Metaphors

Metaphors:
words and expressions used in the figurative sense
rather than the literal sense.

Researchers still hope to one day find cancer’s
silver bullet.
Ross Perot laid the foundation of a new political

Tim Tebow is poetry is motion.
My grandmother is getting so Yoda.
The news article threw the spotlight on
government corruption.

Daniel Shore, talking about the Watergate
investigation, described President Nixon ...
as a Russian nobleman with his entourage on
a sleigh being chased by a pack of wolves
through a Siberian forest.
Everyone once in a while the nobleman would
throw one of his servants to the wolves to slow
them down, but in the end wolves caught up with
the sleigh and devoured the nobleman.

Political commentator talking about the political
risks of revamping Social Security:
The Social Security system is the third rail
on an electric train: If you touch it you’ll be
electrocuted.

LA Times story on parents’ concerns about child care:
The controversy over Carla Marie Faith’s home day-
care center raises two questions that strike at the
Achilles’ heel of most working moms and dads:
How do you find responsible people to take care of
your pre-school children while you’re out making a
living?
And how do you know whether dangerous conditions
could be fostered at places that on their face look like
God’s gift to a conscientious parent?
LA Times:
S. David Freeman, the wily 75-year-old general manager of the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, will resign soon to become Gov. Gray Davis’ chief energy advisor and is widely believed to be a leading candidate to head a new California power authority.

more

Sports metaphors:
baseball:
The professor threw me a curve on the test.
Noisy kids drive me up the wall.
His ideas are out in left field.
Jack says he’d rather play the field than get married any time soon.
I struck out on my date last night.
Jack claims that he made it to third base.

pool:
behind the eight ball

racing:
have to make a pit stop
spinning your wheels
win by a nose

poker:
the buck stop here
passing the buck
(*buck knife passed to whoever’s deal it was*)

Arms Race May Not Be a Numbers Game
By JOHN-THOR DAHLBURG
Los Angeles Times, May 29, 1998
Clay Bowen, senior research associate at California’s Monterey Institute of International Studies, talking about the arms race between India and Pakistan:

“One Rubicon has been crossed, but it doesn’t mean there will be war in South Asia.”
Hands-Off Stand on Macedonia May Backfire for U.S.

Foreign policy: Analysts warn that the strategy risks a new Balkan war.

Daniel Serwer, head of the Balkans project at the U.S. Institute of Peace in Washington:

"Macedonia is an important linchpin. If the fighting is allowed to fester or deteriorate, then a lot of other places around it are also going to fall apart."

"Once those things happen, then it'll take an enormous international commitment, and we still may not be able to put Humpty Dumpty together again."

Philadelphia Inquirer, 9/12/83, Feature story on the war in Lebanon

BHAMBOUN, Lebanon – Down by the ruins of the Hotel Splendid, squatting atop the blackened husk of a car, a mannequin in a red fright wig grins obscenely. Someone has shot off his nose and arranged his fingers in a little V for victory. Nearby, a charred plastic leg has been stuffed into a shell crater.

A roving circus of the absurd has come to Bhamdoun, the first major town to fall in the war of the Shouf Mountains, a war that permits no prisoners and few survivors. Bhamdoun has been delivered by the conquering Druse militias to ragtag bands of gunmen who had helped them destroy it.

Yesterday, as the expanding mountain war hissed and crackled three miles down the highway, the gunmen picked at the smoldering corpse of Bhamdoun. Nothing much was left. The town had fallen Tuesday.

The Christian militiamen who had made a fortress of Bhamdoun either fled it or died in it. Entire city blocks were burned; flames still licked lazily at some buildings.

A Druse militiaman picked absently at his beard. "Three hundred, maybe four hundred bodies. The Christians," he said. "We burned them and buried them. I burned some myself."
The shops and boutiques and homes of the Christians had been split open like soup cans. The belongings inside were gone or burned or smashed or strewn into the street. Some of it could be called looting. Most of it was just war.

"I want us to get in on the ground floor of the next bandwagon.

Metaphor pitfalls

Cliches:
It's time to take the bull by the horns and look the problem in eye.

Hillary Clinton is testing the waters before she officially throws her hat into the ring.

Mixed metaphors:
The festering refugee problem was intensified by the flight of a new wave of displaced persons.

Creeping inflation is thought to be a buoyant factor in economic growth.

Rep. Dan Burton:
"The American people have a right to know why they have this blanket of secrecy over the White House, and I intend to get to the bottom of it." mixed metaphor – bottom of the blanket?

The Orange County Register
Nov. 8, 1997
Republican investigation in Dornan-Sanchez congressional race
WASHINGTON – If there were any chance of a deal between Democrats and Republicans to shut down the investigation of Rep. Loretta Sanchez's election, House Speaker Newt Gingrich on Friday slammed that door shut.

What door is the story talking about?

OC Register:

Pacific Sunwear of California has found the state's reception toward its Anaheim-based chain of young men's casual fashions warming. Sales at stores opened at least a year were up 8 percent for the month of August, largely driven by increased sales in the Golden State.

The company notes sales have been down this year because of the state's sluggish economy and lack of a strong fashion statement to guide women apparel retailers.

Revised:

Pacific Sunwear of California has found a warm reception in the state for its young-men's casual fashions. The Anaheim-based retail chain said sales at stores open at least a year were up 8 percent for the month of August, largely because of increased sales in the Golden State.
Meanwhile, things are a little cooler at Clothestime Inc., an Anaheim-based women's casual-clothes retailer where sales were down 15 percent in August.

The company notes sales have been down this year because of the state's sluggish economy and lack of a strong fashion statement to guide women apparel retailers.

The company blamed the poor sales on the state's gloomy economy and on the lack of a strong fashion statement to guide women apparel retailers.

Bad analogies contest winners

This is supposed to be from the Washington Post. If it is, they are ripping off the famous Bad Bulwer Lytton contest. He's the man who first penned "It was a dark and stormy night." Or, at least the first one to admit to penning it.

The ballerina rose gracefully en pointe and extended one slender leg behind her, like a dog at a fire hydrant. (Jennifer Hart, Arlington)

The revelation that his marriage of 30 years had disintegrated because of his wife's infidelity came as a rude shock, like a surcharge at a formerly surcharge-free ATM. (Paul J. Kocak, Syracuse)

The dandelion swayed in the gentle breeze like an oscillating electric fan set on medium. (Ralph Scott, Washington)
It hurt the way your tongue hurts after you accidentally staple it to the wall. (Brian Broadus, Charlottesville)

The sardines were packed as tight as the coach section of a 747. (Tom Witte, Gaithersburg)

She was as easy as the TV Guide crossword. (Tom Witte, Gaithersburg)