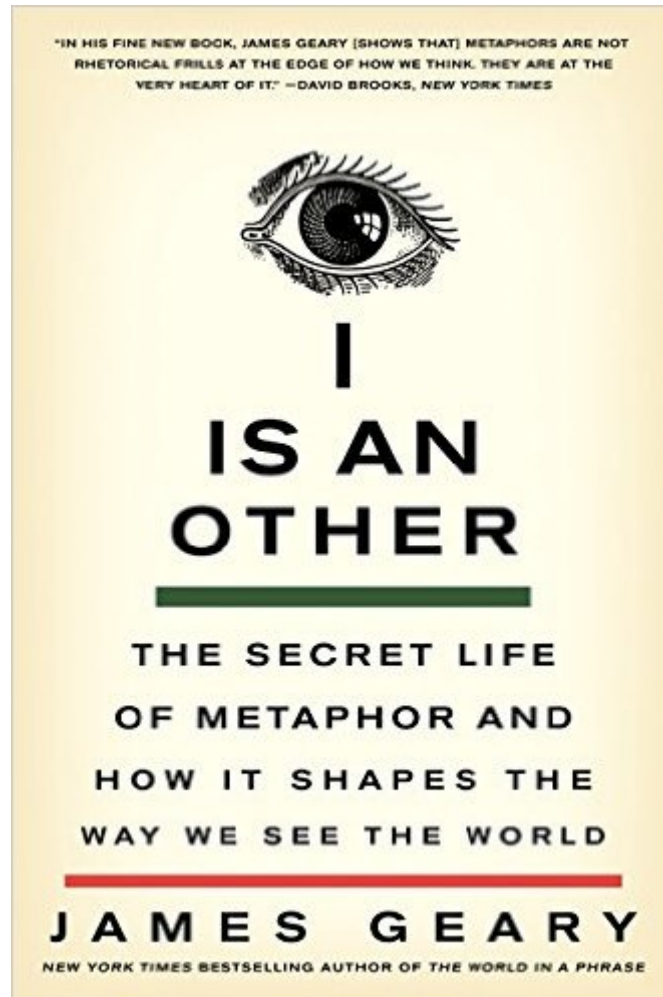


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# I Is An Other: The Secret Life Of Metaphor And How It Shapes The Way We See The World



## Synopsis

“Sherlock Holmes could glance at a bowler hat and tell that its owner’s wife had ceased to love him. In this brilliant book about metaphor James Geary is no less astonishing, as he deciphers the subtle implications embedded in advertising slogans, familiar slang and government double-talk. You’ll scarf down every page of *I Is an Other* and then ask for more.” —Michael Dirda, Pulitzer Prize-winning critic and author of *Book by Book* and *Classics for Pleasure*

For lovers of language and fans of *Blink* and *Freakonomics*, New York Times bestselling author James Geary offers this fascinating look at metaphors and their influence in every aspect of our lives, from art to medicine, psychology to the stock market.

## Book Information

Paperback: 320 pages

Publisher: Harper Perennial; Reprint edition (January 24, 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0061710296

ISBN-13: 978-0061710292

Product Dimensions: 5.3 x 0.7 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 8.5 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (39 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #203,573 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #117 in [Books > Reference > Words, Language & Grammar > Alphabet](#) #620 in [Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Social Sciences > Linguistics](#) #647 in [Books > Reference > Words, Language & Grammar > Rhetoric](#)

## Customer Reviews

As someone with an amateur interest in linguistics, I’ve always felt that Lakoff and Johnson’s *Metaphors We Live by* [METAPHORS WE LIVE BY -OS] is a book that I should have read. I bought it about two years ago, but despite repeated efforts every 3 months or so, I just cannot make it through more than 30 pages before giving up. I don’t question its importance, but it’s written in a style that I find impenetrable - an odd mixture of material that veers from blindingly obvious to highly technical, with little apparent regard for the reader. So I was happy to stumble across this book by James Geary, even happier as I was reading it. I no longer feel obliged to punish myself by re-trying Lakoff and Johnson every three months. Geary covers much of the same ground, with a little less emphasis on linguistics and a sharper focus on the role of metaphor in cognition and human behavior. Geary’s coverage of relevant brain research is also more up to date, reflecting his book’s

more recent publication date. But its real advantages are the accessible style and superior organization. Key concepts are introduced and identified as such. The exposition proceeds in a logical, orderly fashion. The examples are interesting, persuasive, insightful, and actually help the reader better understand the concepts being discussed. Geary is organized and engaging; he writes with fluidity, humor, and grace. Occasionally his enthusiasm gets the better of him, but for the most part he is careful not to overstate his case. He never condescends to the reader, and his enthusiasm is infectious.

Having enjoyed James Geary's previous book, *The World in a Phrase: A History of Aphorisms*, I was very eager to get my hands in this one. Thankfully, I was not let down. In fact, this book is quite remarkable. To some readers it might seem just another work in a long inventory of pop-psychology books; however, I found it definitely contained quite a bit more. As Geary explains it, "Metaphor is most familiar as the literary device through which we describe one thing in terms of another, as when the author of the Old Testament Song of Songs describes a lover's navel as "a round goblet never lacking mixed wine" or when the medieval Muslim rhetorician Abdalqahir Al-Jurjani pines, "The gazelle has stolen its eyes from my beloved." Yet metaphor is much, much more than this. Metaphor is not just confined to art and literature but is at work in all fields of human endeavor, from economics and advertising, to politics and business, to science and psychology." The book is chock-full of great and varied research. For instance, just some of the people that Geary cites are: Gerald Edelman (*Second Nature: Brain Science and Human Knowledge*), V.S. Ramachandran (

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