The diverse discourse functions of *ape, monkey, and gorilla*

Shala Barczewska

ICLC 12
Edmonton, Alberta
Canada
June 2013

http://www.answersingenesis.org/assets/images/media/cartoons/after-eden/20000710.gif
• **Encyclopedic**

  “Words do not represent neatly packaged bundles of meaning (the dictionary view), but serve as ‘points of access’ to vast repositories of knowledge relating to a particular concept or conceptual domain.

• **Involves conceptualization, blending**

• **Involves inferencing strategies**

• **Usage – based**
  
• *That soldier is a lion*
• *That ballerina is a lion*

– Evokes folk knowledge which
  • *May or may not reflect reality*
  • *Profiles a certain aspect of the animal’s character*

– This folk knowledge is transferred in figurative usage
Null Hypothesis:
The various primates will have similar distribution in the corpus
• no clear preference for literal/figurative usage
• Similar usage patterns in figurative/literal usage of different types of primates

Alternative Hypothesis:
• Some types of primates will be more productive in producing figurative expressions
• Some types of primates will show a preference for different contextual situations.

If the alternative hypothesis is true...
• Patterns will emerge between the animal and its usage
## Description of the Corpus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>News source</th>
<th>Search term</th>
<th>Articles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1923-1932</td>
<td>Time Magazine Archives</td>
<td>“evolution”</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>Menken’s articles</td>
<td><em>Scopes Trial Reporting</em></td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003-2012</td>
<td>‘National’ News ProQuest Newspaper Core*</td>
<td>ab(evolution OR creationism OR &quot;intelligent design&quot;) NEAR/4 ab((education OR school OR classroom OR teach* OR taught))</td>
<td>271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003-2012</td>
<td>‘National’ Magazines ProQuest Magazines</td>
<td>ab(evolution OR creationism OR &quot;intelligent design&quot;) AND ab((education OR school OR classroom OR teach* OR taught))</td>
<td>256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003-2012</td>
<td>‘Local’ News: Ebsco Host</td>
<td>evolution OR creationism OR “intelligent design”) AND (education OR teach* or classroom OR taught)</td>
<td>376</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Search terms

- anthropoid*
- ape*
- aping
- baboon*
- chimp*
- gibbon*
- gorilla*

- hominid*
- lemur*
- mandrill*
- marmoset*
- monkey*
- orangutan*
- *primate*

- prosimian*
- simian*
- tarsier*
• *Defining literal and non-literal language?*
  – Meaning accessed from secondary vs. primary cognitive models?
Literal vs. Figurative

• **Defining literal and non-literal language?**
  – Meaning accessed from secondary vs. primary cognitive models?
  – Salience based, continuum?

• **For this study:**
  – **Literal** – animal or replica (eg. stuffed toy)
  – **Figurative** – other uses, eg. to make a comparison (metaphor) or symbolically to refer to sth greater (metonym)
Literal – Figurative??

• Frank Robinson entertained customers with a besuited chimp that sipped "simian soda" and played a toy piano. (PQ MAG ED)

• What's next? I am inclined to believe The story of Adam and Eve. There's no chimpanzee(?) In my pedigree And you can't make a monkey of me. (PQ MAG ED)

• Across the pond Bishop Barnes was preaching his "Gorilla Sermons," which argued that Christians needed to accept apes as ... (PQ MAG ED)
Categories used for marking primate usage

A = as an ancestor
B = rejected as an ancestor or ancestral role presented in a negative light
C = animal (mention)
D = humorous (eg. Simian soda)
R = direct ridicule
F = other figurative
• ...entertained customers with a besuited chimp (D) that sipped "simian (D) soda" ...
(PQ MAG ED)
• ...There's no chimpanzee (B) In my pedigree
And you can't make a monkey (F) of me. (PQ MAG ED)
• ....flashed a picture of a chimpanzee (B).
"Did your grandfather look like this?" ..... (PQ NEWS NEWS)
• ... "Gorilla (F) Sermons," which argued that Christians needed to accept apes (A) as ...
(PQ MAG ED)
• ...Clarence D arrow, famed champion of Leopold, Loeb and the Ape (A) ... (TIME)
Usage overview

Clear distinction between the way ‘monkey’ is used as compared to the other primates

Preference comparable to that in the OED which gives many more uses for monkey, included 10 Phrases and 72 Compound words
‘primates’ in the corpus

- Monkey trials
- Gorilla sermons
- Monkey bill
- Monkey business
- Get the monkey off Darwin’s back
- Monkey-see monkey do
- Man: Ape or Angel
- Make a monkey out of me
- Monkey state
- Monkey show
- Funda-monkeyist

But not...

- Chimp trials
- Monkey sermons
- Ape bill
- Primate business
- Get the Orangutan off Darwin’s back
- Hominoid-see, hominoid-do
- Man: Gibbon or Angel
- Make a chimp out of me
- Ape state
- Gorilla show
- Fund-ape-ist
‘primates’ in the corpus

Why?

But not...

How?

- Monkey trials
- Gorilla sermons
- Monkey bill
- Monkey business
- Get the monkey off Darwin’s back
- Monkey-see monkey do
- Man: Ape or Angel
- Make a monkey out of me
- Monkey state
- Monkey show
- Funda-monkeyist

- Chimp trials
- Monkey sermons
- Ape bill
- Primate business
- Get the Orangutan off Darwin’s back
- Hominoid-see, hominoid-do
- Man: Gibbon or Angel
- Make a chimp out of me
- Ape state
- Gorilla show
- Fund-ape-ist
WHAT MOTIVATED THE WORD CHOICE IN THESE PHRASES?

- Gorilla Sermons
- Monkey trial
- Man: Angel or Ape
- ...Leopold, Loeb and the Ape
Gorilla

a. The largest of anthropoid apes, a native of western equatorial Africa; it closely resembles man in its structure, is very powerful and ferocious, and arboreal in its habits.

b. *transf.* A person who resembles a gorilla.

Compounds

*attrib.* and *Comb.*, as gorilla-land, gorilla-skin; gorilla-built adj.
OED: Ape

1. An animal of the monkey tribe (Simiadæ); before the introduction of ‘monkey’ (16th c.), the generic name, and still (since 1700) sometimes so used poetically or rhetorically, or when their uncouth resemblance to men and mimicry of human action is the main idea

2. a. *spec.* A member of the Simiadæ, having no tail nor cheek-pouches; gorilla, chimpanzee, orang-outan, and gibbons.
   b. to play the ape: to imitate, *esp.* in an inferior or spurious manner, to counterfeit, mimic
   c. Used quasi-adverb. in to go ape (slang, orig. U.S.), to go ‘crazy’;

3. Hence *fig.* One who ‘plays the ape’; an imitator, a mimic.
   • a. contemptuously or derisively. b. in a good or neutral sense. *Obs.*


7. as adj. Foolish, silly. adv. Foolishly, sillily.

Compounds

1. Ape (v)
   a. To imitate, mimic:
      a. pretentiously, irrationally, or absurdly.
      b. in a good or neutral sense. rare.
   2. to ape it: to play the ape, mimic the reality.
monkey, n.
n: 27 uses, 10 Phrases, 72 compounds

a. Any of numerous small- to medium-sized primates belonging to the one of the three families ..., most kinds of which have long tails and live in trees in tropical countries. Also more generally: any higher primate, including the apes as well as the true monkeys.

c. With distinguishing word: a particular species or kind of monkey.

d. The fur of a monkey, as dressed and used in garments. Freq. *attrib.*

e. Each of three carved monkeys, ... Chiefly in three wise monkeys ... to refer to a person who chooses to ignore or keep silent about wrongdoing, etc.

monkey, v.

1. trans. To ape the manners of, mimic; to mock, ridicule. *Now rare.*

2. intr. colloq. (orig. U.S.). To play mischievous or foolish tricks. Also: to fool or mess about or around; to tinker, tamper, or interfere

3. intr. U.S. To dance the monkey *Now rare.*

Obs. rare. Resembling or suggestive of a monkey; playful, amusing, etc.
Other uses of monkey (n)

II. A person regarded as resembling a monkey

5. A child; a junior; a foolish person.

6. A mimic, a person who acts comically; a mischievous person; a rascal, a scamp. Now freq. in little monkey.

7. A person engaged in any of various trades and professions, esp. one performing a subordinate or menial task, or one which involves physical agility.


11. Freq. depreciative. Used contrastively with organ-grinder: a person who is less important or powerful than another;

III. Technical uses.

IV. Other extended uses.

24. colloq. A mortgage. Chiefly in to have a monkey on : to have a mortgage on (a house, etc)

a. slang (chiefly U.S. & Aust.). The female external genitals

b. slang (orig. and chiefly U.S.). The penis. Usu. in to spank the monkey and variants: to masturbate.

26. slang. Addiction to, or habitual use of, a drug. Freq. in extended fig. context.

27. orig. U.S. A dance popular in the 1960s

Phrases

P1. slang (orig. U.S.). to make a monkey (out) of : to make a fool of (freq. refl.); to deceive, dupe; to ridicule.

P4. colloq. a wagonload (also barrel, etc.) of monkeys : used as the type of something extremely clever, mischievous, disorderly, jolly, fun,

P5. cold enough to freeze the balls (also tail, etc.) off a brass monkey:

P6. to have a (also the) monkey on one's back :

a. To be angry. Also to take the monkey off one's back .

b. slang (orig. U.S.). To be addicted to drugs
c. To suffer from burdensome worries, emotional pressure

P8. colloq. monkey see, monkey do: commenting (freq. contemptuously) on an instance of unthinking imitation, or of learning or performing by rote.

P9. colloq. I'll be (also I am) a monkey's uncle : an expression of surprise; freq. used to intensify a previous statement.

P10. coarse slang. not to give (also care) a monkey's (fuck), etc.: not to care at all; to be completely indifferent or unconcerned.
Summary of OED Definitions, Usage

Ape
1. The animal: general for tailless primates, incl. gorilla -lost overarching general sense to monkeys in 19th c.
2. Salient characteristic: mimicry ‘in an inferior or spurious manner’, ‘pretentiously, irrationally, or absurdly.’
3. To go crazy, angry: negative -lost silliness sense (to monkey?)

Gorilla
1. The animal: a type of ape
2. Salient characteristics: size, ‘power, ferocity, arboreal habits’
3. A person resembling a gorilla.

Monkey
Noun:
1. The animal: general term, specifically small and tailed
2. Salient characteristics:
   - silly, foolish
   - mischievous
   - inferior or subordinate → derogatory unless to a child
3. Verb: to play mischievous tricks
4. Other slang uses:
   - drug addiction or other problem
   - male and female sexual organs
   - to copy w/o thinking:
     - monkey see-monkey do
     - lost mimicry sense – (to ape?)
Gorilla Sermon

A strong or fierce sermon in which the pastor behaves like a gorilla in arguing for/against evolution?

**Gorilla**
- The animal: a type of ape
- 2. size, 'power, ferocity, arboreal habits'
- 3. A person resembling a gorilla

**Generic N+N**

**Sermon**
- Given by pastor
- Persuasive
- Speaks with authority of the divine

**Blending: Gorilla Sermons (OED)**

**GROUNDING**
Evolution – Creation debate
Blending: Monkey Trial (OED)

**Monkey**
1. The animal
2. silly, foolish
   mischievous
   inferior or subordinate, derogatory
3. to play mischievous tricks

**Generic N + N**

**Trial**
- Court case
- Serious
- The result of a broken law
- To establish justice
- To determine who is right/wrong

**Monkey Trial**
A foolish trial that has mischievous goals – instead of achieving justice

GROUNDING
Evolution – Creation debate
Man: Ape or Angel?

Inferior, wild, uncontrolled or Devine/obedient/Superior?

**Generic**
- Living being
- Characteristics
- Intrinsic identity

**Man: Living being**
- Characteristics
- Intrinsic identity

**Ape**
1. A primate animal
2. mimicry ‘in an inferior or spurious manner’
3. to go crazy, angry

**Angel**
- Divine messenger
- Spiritual, superior to man
- Intelligent, powerful
  - lovely, bright, innocent, gracious

**Man: Ape or Angel?**

Grounding
Evolution – Creation debate
Man: Ape or Angel?
Inferior, wild, uncontrolled or Devine/obedient/Superior?

Ape
1. A primate animal
2. mimicry ‘in an inferior or spurious manner’
3. to go crazy, angry

Man: Ape or Angel?
Inferior, wild, uncontrolled or Devine/obedient/Superior?

Angel
• Divine messenger
• Spiritual, superior to man
• Intelligent, powerful
• lovely, bright, innocent, gracious

Hierarchy/Scalar Frame:
God → Angels → Man → Animals → Plants
(Panther 2013)

Generic
• Living being
• Characteristics
• Intrinsic identity

Man:
Living being
Characteristics
Intrinsic identity

Grounding
Evolution – Creation debate
So, what does a general corpus of American English tell us?

• Using a Corpus provides
  – examples of ACTUAL language usage (vs. introspection)
  – reduction of human error or oversight in identifying all occurrences of a given word or phrase
  – decreased researcher bias
  – bringing to light trends in collocation, semantic preference, discourse prosody, lexical priming.
  – Countable, repeatable, testable

### Usage of monkey, ape, and gorilla (COCA frequency list)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monkey</th>
<th>Ape</th>
<th>Gorilla</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Appearance:</strong> red, little, green,, giant, golden</td>
<td><strong>Appearance,</strong> giant, bald, hairy, huge, wild, physical</td>
<td><strong>Appearance:</strong> giant, feature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Behavior:</strong> drunken, trained, throw, eat, swing, climb, feed, steal, jump, chatter, resemble, act</td>
<td><strong>Behavior:</strong> rob, evolve, compare, perceive, swing, scream, charge, grab</td>
<td><strong>Behavior:</strong> eat, feed, climb, track,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use:</strong> stuffed,</td>
<td><strong>Type:</strong> howler, spider</td>
<td><strong>Use:</strong> famous? pet, name, dress, Dian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type:</strong> howler, spider</td>
<td><strong>Environment:</strong> wild, monkey house</td>
<td>(research)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Environment:</strong> wild, monkey house</td>
<td><strong>Movie:</strong> planet of the Apes</td>
<td><strong>Type:</strong> female, male, gorilla, chimpanzee, orangutan, ape,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Compound nouns:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Type:</strong> great, monkey, human, ape, gorilla</td>
<td><strong>Environment:</strong> western, wild, captive, endangered, African, mountain, lowland, zoo, mist, forest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>business, wrench, bar</td>
<td><strong>Environment:</strong> African, wild, aquatic (?)</td>
<td><strong>Compound nouns:</strong> suit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Movie:</strong> Gorillas in the mist (Dian Fossy)</td>
<td><strong>Environment:</strong> western, wild, captive, endangered, African, mountain, lowland, zoo, mist, forest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Small, silly, mischievous, active | Large, hairy, evolving, dangerous | Captive, endangered, researched
## Usage of monkey, ape, and gorilla (COCA frequency list)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monkey</th>
<th>Ape</th>
<th>Gorilla</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Appearance:</strong> red, little, green,, giant, golden, Behavior: drunken, trained, throw, eat, swing, climb, feed, steal, jump, chatter, resemble, act</td>
<td><strong>Appearance:</strong> giant, bald, hairy, huge, wild, physical Behavior: rob, evolve, compare, perceive, swing, scream, charge, grab</td>
<td><strong>Appearance:</strong> giant, feature Behavior: eat, feed, climb, track, Use: famous? pet, name, dress, Dian (research)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Behavior:</strong> drunken, trained, throw, eat, swing, climb, feed, steal, jump, chatter, resemble, act</td>
<td><strong>Use:</strong> stuffed,</td>
<td><strong>Type:</strong> female, male, gorilla, chimpanzee, orangutan, ape, Environment: western, wild, captive, endangered, African, mountain, lowland, zoo, mist,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type:</strong> howler, spider</td>
<td><strong>Type:</strong> howler, spider</td>
<td><strong>Environment:</strong> wild, monkey house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Environment:</strong> wild, monkey house</td>
<td><strong>Environment:</strong> African</td>
<td><strong>Compound nouns:</strong> suit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Compound nouns:</strong> business, wrench, bar</td>
<td><strong>Movie:</strong> planet of the Apes</td>
<td><strong>Movie:</strong> Gorillas in the mist (Dian Fossy)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

But COCA is modern... what about the 1920s... were these images of monkey, ape, gorilla prevalent/available to the discourse community 80-90 years ago?
## Usage of monkey, ape, and gorilla – 1820-1930

**(ca. Top 20-25 COHA collocates, Lemmas, MI=5)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monkey</th>
<th>Ape</th>
<th>Gorilla</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>animals, types: monkey, rae, parrot, dog, appearance: tail, behavior: chatter, trick, climb, leap, grin, agility, jump, swing cultural: major, jack, tiger, cat, tale use: pet, organ, entertainment environment: cage, tribe expressions: wrench, jacket, brass - silly, entertainer</td>
<td>animals, types: great, ape, species, anthropoid, yellow, Colombian appearance: resemble, skin, manlike, giant, huge, hairy, behavior: agility, grin, manner, idiot cultural: huh, Bentley use: descend, brain, skull, ancestor, research oriented-evolution Large and strong, but idiotic</td>
<td>animals, types: chimpanzee, ape, gorilla, orang, anthropoid, male, adult, elephant (opposed) appearance: figure behavior: roar, growl, chest, intelligent cultural: recognize, Dave original, Abe Lincoln was the Original ape use: stuffed, du, jaw, compare, separate, research oriented, Intelligent, controlled aggressor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Similarities: Research into evolution**

**Similarities: Fictional characters, human-like characteristics...........**
Gorilla Sermon

A sermon supporting the theory of Evolution as the method God used to create

Gorilla
- Abe Lincoln was the Original ape
- research oriented,
- Intelligent, controlled aggressor

Generic
N + N

Sermon
- Given by pastor
- Persuasive
- Speaks with authority of the divine

GROUNDING
Evolution – Creation debate
Growing authority of Science → Evolution as the ‘educated’ view.
Monkey Trial

• silly,
• perhaps mischievous
• entertainer

Generic
N + N

Trial
• Court case
• Serious
• The result of a broken law
• To establish justice
• To determine who is right/wrong

Monkey Trial
a silly, perhaps even mischievous, but also entertaining: out the circus nature of the event.

GROUNDING
1920s – 1930s
Evolution – Creation debate
Man: Ape or Angel? (OED)

Ape
- Animal
- Large and strong, but not so intelligent
- Evolved: inferior to man

Generic
- Living being
- Characteristics
- Intrinsic identity

Man:
- Living being
- Characteristics
- Intrinsic identity

Angel
- Divine messenger
- Spiritual, superior to man
- Intelligent, powerful
- lovely, bright, innocent, gracious

Man: Ape or Angel?

a being of divine creation, intelligent, good intentions, a spiritual aspect? – OR – merely an animal, evolved to the ‘top of the food chain’ as a result of brute strength?

Hierarchy/Scalar Frame:
God → Angels → Man → Animals → Plants
(Panther 2013)

GROUNDING
Evolution – Creation debate
CRITIQUE OR COMPLIMENT OF DARROW’S CHOICE OF CLIENTS?

...Leopold, Loeb and the Ape
Conclusions: ‘primate’ usage

- ‘monkey’ is unique amongst the primates for its figurative usage
- ‘folk knowledge’ identifies different primates with different salient characteristics, which enable them to be used to accomplish various discourse goals
- ‘monkey’ provides a way of laughing at and marginalizing the debate in a “lighthearted” way
- ‘ape’ and ‘gorilla’ are both used in support of the evolutionary theory; however, ‘ape’ seems to emphasize man’s animal nature, and ‘gorilla’ the intelligence of the primate order.
  - Caveat: limited examples of figurative uses of ape and gorilla make this claim tentative until further research is done.
- Despite the different collocates for ‘monkey’ over the years, the evaluative content is consistent.
Conclusions: Contribution to cognitive linguistics

• Impossible to blend w/o taking into account Encyclopedic knowledge

• Corpus analysis of collocates can help in re-creating possible encyclopedic knowledge about a particular topic

• More research should be done into the motivations for using particular senses in blends or choosing one ‘synonym’ over another.
References


