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**Metaphors We Manipulate with**

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# What Makes Metaphors Manipulative Tools?

## *A Case-Study of Pro-Life Speeches in the US*

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Manipulation implies a conscious choice from speakers to trigger a change of opinion in the interlocutors and to make them accept their own point of view, i.e. their own vision of the world. As pointed out by Goatly [2007], Charteris-Black [2005, 2014] or Van Dijk [1998], metaphors can be used as manipulative tools. Metaphors have traditionally been considered as figures of speech used by rhetoricians to convince crowds; cognitivists have demonstrated that they are figures of thought as well, which partly accounts for their manipulative potential. The three underlying reasons to this are, among others, the highlighting-hiding process, the existence of asymmetrical metaphors, and the multivalency of metaphors. The manipulative potential of metaphors is examined in twelve speeches from pro-life supporters, ranging from 2006 to 2019. One of the main ideological debates going on in the US has been on abortion, as the pro-life movement has grown stronger in recent years and has been threatening the right to abortion guaranteed by Roe v. Wade. The study of the metaphors in those speeches has enabled us to highlight how pro-lifers manipulate people regarding the apprehension of reality by systematically using a limited number of conceptualizations.

Keywords: abortion, Conceptual Metaphor Theory, metaphor, manipulation, pro-life movement, USA

Le concept de manipulation implique qu'il y a un choix conscient des locuteurs qui permet de déclencher un changement d'opinion chez les interlocuteurs et de leur faire accepter leur propre point de vue, c'est-à-dire leur propre vision du monde. Comme le soulignent Goatly [2007], Charteris-Black [2005, 2014] ou Van Dijk [1998], les métaphores peuvent être utilisées comme des outils de manipulation. Les métaphores sont traditionnellement considérées comme des figures de style utilisées par les rhétoriciens pour convaincre les foules ; les cognitivistes ont démontré qu'elles sont également des figures de pensée, ce qui explique en partie leur potentiel ma-

nipulatoire. Les trois raisons sous-jacentes à cela sont, entre autres, le processus de *highlighting-hiding*, l'existence de métaphores asymétriques et la multivalence des métaphores. Le potentiel manipulateur des métaphores est étudié dans douze discours de *pro-lifers*, ou militants anti-avortement, de 2006 à 2019. L'un des principaux débats idéologiques contemporains aux États-Unis porte sur l'avortement, dans la mesure où le mouvement *pro-life* s'est renforcé ces dernières années et où il menace le droit à l'avortement garanti par l'arrêt de la Cour Suprême *Roe v. Wade*. L'étude des métaphores dans ces discours nous a permis d'étudier comment les *pro-life* manipulent la manière dont leurs interlocuteurs appréhendent la réalité, en recourant systématiquement à un nombre limité de conceptualisations.

Mots-clés : avortement, *Conceptual Metaphor Theory*, métaphore, manipulation, mouvement *pro-life*, États-Unis d'Amérique

## Introduction

Manipulation implies a conscious choice from speakers to trigger a change of opinion in their interlocutors and to make them accept their own point of view, i.e. their own vision of the world. Manipulation is especially blatant when two opposite views of reality clash, such as the vision advocated by pro-life supporters and that defended by pro-choice supporters in the USA. This specific issue was chosen not only because of its relevance in the news – several bills aim to restrict the access to abortion in various states, and the Supreme Court will issue a decision in a case related to abortion in 2020 (*June Medical Services, LLC. v. Gee*) – but because the stances are so firm from both sides that they inevitably lead speakers to resort to manipulation techniques to convince their interlocutors. In this paper, we will mostly focus on the use of metaphors and the reasons why they can be used as manipulative tools by conducting analyses on a selection of speeches delivered by pro-life supporters, and comparing them, when deemed relevant, to some speeches delivered by people advocating pro-choice.

We will therefore try to link metaphors and metaphor themes with a similar attempt by George Lakoff in *Moral Politics* [1996] and Andrew Goatly in *Washing the Brain. Metaphor and Hidden Ideology* [2007], and attempt to see “to what extent the metaphor themes [...] are ideological constructs, dependent upon specific historical and cultural circumstances” [Goatly 2007: 402], and how metaphors can manipulate people and their apprehension of reality.

The theoretical background regarding the links between metaphor and manipulation is first introduced; the historical context of the pro-life vs. pro-choice debate in the USA, the corpus (or rather set of data) and the methodology are then presented. The last section of the article is based on our corpus and is devoted to the analysis of some metaphorical occurrences used to manipulate the audience of pro-life supporters.

# 1. Theoretical considerations on metaphor and manipulation

## 1.1. Manipulation and ideology: key concepts

Various words may come to mind whenever the word *manipulation* is mentioned: persuasion, conviction, coercion, ideology, belief, rhetoric, etc. It is not always easy to clearly define what manipulation is really about, as Sorlin [2016: 18] makes it clear when she suggests that there is a continuum between persuasion, manipulation and coercion:

Manipulation can be seen as sharing one external border with persuasion and another with coercion. It might be better still to perceive the three categories along a continuum allowing for some possible overlap. [...] The difference between persuasion and manipulation lies in the fact that, in the former case, the addressee has the liberty to disagree with the arguments advanced by the addresser, whereas, in the latter, the victim's free choice is circumscribed to a superior degree. If one goes still one step further towards coercion on the continuum, the limit exercised on freedom becomes more absolute.

The noun *manipulation* has four main meanings according to the *Oxford English Dictionary (OED)* [*'manipulation, n.'* 2000]:

### **manipulation, n.**

**Origin:** A borrowing from French. Etymon: French *manipulation*.

**Etymology:** < French *manipulation* (1716 in sense 1 (in an account of silver mines in South America), 1762 in sense 2) < Spanish *manipulación* (1619 in sense 2, referring specifically to alchemy; 1730 in sense 1 but probably earlier: compare *manipulante* person who works in precious metals (1713)) < classical Latin *manipulus* (see *maniple* n.) + Spanish *-ación* -ation suffix.

1. A method of digging silver ore. *Obsolete. rare.*

2. *Chemistry.* The action of handling apparatus, reagents, etc., in experiments; experimental procedure; an instance or example of this. Now archaic.

3. *gen.* The action or an act of manipulating something; handling; dexterity. Also (occasionally): the making of hand motions.

*Medicine.* Manual examination or treatment of a part of the body, esp. the production of specific passive movements of joints in chiropractic, osteopathy, or physiotherapy.

4. The action or an act of managing or directing a person, etc., esp. in a skilful manner; the exercise of subtle, underhand, or devious influence or control over a person, organization, etc.; interference, tampering.

The sense of *manipulation* we will use in this paper is the final sense in the *OED* (#4), and it is interesting to note that this specific meaning was generated metaphorically. Sense #4 clearly exhibits the two connotations found in the word: a rather neutral, and even positive sense ("The action or an act of managing or directing a person, etc., esp. in a skilful manner") and the negatively-connoted sense ("the exercise of subtle, underhand, or devious influence or control over a person, organization, etc.; interference, tampering"). Consequently, we will use both meanings and consider *manipulation* as the act of persuading the interlocutor regardless of the consequences. Manipulation will also be related to the notion of *ideology*, defined by van Dijk [1998: 8] as:

the basis of the social representations shared by members of a group. This means that ideologies allow people, as group members, to organise the multitude of social beliefs about what is the case, good or bad, right or wrong, for them and to act accordingly.

According to Charteris-Black [2011: 13], manipulation – just like persuasion – "should be considered a *speech act*", because "it is a type of language that changes cognition, rather than simply describes it or how such a change is achieved".

As mentioned in the introduction, metaphor can be used as a manipulative tool, and we will therefore follow Goatly [2007: 2], who focuses on "the importance of metaphorical patterns in the vocabulary and grammar of English for representing and shaping ideologies and social practices", and Charteris-Black [2011: 24], who writes: "[M]etaphor provides a linguistic means for mediating between conscious and unconscious mental activities, between cognition and emotion, between ideology and myth".

## 1.2. Metaphor, CMT and manipulation

According to Conceptual Metaphor Theory (henceforth CMT), the world does not exist *per se*, but is a construct of the mind and the language we speak, as summarized by Goatly [2007: 25, 33]:

We may think, naively, that the information conveyed by language is about the real world. But in fact "we have conscious access only to the projected world – the world as unconsciously organised by the mind: and we can talk about things only insofar as they have achieved mental representation through these processes of organisation" (Jackendoff 1983: 29). [...]

There exists a real world, but we have no direct "real" knowledge of it, since that knowledge is produced discursively and linguistically through conventionalised metaphors, some of which are so conventionalised we

call them literal. Knowledge of the world is mediated through perception, cognition and language / discourse.

Why can metaphors be used as persuasive or manipulative tools? Probably because before being a matter of language and discourse, metaphors are a matter of thought. As a consequence, the language we speak is determined by our conceptual system<sup>1</sup>, as Goatly [2007: 4] indicates:

[L]anguage is not some transparent medium through which we think, but that it shapes our thoughts and practices. So the conventional metaphors in the discourses of race, sex, politics, defence, economics, environment, and so on, tend to determine our ways of thinking / consciousness and acting/practice in these social spheres.

Interestingly, Goatly [2007: 25] defines *metaphors* metaphorically by saying that “[m]etaphors are cognitive filters, but different metaphors filter different particles of truth”. According to CMT, metaphorical utterances are “attempt[s] to re-draw semantic boundaries, to redefine [...] concept[s]” and produce “creative or destructive blurrings of categories” [Goatly 2007: 120]. It is because metaphor offers a ‘new vision of reality’ and can be used to ‘convey evaluation’ that it can be used as a manipulative tool. Charteris-Black [2011: 2] makes it clear that metaphor is at the heart of the persuasive linguistic process:

The spoken language is the primary mode of communication in the gentle arts of persuasion and impression management because it projects shared social beliefs about what is right and wrong so that alliances can be formed around these beliefs. Spoken strategies include humour, metaphor and the telling of myth. [...] [The] choice of metaphor is essential to [...] persuasiveness. I will demonstrate the cognitive and affective appeal of metaphor and illustrate how it contributes to persuasion. This, I suggest, is because it exploits subliminal resources that are aroused non-verbally and then developed through language. The subliminal potential of metaphor is central to the performance of leadership.

Before exemplifying the manipulative power of metaphor through a case study, this paper will focus on the various reasons why metaphors can be used as manipulative tools, following, among other cognitive linguists, Goatly [2007]. We can list three main reasons why metaphors can be used as manipulative tools: the highlighting-hiding process, the existence of asymmetrical metaphors, and the multivalency of metaphors.

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1 Just like Goatly, we will adopt a light version of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis: “I espouse a weak form of the Whorfian hypothesis, that is, in brief, that the particular language we speak predisposes us to think and act in certain ways. I do not adopt the strong one, which says one’s language totally determines one’s thought.” [Goatly 2007: 24].



Firstly, manipulation can be all the more powerful through the 'highlighting-hiding process' at work in metaphors, as Murray Edelman [1971: 68] explains<sup>2</sup>:

Metaphor, therefore, defines the pattern of perception to which people respond. [...] Each metaphor intensifies selected perceptions and ignores others, thereby helping one to concentrate on desired consequences of favoured public policies and helping one to ignore their unwanted, unthinkable, or irrelevant premises and aftermaths. Each metaphor can be a subtle way of highlighting what one wants to believe and avoiding what one does not wish to face.

One of the tenets of cognitive linguistics is that reality does not exist independently of the perception we have of the world; the choices speakers make when choosing the source domain to conceptualize the target domain have an effect on the construction of reality, as Goatly [2007: 213-214] makes it clear:

Diverse metaphors are essential for ideological analysis. Since each metaphor highlights and suppresses certain features of a target, or constructs the target in a particular way it both empowers our understanding and limits it.

Another aspect that needs to be taken into account is the existence of 'asymmetrical metaphors', which can be used to manipulate, as Goatly [2007: 119] explains:

But language users are by no means always unanimous about what is literal and metaphorical. As I have discussed elsewhere (Goatly 1997: 127-30), there is a species of metaphors that one might call asymmetrical, in that the speaker may regard them as metaphorical and the hearer as literal, or vice versa.

The 'multivalency' of metaphors – i.e. the scopes of targets – and the 'diversification' of metaphors – i.e. the scopes of sources – are two other aspects of manipulation. As Goatly [2007: 167] mentions, if *more is high* and *power is high*, therefore *more* is often equated with *power*:

two cases by which multivalent sources might create extra ideological equations, MORE IS HIGH + GOOD IS HIGH + MORE = GOOD, and CHANGE IS MOVEMENT + DEVELOPMENT / SUCCESS IS MOVEMENT + CHANGE = SUCCESS. [Goatly 2007: 177]

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2 See also Kövecses [2002: 80].

Goatly [2007: 214] develops the notion of *multivalency* by linking it to the association between different target domains which were not related at first:

[M]ultivalency can lead to association between different targets so that GOOD IS HIGH and MORE IS HIGH taken together suggest MORE = GOOD, which reinforces patterns of excessive wealth accumulation and consumption as part of the Protestant capitalist ethic, despite the objections that SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL. We also explored how CHANGE IS MOVEMENT and DEVELOPMENT / SUCCESS IS MOVEMENT FORWARD might suggest that CHANGE = DEVELOPMENT / SUCCESS, again an increasingly doubtful and contentious suggestion, though one which the technologically driven retail economies of the West have espoused in the cause of selling the latest and most fashionable consumer products.

As the highlighting-hiding process, the existence of asymmetrical metaphors and the multivalency of metaphors are both a matter of thought and language (just like metaphor), they are prone to giving way to manipulation and deception. Before exemplifying each of those three components in section 3 when analyzing the set of data and seeing how they interact to manipulate the audience, the following section will introduce the historical context. As any occurrence is manipulative only in a specific, given context, it seems necessary to give an overview of the historical and societal context of abortion and the existence of the pro-life movement in the United States. The speeches making up our corpus have been produced in this specific socio-historical situation, hence the importance of clearly delineating the context of occurrence where manipulation can take place.

## **2. Historical background, corpus and methodology**

### **2.1. Historical background and the pro-life movement**

In the United States, a topic that undoubtedly needs much persuasion and manipulation is abortion, as it is still very often considered a taboo topic and widely debated. Some historical conceptualization may be necessary to understand why abortion is such a highly controversial topic in the USA. Abortion was legalized and decriminalized at the federal level in 1973 in the landmark Supreme Court decision *Roe v. Wade*. Before 1973, legislation varied from state to state, and *Roe v. Wade* established a uniform framework, with the following principles: states cannot regulate abortion in the first trimester of pregnancy; in the second trimester of pregnancy, states may regulate abortion if they have a compelling interest to protect the woman's health; and in the third trimester of pregnancy, states may ban abortion to protect the woman's health and to protect the life of the unborn. The Supreme Court found (7-2) that states could not regulate abortion in the



first trimester of pregnancy because it did not threaten the woman's health and because there was no scientific proof that life begins at the moment of conception. The Supreme Court determined that states had no compelling interest in protecting human life or the potentiality of human life before the fetus became viable. The Court also argued that women have a right to privacy (created through the Ninth and the Fourteenth Amendment) regarding their decision to have an abortion or not because of the physical, psychological, and economic stress that a woman can be confronted with during pregnancy [Roe v. Wade 1973].

The legalization of abortion has been criticized for several reasons – the main two being political and moral. The political argument is that the Supreme Court is constituted by 9 Justices who are not elected. They are appointed for life by the President of the United States, and it has been argued that they had no legitimacy to make such a decision and that the decision should have been left to the people – and therefore to Congress – and / or to the states. It was not the first time that the Supreme Court had been criticized by detractors of judicial activism<sup>3</sup>. The second argument, which is exclusively used by pro-lifers, is that abortion should not have been legalized at all because according to them, life begins at the moment of conception and abortion is therefore a form of murder.

Since this decision, some states – mostly Southern states – have systematically tried to restrict the right to abortion. In 1992, in *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*<sup>4</sup>, the Supreme Court found that regulations were allowed as long as they did not create an "undue burden" on the woman [Planned Parenthood v. Caser 1992], which made the implementation of such restrictions easier for states, even though the right to abortion was upheld. In the first half of 2011, for example, "more than 80 abortion-related restrictions were enacted across the United-States" [Hill 2012]. According to Hill [2012], states have a number of laws to limit the right to abortion:

- firstly, banning abortion before the fetus is viable, despite the fact that this is contrary to what the Court stated in *Roe v. Wade*. Abortions are banned after the 20<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy<sup>5</sup> in some states (the fetus is only viable after the 24<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy). Twenty states introduced bills banning abortion once a heartbeat has been detected in the fetus – that is to say, after 6 or 8 weeks of pregnancy (a stage at which most women do not even know they are pregnant);

3 i.e. when judges are suspected of using their personal opinion instead of the law to issue a decision, notably on sensitive issues.

4 In *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*, the Supreme Court decided to uphold four provisions but to reject the requirement of spousal consent because it placed an undue burden on the woman.

5 A bill entitled *Paid-Capable Unborn Children Protection act* was re-introduced in Congress in January 2019 [available at <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/784/text>], it has repeatedly been blocked by the Senate in the past.

- secondly, informed consent and waiting periods (visitation of pro-life centers, fake information on the consequences of abortions, mandatory ultrasounds, etc.);
- thirdly, restriction on medical abortion;
- finally, bans on insurance coverage for abortion.

In April 2019, a bill defining abortion as a form of murder was introduced in Texas [North 2019]. As Texas allows the death penalty for murder, women could be convicted and sentenced to death for having an abortion; the bill did not pass the initial hearing, but it shows how far some pro-life legislators are willing to go to restrict abortion.

Other kinds of restrictions can be mentioned, such as TRAP laws [Planned Parenthood 2020a], which target abortion providers and which require very high standards for abortion clinics – standards which cannot be met, considering the lack of funding for abortion services since the 1976 Hyde Amendment, which prohibited federal government funding for abortions (it was upheld by the Supreme Court in 1978 and 2000) [Ashbee 2007: 204-208]. Funding is unlikely to improve as the Trump administration announced in February 2019 that it would “bar organizations that provide abortion referrals from receiving federal family planning money, a step that could strip millions of dollars from Planned Parenthood and direct it towards religiously-based, anti-abortion groups”, according to *The New York Times* [Belluck 2019].

As abortion has become a partisan issue and a subject of dissension between the Democrats and the Republicans, restrictions exist at the federal level, as previously mentioned. For *Roe v. Wade* to be overturned by the Supreme Court, a case would first have to be granted *certiorari* by the Court; the Court has agreed to hear a case (*June Medical Services, LLD v. Gee*) that is very similar to *Whole Woman’s Health v. Hellerstedt* (2016), in which the Supreme Court found that two restrictions in Texas placed an “undue burden” on women’s right to abortion. It is the first abortion-related case the Court has agreed to hear since Kavanaugh was appointed by Trump to replace Kennedy, and there have been concerns that the Supreme Court could overturn *Roe v. Wade* because there is now a conservative majority [Singiser *et al.* 2018]. However, in theory, abortion is still legal in the United States, but in practice, it is becoming more and more difficult for women to get an abortion depending on the state they live in, and *Roe v. Wade* would not need to be formally overturned for abortion to be almost inaccessible because of the increasing number of laws passed by states and because of the closing of abortion clinics. According to the Guttmacher Institute, Mississippi, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming only

have one clinic left [Guttmacher Institute 2020], and according to Planned Parenthood [2020b], the number of clinics keeps decreasing, mostly in Southern states<sup>6</sup>.

Anti-abortion legislation has mainly been encouraged by the pro-life movement, which has played a significant role in persuading the general public that abortion is wrong [Ashbee 2007]. There are many anti-abortion organizations in the US, and they resort to different means to persuade crowds to side with them: it goes from demonstrations (mass demonstrations, picketing in front of abortions clinics, etc.) to counseling centers (in which women are forced to go before undergoing an abortion) or online activism. According to the National Abortion Federation (NAF)<sup>7</sup>, acts of disruption<sup>8</sup> went from 1,276 between 1977 and 1989 to 36,509 between 1990 and 1999 to 117,444 between 2000 and 2009 to 281,639 between 2010 and 2017<sup>9</sup>. The NAF also reported a steep escalation of anti-abortion activity between 2016 and 2017, which they link to the political environment [National Abortion Federation 2017, 2018]. In that sense, through their activism, pro-lifers serve an ideology, as stated by Charteris-Black [2011: 22]: "So, once articulated, an ideology serves to bring individuals together for the purpose of some form of *social action*".

Recent polls [Jones 2018]<sup>10</sup> on public opinion confirm that there has been an increase in the number of Americans who consider themselves "pro-life" over the past 25 years (33% in 1996 vs. 48% in 2018), even though Americans are overall evenly divided on the issue. Moreover, more Americans consider abortion as "morally wrong" (48% in 2018) than as "morally acceptable" (43% in 2018).

There seems to be a discrepancy between the increase in the number of Americans who consider themselves "pro-life" and the increase in pro-life activity. It seems fair to assume that pro-life movements have intensified their activity, notably through more demonstrations, picketing, meetings, and speeches, but it does not necessarily mean that their activity is correlated with public opinion; the polls actually show that half the American population believe that abortion should be restricted to certain circumstances but not

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6 For an illustration of the forecasts by Planned Parenthood on the availability of abortion clinics in the South, see [https://www.plannedparenthoodaction.org/uploads/filer\\_public/61/7c/617c4b07-46ac-4ad8-8454-553371b291b0/abortion-providers-closed-in-the-south-2-25-16\\_1.gif](https://www.plannedparenthoodaction.org/uploads/filer_public/61/7c/617c4b07-46ac-4ad8-8454-553371b291b0/abortion-providers-closed-in-the-south-2-25-16_1.gif).

7 The National Abortion Federation is an organization of abortion providers. They release disruption and violence statistics every year (the 2018 report is not available yet).

8 Acts of disruption include hate mail, harassing calls, Internet harassment, suspicious packages, bomb threats, picketing, and obstruction. Picketing acts alone amounted to 189,200 between 2010 and 2017.

9 There has also been an increase in violent acts, from 1,273 between 1977 and 1989 to 2,622 between 2010 and 2017.

10 All poll results mentioned in the rest of this section are from Jones [2018].

entirely banned (50% in 2018 against 54% in 1976), while 29% believe it should be legal in all circumstances (22% in 1976), and 18% think it should be illegal in all circumstances (21% in 1976).

## 2.2. Corpus

This historical context and the overwhelming presence of abortion-related speeches in the news in the United States have led us to focus on the manipulative dimension of the pro-life movement through some of their speeches. To constitute a corpus of relevant texts, we have selected speeches dealing with this specific issue. Our analysis mostly focuses on the manipulative techniques used by pro-lifers but we have also, when deemed necessary and relevant, compared and contrasted those speeches with speeches delivered by pro-choice supporters. There is a vast array of speeches delivered by pro-life supporters, especially because of the annual March for Life generally held in January in Washington D.C. since 1974<sup>11</sup>. A selection of contemporary speeches made by supporters, most of the time politicians, attending the March for Life, but not only, was thus made. We selected twelve speeches from pro-life supporters, ranging from 2006 to 2019:

**Figure 1. Speeches from pro-life supporters**

Name of pro-life speaker	Date of speech	Code
George W. Bush	23 January 2006	GWB 2006_01_23
Marco Rubio	1 February 2012	MR 2012_02_01
Monica Snyder	29 January 2014	MS 2014_01_29
James Lankford	20 January 2016	JL 2016_01_20
Lila Rose	9-13 May 2016	LR 2016_05_9-13
Kellyanne Conway	27 January 2017	KC 2017_01_27
Mia Love	27 January 2017	ML 2017_01_27
Mike Pence	27 January 2017	MP 2017_01_27
Mike Lee	8 June 2017	ML 2017_06_08
Donald Trump	19 January 2018	DT 2018_01_19
Paul Ryan	19 January 2018	PR 2018_01_19
Ben Shapiro	18 January 2019	BS 2019_01_18

11 The March for Life movement is not only found in the US, but in many other countries. In the US, it has a dedicated website: <https://marchforlife.org/>.

To briefly compare pro-lifers' rhetoric with pro-choice supporters' rhetoric quantitatively speaking, we have selected only 6 speeches from pro-choice supporters, ranging from 2005 to 2016, as the main focus of the analysis remains pro-life speeches:

**Figure 2. Speeches from pro-choice supporters**

Name of pro-choice speaker	Date of speech
Hillary Clinton	24 January 2005
Rev. Carlton Veazey	17 September 2008
Ilyse Hogue	1 July 2013
Brendan O'Neill	18 November 2014
Hillary Clinton	8 June 2016
Mark Ruffalo	17 August 2017

The speeches were saved in .txt format so as to upload them onto WMatrix, a corpus linguistics tool.

### 2.3. Identification of the metaphors in the corpus

As the corpus is quite small, we have been able to identify the metaphors manually, following the recommendations of the Pragglejazz group, who established the MIP (Metaphor Identification Procedure) [2007: 3]:

The MIP is as follows:

1. Read the entire text-discourse to establish a general understanding of the meaning.
2. Determine the lexical units in the text-discourse.
3. (a) For each lexical unit in the text, establish its meaning in context, that is, how it applies to an entity, relation, or attribute in the situation evoked by the text (contextual meaning). Take into account what comes before and after the lexical unit.
- (b) For each lexical unit, determine if it has a more basic contemporary meaning in other contexts than the one in the given context. For our purposes, basic meanings tend to be

- More concrete; what they evoke is easier to imagine, see, hear, feel, smell, and taste.
- Related to bodily action.
- More precise (as opposed to vague).
- Historically older.

Basic meanings are not necessarily the most frequent meanings to the lexical unit.

- (c) If the lexical unit has a more basic current-contemporary meaning in other contexts than the given context, decide whether the contextual meaning contrasts with the basic meaning but can be understood in comparison with it.
4. If yes, mark the lexical unit as metaphorical.

We then identified all the metaphors related to abortion in the corpus, and only the metaphors dealing with this specific domain, which means that metaphors related to other conceptual domains were disregarded, as well as metaphors using *abortion* as source domain. We marked abortion-related lexical units as metaphors regardless of their degree of conventionality, even though some metaphorical occurrences are so conventional that they may be regarded as literal. After this initial identification, we classified the metaphorical occurrences depending on the underlying conceptual metaphor they were generated from, and more specifically depending on their source domain, as they represent, according to Charteris-Black [2011: 28] “the bread and butter of political language” and because “[a]nalyzing the source domain of a metaphor is therefore a way of exploiting it persuasively in political discourse” [Charteris-Black 2011: 30], as exemplified in section 3.

As any manipulative text has to be taken as a whole and resorts to many other rhetorical devices and as metaphors only participate in the manipulative process, our analysis will first be devoted to a brief general overview of the manipulative techniques at work in the corpus, before focusing on the role of metaphors in the manipulative process.

### 3. Analysis of the corpus of pro-life speeches

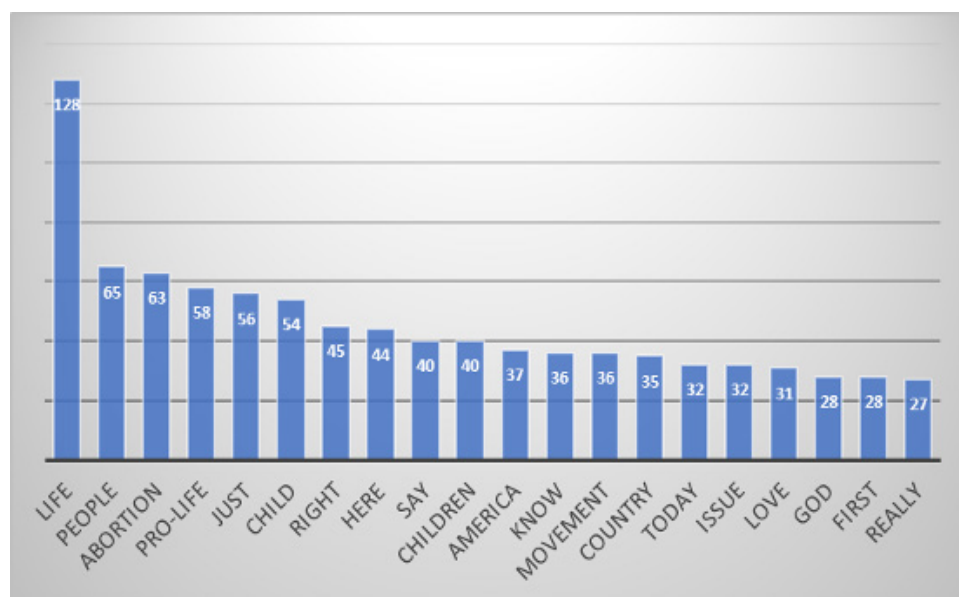
#### 3.1. General overview of the manipulative techniques in the pro-life corpus

We uploaded the speeches of our corpora one by one, in a first stage, and then compiled the pro-life speeches (henceforth PL corpus), and the pro-choice speeches (henceforth PC corpus) in a second stage. The two corpora were uploaded onto WMatrix4, and a word-frequency list for the two corpora

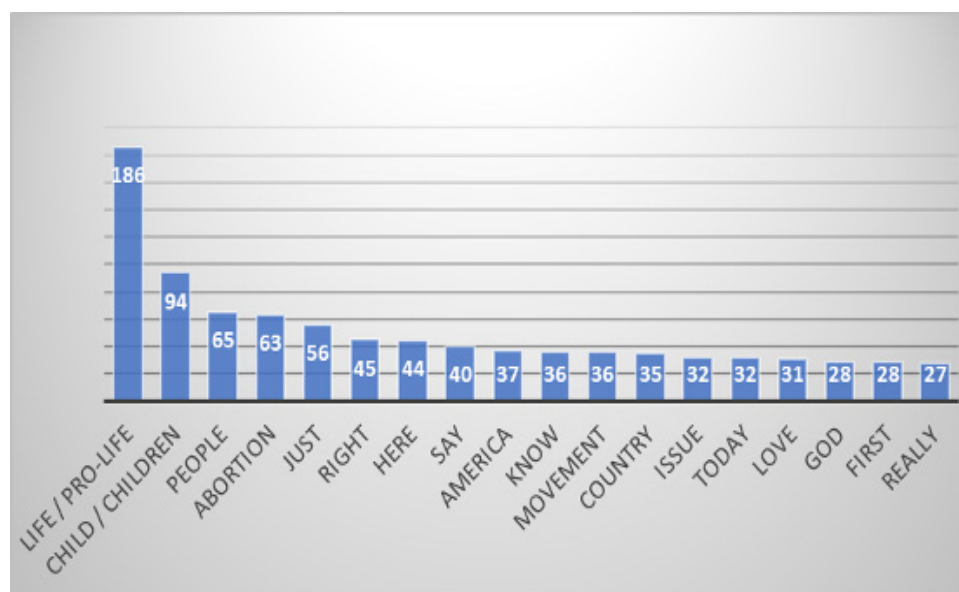


was established, first without lemmatization (see Figure 12), then by using a lemma list to lemmatize the most frequent terms (see Figure 13); a stop list was also used to remove the grammatical tokens we did not consider relevant to our analysis:

**Figure 3. Token frequency for the pro-life corpus**



**Figure 4. Lemma frequency for the pro-life corpus**



The same analyses were performed for the pro-choice corpus:

Figure 5. Token frequency for the pro-choice corpus

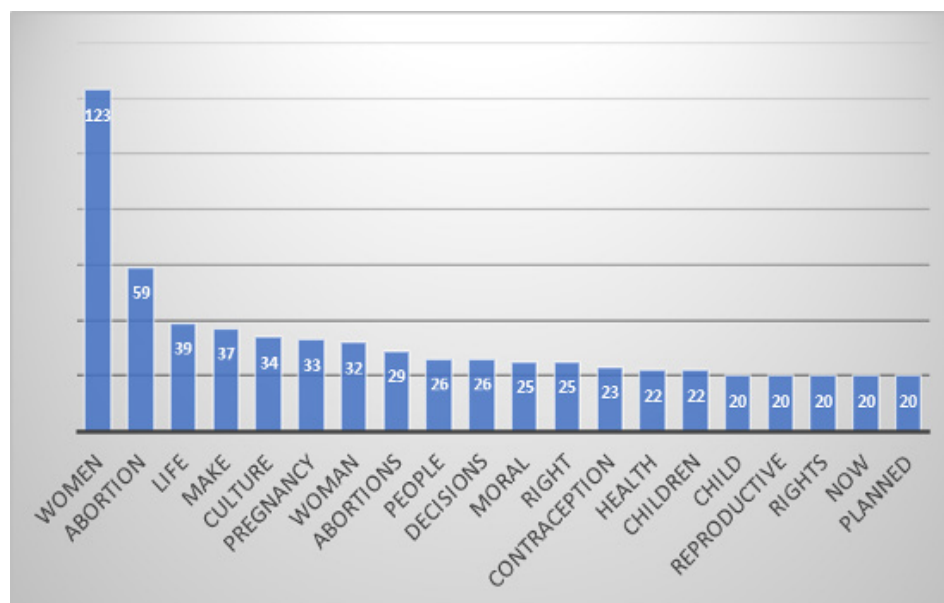
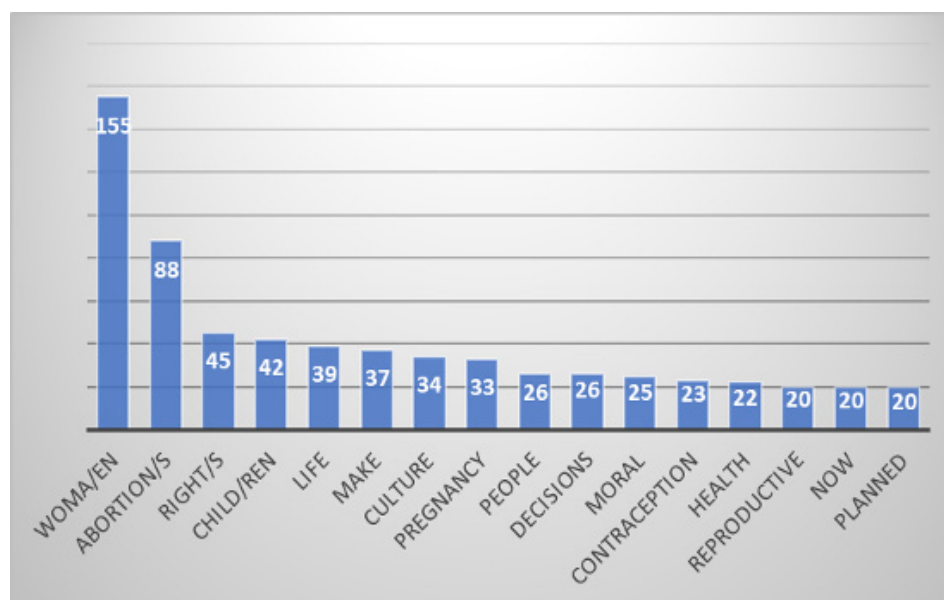


Figure 6. Lemma frequency for the pro-choice corpus



It is interesting to note that if words such as *life*, *abortion*, *child* / *children* and *people* are used in the PL corpus and in the PC corpus, the frequency and order of the words are different: the PL corpus insists on the life of the child / children – who would be considered fetuses by pro-choicers – and words such as *America*, *country*, *God* and *love* are also frequently used to emphasize the fact that resorting to abortion is an act against the USA, against God and against love; on the contrary, the PC corpus insists on

words such as *woman / women* (which is by far the most frequent word in the corpus), *rights*, *decisions*, etc., to highlight the woman's free choice when faced with an unwanted pregnancy. Manipulation is therefore already present at the lexical level, by the choice of lexical words made by speakers.

The two corpora were then compared to the American English 2006 (AME06) reference corpus thanks to WMatrix4. We decided to keep only the first 25 results and focus more specifically on the log-likelihood (LL) score, first in the PL corpus:

**Figure 7. Log-likelihood scores for the pro-life corpus**

	Item	O1	%1	O2	%2	LL	LogRatio
1	Concordance we	249	1.71	3200	0.33 +	404.45	2.37
2	Concordance pro-life	58	0.40	26	0.00 +	385.38	7.21
3	Concordance life	127	0.87	688	0.07 +	385.02	3.62
4	Concordance abortion	64	0.44	63	0.01 +	364.92	6.08
5	Concordance thats	33	0.23	0	0.00 +	277.97	12.10
6	Concordance nt	33	0.23	2	0.00 +	262.69	10.10
7	Concordance our	118	0.81	1288	0.13 +	221.84	2.61
8	Concordance child	53	0.36	198	0.02 +	193.57	4.15
9	Concordance you	204	1.40	4535	0.47 +	171.35	1.58
10	Concordance lila	20	0.14	0	0.00 +	168.46	11.38
11	Concordance thank you	28	0.19	43	0.00 +	141.90	5.44
12	Concordance theyre	16	0.11	0	0.00 +	134.77	11.05
13	Concordance Im	18	0.12	3	0.00 +	134.48	8.64
14	Concordance unborn	17	0.12	2	0.00 +	130.47	9.14
15	Concordance youre	15	0.10	0	0.00 +	126.35	10.96
16	Concordance because	72	0.50	871	0.09 +	123.70	2.46
17	Concordance cant	16	0.11	2	0.00 +	122.27	9.05
18	Concordance movement	36	0.25	163	0.02 +	119.95	3.88
19	Concordance march	24	0.17	42	0.00 +	116.89	5.25
20	Concordance is	269	1.85	8474	0.88 +	116.36	1.08
21	Concordance that	342	2.35	11909	1.23 +	114.34	0.93
22	Concordance theres	13	0.09	0	0.00 +	109.50	10.75
23	Concordance America	38	0.26	234	0.02 +	107.06	3.43
24	Concordance parenthood	15	0.10	4	0.00 +	106.91	7.96
25	Concordance bless	14	0.10	3	0.00 +	102.17	8.28

A log-likelihood score above 150 indicates that the word is statistically more frequently used in the corpus under scrutiny than in the reference corpus, i.e. American English 2006. Pro-life rhetoric therefore resorts more often to the words *we*, *pro-life*, *life*, *abortion*, *our*, *child* and *you* than general American English, which is no surprise given the themes tackled by pro-lifers.

The same analysis was carried out on the PC corpus:

Figure 8. Log-likelihood scores for the pro-choice corpus

	Item	O1	%1	O2	%2	LL	LogRatio
1	Concordance women	123	1.15	668	0.07 +	442.24	4.06
2	Concordance abortion	59	0.55	63	0.01 +	365.40	6.41
3	Concordance nt	25	0.23	2	0.00 +	211.64	10.14
4	Concordance pregnancy	33	0.31	36	0.00 +	203.39	6.38
5	Concordance abortions	29	0.27	28	0.00 +	183.60	6.55
6	Concordance parenthood	19	0.18	4	0.00 +	150.48	8.75
7	Concordance reproductive	20	0.19	13	0.00 +	136.72	7.12
8	Concordance 185,000	15	0.14	0	0.00 +	135.51	11.41
9	Concordance culture	34	0.32	152	0.02 +	133.57	4.34
10	Concordance contraception	23	0.22	34	0.00 +	131.65	5.94
11	Concordance we	120	1.12	3200	0.33 +	121.91	1.76
12	Concordance decisions	26	0.24	79	0.01 +	119.08	4.90
13	Concordance Womens	13	0.12	0	0.00 +	117.44	11.20
14	Concordance fetus	14	0.13	3	0.00 +	110.70	8.72
15	Concordance pregnancies	14	0.13	4	0.00 +	107.50	8.31
16	Concordance autonomy	18	0.17	24	0.00 +	105.78	6.09
17	Concordance moral	25	0.23	124	0.01 +	93.77	4.19
18	Concordance planned	20	0.19	62	0.01 +	90.94	4.87
19	Concordance Donald_trump	11	0.10	2	0.00 +	88.26	8.96
20	Concordance unintended	11	0.10	4	0.00 +	82.07	7.96
21	Concordance unwanted	12	0.11	9	0.00 +	79.92	6.92
22	Concordance rights	20	0.19	94	0.01 +	76.86	4.27
23	Concordance im	10	0.09	3	0.00 +	76.36	8.24
24	Concordance pregnant	13	0.12	19	0.00 +	74.63	5.95
25	Concordance theyre	8	0.07	0	0.00 +	72.27	10.50

Quite differently, pro-choice rhetoric resorts more often to the lexemes *women*, *abortion*, *pregnancy*, *abortions*, and *parenthood* than general American English.

We performed the same search, not in terms of lexical frequency but in terms of semantic tagging, still looking at the log-likelihood test. The PL corpus (Figure 18) and the PC corpus (Figure 19) showed the following results:

Figure 9. Log-likelihood scores for the pro-life corpus in terms of semantic tagging

	Item	O1	%1	O2	%2	LL	LogRatio
1	List1 Concordance I8	2054	14.12	84722	8.76 +	394.23	0.69 Pronouns
2	List1 Concordance L1+	133	0.91	907	0.09 +	352.10	3.28 Alive
3	List1 Concordance S2	227	1.56	4225	0.44 +	244.86	1.84 People
4	List1 Concordance B3	111	0.76	2016	0.21 +	123.53	1.87 Medicines and medical treatment
5	List1 Concordance A3+	554	3.81	24478	2.53 +	79.59	0.59 Existing
6	List1 Concordance S7.4+	70	0.48	1329	0.14 +	73.58	1.81 Allowed
7	List1 Concordance I4	118	0.81	3830	0.40 +	47.47	1.03 Discourse Bin
8	List1 Concordance T1.1.3	108	0.74	3496	0.36 +	43.74	1.04 Time: Future
9	List1 Concordance E2+	57	0.39	1360	0.14 +	42.76	1.48 Like
10	List1 Concordance A5.1+	92	0.63	2973	0.31 +	37.41	1.04 Evaluation: Good

**Figure 10. Log-likelihood scores for the pro-choice corpus in terms of semantic tagging**

	Item	O1	%	O2	%	LL	LogRatio	
1	List1 Concordance S2.1	188	1.76	1999	0.21 +	460.32	3.09	People: Female
2	List1 Concordance B3	187	1.75	2016	0.21 +	453.54	3.07	Medicines and medical treatment
3	List1 Concordance X6+	58	0.54	853	0.09 +	111.01	2.62	Decided
4	List1 Concordance L1+	57	0.53	907	0.09 +	101.91	2.51	Alive
5	List1 Concordance X7+	140	1.31	4859	0.50 +	94.35	1.38	Wanted
6	List1 Concordance S2	107	1.00	4225	0.44 +	56.10	1.20	People
7	List1 Concordance S7.4+	51	0.48	1329	0.14 +	53.44	1.80	Allowed
8	List1 Concordance I8	1152	10.79	84722	8.76 +	46.10	0.30	Pronouns
9	List1 Concordance B2	23	0.22	351	0.04 +	42.65	2.57	Health and disease
10	List1 Concordance G2.2+	28	0.26	566	0.06 +	39.67	2.16	Ethical

If the PL corpus resorts principally to lexemes related to the semantic domains of *alive* and *people*, and uses lots of pronouns, the PC corpus, however, resorts to lexemes related to the semantic domains of *people: female* and *medicines and medical treatment*. If the “baby-to-be” is semantically highlighted in the PL corpus, the “pregnant woman who has to decide for herself by resorting to medical treatment” is the focus in the PC corpus. This clearly indicates completely different emphases aimed at manipulating the potential audience.

As we mentioned previously, any manipulative text resorts to a variety of persuasive techniques and rhetorical figures of speech, metaphor being one among many; this is the case in the PL corpus, in which there are, for example, many ‘repetitions’, in bold fonts in the excerpts below<sup>12</sup>:

(1) It means, to *stand up*, *stand tall*, and *stand together* against the indifference and the indefensible; and to *stand up*, *stand tall*, and *stand together* on behalf of babies in the womb. [KC 2017\_01\_27]

(2) Looking out on this crowd, I can see there are people here of all ages, from all walks of life, but the young people here is what is so inspiring because it tells me this is a movement that is *on the rise*. And do you know why the pro-life movement is *on the rise*? Because truth is *on our side*. Life begins at conception.

Do you know why the pro-life movement is *on the rise*? Because science is *on our side*. Just look at the ultrasounds that have shown us more about the pre-born child than ever before. How they develop, how they react, how they feel pain.

Most importantly, the pro-life movement is *on the rise* because we have love *on our side*. We believe every person is worthy of love and dignity. That is why the pro-life movement is *on the rise*. [PR 2018\_01\_19]

12 Techniques such as repetition are in line with theories on populist discourse, which has been widely researched, especially in France (for instance, Dorna [2007]). Populist discourse also resorts to the following devices: simple language with repetition; bipolar discourse: “we” and “the others”; national imagery, etc.).



Not only are metaphors used in (1) and (2) repetitive, but they are highly conventional, which reinforces their manipulative aspect (see section 3.2.1.). Repetition is particularly salient when it takes the form of anaphora, that is to say when a sequence of words is repeated at the beginning of several sentences in the nearby textual environment:

(3) You know, *life is winning* in America. And today is a celebration of that progress, the progress that we have made in this cause.

You know, I've long believed that a society can be judged by how we care for our most vulnerable – the aged, the infirm, the disabled, and the unborn. We've come to a[n] historic moment in the cause for life, and we must meet this moment with respect and compassion for every American.

*Life is winning* in America for many reasons.

*Life is winning* through the steady advance of science that illuminates when life begins more and more every day.

*Life is winning* through the generosity of millions of adoptive families to open their hearts and homes to children in need.

*Life is winning* through the compassion of caregivers and volunteers at crisis pregnancy centers and faith-based organizations who minister to women in the cities and towns across this country.

And *life is winning* through the quiet counsels between mothers and daughters, grandmothers and granddaughters, between friends across kitchen tables, and over coffee at college campuses. The truth is being told. Compassion is overcoming convenience; and hope is defeating despair.

In a word, *life is winning* in America because of all of you. [MP 2017\_01\_27]

Another frequent persuasive technique is 'story-telling' [Lakoff 1991]; to demonstrate their point, a majority of the speeches in the PL corpus take one story about a woman who decided not to have an abortion as an example:

(4) Forty-one years ago a struggling couple arrived in America. They left their country, entrusted their two children which they wouldn't see for another five years in the care of family members to come here – to the land of opportunity. It was inconvenient for them to learn to find out that they were pregnant with their third because both had to work multiple jobs to make ends meet. Some would say it would have been easier for them to have an abortion, but this couple had to make a difficult choice – protect the life of their child or always wonder what might have been. [ML 2017\_01\_27]



(5) During the other march in Washington last week I saw the picture of a young, black teenage girl in the crowd who was holding a sign that said, "I survived Roe v. Wade." That young woman beat the odds and was born into a world too far often that favors the abortion of a black girl instead of the life of a black girl. [ML 2017\_01\_27]

(6) Marianne was 17 when she found out she was pregnant. At first, she felt like she had no place to turn. But when she told her parents, they responded with total love, total affection, total support. Great parents? Great? [DT 2018\_01\_19]

Less frequently, the speakers use stories about abortion doctors, who are depicted as being insensitive monsters, just like pro-choicers:

(7) She *recounts a harrowing experience* while performing an abortion: "An eyeball just fell down into my lap," she says, "and that's gross." Her remark was greeted with laughter from her audience. [ML 2017\_06\_08]

This reinforces the 'we vs. they' opposition, another frequent persuasive / manipulative technique:

(8) And that's why *we're* growing and *they're* shrinking, and it's making them desperate! [MS 2014\_01\_29]

The comparison between the PL corpus and American English 2006 used as a reference corpus which was conducted through WMatrix indeed showed that 1st person plural pronouns (WE, OURS) were overused in PL speeches, which creates both an opposition between WE and THEY and a sense of "in-groupness" [Cacciari 1998: 141].

Manipulation can also be achieved through the creation of symbolic imagery relying on shared knowledge; it is therefore easily taken for granted by the audience, all the more as the most frequent words used by pro-lifers are the words we find in the occurrences related to symbolic imagery (see section 3.1.). We can note the use of religious imagery:

(9) We know that life is the greatest miracle of all. We see it in the eyes of every new mother who cradles that wonderful, innocent, and glorious newborn child in her loving arms. [DT 2018\_01\_19]<sup>13</sup>

or through references to the history of the United States and its destiny, which is, at times, intertwined with religious imagery:

(10) Under my administration, we will always defend *the very first right in the Declaration of Independence*, and that is the right to life. [DT 2018\_10\_19]

(11) And most of all, God, the *God who built and preserved nations*, who brings life and maintains it, who stands with those who suffer evil, he will remember us. He will *remember America and bless her*. [BS 2019\_01\_18]

Enumeration is resorted to in a few speeches from the PL corpus, especially to draw up a list of the different pieces of legislation:

(12) We strive to make our time in Congress a March for Life in itself. We strive to fight for the unborn, to *pass important pro-life legislation through Congress*, to work with the Trump administration to pass pro-life policies and laws. And we're making a lot of progress.

In the House, we passed *legislation defunding Planned Parenthood*. In the House, we passed the *Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act*, which restricts abortions after 20 weeks.

We passed the *Conscience Protection Act*, which ensures no one is forced to perform an abortion against his or her will. Religious freedom is the *First Amendment*. It is the first protection in our *Bill of Rights*.

And just a few minutes ago, today, we passed the *Born-Alive Survivors Protection Act*. It protects the life of those babies who suffer from failed abortions. [PR 2018\_01\_2019]

Fake information (accompanied by data, figures, etc.)<sup>14</sup> is also frequently provided in pro-life speeches, following the *logos* principle:

13 This short paragraph by Donald Trump immediately evokes the Virgin Mary, especially in this specific context.

14 We decided to label those occurrences "fake information" because they were different from the official data (see Figures 8 and 9).

(13) Americans are more and more pro-life. You see that all the time. In fact, *only 12 percent of Americans* support abortion on demand at any time. [DT 2018\_01\_19]

(14) As of last year, *58% of Americans* said they think abortion should be illegal. [MS 2014\_01\_19]

Yet, recent polls (2018) showed that 29% of American citizens believe that abortion should be legal in all circumstances [Jones 2018].

The main manipulative techniques used in the corpus are thus quite prototypical of the techniques used to manipulate crowds through speech, following Aristotle's classification [2004]: *logos*, *pathos* and *ethos*. As reminded by Charteris-Black [2011: 7], "these three artistic proofs are still relevant to how persuasion is achieved in contemporary political rhetoric". The speakers present themselves as saviors (*ethos*), try to arouse emotions in the audience through images of dying babies (*pathos*), and use linguistic devices, figures and data to be even more persuasive (*logos*). Metaphor is only one of those manipulative techniques; we will now mostly focus on the choice of metaphors, because as Charteris-Black [2011: 3] reminds us, "[u]nderstanding the systematic nature of metaphor choices is therefore necessary if we are to understand how political language becomes persuasive."

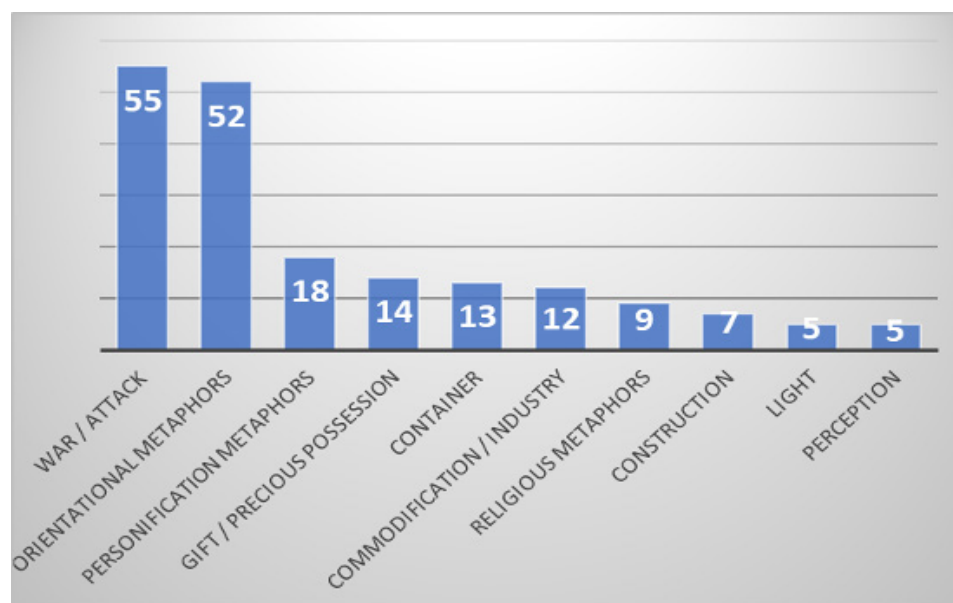
### 3.2. How are metaphors used manipulatively in the PL corpus?

The 190 metaphors found in the corpus have been divided between orientational metaphors and structural metaphors [Lakoff & Johnson 1980]<sup>15</sup>; the latter were classified according to their source domains. They are distributed as shown on the following graph:

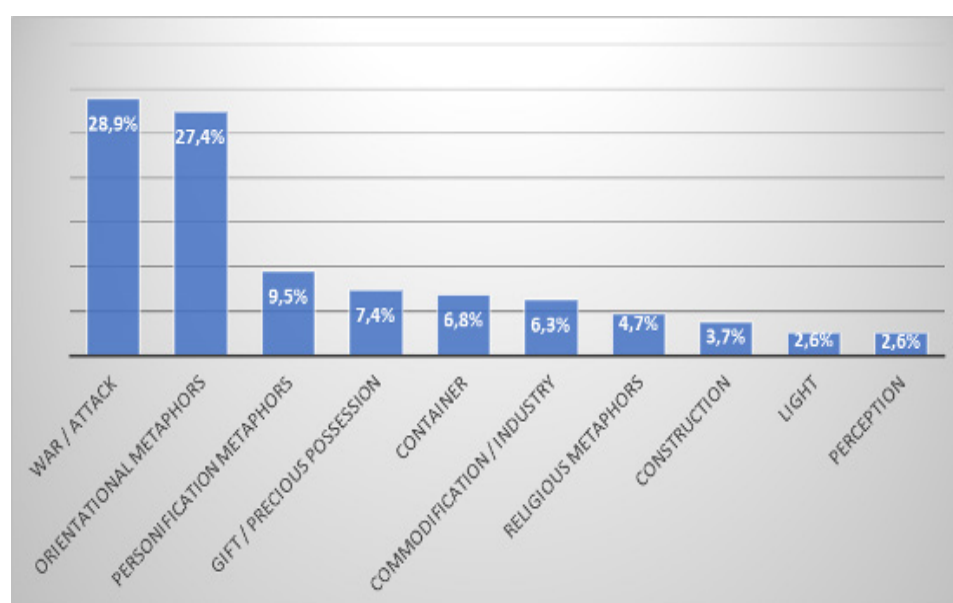
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15 "[T]hree general kinds of conceptual metaphor have been distinguished: structural, ontological, and orientational" [Kövecses 2002: 33].

**Figure 11. Frequency of the conceptual domains in the pro-life corpus**



**Figure 12. Frequency of the conceptual domains in the pro-life corpus in percentage**



In the following subsections, the metaphorical occurrences from the PL corpus will be analyzed according to their source domain, and particular attention will be given to the manipulative techniques resorted to in the occurrences under study.

### 3.2.1. *war / attack metaphors*

The highest number of occurrences (28.9%) derives from the domains *war / attack* (55). We have identified two different kinds of conceptual metaphors related to *war / attack* in the corpus:

- *abortion is an attack*: many of those occurrences are considered literal utterances for pro-lifers, as they do believe pro-choicers and legal abortion attack the yet unborn babies<sup>16</sup>, as reminded by Charteris-Black [2011: 32]:

At any one instance in time a word may be more or less metaphoric for an individual speaker because judgements of what is normal, or conventional, depend on language users' unique experiences of discourse.

(15) You have to *destroy the second child* [JL 2016\_01\_20]

(16) What we were engaging in was the *mass killing of the unborn* [BS 2019\_01\_18]

(17) The *dismemberment of babies and torture of tiny bodies* in the womb and we told ourselves we were virtuous for our *ally*, we reversed good and evil, we told ourselves the *killing* had continued because if it did not, we would be imposing economic hardship. [...] we told them to be proud of participating in the *killing of the unborn*. [BS 2019\_01\_18]

These occurrences largely rely on another conceptual metaphor, i.e. *life is a journey*; pro-lifers conceptualize the moment of conception as the beginning of the journey; that is how expressions such as "killing babies" become non metaphorical for them. Even though they are not metaphors for them, they are all linked to the frame War and tend to be metaphorical (or at least metonymy-based metaphors) for pro-choicers, who consider that fetuses cannot be killed as they are not viable organisms. This is an example of asymmetrical metaphors [Goatly 2007: 119]: the discrepancy between what some speakers consider as literal and what some others consider as figurative enables manipulation in this specific context.

- *ARGUMENT IS WAR*, which is itself subdivided into:
  - *pro-choicers are life attackers*

(18) They will characterize this nation as *barbarians*. [MR 02\_01\_2012]

16 Note that the terms *babies*, *unborn*, *bodies*, etc. are used, instead of terms like *fetuses* for instance.

(19) as Planned Parenthood and their *allies* in the mainstream media hoped [ML 2017\_06\_08]

- *pro-lifers are life defenders*

(20) The pro-life movement *is winning*, because we are THE big *tent*! Do you believe in God? Great, come on in! You don't believe in God? Great, come on in! You're not sure about God? Great, come on in! Everyone who recognizes the horror of abortion is welcome here! [MS 2014\_01\_29]

(21) More than that, they would have never dreamed she would grow up to *fight for* all children and those yet to be born. [ML 2017\_01\_27]

Pro-lifers see themselves as victims having to respond to an attack – the attack by pro-choicers on the lives of unborn children; they did not initiate it but have to react peacefully to the aggression from pro-choicers, for example by 'marching'. The metaphors *abortion is an attack* and *argument is war* are therefore quite frequently combined:

(22) we casually don't just try to *fight off the destruction of tissue* in other ways [JL 2016\_01\_20]

According to Charteris-Black [2011: 37], "[m]etaphors provide the ammunition for debate", and this participates in the manipulative process because pro-life violent activity has actually been increasing in the past 30 years (see statistics provided in 2.1.): pro-lifers present themselves as non-violent as compared to pro-choicers, as illustrated in (18). Conceptualizing pro-choicers as baby killers allows them to hide the violent dimension their movement can sometimes take.

Most metaphors related to *war* are lexicalized metaphors or borderline cases of metaphors, which tends to make them less salient and therefore potentially more dangerous, as they can go unnoticed. There are, however, some occurrences which are much more vivid, extended, or combined, such as the following one:



(23) At its core, this is a debate about life and death. And we're *promoting* life, they're *promoting* death. It's like *Coke vs Pepsi*—we're *Coke*, they're *Pepsi*, but instead of *Pepsi* they use *rat poison*. It's *Coke vs. rat poison*! They can have the *coolest cans*, they can have the *funniest commercials*, but in the end it's still a can of *rat poison*! When you peel away the *glossy ad*, the pro-choice position offers death. Nothing more.

[...]

Why you should choose *Coke*, not *rat poison*! Stop by anytime!"

[MS 2014\_01\_29]

We mentioned repetition as a manipulative technique, and in this excerpt, repetition takes the form of an extended metaphor; this occurrence is quite remarkable, as there is a combination of the *attack/war* and *commodification/industry* conceptual domains, exemplified in the expression "a can of rat poison", reinforced by the 'us vs. them' opposition. The rare occurrences of those metaphors also participate in the manipulative process, as they resemble storytelling or parables, which places pro-lifers in the position of the 'good guys', and pro-choicers in the position of the 'bad guys'<sup>17</sup>.

More generally speaking, *war / attack* metaphors tend to create two opposed sides: that of the pro-lifers, who are considered as the 'good guys' defending life (*life* is often used metonymically to refer to the fetuses) and that of the pro-choicers, who are actually considered as 'pro-abortionists'. This deformed vision of reality completely ignores the in-between zone, with which 50% of American citizens identify – that is to say, the belief that abortion should be legal but regulated. Because of the correspondences which are established between the two domains, *war* metaphors present a much-dichotomized vision of society, with life defenders / good on one side and life attackers / evil on the other side.

### 3.2.2. Orientational metaphors

There are 52 occurrences of orientational metaphors in the corpus, accounting for 27.4% of all metaphors found in the corpus, which is not surprising given the fact that orientational metaphors are frequent in any type of discourse. Most of these derive from the *good is up* or *good is forward movement* conceptual metaphors:

(24) We always move *forward toward* the perfection of that promise. [BS 2019\_01\_18]

17 We can mention the conceptual metaphor THE USA IS THE MORAL LEADER in conjunction with good and bad guys, as proposed by Charteris-Black [2005: 177]. Pro-life arguments therefore bring in national morality into the debate.

(25) And, yes, we *walk*, we *march*, we *run*, and we *endeavor forward* with you. [KC 2017\_01\_27]

(26) Life is winning through the steady *advance* of science that illuminates when life begins more and more every day. [MP 01\_27\_2017]

(27) We *stand* between America and darkness and we will march until that darkness is banished forever and all of our children can *stand* together in the sunlight. [BS 2019\_01\_18]

(28) It means, to *stand up*, *stand tall*, and *stand together* against the indifference and the indefensible; and to *stand up*, *stand tall*, and *stand together* on behalf of babies in the womb. [KC 2017\_01\_27]

The occurrences of “stand up” are numerous and generally rely on a syllepsis, as the audience literally stands up and figuratively stands up for life.

These examples are manipulative through the multivalency of metaphors: in the first three occurrences, the two targets – *good* and *the progress brought by the pro-life movement* – become associated or confused into an equation, because they share the multivalent source *forward movement* (*good is forward movement + the progress brought by the pro-life movement is forward movement = good is the progress by the pro-life movement*); in the last two occurrences, the two targets *good* and *the resistance of the pro-life movement* become associated or confused into an equation, because they share the multivalent source *up* (*good is up + the resistance of the pro-life movement is up = good is the resistance of the pro-life movement*).

### 3.2.3. Personification metaphors

In the PL corpus, personifications, accounting for 9.5% of the overall metaphors, often rely on metonymies (“soul”, “life”, “voices”, etc.) to name the fetuses. According to Charteris-Black [2011: 62]:

Personification is persuasive because it evokes our attitudes, feelings and beliefs about people and applies them to our attitudes, feelings and beliefs about abstract political entities and is therefore a way of heightening the emotional appeal.

These are used for two reasons: firstly, to name them because there are no physical bodies when women have an abortion during the first trimester; pro-lifers often refer to the “unborn children”. However, personification is

also a way to designate the potential of life and to give fetuses the attributes of a real person, not just the attributes of a body, and therefore to reinforce the opinion according to which life starts at the moment of conception.

(29) *stilled* forever, *voices* that could not speak, we dehumanize the most innocent [BS 2019\_01\_18]

(30) to stand here with the *souls* of the future of America [BS 2019\_01\_18]

(31) all *life enjoys* God's love. [MR 02\_01\_2012]

The remaining occurrences mainly conceptualize "truth", "faith", or "love" as participants in the March for Life, manipulating again the audience by presenting those positively-connoted notions as if they were attending the March for Life, i.e. as members of the pro-life movement:

(32) So we have to be a *voice of truth*, and uncompromising truth, about abortion [and] human life, but we have to be compassionate and say that anybody can change. [LR 2016\_05\_9-13]

(33) My faith *teaches* me this life will *end* [...] your faith *teaches* you, they almost all *teach* the same thing: you will be *held to account*. [MR 02\_01\_2012]

(34) And that theme is: *Love saves lives*. [DT 2018\_01\_19]<sup>18</sup>

Once again, this participates in the simple manipulative process through the conceptualization of pro-lifers as 'the good guys', who are accompanied by personifications of love, faith, or truth, and in the not so implicit conceptualization of pro-choicers as 'the bad guys'.

### 3.2.4. LIFE IS A GIFT / A PRECIOUS POSSESSION metaphors

*life is a gift / a precious possession* metaphors are not uncommon in the English language [Kövecses 2002, 2006], but surprisingly, not so frequent in the corpus, as they only account for 7.4% of the occurrences. In the set of data, they are closely linked to religion, as *life* is often conceptualized as *a gift from God*:

(35) "Human life is a *gift* from our Creator" [GWB 2006\_01\_23]

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18 As Richard Trim (personal communication) mentioned to us: "All these tend to involve symbolic imagery: God, truth, love, etc. They are generally linked to the morality concept which has formed a part of American constitutional rhetoric since the beginning."

(36) I think virtually every faith condemns the practice of abortion, recognizes that life is a *gift* from the creator [MR 02\_01\_2012]

*life is a gift* and *life is a precious possession* are often combined:

(37) every child is a *precious gift from God* [DT 2018\_01\_19]

(38) Life is *precious* and life is *sacred* [LR 2016\_05\_9-13]

The manipulative potential of these metaphors relies on two elements: firstly, the two conceptual metaphors are quite common and therefore entrenched in the minds of speakers. Therefore, they participate in the manipulation of speakers as they are not as salient as novel metaphors and can consequently go unnoticed. Secondly, they insidiously compel speakers to conceptualize life as starting at the moment of conception, because *life* in those speeches metonymically stands for *fetuses*. These metaphors therefore subtly modify the correspondences established between the two domains by moving the source in the *source-path-goal* image-schema to the moment of conception.

### 3.2.5. CONTAINER metaphors

There are 13 occurrences of *container* metaphors in the corpus, i.e. 6.8%. Those are quite frequent metaphors in any type of discourse as well, and it is therefore not surprising that they should be found in the corpus. Some occurrences present a conceptualization of the United States or of a period in the United States as a container that can or cannot be filled with children:

(39) And that is why we declare that America's future will be *filled* with goodness, peace, joy, dignity, and life for every child of God. [DT 2018\_01\_19]

(40) We as a country decided to *erase* them [BS 2019\_01\_18]

(41) we decided we could safely *blot out* millions of souls [BS 2019\_01\_18]

A full container is generally positively connoted, while an empty one is negatively connoted, mostly because what is supposed to fill the container is life. However, more generally, fullness is regarded as positive while emptiness is regarded as negative [Goatly 2007: 65]. However, *container* metaphors can also be negatively connoted if the container is used to conceal something that is negatively connoted, as in the following occurrence:

(42) then we put *walls around* that lie [BS 2019\_01\_18]

Here, “we” refers to American people and more specifically to pro-choicers rather than to pro-lifers. In most occurrences, however, the notion of fullness – and its very mention – conveys a positive interpretation, whatever the target domain:

(43) The whole world was *opened* to me: I could be with the older kids or the younger kids, I could do extracurriculars that weren’t necessarily traditional. [LR 2016\_05\_9-13] (*the visual field is a container*)

(44) So I can’t thank my parents enough for *pouring themselves into* my education and really setting me up for success to do the most in this cause for life. [LR 2016\_05\_9-13] (*education is a container*)

(45) And one day, soon, we will reaffirm our nation’s principles in their dignified *fullness* and avow once again, that all men are created equal. [ML 2017\_06\_08] (*the nation is a container*)

(46) The pro-life movement is winning, because we are THE big tent! Do you believe in God? Great, *come on in*! You don’t believe in God? Great, *come on in*! You’re not sure about God? Great, *come on in*! Everyone who recognizes the horror of abortion is welcome here! [MS 2014\_01\_29] (*a community is a container*)

Systematically associating pro-lifers to fullness allows them to present themselves in a positive light, contrary to pro-choicers, who are rather conceptualized as emptying the United States of all life and of all potential American children.

### 3.2.6. commodification / industry metaphors

*Industry* and *commodity* metaphors can be found in five different speeches from the corpus and account for 6.3% of the overall metaphors<sup>19</sup>. There are three occurrences of the collocation “abortion industry” in the corpus in two different speeches:

(47) the Center for Medical Progress is once again the target of criminal and civil investigations designed to intimidate further questions about the *abortion industry’s* methods and money. [ML 2017\_06\_08]

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19 The American context of business is important (see Goatly [2007]’s theories of business metaphors and ideology).

(48) Learn the facts about the *abortion industry*. [LR 2016\_05\_9-13]

as well as one occurrence of “abortion chain” [LR 2016\_05\_9-13], one of “abortion-on-demand” [MS 2014\_01\_29], and one of “industry” [ML 2017\_06\_08]. The systematic use of this collocation and of this conceptual metaphor in different speeches throughout the years also participates in the manipulative process, as it contributes to leaving a permanent imprint of this concept in the minds of the audience, so to speak. Those metaphors are also manipulative as they participate in the demonization of pro-choicers. *Industry* is defined in the following words in the *OED* [‘industry, n. 5.a.’ 2015]:

A particular form or sector of productive work, trade, or manufacture. In later use also more generally: any commercial activity or enterprise. Also with modifying word indicating the type of activity or principal product.

By suggesting that abortion is a form of lucrative business, pro-lifers imply that the only aim of abortion providers is to make money off women and children and that they want to increase the number of abortions in order to make more money. Therefore, *abortion is an industry* is closely linked to *a fetus is a commodity*, which derives from *a person is a commodity*, pro-lifers considering that life starts at the moment of conception. Dehumanization in this metaphor is therefore highly dysphemistic<sup>20</sup> as it enables the objectification of people and fetuses and suggests that they can be sold; pro-lifers reverse the argument given by pro-choicers and science according to which life does not start at the moment of conception by pushing it to the extreme and associating abortion not to medicine, but to trade. The association between fetuses and commodities is explicitly mentioned in the text on two occasions:

(49) these were not human beings, human lives at all but disposable balls of meat  
[...]  
not human beings, human lives at all but disposable balls of meat.  
[BS 2019\_01\_18]

(50) It shows another Planned Parenthood doctor stating that ‘the fetus is a tough little object,’ so ‘taking it apart’ in the womb is ‘very difficult’ [ML 2017\_06\_08]

20 “A **dysphemism** is an expression with connotations that are offensive either about the denotatum or to the audience, or both, and it is substituted for a neutral or euphemistic expression just for that reason” [Allan & Burridge 1991: 26].



The manipulative process also relies on the fact that pro-lifers argue that those are not metaphorical for pro-choicers and that they literally believe that fetuses are objects that can be tossed away. This completely conceals the underlying metaphor *a fetus is a commodity* and uses a short cut in order to give less credibility to the argument of pro-choicers: if non-viable fetuses are not human lives, then they are objects and can be attributed all the characteristics and functions that can be attributed to regular objects. Attributing those words to pro-choicers participates in their demonization.

One occurrence (23) we discussed previously in the *war / attack* section seems to stand out: it is particularly salient because it is both novel, extended and it combines two conceptual metaphors, *abortion is war / attack* and *abortion is commodification / industry*, which makes it all the more manipulative, as it participates in the dehumanizing process:

(23) At its core, this is a debate about life and death. And we're promoting life, they're promoting death. It's like *Coke vs Pepsi* — we're *Coke*, they're *Pepsi*, but instead of *Pepsi* they use rat poison. It's *Coke* vs. rat poison! They can have the *coolest cans*, they can have the *funniest commercials*, but in the end it's still a *can* of rat poison! When you peel away the *glossy ad*, the pro-choice position offers death. Nothing more.

[...]

Why you should choose Coke, not rat poison! Stop by anytime! [MS 2014\_01\_29]

### 3.2.7. Religious metaphors

Although we have already mentioned a few metaphors that are partially linked to religion<sup>21</sup>, some of them more explicitly present pro-lifers as the incarnation of everything that is good and as believers, while presenting pro-choicers as the incarnation of evil; interestingly enough, there are not many of them in the corpus (4.7%):

(51) The dismemberment of babies and torture of tiny bodies in the womb and we told ourselves we were virtuous for our ally, we *reversed good and evil*, we told ourselves the killing had continued because if it did not, we would be imposing economic hardship. [BS 2019\_01\_18]

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21 Religious metaphors are not numerous; they have been gathered in the same section even though they do not all use the same conceptual domain.

Part of those occurrences are probably not entirely metaphorical to pro-lifers as they strongly believe that abortion is a form of murder that is condemned by religion and that should be condemned by society, as exemplified in the following occurrences:

(52) I think virtually every faith *condemns* the practice of abortion, recognizes that life is a gift from the creator [MR 02\_01\_2012]

(53) The way we look at these things in history and *condemn* them, this era will be *condemned* for this [MR 02\_01\_2012]

The use of religious imagery and the references to history enable to define abortion as something evil that should be unlawful, and therefore to make a parallel between religion and law. The occurrences linked to religion also sometimes rely on metaphor and hyperbole:

(54) the democratic party has *embraced* abortion as a *sacrament* [BS 2019\_01\_18]

This occurrence fosters the conceptualization of good religious pro-lifers as opposed to evil pro-choicers, who are equated with Satanists, reversing the concept of sacrament as Satanists reverse all Christian rites and symbols. However, Ben Shapiro may not literally believe that the Democratic Party is made of Satanists, but the metaphor allows him to manipulate the audience who may not perceive the metaphor as a metaphor. The distinction between metaphor, hyperbole, and pure lie is quite blurred here. It is also unsure how metaphorical "miracle" is used in the next two occurrences:

(55) life is the *greatest miracle of all* [DT 2018\_01\_19]

(56) speak to the many women who have faced challenges becoming and remaining pregnant – and then welcomed a *miracle* [KC 2017\_01\_27]

It seems fair to assume that most pro-lifers in the United States are religious and that they do believe that miracles are caused by God; however, the *OED* [‘miracle, n. 1.a.’ 2002] defines the word *miracle* as “[a] marvelous event not ascribable to human power or the operation of any natural force and therefore attributed to supernatural, esp. divine, agency”, and *life* and *children* cannot be considered as “events”, which makes these occurrences partly metonymic / metaphorical. Moreover, if most pro-lifers are religious, it is probably not the case for all of them, and some pro-lifers may partly accept a scientific explanation to the existence of life. “Miracle” is therefore likely to be interpreted in its metaphorical sense of “something extraordinary” by part of the audience. Even for non-religious people, the very concept of life is somehow miraculous, as it cannot be entirely accounted for. Of

course, these occurrences also rely on the assumption that life begins at the moment of conception, but the use of “miracle” gets everyone to agree and participates in the manipulative process.

### 3.2.8. CONSTRUCTION metaphors

There are two different conceptual metaphors using *construction*. Most of the time, *pro-lifers* are conceptualized as *builders of a better world / culture*:

(57) But you all come for one beautiful cause: to *build* a society where life is celebrated, protected, and cherished. [DT 2018\_01\_19]

(58) you and I are working together, along with others, to *build* what I've called a 'culture of life.' [GWB 2006\_01\_23]

In these occurrences, *pro-lifers* are more or less explicitly equated with God or the Pilgrim Fathers:

(59) The God who *built* and *preserves* nations, who *brings* life and maintains it [BS 2019\_01\_18]

(60) We *built* the country for our children, we *build* our lives for our children [BS 2019\_01\_18]

*construction* metaphors also imply *more is good*, especially when *good* is equated with *life*, which is a case of multivalency of metaphors enabling manipulation by the blurring of the conceptual domains.

The second kind of occurrence – only one in the corpus – derives from *argument is construction*:

(61) so if you *build* on that, you're already on *slippery sand* [MR 02\_01\_2012]

This metaphor allows to conceptualize the discourse of *pro-choicers* as not being well-built and on the verge of collapsing.

### 3.2.9. LIGHT metaphors

*goodness is light* metaphors [Charteris-Black 2011: 71], even if rare – 2.6% – are present in the corpus:

(62) This is a new day, a new *dawn* for life. [KC 2017\_01\_27]

(63) We stand between America and *darkness* and we will march until that *darkness* is *banished* forever and all of our children can stand together in the *sunlight*. [BS 2019\_01\_18]

They promote the conceptualization of pro-lifers as good and that of pro-choicers as evil. They are also mixed with *knowledge is life* metaphors, in which the basic assumption is that the fact that life begins at the moment of conception is the piece of knowledge that should be available to everyone and the times when abortion was legal are considered as dark times in the same way as the Middle Ages. The manipulation goes further when science is supposed to be the source of light that helps reveal this piece of knowledge, as in the following example:

(64) Life is winning through the steady advance of science that *illuminates* when life begins more and more every day. [MP 01\_27\_2017]

### 3.2.10. PERCEPTION metaphors

Finally, there are five occurrences of *perception metaphors* in the corpus (2.6%), but the role they play in the manipulative process is not as clear-cut as that of the other occurrences we have mentioned so far, probably because they are not as frequent; manipulation needs some repetitions, to achieve some hammering effect, and if the same metaphors are scarce in a given corpus, it is fair to assume that they will not have a specific manipulative function:

(65) We fought to avoid *looking at the ugly truth* of what we've done [BS 2019\_01\_18]

(66) I believe in all my heart that future generations will *look back* at this era of American history and condemn us [...] people will *look back* at this practice [...] we *look back* at the atrocities of the past. [MR 02\_01\_2012]

## Concluding remarks

The analysis of the pro-life corpus enabled us to confirm that the following elements participate in the manipulative potential of metaphors:

(1) The three criteria mentioned in section 1 seem to play a part in the manipulative power of metaphors. Firstly, the highlighting-hiding process: for example, *war* metaphors hide the violence displayed by pro-lifers and suggest that pro-choicers are violent attackers; pro-lifers are conceptualized

as defenders, but in any war, you are also attackers, and there are casualties on both sides (pro-lifers tend to insist that dead people – fetuses – are only on their side). As Charteris-Black [2011: 44] writes, “[w]hen evaluating metaphor we should therefore always consider how far metaphors conceal a speaker’s intentions”. Secondly, the existence of asymmetrical metaphors: they are indeed quite frequent in our corpus, more particularly in the pro-life corpus, as many religious-based metaphors may not be perceived as metaphors by pro-lifers, but as literal language, or are presented as such. *abortion is an attack* metaphors are perceived as real attacks by pro-lifers. A number of metaphors are also in between literal and figurative meaning, and some vivid metaphors (such as “march”) remind us of the original military meaning as they are surrounded by so many military metaphors; thirdly and finally, the multivalency of metaphors: metaphors contribute to the depiction of pro-lifers as good and pro-choicers as evil. This dichotomized vision of American society is also conveyed by many other elements in the text, as we have seen;

(2) A number of metaphors in the corpus rely on the *life is a journey* metaphor: the source of the journey is the moment of conception, not the birth *per se*; this underlying assumption participates in the manipulative potential of many conceptual metaphors in the corpus;

(3) The degree of conventionality of the metaphor also has to be taken into account regarding the potential manipulative force of the metaphor, as conventional metaphors often go unnoticed because they are less salient than vivid metaphors, which may make them even more dangerous. Our corpus exhibits few vivid metaphors, except for a couple of occurrences in which vivid metaphors are also extended; these occurrences often participate in the construction of storytelling and parables. On the other hand, the few vivid metaphors in the corpus are salient and lay emphasis on a specific aspect of reality;

(4) The same conceptual metaphor is often used throughout the text, which creates textual cohesion and participates in the manipulative process as well.

Finally, the metadiscursive dimension has to be taken into account: there is frequent resort to metalinguistic / metadiscursive comments on the part of the speakers, as if they were in fact describing the utterance process and conscious of the manipulative nature of the utterance. In the corpus, they can be found in the *argument is war* metaphor, but also in the following occurrences:

(68) Our goal is to reach every single American, no matter where they are, no matter what their background is, to get them the right kind of media and content that's going to *shape their thoughts* and *touch their hearts* about the abortion issue and about the related issues of human dignity and the human right to life. [LR 2016\_05\_9-13]

(69) So we have to be *a voice of truth*, and uncompromising truth, about abortion [and] human life, but we have to be compassionate and say that anybody can change. [LR 2016\_05\_9-13]

(70) They'll use rhetoric—they'll use rhetoric about freedom, about female empowerment, and that can be very appealing. [MS 2014\_01\_29]

This study was carried out on a rather short set of data, and further study is needed to see if other criteria can be brought out when it comes to the manipulative dimension of metaphor, in combination with other rhetorical and cognitive devices. As Goatly [2007: 213] writes:

Clearly there is enormous scope for research in exploring the diversity of structuring in relation to other diverse metaphor themes, explaining their ideological and ontological presuppositions, and validating the resulting hypotheses through experimentation, by, for example, testing whether a different metaphorical conception leads to different thought patterns or behaviour.

Finally, it is fair to say that the success of those metaphors – and by extension, the manipulative effectiveness of those speeches – could be questioned. Indeed, pro-life speeches are mainly aimed at a pro-life audience as they are delivered at pro-life meetings. Therefore, the audience does not really need to be manipulated or, at least, does not need to be convinced that abortion should be banned. The aim is probably rather to keep the audience convinced (through language manipulation, for example) than to radically change the minds of pro-choicers. A further study could be the contrastive perception on metaphor manipulation between pro-lifers and pro-choicers, as well as a lexical analysis of *pro-* in *pro-choicers* and *pro-life*, as it could fuel the manipulative process.



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