

Metaphor and Fictionality

In this paper I investigate the relationship between metaphor and fictionality, and argue that this relationship rests on "as if" thinking. The absence of metaphorical expression or understanding precludes "as ifs," which in turn makes it difficult or perhaps impossible to understand the notion of fictionality.

My case studies are three fictional beings: *Embassytown's* Ariekei, *Galaxy Quest's* Thermians, and *Star Trek's* Tamarians. The first two cannot conceive of fictionality, while the third can only communicate via metaphors. An exploration of these beings' communication suggests that while metaphor and fiction are separate, they likely reside on the same conceptual spectrum.