeo & G. White (Eds.), *Disentangling: Conflict discourse in Pacific societies* (pp. 335–372). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Mueller, R., & Gibbs, R. (1987). Processing idioms with multiple meanings. *Journal of Psycholinguistic Research*, 16, 63–81.
- Pfaff, K., & Gibbs, R. (1997). Authorial intentions in understanding satirical texts. *Poetics*, 25, 45–70.
- “Retired Teacher Finds Balance” (2009). *San Francisco Chronicle*, June, 15, p. E5.
- Wilson, N., & Gibbs, R. (2007). Real and imagined body movement primes metaphor comprehension. *Cognitive Science*, 31, 721–731.

Copyright of Metaphor & Symbol is the property of Taylor & Francis Ltd and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.