

4 *Getting your sources right*

What Aristotle didn't say

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Introduction and overview

As at least one influential writer on metaphor has pointed out – and there are few who would disagree with him – it is still the case that “Any serious study of metaphor is almost obliged to start with the works of Aristotle” (Ortony, 1979a: 3). Most studies of metaphor, however, have scarcely a good word to say about Aristotle. The obligation to discuss him is considered to be something of a chore. Such studies always insist that Aristotle undervalued metaphor and believed it to be merely an ornamental extra in language. They also insist that he was ridiculously elitist with respect to metaphor, believing that one had to be a genius in order to use a metaphor properly. Partly as a result of this prevailing negative appraisal, the scholarship contained in these studies tends to be rather shallow. Since Aristotle’s account of metaphor is fundamentally wrong, it seems, there is not much point in going into great detail about his views, or in consulting more than one of the texts in which he discusses metaphor.

Shallow scholarship about rich and important sources of work on metaphor and language use, however, can impoverish and, at its worst, seriously bias empirical research on the topic. Moreover, getting your sources right is not merely a valuable end in itself – it may also lead to the discovery of insights which support the claims of your current research, or even to the development of new areas for your critical investigation. In this essay I want to argue that a more detailed examination of Aristotle’s writings on metaphor yields both of these happy results. Aristotle, it turns out, holds a position on the ubiquity of metaphor in conversation and writing which supports current views about the omnipresence of metaphor in everyday discourse and the print media. What he has to say about how people can express themselves in a clearer and more attractive way through the use of metaphors is also extremely relevant to the concerns of

contemporary theorists grappling with the problem of language teaching and learning, since it is Aristotle's view that people actually learn and understand things better through metaphors. Furthermore, his account of metaphor includes a distinction between the *coinage* of a metaphor and the *usage* of a metaphor, one which allows for the ubiquity of metaphors in common discourse, without downplaying the aspect of human creativity involved in the creation of new metaphors. This is a distinction which, I think, should be taken on board by future researchers. Finally, I shall remind theorists that Aristotle was the first to argue for an entirely natural origin of true literary genius, and that in this respect his naturalistic aesthetic theory was a revolutionary one, breaking with a long, elitist, anti-naturalistic tradition of theorising about literary genius. Since Aristotle largely identified literary genius with the ability to coin marvellous new metaphors, it follows that Aristotle was the first to argue for an entirely natural origin of metaphor coinage. The fact that he was able to do this without abandoning or downplaying literary talent should be taken into account by those currently engaged in research on language who tend to overlook the plain fact of literary genius in their pursuit of a more egalitarian account of metaphor.

Aristotle on metaphor in the *Poetics*

Aristotle's discussion of metaphor in the *Poetics* is to be found in Chapters 21 and 22. In Chapter 21 Aristotle states that every word "is either current, or strange, or metaphorical, or ornamental, or newly-coined, or lengthened, or contracted, or altered" (21: 1457b; Butcher, in Nahm Ed., 1950: 27¹). The terms *current* and *strange* refer to the commonness of a word in the writings and conversation of a people; *lengthened*, *contracted* or *altered* refer to modifications made to words in Greek; and *newly-coined* refers to newly coined words (and not to new combinations of words). Although there is no separate explanation given of *ornamental*,² it should be noted that the ornamental is differentiated from the metaphorical. The overall importance of including metaphors in this list, however, is that

¹ References to Aristotle's *Poetics* are from the translation by M. C. Butcher, in Nahm Ed. (1950). I have elected to use the Butcher translation because it is the one commonly referred to by other critics, and its phrases are now famous.

² It is almost certain that we do not have the complete text of the *Poetics*, and also that, as Grube has said, "More clearly than any other work of Aristotle, the *Poetics* can only have been a set of lecture notes with later additions and interpolations by the lecturer himself" (1958: xviii). As a result, there are many lacunae in the text, among them the absence of a passage explaining the term *ornamental*.

Aristotle appears to classify metaphors as lying outside normal language use.

Aristotle defines *metaphor* as “the application of an alien name by transference either from genus to species, or from species to genus, or from species to species, or by analogy, that is, proportion” (21: 1457b; Butcher p. 28). Since ‘lying at anchor’ is a species of the genus ‘lying’, one can say **There lies my ship** (genus-to-species metaphor). Since ‘ten thousand’ is a species of a ‘large number’, one can say **Verily ten thousand noble deeds hath Odysseus wrought** (species-to-genus metaphor). Since ‘to draw away’ and ‘to cleave’ are each a species of the genus ‘taking away’, one can say **with blade of bronze drew away the life** (species-to-species metaphor). And since old age is to life as evening is to day, one can say **that old age is the evening of life** (analogy metaphor) (21: 1457b; Butcher p. 28). All metaphors, Aristotle believes, fall into at least one of these four categories, although analogy metaphors are the most pleasing.

This account of metaphor is known as the comparison theory of metaphor. Some contemporary writers on metaphor still accept this account;³ most, however, do not – at least not without many qualifications. However, it is not my intention here to defend the comparison theory of metaphor against all other contenders. As it stands, Aristotle’s account is, in general outline, quite close to the common-sensical understanding of metaphor, and it suffices for the purposes of my essay that he is obviously discussing what we would also call metaphor, even if the comparison theory is applicable to only a limited number of cases. It is the chapter of the *Poetics* which follows this one, where Aristotle elaborates on how metaphors are unusual, and discusses the relationship between metaphor and genius, which is considered to be the more controversial part of his account. This is the part of the *Poetics* on which I will focus.

In Chapter 22 Aristotle argues that the best writing style is that which is clear, but which contains a certain amount of unusual words. “By unusual”, Aristotle says, “I mean strange (or rare) words, metaphorical, lengthened, – anything, in short, that differs from the normal idiom” (22: 1458a; Butcher p. 28). Just as it is important to avoid a style which is perfectly clear but mean – that is, a style composed entirely of “current or proper” (22: 1458a; Butcher p. 29) words, so too it is important to avoid a style composed entirely of unusual words. A style composed entirely of metaphors, for example, would be a “riddle” (22: 1458a; Butcher p. 29). Thus a certain infusion of unusual words “will raise it above the commonplace and

³ See, for example, Susan Sontag’s (1991), *Illness as Metaphor: Aids and Its Metaphors*.

mean, while the use of proper words will make it perspicuous" (22: 1458a; Butcher p. 29). All unusual words, however, Aristotle cautions, must be employed with propriety. It is in this context that he makes his most famous statement about the relationship between metaphor and genius:

It is a great matter to observe propriety in these several modes of expression – compound words, strange (or rare) words, and so forth. But the greatest thing by far is to have a command of metaphor. This alone cannot be imparted by another; it is the mark of genius – for to make good metaphors implies an eye for resemblances. (*Poetics* 22: 1458b; Butcher p. 31)

This is the extent of the account of metaphor given in the *Poetics*. Despite its relative brevity, it is probably the most influential account of metaphor ever provided.

The controversy over the account centres on at least four claims concerning metaphor which are attributed to Aristotle on the basis of these statements in the *Poetics*. The first is that, according to Aristotle, metaphors lie outside normal language use. They are a deviant or aberrant form of discourse. The second is that metaphors have no cognitive value, and are considered to be merely decorative extras. As Ortony (1979a: 3) says, "As to their use, [Aristotle] believed that it was entirely ornamental. Metaphors, in other words, are not necessary, they are just nice". The third claim is that metaphors do not possess clarity. As Hawkes puts it, writing about Aristotle's account of metaphor:

It is abundantly clear that, as an entity in itself, metaphor is regarded as a decorative addition to language, to be used in specific ways, and at specific times and places. It will also be noticed that 'clarity' is presumed to reside in 'ordinary' language, which is non-metaphorical: metaphor is a kind of dignifying, enlivening ingredient. (Hawkes, 1984: 8–9)

The fourth claim attributed to Aristotle is that in order to be able to use a metaphor correctly, a person must have genius. I.A. Richards, among many others, attributes this claim to Aristotle, as I will show later on.

I want to argue that Aristotle makes none of these claims. The misunderstanding of his position which has generated this view is largely due to a failure to appreciate the context of the discussion of metaphor in the *Poetics* and to a confusion of the concepts of *coinage* and *usage*, coupled with a general lack of familiarity with what Aristotle has to say about metaphor in the *Rhetoric*.

The *Poetics* is a treatise about Greek literature, principally tragic and epic verse. It is not a treatise about language. In the chapters of the *Poetics* quoted above, Aristotle is discussing the "making", or

coinage, of metaphors in literature, and not their *use* in everyday discourse. Here Aristotle is only concerned with language insofar as it is used by tragedians and poets in the writing of their works. He believes, firstly, that metaphors coined by tragedians and epic poets are unusual, and outside of the normal idiom, insofar as they are new combinations of words, combinations which have not been made before. Secondly, he believes that the ability to coin new metaphors which are pleasing and informative – the ability, in other words, to coin *good* new metaphors – is the greatest kind of creative ability a tragedian or epic poet can have. This kind of creative ability is a rare skill which cannot be taught. Thirdly, he believes that metaphors convey truths about “resemblances” that actually exist between things in the world. And fourthly, he believes that metaphors can be lucid, and that those of a good writer always are.

Textual support for this interpretation of his statements about metaphor in the *Poetics* can be garnered from his subsequent discussion of metaphor in the *Rhetoric*, to which I will now turn.

Aristotle on metaphor in the *Rhetoric*

Aristotle’s discussion of metaphor in the *Rhetoric* is to be found in Book 3. Many of the statements about metaphor made in the *Rhetoric* rely upon the account of metaphor already provided in the *Poetics*. As he says in Chapter 2 of Book 3, “The nature of each of these kinds of words has already, as I said, been discussed in the *Poetics*; so have the different kinds of metaphor, and the extreme importance of metaphor in both prose and verse”.⁴ While it is true that the account of metaphor given in the *Poetics* is the definitive account, this certainly should not lead us to ignore what is added to this account in the *Rhetoric*, as many critics tend to do.

Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* is concerned with everyday discourse and public oratory, as well as with written prose. He places more restrictions on the kinds of words which can be used in these contexts. He divides up the list of unusual words, previously provided in the *Poetics*, into those which ought to be used and those which ought not. While strange, new or compound words ought not to be used in public oratory and written prose, metaphors ought to be. The reason is that they are ubiquitous in normal conversation and writing. As he says again in Chapter 2 of Book 3:

There is very little occasion in prose to use strange words, compounds, or new coinages . . . and the reason has already been stated: they make the

⁴ References to Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* are from G. M. A. Grube’s (1958) translation.

language more elevated and unusual than is appropriate. Only current words, the proper names of things, and metaphors are to be used in prose, as is indicated by the fact that everybody uses only these. Everybody does use metaphors, the proper names of things, and current words in conversation, so that the language of a good writer must have an element of strangeness, but this must not obtrude, and he should be clear, for lucidity is the peculiar excellence of prose. (*Rhetoric* 3, 2: 1404b; Grube pp. 69–70)

Here Aristotle refers to his account of metaphor in the *Poetics*, and points out that a metaphor is “lucid, pleasing, and strange, and has all these qualities to a high degree” (R3, 2: 1404b; Grube p. 70). He also says that what Grube translates as its “use” (p. 70), but what I would call its *coinage*, cannot be learned from anyone else. After this reiteration of the claim concerning the ultimate unteachability of the creative ability to coin good new metaphors, Aristotle proceeds to give advice on how to derive *better* metaphors. He cautions that metaphors used in prose must be appropriate and not “farfetched” (R3, 2: 1405a; Grube p. 71), and he invokes the proportional method of the analogy metaphor ($a : b :: c : d$) given in the *Poetics* as an aid to coining metaphors:

Think of it this way: as a purple cloak is to youth, so to old age is – what? The same garment is obviously unusable. If you want to flatter your subject, you must derive your metaphor from the nobler things in the same genus; if you want to censure, from the worse. (*Rhetoric* 3, 2: 1405a; Grube p. 70)

Aristotle also argues that metaphors should be “made from words that are beautiful in sound, in meaning, or by association to the eye or some other sense” (R3, 2: 1405b; Grube p. 72). After arguing that all similes are really metaphors (“all similes become metaphors when the explanation is omitted”, R3, 2: 1407a; Grube p. 76), the next important statement about metaphor is made in Chapter 10, in the course of outlining how to obtain the most felicitous phrases in writing prose. “Three things should be aimed at: metaphor, antithesis, and vividness” (R3, 2: 1410b; Grube p. 89), and about metaphors he says that it is from them that we learn the most. We are attracted to metaphors, he says, precisely because we *learn* from them:

We learn above all from metaphors. When Homer compares old age to wheat stubble, he makes us realise and understand that both wheat stubble and old age belong to the genus of things that have lost their vigor . . . we are attracted by those things which we understand as soon as they are said or very soon afterwards, even though we had no knowledge of them before, for then there is a learning process or something very like it, but in the case of the obvious or the unintelligible there is no learning at any time.

(*Rhetoric* 3, 10: 1410b; Grube p. 89)

Aristotle next proceeds to give a whole series of examples of metaphors – principally examples of proportional metaphors – taken from the speeches of politicians and generals. In Chapter 11 he states that the best metaphors are ones which achieve the effect of “bringing things vividly before the eyes of the audience”, and argues that this effect is “produced by words which refer to things in action” (R3, 11: 1411b; Grube pp. 92–93). This is followed by an important claim about the merit of a metaphor depending upon the correspondence of the metaphor to a similarity actually existing between things in the world:

As I said before, metaphor must be by transference from things that are related, but not obviously so, as it is a sign of sound intuition in a philosopher to see similarities between things that are far apart.

(*Rhetoric* 3, 11: 1412a; Grube p. 93)

Most felicitous sayings, Aristotle goes on to conclude, rely on metaphor, and “the best image involves a metaphor” (R3, 11: 1413a; Grube p. 96). He also argues that all proverbs are metaphors, and that “Successful hyperboles are also metaphors, as when it was said of a man with a black eye: You’d take him for a basket of mulberries, a black eye, too, being purple, and the quantity of mulberries provides the exaggeration” (R3, 11: 1413a; Grube p. 96). Finally he reiterates his important claim concerning the correspondence of metaphors to similarities existing between things in the world: “Poets are hissed off the stage if their metaphors are bad, but good metaphors are much applauded, when there is a true correspondence between the terms” (R3, 10: 1413a; Grube p. 96).

As I stated earlier, the account of metaphor provided in the *Rhetoric* is often ignored by critics of Aristotle, and this lack of familiarity with the *Rhetoric* has led to the misinterpretation of his overall position on metaphor. For here Aristotle acknowledges that *everybody* uses metaphors in conversation, and he simply encourages orators and writers to work on producing *better* metaphors. Even if true literary genius cannot be taught, it is at least possible for people to practise coining metaphors, and improve their ability to coin them. Aristotle also extends the scope of metaphor to include hyperboles and proverbs, and discusses at greater length the details of what makes a metaphor successful, pleasing and informative. He stresses the cognitive value of these metaphors, claiming that they are lucid and that they convey truths about the world. He also stresses their pedagogical value: metaphors tell us things about the world which we did not understand beforehand, and the “learning process” is extremely enjoyable. People are attracted to metaphors precisely

because they learn new things from them, seeing connections where previously they had not seen any. Metaphors bring things vividly "before the eyes" of listeners or readers, and the pleasing mental effort required to understand them makes them memorable.

This summary of the main points of the discussion of metaphor in the *Rhetoric* provides support for my earlier interpretation of certain statements from the *Poetics*, and undermines the criticisms made by Ortony and Hawkes. If everyone uses metaphors in conversation, it can hardly be the case that for Aristotle metaphors *per se* are unusual. It must be the case that the metaphors of the tragic and epic poets are unusual because they are *new* metaphors. Nor can it be said that for Aristotle clarity resides entirely in ordinary language, since good metaphors are credited with being lucid. They are even said to be the best way to teach people things about the world, and they are thus *superior* to literal explanation. Nor can it be said that for him metaphors are entirely ornamental, since good metaphors convey truths about similarities actually existing between things in the world. As Cooper has pointed out:

The fact is, though, that in addition to judging metaphors as witty or flat, stimulating or dull, vivid or pale, edifying or corrupting, people have always felt a strong desire to appraise them in the terminology of truth and falsity. The urge needs to be understood even if the explanation shows it to be misguided. We must investigate, if not fully sympathize with, the tendency illustrated by Aristotle's insistence that metaphors "fairly correspond to the things signified".
(Cooper, 1986: 199)

With this more comprehensive interpretation of Aristotle's position on metaphor in mind, I now want to address in greater detail the claim attributed to him by various critics that in order to be able to use a metaphor correctly a person must have genius.

Richards on Aristotle, metaphor and genius

In his lectures on rhetoric given at Bryn Mawr in 1936, published that year under the title of *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, I. A. Richards quotes Aristotle's twin claims in the *Poetics* that the greatest thing by far is to have a command of metaphor, and that the ability to make good metaphors is the mark of genius, and says that in these claims he finds "the evil presence of three assumptions which have ever since prevented the study of this 'greatest thing by far' from taking the place it deserves among our studies" (1936: 89).

The first assumption of which Aristotle is guilty is that "an eye for resemblances' is a gift that some men have but others do not".

Against this Richards argues that “we all live, and speak, only through our eye for resemblances. Without it we should perish early” (1936: 89). The second assumption of which Aristotle is guilty is that “though everything else may be taught, the command of metaphor cannot be taught”. Against this Richards argues as follows:

But, if we consider how we all of us attain what limited measure of a command of metaphor we possess, we shall see that no such contrast is valid. As individuals we gain our command of metaphor just as we learn whatever else makes us distinctively human. It is all imparted to us from others, with and through the language we learn, language which is utterly unable to aid us except through the command of metaphor which it gives.
(Richards, 1936: 90)

The third assumption of which Aristotle is guilty is “that metaphor is something special and exceptional in the use of language, a deviation from its normal mode of working”. Against this Richards argues that metaphor is “the omnipresent principle of all [language’s] free action” (1936: 90).

I want to argue that Aristotle is not guilty of these three evil assumptions. Firstly, Aristotle is not claiming that a select few geniuses have an eye for resemblances, whereas the rest of us do not. Rather, he is claiming that there are people – the tragedians and epic poets – who have a *better* eye for resemblances than the rest of us, and who have the ability to coin wonderful new metaphors which capture these resemblances. Aristotle could not consistently claim that nobody except a *genius* has an eye for resemblances and at the same time encourage people in the creation of their metaphors to “derive your metaphor from ... things in the same genus”, as he does in the example quoted above from the *Rhetoric* concerning the cloak and old age. For an eye for resemblances is surely required in order to perform *that* task.

Secondly, Aristotle is not claiming that our ability to use metaphors is one which we cannot learn from others. That claim alone would contradict almost every exhortation contained in Book 3 of the *Rhetoric*, where he goes to great lengths to give practical advice on how to use metaphors in order to “bring things vividly before the eyes of the audience” in making speeches. Aristotle must believe that our ability to use metaphors can be learned and improved from reading works such as the *Rhetoric*, otherwise he would not write in such a manual-like way.

Finally, as I have already argued above, Aristotle is not claiming that metaphors *per se* are exceptional. He is only claiming that new good metaphors that are coined by the tragedians and epic poets are

exceptional. Although he could not, I think, be said to hold the position that metaphor is *omnipresent* in language, he does at least hold the position that the use of metaphors in conversation is as common as the use of current words and the proper names of things. Consequently, I reject Richards' ascription of these three "evil assumptions" to Aristotle.⁵

Metaphor coinage and literary genius

The value of re-interpreting Aristotle as a theorist who seeks to explain what he calls the "extreme importance of metaphor in both prose and verse" is that it allows for a more thorough evaluation of his position on the relationship between metaphor and true literary genius. Aristotle's position is actually similar to that of Shelley's in his *A Defence of Poetry*.⁶ It is the position that true literary genius consists in the ability to coin marvellous new metaphors which capture similarities existing between things in the world. Aristotle also believes that this skill, which the tragedians and epic poets possess, is an entirely *natural* skill.

It is important to note here that, in making this claim about the natural origin of metaphor creation in tragedians and epic poets, Aristotle was breaking with a long, anti-naturalistic tradition of aesthetic theory which asserted that poetry was the result of divine inspiration, and that a poet was a kind of madman. This tradition included Plato's *Phaedrus* and *Ion*, in which it is claimed that:

Just so the Muse. She first makes men inspired, and then through these inspired ones others share in the enthusiasm, and a chain is formed, for the epic poets, all the good ones, have their excellence, not from art, but are inspired, possessed, and thus they utter all these admirable poems.

(*Ion* 533e; Hamilton and Cairns, 1963: 220)

⁵ I also reject Richards' claim that Shelley's position on metaphor in his *A Defence of Poetry* is opposed to that of Aristotle, because Shelley observed "that 'Language is vitally metaphorical ...'" (Richards, p. 90). Shelley observed no such thing, because this is a misquotation. What Shelley in fact observed was that "*Their* language is vitally metaphorical ..." – the language, that is, of the great poets (Brett-Smith Ed., 1921: 25) [emphasis added]).

In his summary of Richards' *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, Paul Ricoeur compounds these two misreadings when he says that "contrary to Aristotle's well-known saying that the mastery of metaphor is a gift of genius and cannot be taught, language is 'vitally metaphorical', as Shelley saw very well" (Ricoeur, translated by R. Czerny, 1978: 79–80).

⁶ For more on Shelley's position on metaphor, see my 'Truth and metaphor: A defence of Shelley' (Mahon, 1997).

It was revolutionary of Aristotle to assert, as he does in Chapter 17 of the *Poetics*, that “Hence poetry implies either a happy gift of nature or a strain of madness” (P17: 1455a; Butcher p. 22), and to argue that the former kind of poet, who has an innate gift but who retains his critical sense, is the superior poet. As Murray puts it:

Despite the brevity of the statement and the complexity of the context in which it occurs, Aristotle is clearly contrasting two types of poet, the *manikos-ekstatikos*, that is the inspired poet (in the Platonic sense of the word) and the *euphuēs-euplastos*, one endowed by nature to be adaptable or versatile. This is the first explicit formulation in Greek literature of a distinction between inspiration and natural endowment (to call it ‘genius’ as many commentators do is probably stretching the term too much) as alternative sources of poetic activity. (Murray, 1989: 19)

Aristotle was thus the first thinker to argue for an entirely natural origin for true literary genius, and hence, the first to argue that the ability to coin marvellous new metaphors was indeed a wholly natural ability.

Much of the work being done on metaphor in the latter half of the twentieth century is concerned with stressing the ubiquity of metaphor in conversation and in the print media, against earlier theorists (such as the Logical Positivists) who wished to deny the omnipresence of metaphor. This project is an important and necessary one. As I have shown above, it was foreshadowed in Aristotle’s own assertion that everybody uses metaphors in conversation. However, researchers pursuing this project tend to downplay the aspect of creativity involved in the coinage of new metaphors by talented writers. For example, in the opening chapter of *The Poetics of Mind*, Gibbs (1994: 7) argues that “What poets primarily do, again, is not create new conceptualizations of experience but talk about the metaphorical entailments of ordinary conceptual mappings in new ways”. About a poem by Emily Dickinson – ‘I Taste a Liquor Never Brewed’ – he says that:

It is misleading to assert that a creative poet like Dickinson has actually created a new metaphorical mapping between dissimilar domains when she has only made manifest some of the possibilities about love that are suggested by the conceptual metaphor LOVE IS A NUTRIENT.

(Gibbs, 1994: 7)

The implication of these claims is that authors such as Dickinson do not really coin new metaphors, but merely elaborate upon generic conceptual metaphors which are basic to entire cultures, or even to the human race (e.g. LOVE IS A NUTRIENT, or ANGER IS HEATED FLUID IN A CONTAINER). Such an implication is

certainly interesting, and may perhaps be true in some form – Gibbs' work on the naturalistic origin of metaphors is among the most important and fruitful being done on metaphor creation at the moment.⁷ This implication, however, does not alter the fact that writers such as Dickinson are indeed more creative in their use of language than the rest of us. Such writers have an ability to coin new metaphors that delight and educate their audiences which is *rare*, and which wins them recognition for having literary genius.

The lessons to be learned from a more detailed examination of Aristotle's writings on metaphor are many, but among the most important is that, while everyone uses and coins metaphors and thus is creative to some extent, it is still the case that some individuals are better at coining good ones than the rest of us, and thus may be said to possess genius, albeit a wholly natural genius. No-one, I think, could seriously dispute this; we *do* look upon those authors who are able to coin marvellous new metaphors as having the 'mark of genius', and we *do* consider their literary talent to be a natural talent.

The contemporary egalitarian project of establishing that we all use and coin metaphors notwithstanding, we may still look upon certain gifted wordsmiths as having a 'command of metaphor' without thereby relegating the rest of us to mere literal usage. The fear that we would be so relegated were we to admit a definition of literary genius along the lines of metaphor coinage is unwarranted, as Aristotle's writings amply demonstrate.

⁷ For more on Gibbs' work, see my 1996 review of *The Poetics of Mind*.