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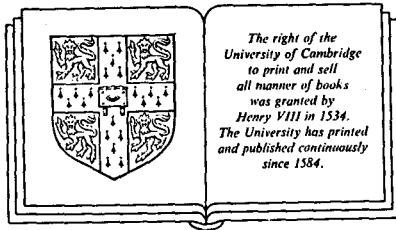
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Metaphors in the history of psychology

Edited by
David E. Leary



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Preface

This volume reflects at least three trends that have become increasingly apparent over the past several decades: the development of interest in the history of psychology; the development of interest in the nature of cognitive processes, particularly those underlying creative activity; and the development of interest in the nature of language, especially the incidence and functions of metaphor. Although these trends overlap in various regards, the chapters in this volume tighten their association by explicating the role of metaphors in the thinking and behavior of psychologists. As a whole, this volume should raise the consciousness of psychologists, historians of science, students, and interested laypersons regarding the uses – and abuses – of metaphor in the history of psychology.

As the book's progenitor and editor, I am particularly grateful for the cooperation, diligence, and scholarship of my collaborators; for the interest and support of the director, staff, and my fellow fellows (in 1982–3) at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, Stanford, California; for the encouragement and feedback of many persons who attended a series of symposia entitled "Metaphors in the History of Psychology" that were held at the annual meetings of the American Psychological Association between 1983 and 1986; for the intellectual and financial assistance of the Department of Psychology, Dean Stuart Palmer of the College of Liberal Arts, and the Research Administration Office of the University of New Hampshire; for the reference checking and proof-reading done by Trey Buchanan and Linda Pertsch; for the patience and secretarial help of Shirley Norton, Donna Hardy, and especially Anna Moses; for the expert and timely editorial work of Helen Wheeler and

Mary Nevader of Cambridge University Press; and for the forbearance of all those, from collaborators to strangers, who kept asking, "When is that book on metaphor going to come out?" Finally, I would like to acknowledge a very personal debt to my wife, Marge, and to my children, Emily, Elizabeth, and Matthew. I would not have had the satisfaction of being associated with this work if they had not continually supported my scholarly efforts.

Perhaps a few words about the chapters in this volume are in order. My introductory chapter, "Psyche's Muse," is meant simply to draw you, the reader, into the subject and concerns of this volume by presenting a brief, preliminary discussion on metaphor and by pointing to illustrative instances of its historical role in fields other than psychology as well as in psychology itself. The objective of this introductory chapter is simply to set the scene for the subsequent chapters in such a way that no reader will put down this volume with the idea that psychology is somehow alone in its reliance on metaphor. However unique its particular uses of metaphor, psychology has had no monopoly on metaphorical thinking. As a result, even though this volume focuses primarily on the role of metaphors in psychology, its analyses are relevant to an understanding of intellectual life in general, both inside and outside the domain of science.

Whereas my introductory chapter seeks to elicit your interest and to set wider boundaries for your thoughts, my concluding chapter briefly summarizes the major metaphors and sources of metaphors covered in each chapter, sharpens an important point that is not emphasized in the foregoing chapters, and indicates the scholarly work that remains to be done. Since the chapters of this volume provide in each case something akin to initial reconnaissance, I have resisted the impulse – and the weight of custom – to "tie it all together." Such considerable unity as this volume enjoys inheres in its common subject and in the common objective toward which the chapters point. There is no need to hasten closure at this time.

As for the chapters between my introduction and conclusion, you will discover that they are the heart and soul of this book. They describe in considerable detail the uses of metaphor in different areas of psychology. Other areas might have been represented, either instead of or in addition to those actually chosen. But those surveyed herein constitute a very reasonable selection from among the many subspecialties encompassed by the contemporary discipline of psychology. In any case, by offering such a rich and varied diet, the contributors to this volume have provided plenty of food for you to digest, with profit, for a good long time.

This book is intended primarily for those whose interests intersect one or more of the trends listed at the beginning of this preface. But even if you

are not among these many individuals, I join my fellow collaborators in hoping that you will be informed, stimulated, and challenged by this volume.

As for ourselves, the authors of this volume, we have enjoyed producing this book, and if anything, we are now more conscious than before that our topic is important – and that our contributions are all too preliminary. As Philip Wheelwright once noted in a similar context, we can only murmur with the Hindu sages of the Upanishads, “*Neti neti*,” which is to say, “Not quite that! Not quite that!”

We thank those who have been patient as we traveled toward this milestone in our efforts to comprehend the role of metaphor in the history of psychology, and we are grateful in advance to those who will read this volume with tolerance as well as vigilance. However fallible our analyses and arguments may be, we are convinced that they deal with topics and concerns that deserve – and will repay – the effort of sustained attention.