

# Tropes

Word meaning is altered from the usual or expected.

# Allegory

An allegory is a type of extended metaphor. The metaphor is prevalent in the whole piece so the reader makes connections to the real world.

EXAMPLES- Golding's *Lord of the Flies*; Orwell's *Animal Farm*; *Avatar*, and *The Seventh Seal*.

The most famous allegory is John Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress", a story about Christian salvation. Dante's *Inferno* is perhaps the second most famous allegory. *1984* is a close third.

EFFECT- Allegories are used to teach a lesson.



# Allusion

A reference to a well known piece of literature, person, or event.

EXAMPLES- "Plan ahead: it wasn't raining when Noah built the arc."

"You belong in the 8th circle."

"If you use my pen again, expect WWII."

EFFECT- The reader makes a clear distinction (if the allusion is known; if not, it will be a dead end).

Adds variety and depth.

## Ambiguity

An expression that has more than one meaning.

EXAMPLES- Brave men run in my family.

Union Demands Increased Unemployment.

"Leahy Wants FBI to Help Corrupt Iraqi Police Force"

EFFECT- Usually humorous, ambiguous statements show duality. (However, not every person will see both meanings, hence why they are usually newspaper headlines already published.)



# Ambiguity

What happens in Vagueness  
stays in Vagueness



## Analogy

A comparison between two similar items. The comparison may be explained in detail and include a simile.

EXAMPLE- "Knowledge always desires increase: it is like fire, which must first be kindled by some external agent, but which will afterwards propagate itself." --Samuel Johnson

EFFECT- To explain the comparison and possibly help someone see the comparison clearer.



This advertisement (as disturbing as it is) is an analogy. What is the analogy? This can also have different Tropes in it as well. As we go along with the Tropes, you may spot other devices in this advertisement.

## Apostrophe

Addresses a person or personified item, either present or absent. This usually begins with an

“O”.

EXAMPLES- “Sing to me, O Muse...”

“O, pardon me, thou bleeding piece of earth.”

“O value of wisdom...”

O Love! Thou have won again!

EFFECT-To vent or to display intense emotion.

Personifies inanimate objects and makes them relatable.



## Colloquialism

Everyday speech not used in formal writing; slang.

EXAMPLES- “So, I said, like, whatever, ya know. I’m sooooo over that.”

EFFECT- Other than being annoying to read and listen to, this does add an everyday “earthy”

tone.

AVOID using in your own formal writing. However, when authors use it, they are trying to imitate natural speech and meaning.

(See Pinterest Board.)

## Conceit

An extended metaphor, usually found in poetry. This is an in-depth exploration of a topic and is much longer than an analogy.

EFFECT-To relate a comparison at length.



### THE VINE BY ROBERT HERRICK : THE POETRY FOUNDAT!..

I dreamed this mortal part of mine Was  
metamorphosed to a vine, Which crawling one and

<http://www.poetryfoundation.org>

## Euphemism

A pleasant expression for an unpleasant or unacceptable one.

EXAMPLES- "Senior citizens" for old people

"His tongue is now a stringless instrument" for he's dead.

EFFECT-De-emphasizes the truth so the truth is not so blunt yet is sarcastic.







Counselor! Kindly refer to it as "murder," not "thinning out the herd."

# A DAY AT THE MUSEUM OF EUPHEMISM



## Hyperbole

Deliberate exaggeration. Similes, metaphors, and analogies are used.

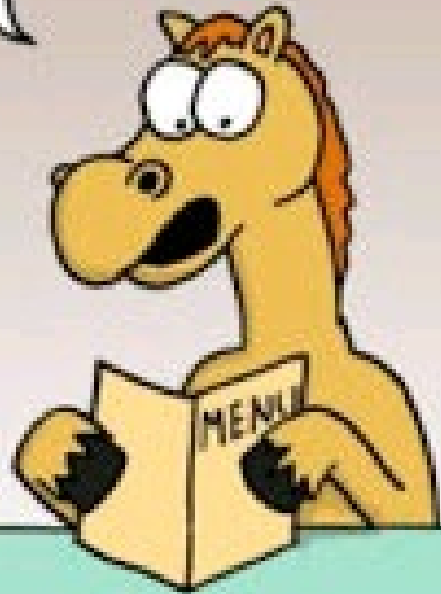
EXAMPLES- "I've told you a million times not to exaggerate."

"It was so cold I saw polar bears wearing jackets."

"We are so poor, we don't have two cents to rub together."

EFFECT-Add color and humor to fiction works.

I'M SO HUNGRY, I  
COULD EAT YOU.



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## Litotes

Exaggeration that belittles the situation. This belittling, in turn, makes the situation seem a little extreme. A type of euphemism. Usually contains "not", which is meant to negate.

EXAMPLES- "It's just a flesh wound."

"Poison is not poisonous after all, nor any wounds fatal."

EFFECT- This makes the situation seem not as serious.



## Meiosis

Opposite of euphemism: a MEAN expression meant to degrade.

EXAMPLES- Abortionists = Murderers.

Devout = Bible Thumper

Environmentalist = Eco-Nazi or Tree Humper

EFFECT- To diminish any respect and belittle the person. This is the opposite of euphemism and litotes.

## Irony

The opposite occurs than what was expected. Three types of irony exist.

#1. Verbal- spoken.

#2. Dramatic-audience knows but the actors do not.

#3. Situational-occurrence.

# Metonymy

Nym = name. An item is substituted for the NAME of a person associated with it.

EXAMPLES- You can't fight city hall. (Mayor)

The checkered flag waved and victory crossed the finish line. (Victory = driver's name)

The crown = Queen's name

EFFECT- The substitution defines the idea with a connotation. We know what is meant without saying it.

# Paradox

DO NOT CONFUSE WITH OXYMORON and JUXTAPOSITION.

A statement that contradicts.

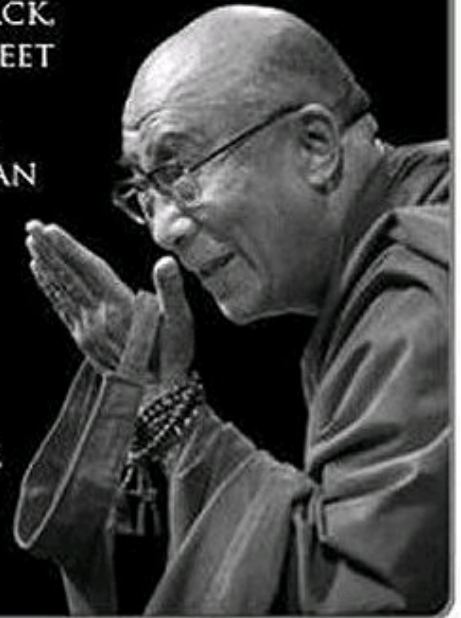
EXAMPLES-"Whosoever loses his life, shall find it."

"The swiftest traveler is he who goes afoot." Thoreau

EFFECT- These statements present a duality that shows a truth.

# THE PARADOX OF OUR AGE

"WE HAVE BIGGER HOUSES, BUT SMALLER FAMILIES;  
MORE CONVENIENCES, BUT LESS TIME;  
WE HAVE MORE DEGREES, BUT LESS SENSE;  
MORE KNOWLEDGE, BUT LESS JUDGEMENT;  
MORE EXPERTS, BUT MORE PROBLEMS;  
MORE MEDICINES, BUT LESS HEALTHINESS;  
WE'VE BEEN ALL THE WAY TO THE MOON AND BACK,  
BUT HAVE TROUBLE CROSSING THE STREET TO MEET  
THE NEW NEIGHBOUR.  
WE BUILT MORE COMPUTERS TO HOLD MORE  
INFORMATION, TO PRODUCE MORE COPIES THAN  
EVER, BUT HAVE LESS COMMUNICATION.  
WE HAVE BECOME LONG ON QUANTITY,  
BUT SHORT ON QUALITY.  
THESE ARE TIMES OF FAST FOOD  
BUT SLOW DIGESTION;  
TALL MAN BUT SHORT CHARACTER;  
STEEP PROFITS BUT SHALLOW RELATIONSHIPS.  
IT IS A TIME WHEN THERE IS MUCH IN THE  
WINDOW, BUT NOTHING IN THE ROOM."  
~DALAI LAMA



## Pun

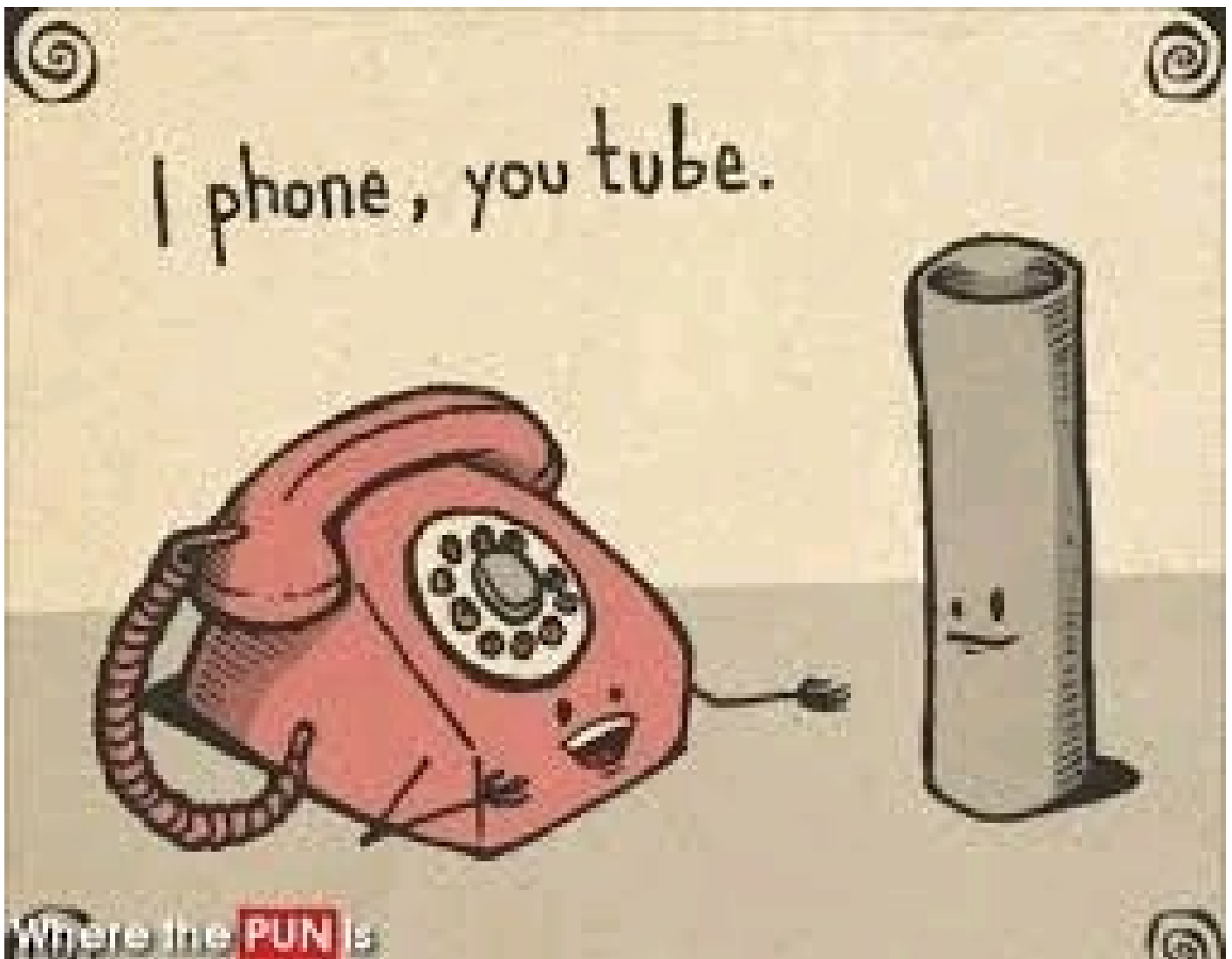
A play on words, usually funny or droll (lol).

EXAMPLES-"The defendant in a coffee theft trial refused to testify on the grounds that could incriminate him."

"I heard Einstein got along well with his parents ... relatively speaking."

"Did you hear about the farmer who got attacked by a cow? He milked it for all it was worth."

EFFECT- Comedic.



## Synecdoche

The part represents the whole. DO NOT CONFUSE WITH METONYMY. This is not a name.

This is one part (could be a body part) that represents the whole item.

EXAMPLES-"I have to sit next to that mouth."

All hands on deck. (hands = sailors)

EFFECT-Focus on the important part of the image, not the whole image or individual.



**FRIENDS, ROMANS,  
COUNTRYMEN**



**LEND ME YOUR  
EARS**

