

CONCEPTUAL METAPHOR & LITERATURE

Senior Seminar ~ **Spring 2012** ~ English 461

Instructor: Dr. Elena Tapia, Ph. D. Linguistics, Indiana University

Class meets: Mondays 4:00 - 6:45 p.m.

"One must learn where metaphor is useful to thought, where it is crucial to thought, and where it is misleading. Conceptual metaphor can be all these."

Lakoff & Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh* (1999)

In this senior seminar, participants will examine metaphor from a linguistic and cognitive perspective. Through basic secondary readings we will study current theories that posit that metaphor is not simply figurative. Rather, metaphor forms much of our conceptual apparatus.

The study of metaphor as conceptual system is quite interdisciplinary. Therefore, our initial readings and discussions will involve approaches to conceptual metaphor in linguistics, cognitive science, psychology, and literature.

Components of a conceptual system relate to what human beings know and experience in basic physical and physiological existence and to what they know about their cultures. These basic experiences, at the level of the body, might involve perception and motor movement. At the



Copyright Leo Cullum. Cullum, celebrated cartoonist for *The New Yorker*, lived 1942-2010.

cultural level, basic experience might involve a culture's understanding of kinship. We might for example, conceive of knowledge with a kinship metaphor: An idea is born or inherited; or, we might say that we adopted an idea. A conceptual metaphor has a structure that may extend throughout a text. The work of the seminar will be to discover and interpret various types of extensively structured metaphors in texts.

Primary sources: Literary texts of various genres and of various periods to be selected by each student and approved by Dr. Tapia. These will be literary works suitable for analysis at this level.

In the second part of this seminar (Eng 462 in Fall '12), students will write a 20-25 page original analysis of a literary work, employing primary and secondary sources. Fall '12 ENG 462 will also meet Mondays 4-6:45 PM.