

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

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ICLC 12

Edmonton, Alberta

Canada

June 2013

AFTER EDEN

by Dan Lietha



Have you ever noticed if someone calls you a "monkey" it's an insult, but if they say you came from a monkey, that's "science"?

Word Meaning – LCCM (Evans 2010:160-163)

- *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*
(cf. Hoey 2005, Partington 1998)

Word Meaning – LCCM (Evans 2010:160-163)

- *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



Baboon



Gorilla



Chimpanzee



Monkey

<http://universe-review.ca/l10-82-primates.jpg>

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



Baboon



Gorilla



Chimpanzee



Monkey

<http://universe-review.ca/l10-82-primates.jpg>

Description of the Corpus

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

Search terms

- anthropoid*
- ape*
- aping
- baboon*
- chimp*
- gibbon*
- gorilla*
- hominid*
- lemur*
- mandrill*
- marmoset*
- monkey*
- orangutan*
- *primate*
- prosimian*
- simian*
- tarsier*

Literal vs. Figurative

- *Defining literal and non-literal language?*
 - Meaning accessed from secondary vs. primary cognitive models?
 - Salience based, continuum?
(cf. Giora 2002, 2008)

Literal vs. Figurative

- *Defining literal and non-literal language?*
 - Meaning accessed from secondary vs. primary cognitive models?
 - Salience based, continuum?
(cf. Giora 2002, 2008)
- *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

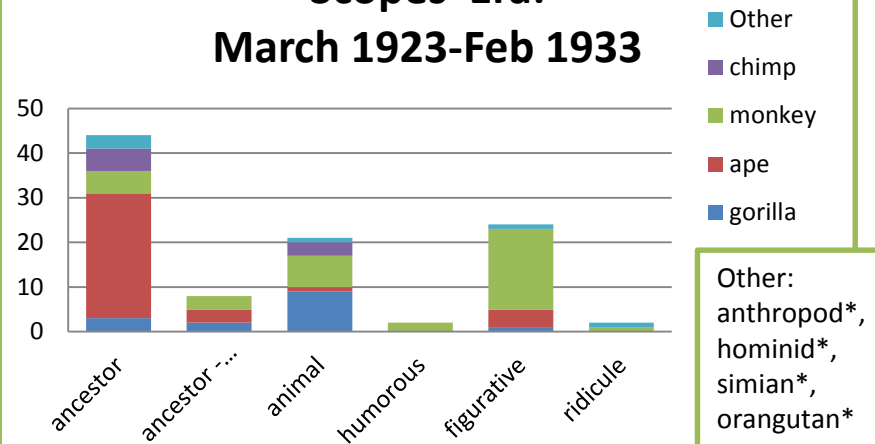
A =
ancestor
B =
negative
C =
animal
D =
humorous
R =
ridicule
F =
other
figurative

- ...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)

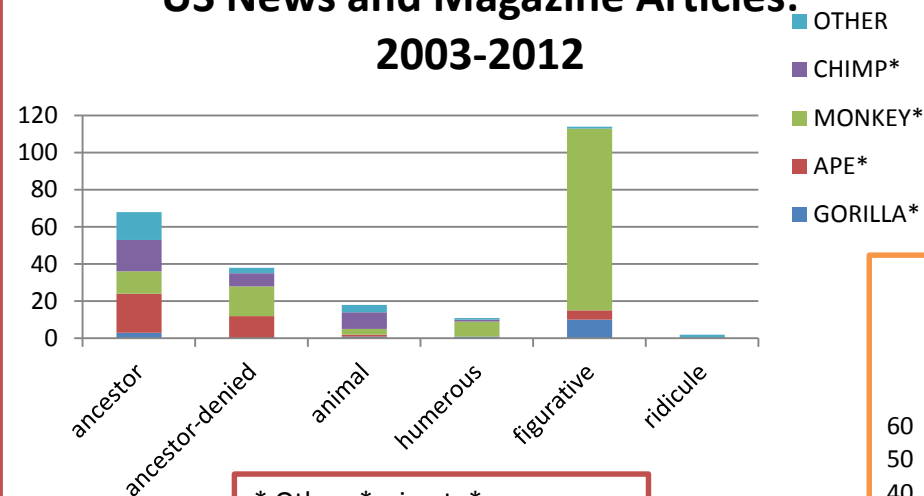
Usage overview

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

Scopes' Era: March 1923-Feb 1933



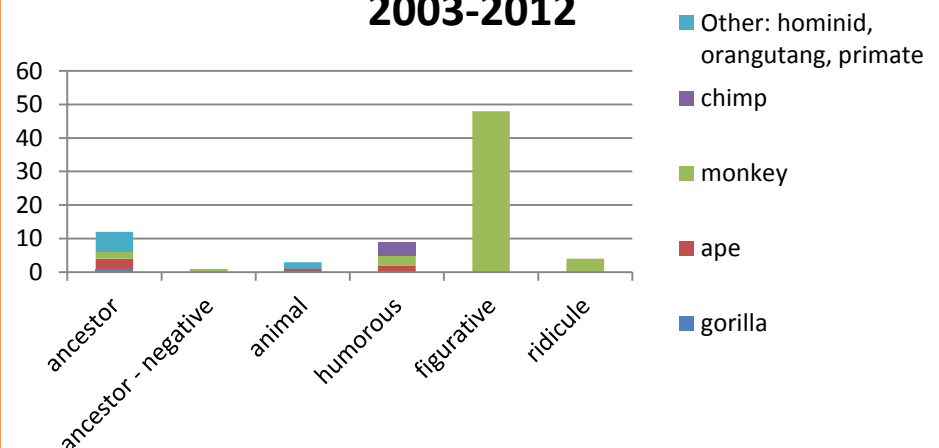
US News and Magazine Articles: 2003-2012



* Other: *primate*, anthropoid*, baboon*, gibbon*, homnid*, lemur*, orangutan*, simion*

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

'Local' US State Newspaper Articles: 2003-2012



‘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



- 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?

- Monkey trials
- Gorilla sermons
- Monkey bill
- Monkey business
- Get the monkey off Darwin's back
- Monkey-see monkey do
- Man: Ape or Angel
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But
not...

How?

- 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

OED: Monkey, Ape, Gorilla

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-advb. 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.*
- †4. *transf.* A fool. God's ape: a natural born fool. to make any one his ape, to put an ape in his hood, to befool or dupe him. *Obs.*
- †7. as adj. Foolish, silly. adv. Foolishly, sillily.

Compounds

- a. ape-headed adj. , ape-like adj.
- b. b. ape-mind n.

Ape (v)

1. 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: 'main' senses

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.

monkey, v.

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.
8. *colloq.* (orig. *U.S.*). An unspecified person; a stranger; Also *Criminals' slang*: an associate.
9. orig. *U.S.* (*offensive*). A non-white or dark-skinned person.
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

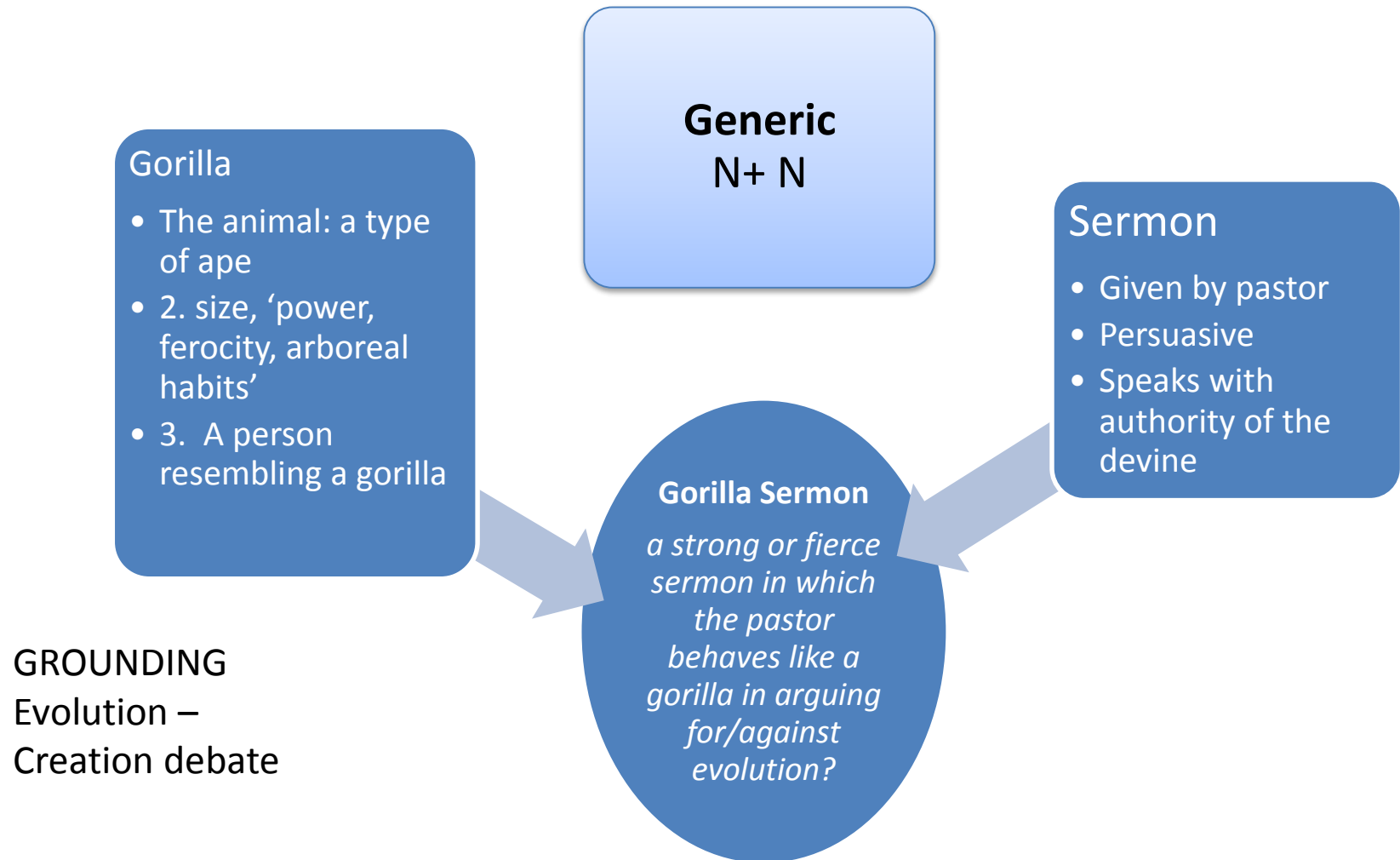
1. The animal: a type of ape
2. Salient characteristics: size,
‘power, ferocity, arboreal
habits’
3. A person resembling a gorilla.

Monkey

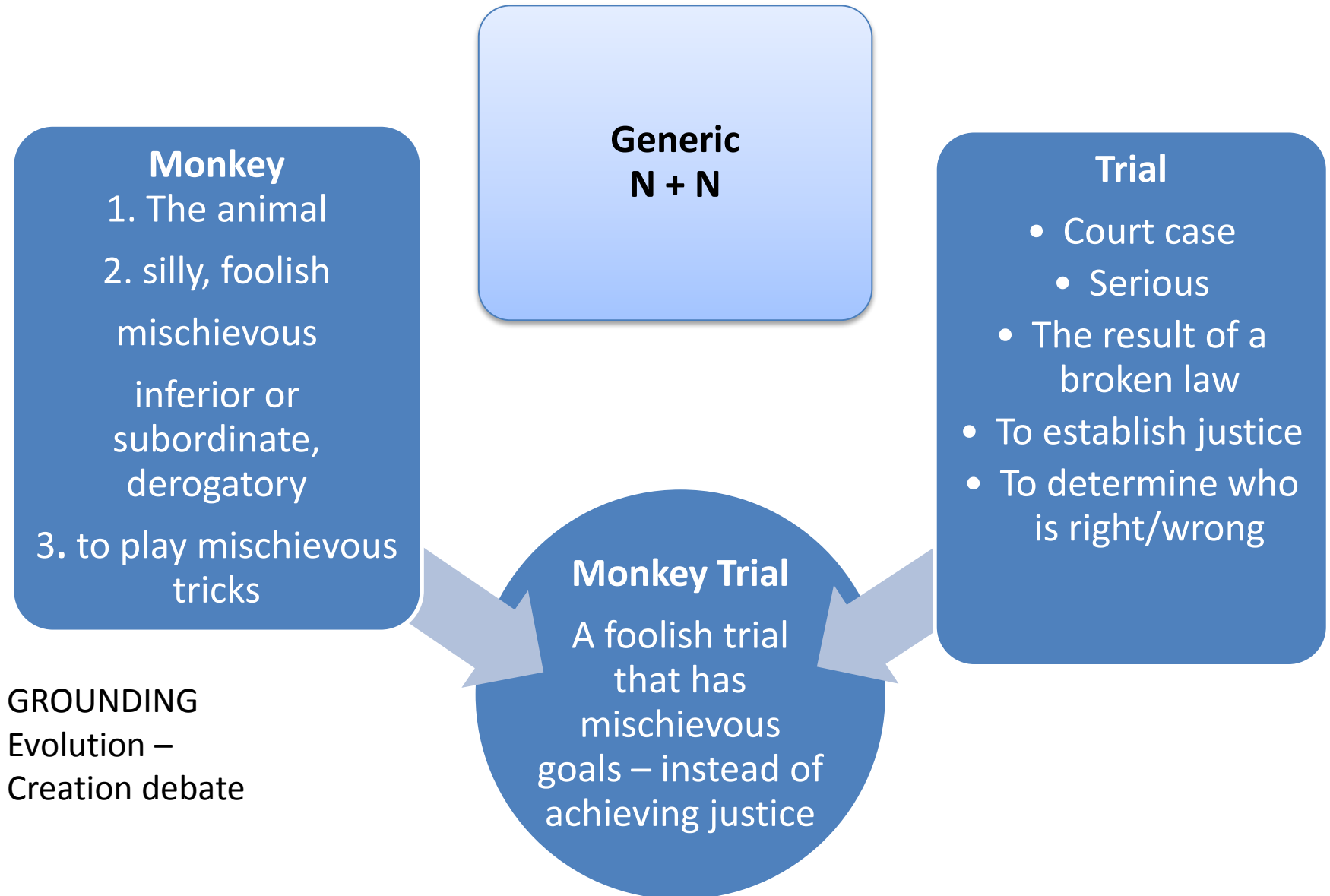
Noun:

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
(monkey on sb’s back)
male and female sexual organs
to copy w/o thinking:
monkey see-monkey do
-lost mimicry sense – (to ape?)

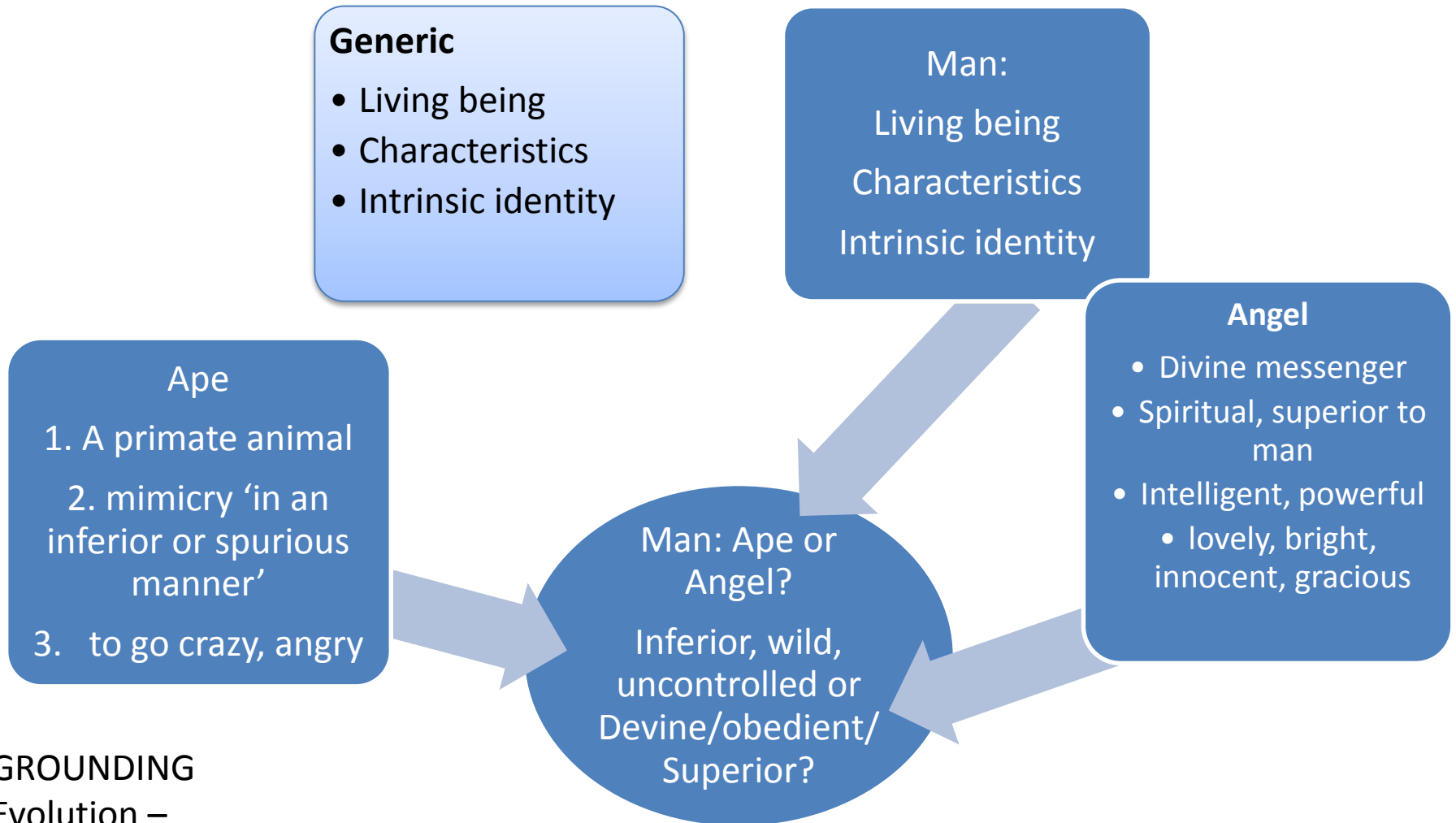
Blending: Gorilla Sermons (OED)



Blending: Monkey Trial (OED)

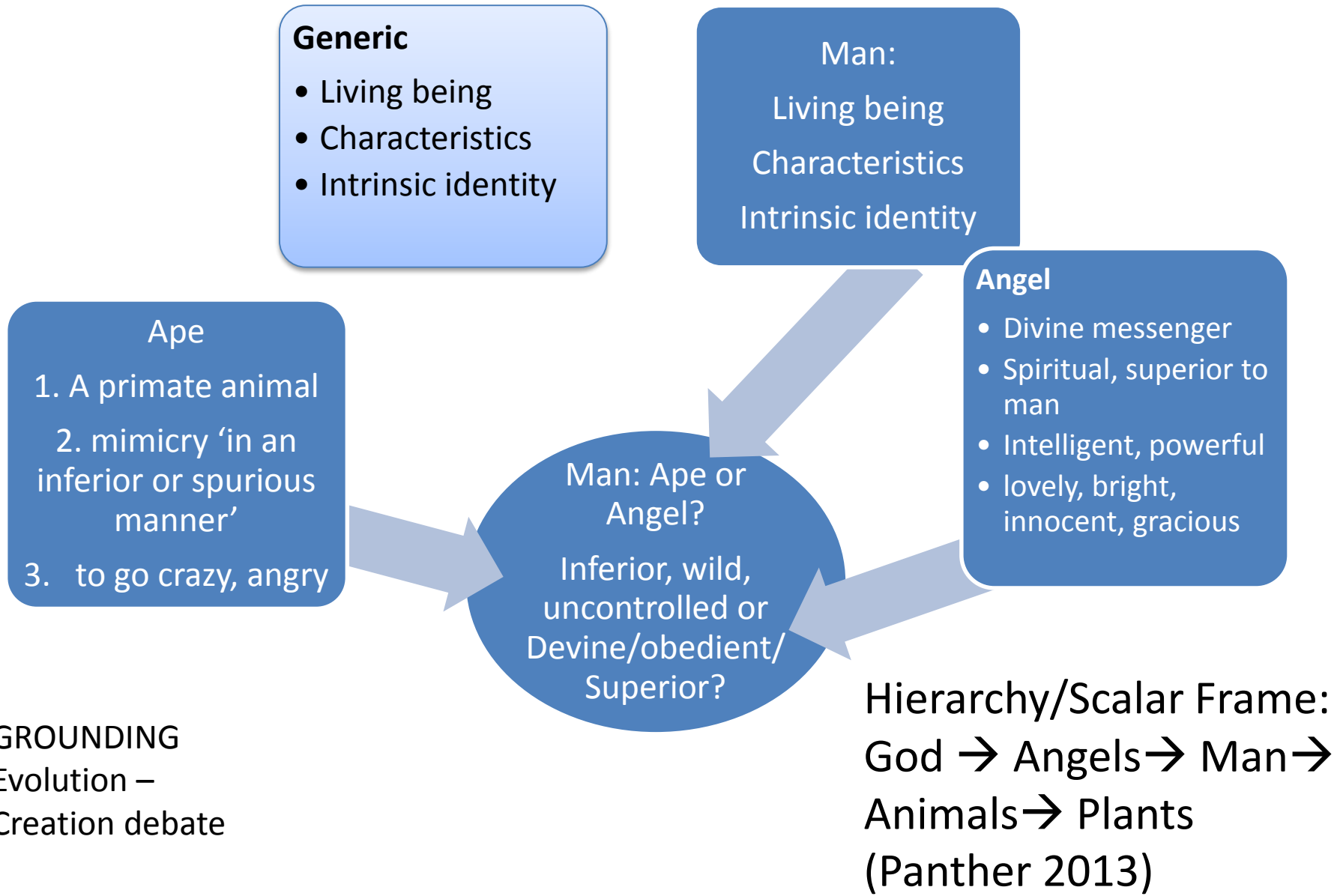


Blending: Ape or Angel? (OED)



GROUNDING
Evolution –
Creation debate

Blending: Ape or Angel? (OED)



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
- (cf. Baker 2006, Partington 2006, Stefanowitsch 2006, Stubbs 1996, Vereza 2008, Hoey 2005)

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

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

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

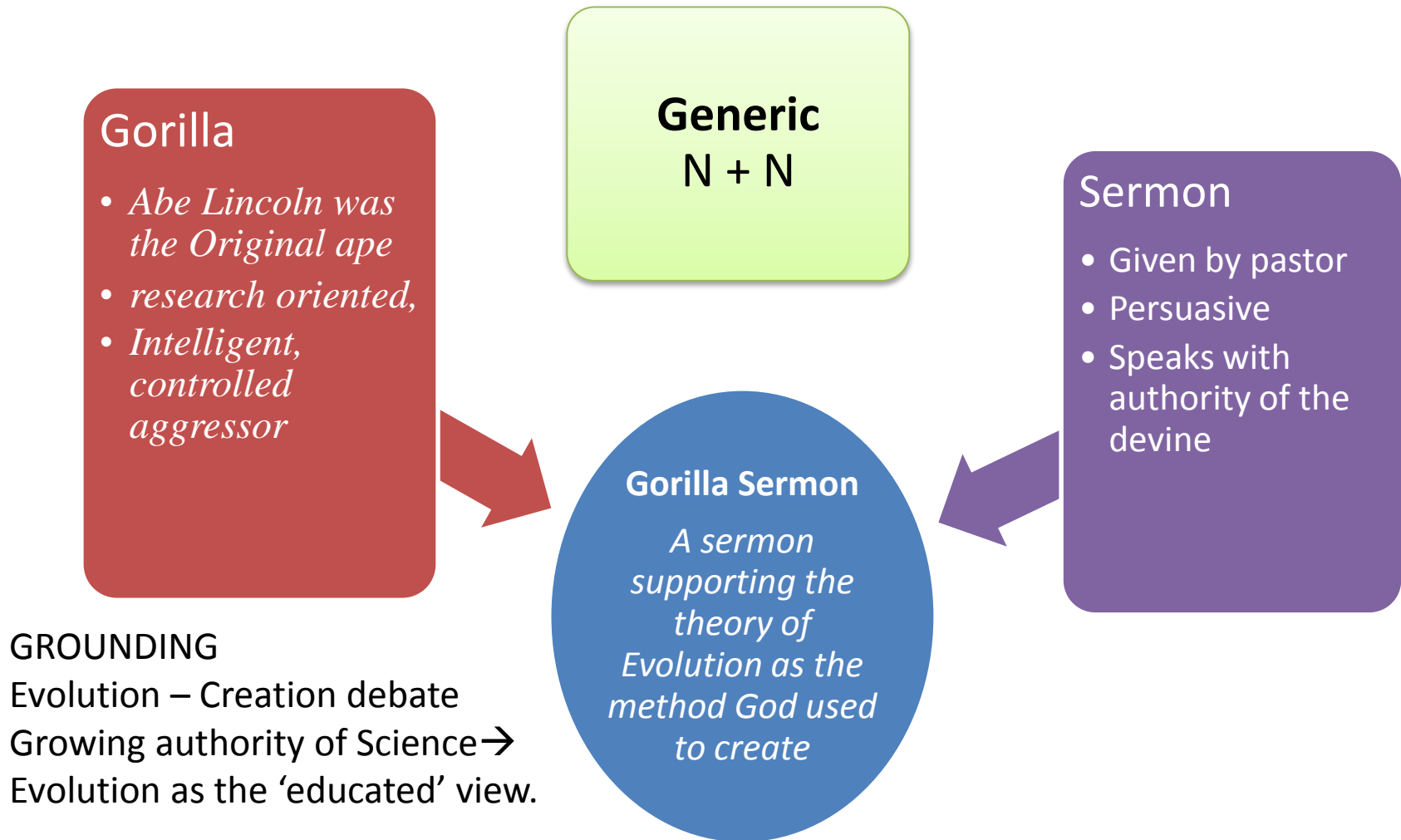
Monkey	Ape	Gorilla
<u>Appearance:</u> red, little, green,, giant, golden, Behavior: drunken, trained, throw, eat, swing, climb, feed, steal, jump, chatter, resemble, act Use: stuffed, Type: howler, spider Environment: wild, monkey house Compound nouns: business, wrench, bar	<u>Appearance:</u> giant, bald, hairy, huge, wild, physical Behavior: rob, evolve, compare, perceive, swing, scream, charge, grab Type: great, monkey, human, ape, gorilla Environment: African	<u>Appearance:</u> giant, feature Behavior: eat, feed, climb, track, Use: famous? pet, name, dress, Dian (research) Type: female, male, gorilla, chimpanzee, orangutan, ape, Environment: western, wild, captive, endangered, African, mountain lowland zoo mist
Small, silly, mischievous, active		

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?

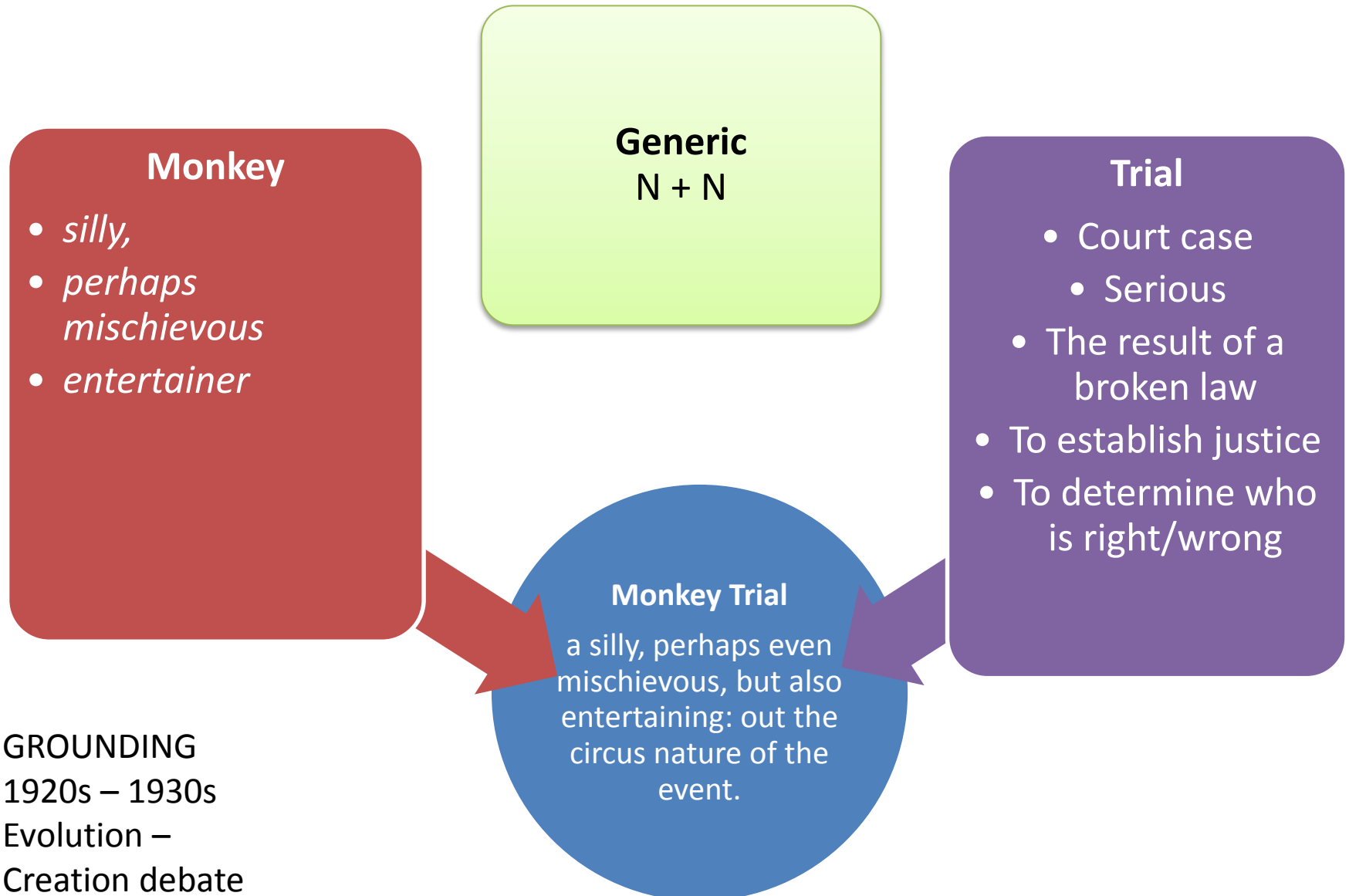
Usage of monkey, ape, and gorilla – 1820-1930 (ca. Top 20-25 COHA collocates, Lemmas, MI=5)

Monkey	Ape	Gorilla
animals, types: monkey, rae, parrot, dog, appearance: tail, behavior: chatter, trick, climb, leap, grin, agility, jump, swing cultural: major, jack, tiger, cat, tale use: <u>pet, organ, entertainment</u> environment: cage, tribe expressions: wrench, jacket, brass - silly, entertainer	animals, types: great, ape, species, anthropoid, yellow, Colombian appearance: resemble, skin, manlike, giant, huge, hairy, behavior: agility, grin, manner, idiot cultural: huh, Bentley use: <u>descend</u> , brain, skull, ancestor, research oriented- evolution Large and strong, but idiotic	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: <u>stuffed</u> , du, jaw, compare, separate, -research oriented, Intelligent, controlled aggressor
Similarities: Research into evolution		
Similarities: Fictional characters, human-like characteristics.....		

Blending: Gorilla Sermons (OED)



Blending: Monkey Trial (OED)



Blending: Ape or Angel? (OED)

Generic

- Living being
- Characteristics
- Intrinsic identity

Man:

- Living being
- Characteristics
- Intrinsic identity

Ape

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

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?

GROUNDING
Evolution –
Creation debate

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

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 recreating 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.

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