



## VISUAL METAPHORS OF DEPRESSION IN *BOJACK HORSEMAN*

MARÍA J. ORTIZ

[mj.ortiz@ua.es](mailto:mj.ortiz@ua.es)

University of Alicante, Spain

---

### KEYWORDS

*Primary metaphor*  
*Animation*  
*Humour*  
*Conceptual metaphor*  
*Audiovisual metaphor*  
*Moving images*  
*Emotions*  
*Storytelling*  
*Cartoon*

---

### ABSTRACT

*Bojack Horseman is an animated television series that revolves around the life of an anthropomorphic horse. A major reason for the series' reputation and positive reviews is its accurate portrayal of depression, mental illness, and trauma. Animation is best suited to illustrate aesthetically inventive metaphors of emotions, as it can display conceptual metaphors that are unavailable to language. The study objective is to analyse the visual manifestations of conceptual metaphors of depression in BoJack Horseman. Additionally, it is argued how some of them can be considered humorous, so viewers understand the characters' feelings but are distanced at the same time from the suffering.*

---

Received: 13/ 03 / 2025

Accepted: 28/ 05 / 2025

## 1. Introduction

**B***oJack Horseman* (2014–2020) is an adult-oriented animated television series created by Raphael Bob-Waksberg and visually designed by cartoonist Lisa Hanawalt. The show was a Netflix hit, garnered critical acclaim, and won multiple awards, including four Critics' Choice Television Awards for Best Animated Series. The story takes place in a fictionalised Hollywood, renamed Hollywoo, in which anthropomorphic and human characters coexist. Creatures such as dogs, cats, or turtles perform as humans, but they all retain certain animal stereotypical attributes. Anthropomorphised animals have always been part of fiction and animation. According to Behrani and Kumari (2021), the stereotyped behaviour attributed to certain animals—such as dogs being loyal and foxes being clever—may serve as a means to critique human beings through allusion, symbolism, and analogy.

The main character of the show is an anthropomorphic horse. He was a famous television star back in the 1990s but is now undergoing a midlife crisis and has become depressed, cynical, and self-destructive. The plot begins when he decides to regain celebrity by having the human woman Diane Nguven ghostwrite his memoir. He fully opens up, expecting her to revamp his image. Finally, he realises that his toxic behaviour has affected those around him, and that he must learn to cope with his childhood traumas and self-loathing tendencies. As noted by Schmuck (2018), the chosen animal establishes a parallelism: bred for work and transportation, horses have become obsolete and superfluous in contemporary society. BoJack outlives the utility of his animal identity as an alcoholic womaniser. Behrani and Kumari (2021) consider that the character is a horse for the humorous connection with proverbs such as “You can lead a horse to water, but you can’t make him drink it” or “To shut the stable door after the horse has bolted”. They also argue that the following three cognitive processes defined in the major theories on humour can be found in the show: relief because the spectators relate to the character failures and release a repressed pain; incongruence because of the absurdity of animals having human tendencies; and disparagement because the audience regard themselves as superior to them.

*BoJack Horseman* displays complex storytelling tactics, intricate character arcs, meta-narratives, intertextuality, and self-reflexive references (Amer, 2023; Falvey, 2020; Szöllősi, 2021). These strategies require a greater implication from viewers and remind them that they are watching fiction. Thus, as they begin to connect with BoJack’s pain, they are distanced from the narrative, helping to explore deeper and darker themes under the veneer of absurdity. Despite the humour, the thematic centre of *BoJack Horseman* is fundamentally tragic. Falvey (2020) defines it as a post-sitcom due to the show’s ironic, self-conscious style. Unlike traditional sitcoms which offer sentimental and comforting distractions, this animated series addresses existential themes, sustaining a nihilistic tone throughout. Sawallisch (2021) classifies it as a “sadcom”, a genre at the intersection of tragic and comic modes of humour in popular media, where complex emotions are hidden behind a thick layer of dark comedy and nihilism. In this type of comedy, serious situations are sprinkled with moments of awkwardness. It can be considered as “uncomfortable humour”, a category identified by Holm (2017) who advances the following metaphor: if humour involves anaesthesia of the heart according to Bergson, in the case of uncomfortable humour, the anaesthesia wears off prematurely. This mixture of suffering and merriment—where pain or shame escalates without a clear resolution—induces two sets of embodied reactions in the audience: reactions linked to amusement, such as laughter, and reactions associated with apprehension, such as cringe. At the same time, spectators experience a painful sympathy for the characters, feeling attached to them and amused by the incongruities of their suffering.

As stated by scholars and specialized websites in television or psychology, *BoJack Horseman* stands out among other mental health representations in the media, particularly of depression and anxiety (see Berlant, 2020; Feely, 2020; Kwok, 2021; Lyons, 2014; Packham, 2017; Sarappo, 2017; Singh, 2021). However, Bob-Waksberg specifies that his priority had never been to be the voice of depression but rather to capture the character (Strachan, 2016). Nevertheless, he acknowledges that the show may resonate with the audience because it helps to articulate feelings that are difficult to identify (McCammon, 2020). This show is not the only modern cartoon series to depict mental illness. *Adventure Time* (Pendleton Ward, 2010–2018) includes The Ice King, who lives in isolation at the top of an ice-cold mountain, wearing a magic crown that keeps him alive but that makes him mentally ill. And in *Rick and Morty* (Dan Harmon & Justin Roiland, 2013–present), a scientific genius embarks on intergalactic and interdimensional adventures to escape depression. The ability of the animation to depict inner states, particularly through visual metaphors, has been highlighted by several scholars. As noted by Prokhorov

(2021), animation has the freedom to use metaphors as part of the story. Fahlenbrach and Reinert (2018) claim that animation excels at ingenious and precise metaphorical representations of emotions, and Grodal (2018) attributes this to the capacity to visualize the effects of the projection from one conceptual area to another. Likewise, humour is used in the animated cartoon genre to express ideas that would otherwise be intolerable (McSwiney & Sengul, 2023), allowing audiences to consider serious issues from a detached position (Hellmann, 2024). To date, however, the use of humorous visual metaphors in animation films has received scant attention in the research literature.

The aim of this study is to investigate the use of visual metaphors in *BoJack Horseman* as one of the strategies used in the portrayal of depression, and to determine whether some of them could be considered humorous. In the pages that follow, I provide some background on the concepts that are central to the analysis: the framework of conceptual metaphors, how they manifest in animation films to express depression, and the relationship between metaphor and humour. Subsequently, I analyse the conceptual metaphors related to depression used in some *BoJack Horseman* scenes and examine why some of them can be regarded as funny. To finish, the significance of the results is discussed in the last section.

## 2. Conceptual metaphors of depression in animation

### 2.1. Conceptual Metaphor Theory

The Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) stated by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) claims that a metaphor is the process of understanding and experiencing a more abstract entity (i.e. target domain), in terms of another more tangible entity (i.e. source domain). As our conceptual system is partly metaphorical, the conceptual metaphors appear not only in language but also in many other areas of human experience (Kovecses & Benczes, 2010). In other words, conceptual metaphors manifest either linguistically or non-linguistically.

CMT distinguishes between “correlation-based metaphors” and “resemblance metaphors” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999). The former are embodied metaphors underlying numerous figurative conceptualisations, many of which we hardly notice as non-literal, whereas the latter stem from a specific cultural context. The minimal units of correlation-based metaphors are called “primary metaphors” (Grady, 1997, 1999). The source domain of a primary metaphor is a concept related to a bodily sensation, whereas the target domain refers to basic cognitive processes. For example, in the primary metaphor MORE IS UP<sup>1</sup>, the target domain is the concept of quantity, and the source domain is the height. As primary metaphors are inherent to human thought and fundamental to convey abstract concepts, several scholars have previously argued that they also intervene to arrange the elements within an image to express abstract concepts. For instance, the primary metaphor KNOWING/UNDERSTANDING IS SEEING manifests visually when the image is out of focus to express that a character is confused (Ortiz, 2023), CONTROL IS UP when the camera angle evokes submission (Coëgnarts & Kravanja, 2012), or BAD IS DARK when the shadows communicate an ominous presence (Forceville & Renkens, 2013; Ortiz, 2011, 2014; Winter, 2014).

### 2.2. Conceptual metaphors of emotions

Many emotion-related metaphors are correlation-based metaphors, and there is linguistic evidence to show that they may be near-universal (Kovecses & Benczes, 2010). For instance, EMOTION IS HEAT (“It makes my blood *boil*”) stems from the thermal sensation produced by anger. As this kind of sensory experience is common to all humans, so is the metaphor. In the same vein, Gibbs (2006) suggests a clear link between emotion and movement, as well as between emotion and spatial location, reflected in the conceptual metaphor GOOD IS UP/BAD IS DOWN. For instance, “I am *flying* with joy” or “I’m feeling *low*”. Similarly, Grady (1997) identifies the primary metaphor HAPPY IS UP. Empirical studies indicate that emotionally neutral objects are rated more positively when they are placed upward in vertical space (see Gottwald et al., 2015). Other primary metaphors related to emotions include the following: EMOTIONAL INTIMACY IS PROXIMITY, INTENSITY OF EMOTION IS HEAT, SYMPATHY IS SOFTNESS, AFFECT IS MOISTURE,

<sup>1</sup> By convention, conceptual metaphors are written in small capitals and their manifestations in italics.

OR AFFECTION IS WARMTH. According to Kövecses (2008, 2014), conceptual metaphors of emotions are hierarchically organised and stem from EMOTIONS ARE FORCES. Likewise, in many cultures, emotions are considered as occurrences inside the body (Kövecses, 2000), that is, THE BODY IS A CONTAINER FOR EMOTIONS.

### 2.3. Conceptual metaphors of depression in animation films

Kövecses and Benczes (2010) claim that cartoons are a rich source of non-linguistic realisation of conceptual metaphors. In fact, several scholars (see Abbot & Forceville, 2011; Forceville, 2005; Shinohara & Matsunaka, 2009; Wen et al., 2023) have found numerous examples across a variety of styles of comics or subjects that confirm this assessment. El Refaie (2019) argues that artists working in this visual medium may be using metaphors more frequently because they are compelled to engage with the nature of human vision. In her analysis of comic books about physical and mental illness, she broadens the definition of visual metaphor, identifying three types: pictorial metaphors, stylistic metaphors, and spatial metaphors. Pictorial metaphors are idiosyncratic, while stylistic metaphors and spatial metaphors are linked to primary metaphors. In the case of stylistic metaphors, the meaning arises from the quality of visual elements, and they can be categorized as isomorphic or indexical. Isomorphic stylistic metaphors suggest abstract meanings by utilizing visual attributes of shapes, colours, textures, etc. For example, spiky shapes have the capacity to convey distress through their association with the harm that sharp objects can inflict. In turn, indexical stylistic metaphors draw attention to the creative process involved in the design of the image. Thus, a sudden break in the visual style of a fragment as compared with other parts may encourage a metaphorical reading. Spatial metaphors, on the other hand, exploit correlations between our bodily experience and abstract concepts or emotions. For instance, spatial closeness to express emotional intimacy, or size to convey significance. Therefore, they are linked to the primary metaphors HAPPY/CONTROL/GOOD IS UP, IMPORTANCE IS SIZE, and RELATIONSHIPS ARE ENCLOSURES

In the same vein, some scholars have devoted efforts to identify visual metaphors of emotions in animated films. As highlighted by Eerden (2009), they are re able to express not only the presence of a certain emotion, but also its intensity or stage. Fahlenbrach (2017), Fahlenbrach and Reinerth (2018), and Forceville and Paling (2018) focus mainly on the representation of depression, a mental state that includes sadness and fear, but also feelings of being insufficient, worthless, and useless. All these analyses conclude that animation benefits from its artistic licence to visually arrange the conceptual metaphors of emotions while equally introducing new conceptualisations. In this way, animation makes experiences that are invisible and highly subjective recognisable, tangible, and relatable for audiences. Together, these studies indicate that the most common visual metaphors to express depression are the following:

- DEPRESSION IS FALLING DOWN/BEING DOWN. It can be linked to the conceptual metaphor BAD IS DOWN, as well as the primary metaphor UNHAPPINESS IS DOWN. Visual examples include a character falling down, shrinking, or being placed in the corner of the frame.
- DEPRESSION IS DARKNESS. It can be connected to the primary metaphor BAD IS DARK. For instance, black shapes or shadows.
- DEPRESSION IS LACK OF CONTROL/MOVEMENT, DEPRESSION IS A CONFINING SPACE/ENTRAPMENT. They are connected to the primary metaphors ACHIEVING A PURPOSE IS ARRIVING AT A DESTINATION, ACTION IS SELF-PROPELLED MOTION AND THE EXPERIENCE OF TIME IS MOTION ALONG A PATH. People undergoing this painful experience seem to abandon the pursuit of future goals, so all events appear equally inconsequential, and the sense of time disappears. Visual examples include the use of slow movements, or someone trapped in some sort of prison.
- DEPRESSION IS A BURDEN. It can be related to the primary metaphor DIFFICULTY IS HEAVINESS. It is visually translated into something pushing down the character or someone carrying a big load.
- DEPRESSION IS A HUGE WILD ANIMAL/MONSTER. It can be connected to the primary metaphor THE NATURE OF AN ENTITY IS ITS SHAPE. This mental state *takes the shape of a beast* of different sizes and behaviour, such as a growing black animal, a strong, fast animal, or the lurking shadow of an animal. Likewise, depression *chases* the characters, *confines* them, *interferes* with their normal activities. In comparison, the subject of emotions is a *defenceless animal*, and can be

thus represented as shrinking or with limited mobility, for instance. Occasionally, the monster is advanced as a depressed person's *alter ego*.

- DEPRESSION IS A STORM. It can be related to the primary metaphor CIRCUMSTANCES ARE WEATHER due to the correlation between weather conditions and our affective state.

These metaphors are often combined, so it is possible to find DEPRESSION IS A DARK MONSTER, DEPRESSION IS A DARK CONFINING SPACE, or DEPRESSION IS A HEAVY MONSTER, for instance. Consequently, any solution to end the symptoms must be compatible with the opposite metaphor. That is, COPING WITH DEPRESSION IS GOING UP, TAMING A MONSTER, ESCAPING FROM THE CONFINEMENT, etc.

Most metaphors mentioned above have been found to be related to other mental diseases, too. For instance, Woodgate et al. (2020) report that the visual metaphors used by people diagnosed with anxiety conceptualised the feeling as *a monster, a burden, a confining space, being down, being stuck in time, surrounded by darkness*. In summary, although anxiety and depression constitute highly complex and unique experiences, they are conveyed verbally or visually through similar conceptual metaphors.

## 2.4. Humorous metaphors

Several scholars have noticed the connection between humour and metaphor. Both share the same conceptual mechanisms based on incongruent notions, which are nevertheless connected in cognitive terms. But while humour tends to retain the opposition between two concepts, metaphors conflate them (Müller, 2015). On the other hand, Attardo (2015) questions why some metaphors are funny and others are not. He argues that a metaphor can be humorous when the inherent incongruity of the mapping is accentuated, treating a target domain according to the source domain logic, but deliberately committing categorical mistakes, verging on absurdity. In other words, humorous metaphors are those in which the mapping of different domains is not fully resolved by interpreting the metaphor. He distinguishes the following types of humorous metaphors: funny metaphors, metaphors with funny referents, and overdone metaphors. Funny metaphors stem from the lack of appropriateness of the connections between the domains. In the example “his thoughts *tumbled* in his head, *making and breaking alliances* like underpants in a dryer”, ideas and underwear are too different in nature to justify the mapping. The resolution is therefore only partial, which is what makes it comical. In the case of metaphors with funny referents, the humour comes from the image evoked (“As independent as a *hog on ice*”). Overdone metaphors, for their part, contravene conceptual relations, providing excessive detail or exaggeration. For instance, the sentence “I am building a theory from the ground up” is a common manifestation of the conceptual metaphor THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS, but “I am building a theory with many windows” would be considered amusing because of the precision involved.

Although humorous metaphors have been analysed in the verbal corpus (see Dynel, 2009; Mio & Graesser, 1991; Schoos & Suñer, 2020; Piata, 2016; Xu et al., 2022), few are dedicated to the visual corpus and the applicability of Attardo's taxonomy remains untested.

## 3. Objectives and methodology

As mentioned earlier, *BoJack Horseman* stands out for its accurate portrayal of depression, for being at the intersection of tragic and comic modes, and for using complex storytelling strategies. On the other hand, several scholars have pointed out that animation films are a rich source of non-linguistic manifestations of conceptual metaphors, and that they make perceptible experiences that are subjective, such as depression. Moreover, animated humour allows audiences to consider serious issues from a distant position. Therefore, the main purposes of this study are the following: (1) to determine if this animated television series use visual realisations of conceptual metaphors to convey depression; (2) to verify if they are similar to those identified in the studies afore mentioned; and (3) to ascertain if some of them can be considered humorous metaphors. Concurrently, the applicability of El Refaie's visual metaphor typology to the animation field, as well as Attardo's humorous metaphor classification to a visual corpus, are examined.

To select the fragments, first I watched the whole television series three times to identify the scenes that depicted the internal states of the characters. Subsequently, I chose those praised by scholars and specialized websites for their accuracy in depicting depression. The final corpus consisted of scenes from the following episodes: *Downer Ending* (Season 1, Episode 11), *Stupid Piece of Shit* (Season 4,



Episode 6), and *Good Damage* (Season 6, Episode 10). I reviewed the comments of viewers related to these episodes in forums<sup>2</sup>, and conducted a qualitative analysis with the categories gathered in the Appendix.

## 4. Analysis

### 4.1. *Diane is a big visceral monster who corners BoJack*

In *Downer Ending*, Diane, the ghost-writer, has finalised BoJack's memoir. BoJack, however, disavows her work, alleging that it exposes his flaws. Back at home, he attempts to write his own autobiography, but he cannot avoid getting distracted. He takes drugs to help his creative process, but they lead him to experience a series of hallucinations. The sequence looks like a nightmare and contains different visual metaphors related to his depressed state. At first, the audience is led to think that the drugs have worn off, and that Diane agrees to change the memoir to make him happy. But she suddenly turns into an expanding big monster with many eyes. When BoJack asks "What is happening?", she replies "I ate too many pancakes!" and then he realises that he is under the effect of drugs. The monster comes closer and closer and corners him (figure 1).

Diane becomes a monster because she makes him feel depressed. The monster is made of body organs and many eyes. As stated by Kövecses (2000), in many cultures, emotions are considered as occurrences inside the body, and we usually refer to feelings as visceral (Peña Cervel, 2001). Therefore, we could consider that we have here the metaphor of Diane as a person who shows her emotions and knows BoJack's feelings. He is frightened of her, so she becomes bigger and bigger, confining him because he cannot avoid the feelings that she has raised. Thus, Diane takes on the appearance of a big monster made of organs and many eyes because he becomes depressed by her display of emotions: she is a *big visceral monster that sees him and corners him*. That is, she is an emotional person who knows his flaws and he cannot do anything to avoid it. The following metaphors are present: DEPRESSION IS A HUGE MONSTER, DEPRESSION IS ENTRAPMENT and KNOWING IS SEEING.

Something is amiss, however. At the beginning of the scene, as she is becoming bigger and deformed, she says that it is because she ate too many pancakes. Because of this joke, the monster is carrying a pan and a bottle of syrup. While the monster's features can be interpreted metaphorically, the pan and syrup cannot be, they maintain the teasing. Hence, the mapping is not fully resolved, and the incongruence makes the metaphoric monster funny. Therefore, it could be an overdone metaphor because it contravenes conceptual relations, providing an incongruent detail.

**Figure 1.** Diane is a big visceral monster who corners BoJack.



Source: Screenshots from *Downer Ending* (Season 1, Episode 11).

### 4.2. *Running away from recollections, surrounded by darkness, falling down, disappearing*

Later in the same episode, the audience goes inside BoJack's brain. It runs past different images that represent painful memories. The animation goes on to exhibit a different quality, metaphorizing his thoughts (figure 2, top row). The figurative meaning is suggested by the drawing quality, that is, the use of colour is different. Therefore, it can be considered an isomorphic stylistic metaphor because the visual attributes indicate a recollection where not all the details are complete. Although imprecise and lacking details, his recollections do not constitute forgotten scenes from his past, but rather vivid memories of being ridiculed at high school, being left in the playground, or being drunk at a party. The brilliant, saturated colour stands out above all. Because of the conceptual metaphor EMOTION IS HEAT, the colour red can metaphorize emotional intensity by extension, particularly anger and love. Likewise, blue, grey,

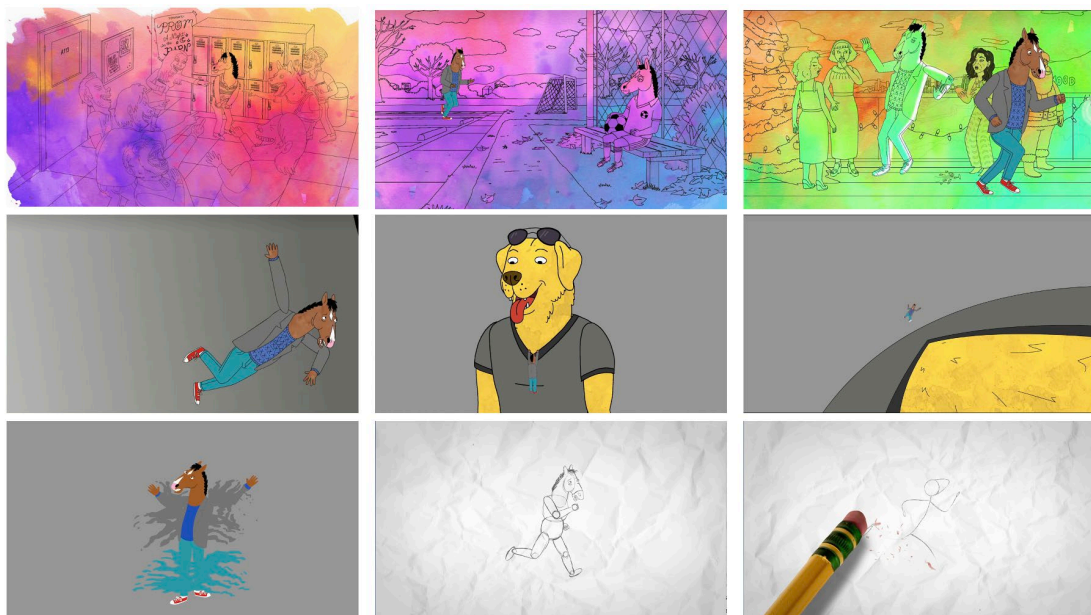
<sup>2</sup> For instance: <https://bojackhorseman.fandom.com/> and <https://www.reddit.com/r/BoJackHorseman/>

and black are linked to sadness, probably because they are associated with the cold. Empirical evidence indicates the correspondence between colour and temperature (Ho et al. 2014), as well as a biological underpinning of the association between temperature and emotions (Wilkowski et al. 2009). BoJack's memories have mixed saturated colours metaphorizing intense and assorted emotions: anger, embarrassment, unhappiness, loneliness, and disgust. Moreover, he *runs away from one place to another*. The primary metaphor MENTAL STATES ARE PLACES ("He is *in* his own *world*") is present here: BoJack seeks to *escape from hot places* in the past, that is, he wishes to avoid intense recollections. The scene is amusing as he repeatedly encounters an embarrassing memory, despite his efforts to evade them.

He continues running, and he enters a restaurant full of Mr. Peanutbutter, his younger and happier antagonist. Subsequently, the background changes to grey, and he falls (figure 2, middle row). He tries to *hang on*, but he is *tiny* compared to his rival, and he finally *falls down*. Present here are the metaphors DEPRESSION IS DARKNESS, and DEPRESSION IS FALLING DOWN, as well as IMPORTANCE IS SIZE. Therefore, they belong to the category of spatial metaphors because they exploit correlations between our bodily experience and abstract concepts or emotions. He is in a *dark space*, *downing*. He tries to *stay up*, *hanging on* to his *big* nemesis, but his colleague's constant joy eventually *sinks him*, making him feel *small*. However, there is a detail that viewers may perceive as sarcastic: BoJack realises that he is attempting to avoid the fall precisely by grabbing the characteristic V-neck T-shirt always worn by his hated Mr. Peanutbutter. That is, the V-shape simultaneously represents a disliked characteristic and the result of him metaphorically hanging on. Hence, the situation is somehow hilarious despite BoJack's feelings of failure, because it retains both references: hanging literally and metaphorically. In other words, BoJack avoids *falling down* in sadness due to Peanutbutter's T-shirt. It could be considered the type of humorous metaphor called overdone, considering that it provides excessive detail of DEPRESSION IS FALLING DOWN.

After *falling down*, he realises that he has no outlines. Although he continues running to avoid the changes, he becomes a simple sketch, until being ultimately erased by a pencil rubber (figure 3, bottom row). No matter how much *he runs away*, he will *vanish*. Here, we might have a variation of THE DEPRESSED SELF AS FRACTURED/SPLIT identified by El Refaie (2019) in graphic illness narratives. Moreover, it may be related to the primary metaphors CONDITION IS SHAPE and EXISTENCE IS VISIBILITY. Despite the nihilism, the scene is comical because it is exaggerated, and BoJack is fully aware of being a cartoon that someone is rubbing out. In other words, the sensation of disappearing is reflected through a visual overdone metaphor, wherein the audience is reminded that they are watching an animated fiction, removing the gravity of the situation.

**Figure 2.** BoJack *runs away* from his recollections (top row). He is surrounded by *darkness*, tries to *hang on* to his *big* friend, but *falls* (middle row). He runs to keep from *disappearing* (bottom row).



Source: Screenshots from *Downer Ending* (Season 1, Episode 11).

### 4.3. Full of emotions and surrounded by darkness

The episode *Stupid Piece of Shit* begins with BoJack's self-critical thoughts. His inner monologue starts as a voice-over calling himself "stupid piece of shit" and then spirals into a series of self-despising words. When his thoughts grow *darker* and more aggressive against himself, the style of the drawing changes to a cardboard cut-out style, caricatured versions of the characters, and a coloured paper background (figure 3). As BoJack's thoughts become frantic and speed up, the images also begin to be more satirical and to move faster. Scenes with regular and cut-out styles are interspersed in the episode. On the one hand, the drawing feature changes can be understood to constitute an indexical stylistic metaphor. That is, the sudden break in the visual style of these scenes in comparison to others encourages a metaphorical interpretation, namely his distorted self-image and the lack of nuances of his rumination. BoJack's inner dialogue consists of relentless opposite arguments. For instance: "—I don't want her driving my car, getting her grubby hands all over everything. —She's not grubby, she's your daughter, you piece of garbage (...) —Why not do the world a favour and swerve into oncoming traffic? —No, you don't deserve to die young, only the greats die young. —Oh, now you think you're young all of a sudden!"

During the continuous monologue, the images undergo constant colour and size alterations according to BoJack's emotions. For instance, his mother Beatrice is purple and his daughter Hollyhock<sup>3</sup> green (figure 3, top row, left), but they become red and evil when he imagines that they are against him (figure 3, top row, centre). As stated before, the red colour can metaphorize intense emotions, especially love and anger. Likewise, they become monsters because they make him feel depressed. Of note, scribbled circular shapes are behind them, a visual manifestation of RELATIONSHIPS ARE ENCLOSURES, they are in the *same circle*. As they suggest abstract meanings by utilizing visual attributes of colours, they can be considered isomorphic stylistic metaphors.

When BoJack feels that he is being constantly scrutinised for his bad behaviour, the cut-out becomes *smaller* and it is placed *down* in the frame (figure 3, top row, right). Moreover, eyes of different sizes and colours *enclose* him. The primary metaphors present here are IMPORTANCE IS SIZE, KNOWING IS SEEING, UNHAPPY IS DOWN, EMOTION IS HEAT and DEPRESSION IS ENTRAPMENT. Beatrice (purple eyes), Hollyhock (green eyes), and some other angry people (orange eyes) know his true self, so he feels unimportant, unhappy, and depressed. They could be considered spatial metaphors.

Another visual metaphor we can find in this scene is EMOTION IS A FLUID IN A CONTAINER. The body and head volumes can change to express an intense emotion, but above it all are the eyes (figure 3, middle row). For instance, the size and shape of BoJack's eyes change as he suddenly realises that one day you can be a famous television star and be totally forgotten the next, that success is ephemeral. This visual metaphor might belong to the isomorphic category due to shape suggests the abstract meaning of emotional intensity. These bulging eyes resemble those identified by Forceville (2005) in comics as a funny sign of the interior pressure-aspect of the body-container.

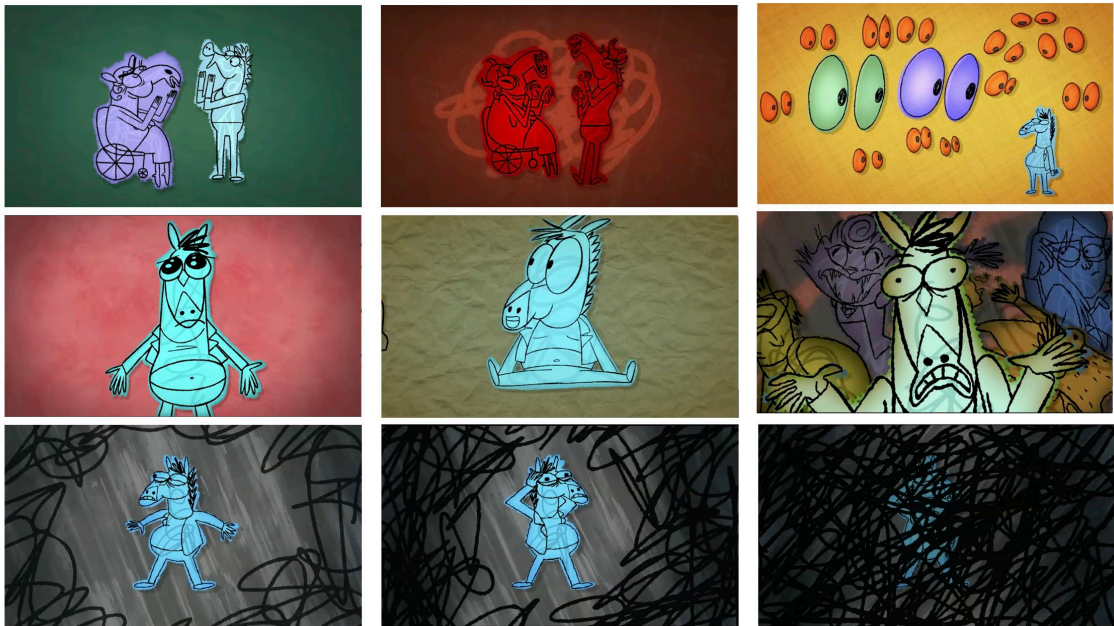
The string of images also includes visual manifestations of DEPRESSION IS A DARK CONFINING SPACE made of rough scribbles and violent lines (figure 3, bottom row). They surround him but become so big that everything finally goes dark, expressing how angry he is with himself and how fast the negative thought spiral is growing. The rough scribbles and violent lines could be considered as isomorphic stylistic metaphors because the meaning emerges from the quality of the lines. Corkscrew-like spirals emanating from an angry person's head have been identified as pictorial metaphors of anger in comics (Forceville, 2005). They appear to convey the effect of rising temperature, or the exertion involved in trying to suppress emotion, so it can be related to the metaphor ANGER IS A HOT FLUID IN A PRESSURISED CONTAINER. Here, however, the line movements seem to convey incessantly circling thoughts, thus relating to CHANGE IS MOTION. In other words, he is *surrounded by a restless darkness that is expanding*.

In spite of BoJack's struggling, the scenes are hilarious. They could be considered an example of uncomfortable humour, where the audience empathizes with the character's distress, but finds amusement in the incongruities of his suffering. The visual representation of the emotions can be easily understood because they are based on the primary metaphors that we use daily to express our emotions. However, the images are exaggerated and overemphasized, making them unreasonable and comical. For this reason, they could be regarded as overdone metaphors.

<sup>3</sup> She turns out to be BoJack's half-sister later on.



**Figure 3.** Beatrice and Hollyhock get *heated* (top row, left and centre). BoJack feels *tiny* because they see him (top row, right). Examples of bulging eyes (middle row) as visual manifestations of EMOTION IS A FLUID IN A CONTAINER. He is surrounded by expanding *restless darkness* (bottom row).



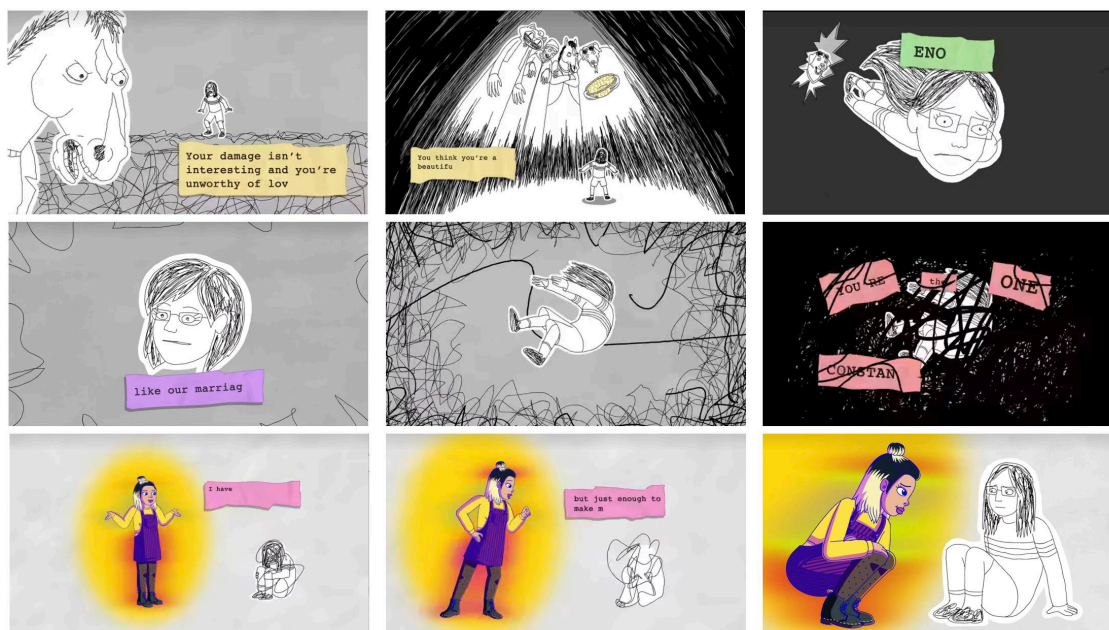
Source: Screenshots from *Stupid Piece of Shit* (Season 4, Episode 6).

#### 4.4. Diane feels tiny, she falls down, she is surrounded by darkness, she disappears

In *Good Damage*, Diane tries to write her memoir while struggling with depression. As in the episode *Stupid Piece of Shit*, the characters are portrayed through cardboard cut-out style caricatures but here some of her monologue sentences are included as text boxes (figure 4). Again, the sudden break in the visual style of these scenes in comparison to others encourages a figurative interpretation. They can be understood as an indexical stylistic metaphor conveying that her thoughts are simpler than reality. The primary metaphor IMPORTANCE IS SIZE frequently appears in these sequences. Diane imagines her father as a *big monster* saying he is unsupportive of her, she flashes back to high school where she is bullied by a *giant girl*, or a *large* BoJack says that she is unworthy of love (figure 4, top row, left), and all her *enormous* friends *looking down on her* (figure 4, top row, centre). Visual manifestations of BAD IS DOWN and BAD IS DARK are also frequent, for instance, when Mr. Peanutbutter disdains her (figure 4, top row, right). The self-deprecating thought spiral is metaphorized through her rolling while scribbled black lines surround her creating a confining dark space that expands until entrapping her (figure 5, middle row), as a visual manifestation of DEPRESSION IS A DARK CONFINING SPACE. Although they resemble those black scribbles of BoJack's thoughts, these are thinner and slower, not so aggressive. Nevertheless, they metaphorize the constant negative thoughts that invade everything.

Out of those negative feelings pop out a fictional character named Ivy. Contrary to the black and white drawing of Diane, she is vividly coloured (figure 4, bottom row). Again, this can be considered to be an isomorphic stylistic metaphor because the drawing quality suggests the figurative meaning. Diane's emotions are *dark* whereas Ivy's have *more nuances*. When she asks Diane why she is so sad, she becomes very *little* (figure 4, bottom row, left) and *loses her shape* (figure 4, bottom row, centre). Here, we might have a variation of THE DEPRESSED SELF AS FRACTURED and DEPRESSION IS BEING DOWN, as well as a visual manifestation of the primary metaphors CONDITION IS SHAPE and EXISTENCE IS VISIBILITY. Finally, she recovers her size and shape when Ivy convinces her to be happier (figure 4, bottom row, right). Again, they might be considered overdone metaphors. While viewers can better understand what the character feels thanks to conceptual metaphors, they are also distanced from the suffering via the hyperbolic perspective.

**Figure 4.** Diane feels tiny, surrounded by darkness and falls down (top row). She is surrounded by an expanding restless darkness (middle row). Diane feels little and loses her shape in front of Ivy but she recovers (bottom row).



Source: Screenshots from *Good Damage* (Season 6, Episode 10).

## 5. Discussion and conclusion

*BoJack Horseman* explores deep and dark themes under the veneer of humour. The show often exhibits different animation styles while abounding in irony and intertextuality. Furthermore, it stands out among other representations of mental health in the media. The aim of the present study was to uncover whether some conceptual metaphors identified in animation films about depression were also used in this sadcom, and whether some of them could be considered humorous.

The analysis revealed that some metaphors identified in animation films about depression by Fahlenbrach (2017), Fahlenbrach and Reinerth (2018), Forceville and Paling, and in graphic narratives by El Refaie (2019) are also present in *BoJack Horseman*. Specifically: DEPRESSION IS FALLING DOWN/BEING DOWN, DEPRESSION IS DARKNESS, and DEPRESSION IS A CONFINING SPACE/ENTRAPMENT. BoJack falls down before Mr. Peanutbutter, and both BoJack and Diane are surrounded by darkness. Additionally, a possible variation of THE DEPRESSED SELF AS FRACTURED/SPLIT might be found when BoJack and Diane lose their shape, becoming simple sketches. Likewise, some characters are *monsters* because they trigger sad emotions, a variation perhaps of DEPRESSION IS A MONSTER. The presence of these conceptual metaphors may play a part in the praised portrayal of depression.

Other conceptual metaphors related to emotions have been identified. For example, the use of the reddish colours to express INTENSITY OF EMOTION IS HEAT, or the bulging eyes because EMOTION IS A FLUID IN A CONTAINER. Numerous visual manifestations of primary metaphors were found as well, such as: IMPORTANCE IS SIZE, MENTAL STATES ARE PLACES, KNOWING IS SEEING, BAD IS DARK, CONDITION IS SHAPE, EXISTENCE IS VISIBILITY, UNHAPPY IS DOWN. In other words, the characters feel *tiny*, BoJack wants to *escape from* their recollections, the true BoJack is *seen*, BoJack and Diane are surrounded by *shadows*, they both consider themselves *unfit*, almost *disappearing*. These visual realisations of conceptual metaphors confirm that they shape several aspects of human creative behaviour. Most of them exploit correlations between our bodily experience and abstract concepts or emotions, so they can be considered spatial visual metaphors. Moreover, a number of stylistic metaphors were uncovered, both isomorphic and indexical. Examples of isomorphic stylistic metaphors are the simpler drawings to convey the characters' thoughts, or the black scribbles that portray depression, whereas the cardboard cut-out style scenes that depict the inner dialogues can be identified as indexical stylistic metaphors. However, although it is helpful to draw distinctions between categories of visual metaphors, such boundaries can sometimes fade, particularly in a complex narrative with different layers of meaning.

Besides, I propose that some visual manifestations of primary metaphors can be considered humorous owing to deliberately made category mistakes, preventing the mapping of different domains from being fully resolved by means of metaphor interpretation. In other words, they could be considered overdone metaphors. For example, the *visceral monster* with the pan and a bottle of syrup, the form of the V-neck T-shirt due to BoJack *hanging on* to his friend, the *disappearing* by a rubber eraser, or the bulging eyes. However, this result is limited by the lack of visual examples of Attardo's categories and considerably more work will need to be done to determine if the classification can be applied to a visual corpus. Likewise, another limitation of this study is the focus on visual realisations of conceptual metaphors alone, yet several factors, such as the witty dialogue or the impressively talented voice cast, definitely play a significant role in the meaning.

To summarise, the present analysis seems to confirm that conceptual metaphors may facilitate the successful depiction of depression. By using bodily metaphoric experiences, creators can connect the minds of fictional characters and viewers. Spectators are able to attribute mental states to characters due to the distinctive correspondence between their own experience and the way the characters' mental states are embodied through visual realisations of conceptual metaphors. These visual metaphors highlight the characters' feelings, aligning the audience with their state of mind and emotions. At the same time, humour distances viewers from the pain, functioning as the famous momentary anaesthesia of the heart. Overall, the results support the CMT's assertion that metaphors are pervasive in our thinking. Furthermore, this study may serve as a reference point for further investigation into the intersection between metaphor and humour in animation.



## References

- Abbott, M., & Forceville, C. (2011). Visual representation of emotion in manga: Loss of control is loss of hands in *azumanga daioh* volume 4. *Language and Literature*, 20, 112–191. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0963947011402182>
- Amer, N. (2023). The Search for Sincerity in the Contemporary Metamodern Sitcom *BoJack Horseman* (2014-2020). *Textual Turnings: An International Peer-Reviewed Journal in English Studies*, 5(1), 93–108. <https://doi.org/10.21608/TTAIP.2023.331313>
- Attardo, S. (2015). Humorous Metaphors. In G. Brône, K. Feyaerts, & T. Veale (Eds.), *Cognitive linguistics and humor research* (pp. 91–110). De Gruyter Mouton.
- Behrani, P., & Kumari, V. (2021). The Influence of Visual Narrative in Generating Humour in Tragedy: A Study of the American Sitcom *BoJack Horseman*. *4th International Conference on Advanced Research in Social Sciences*, 121–130.
- Berlant, L. (2020, November 22). The Traumatic: On *BoJack Horseman*’s “Good Damage”. *Post45*. <https://post45.org/2020/11/the-traumatic-on-bojack-horsemans-good-damage/>
- Bob-Waksberg, B. (2014-2020). *BoJack Horseman*. Netflix.
- Coëgnarts, M., & Kravanja, P. (2012). Embodied Visual Meaning: Image Schemas in Film. *Projections*, 6(2), 84–101. <https://doi.org/10.3167/proj.2012.060206>
- Dynel, M. (2009). Creative metaphor is a birthday cake: Metaphor as the source of humour. *Metaphorik.de*, 17, 27–48.
- Eerden, B. (2009). Anger in *Asterix*: The metaphorical representation of anger in comics and animated films. In C. Forceville, & E. Urios-Aparisi (Eds.), *Multimodal metaphor* (pp. 243–264). De Gruyter.
- El Refaie, E. (2019). *Visual metaphor and embodiment in graphic illness narratives*. Oxford University Press.
- Fahlenbrach, K. (Ed.). (2016). *Embodied Metaphors in Film, Television, and Video Games: Cognitive Approaches*. Routledge.
- Fahlenbrach, K. (2017). Audiovisual metaphors and metonymies of emotions and depression in moving images. In F. Ervas, E. Gola, & M. G. Rossi (Eds.), *Metaphor in Communication, Science and Education* (pp. 95–117). Gruyter Mouton. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110549928>
- Fahlenbrach, K., & Reinert, M. S. (2018). Audiovisual metaphors and metonymies of emotions in animated moving images. In M. Uhrig (Ed.), *Emotion in Animated Films* (pp. 37–58). Routledge.
- Falvey, E. (2020). Situating Netflix’s Original Adult Animation: Observing Taste Cultures and the Legacies of “Quality” Television through *BoJack Horseman* and *Big Mouth*. *Animation: an interdisciplinary journal* 15(2), 116–129. <https://doi.org/10.1177/174684772093379>
- Feely, A. (2020, November 23). *BoJack Horseman* – How It Accurately Portrays Mental Illness. *Impact*. <https://impactnottingham.com/2020/11/bojack-horseman-how-it-accurately-portrays-mental-illness/>
- Forceville, C. (2005). Visual representations of the idealized cognitive model of *anger* in the *Asterix* album *La Zizanie*. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 37(1), 69–88. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2003.10.002>
- Forceville C., & Renkens T. (2013). The good is light and bad is darkness metaphors in feature films. *Metaphor and the Social World*, 3(2), 160–179. <https://doi.org/10.1075/msw.3.2.03for>
- Forceville, C., & Paling, S. (2018). The metaphorical representation of DEPRESSION in short, wordless animation films. *Visual Communication*, 20(1), 100–120. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1470357218797994>
- Gibbs, R. W. Jr. (2006). *Embodiment and Cognitive Science*. Cambridge University Press.
- Gottwald J.M., Elsner, B., & Pollatos, O. (2015). Good is up—spatial metaphors in action observation. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 6, 1–10, <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2015.01605>
- Grady, J. (1997). *Foundations of Meaning: Primary Metaphors and Primary Scenes*. University of California. Berkeley.
- Grady, J. (1999). A typology of motivation for conceptual metaphor: Correlation vs. resemblance. In R. W. Gibbs & G. J. Steen (Eds.), *Metaphor in Cognitive Linguistics* (pp. 79–100). John Benjamins Publishing.
- Grodal, T. (2018). Aesthetics and psychology of animated films. In M. Uhrig (Ed.), *Emotion in Animated Films* (pp. 108–121). Routledge.



- Harmon, D., & Roiland, J. (2013–present). *Rick and Morty*. Adult Swim.
- Hellmann, O. (2024). Can Rick and Morty save the planet? Re-Politicizing Climate Change Through Humor and animation. *Television & New Media*, 26(3) 336–354. <https://doi.org/10.1177/15274764241271200>
- Ho, H. N., Van Doorn, G. H., Kawabe, T., Watanabe, J., & Spence, C. (2014). Colour-temperature correspondences: when reactions to thermal stimuli are influenced by colour. *PloS one*, 9(3), e91854. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0091854>
- Holm, N. (2017). *Humour as politics. The political aesthetics of contemporary comedy*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Kövecses, Z. (2000). *Metaphor and emotion: Language, culture and body in human feeling*. Cambridge University Press.
- Kövecses, Z. (2008). Metaphor and emotion. In R. Gibbs (Ed.), *The Cambridge Handbook of Metaphor and Thought* (pp. 380–396). Cambridge University Press.
- Kövecses, Z. (2014). Conceptualizing emotions. A revised cognitive linguistic perspective. *Poznan Studies in Contemporary Linguistics*, 50(1), 15–28. <https://doi.org/10.1515/psicl-2014-0002>
- Kovecses, Z., & Benczes, R. (2010). *Metaphor: A practical introduction*. Oxford University Press.
- Kwok, M. (2021, July 1). BoJack Horseman and Mental Health. *Because Mental Health*. <https://www.becausementalhealth.com/post/bojack-horseman-and-mental-health>
- Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (1980). *Metaphors we live by*. University of Chicago Press.
- Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (1999). *Philosophy in the flesh: the embodied mind and its challenge to Western Thought*. Basic Books.
- Lyons, M. (2014, September 14). *BoJack Horseman* Is the Funniest Show About Depression Ever. *Vulture*. <https://www.vulture.com/2014/09/bojack-horsemans-radically-funny-sadness.html>
- McCammon, S. (2020, February 1). “BoJack Horseman” rides into the sunset. *NPR*. <https://www.npr.org/transcripts/801629428>
- McSwiney, J., & Sengul, K. (2023). Humor, ridicule, and the far right: mainstreaming exclusion through online animation. *Television & New Media*, 25(4), 315–333. <https://doi.org/10.1177/15274764231213816>
- Mio, J. S., & Graesser, A. C. (1991). Humor, Language, and Metaphor. *Metaphor And Symbolic Activity*, 6(2), 87–102. [https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327868ms0602\\_2](https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327868ms0602_2)
- Müller, R. (2015). A metaphorical perspective on humour. In G. Brône, K. Feyaerts, & T. Veale (Eds.), *Cognitive linguistics and humor research* (pp. 111–128). De Gruyter Mouton.
- Ortiz, M. J. (2011). Primary Metaphors and Monomodal Visual Metaphors, *Journal of Pragmatics*, 43, 1568–1580. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2010.12.003>
- Ortiz, M. J. (2014). Visual Manifestations of Primary Metaphors Through Mise-en-scène Techniques, *Image & Narrative* 15(1), 5–16.
- Ortiz, M. J. (2023). Embodied Cinematography in Mr. Robot. *Baltic Screen Media Review*, 11(1), 84–105. <https://doi.org/10.2478/bsmr-2023-0006>
- Packham, C. (2017, September 23). BoJack Horseman: the Smartest TV Show About Major Depression. *Miami New Times*. <https://www.miaminewtimes.com/film/bojack-horseman-is-the-smartest-tv-show-about-major-depression-9692260>
- Peña Cervel, S. (2001). A cognitive approach to the role of body parts in the conceptualization of emotion metaphors. *EPOS: Revista de Filología*, 245–260.
- Piata, A. (2016). When metaphor becomes a joke: Metaphor journeys from political ads to internet memes. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 106, 39–56. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2016.10.003>
- Prokhorov, A. (2021). The Hero's Journey and Three Types of Metaphor in Pixar Animation. *Metaphor And Symbol*, 36(4), 229–240. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10926488.2021.1919490>
- Sarappo, E. (2017, September 8). 'BoJack Horseman' Nails What It's Like to Hate Yourself. *Vice*. <https://www.vice.com/en/article/9kkxpp/bojack-horseman-season-4-episode-6>
- Sawallisch, N. (2021). “Horsin’ Around”?# MeToo, the Sadcom, and BoJack Horseman. *Humanities*, 10(4), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.3390/h10040115>
- Schmuck, L. (2018). Wild Animation: From the *Looney Tunes* to *Bojack Horseman* in Cartoon Los Angeles. *European journal of American studies*, 13(1), 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.4000/ejas.12459>

- Schoos, M., & Suñer, F. (2020). Understanding humorous metaphors in the foreign language: a state-of-the-art-review. *Zeitschrift Für Interkulturellen Fremdsprachenunterricht*, 25(1), 1431–1446. <https://dial.uclouvain.be/pr/boreal/object/boreal:219700>
- Shinohara, K., & Matsunaka, Y. (2009). Pictorial metaphors of emotion in Japanese comics. In C. Forceville, & E. Urios-Aparisi (Eds.), *Multimodal metaphor* (pp 265–293). De Gruyter Mouton. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110215366.4.265>
- Singh, A. (2021). Bojack Horseman's Existentialism and the Nuances of Representation of Mental Health. *The Creative Launcher*, 6(2), 54–59, <https://doi.org/10.53032/TCL.2021.6.2.09>
- Strachan, M. (2016, July 23). BoJack Horseman 'Didn't Want To Be 'The Voice Of Depression. *HuffPost*. [https://www.huffpost.com/entry/bojack-horseman-season-3\\_n\\_57924bdae4b0bddd4d44f7f](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/bojack-horseman-season-3_n_57924bdae4b0bddd4d44f7f)
- Szöllősi, B. (2021). The Visible Screenplay in *BoJack Horseman*. *Image & Narrative*, 22(1), 82–97.
- Ward, P. (2010–2018). *Adventure Time*. Cartoon Network.
- Wen, S., Zhong, Z., & Chen, S. (2023). Visual metaphor of sadness in poetry comics: a socio-cognitive perspective. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 14, 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1264068>
- Wilkowski, B. M., Meier, B. P., Robinson, M. D., Carter, M. S., & Feltman, R. (2009). Hot-headed is more than an expression: the embodied representation of anger in terms of heat. *Emotion*, 9(4), 464–477. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0015764>
- Winter, B. (2014). Horror movies and the cognitive ecology of primary metaphors. *Metaphor and Symbol*, 29(3), 151–170. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10926488.2014.924280>
- Woodgate, R. L., Tennent, P., & Legras, N. (2021). Understanding youth's lived experience of anxiety through metaphors: A qualitative, arts-based study. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 18(8), 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph18084315>
- Xu, T., Liu, M., & Wang, X. (2022). How humor is experienced: An embodied metaphor account. *Current Psychology*, 42(20), 16674–16686. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-022-02918-1>

## Appendix

Visual manifestations of conceptual metaphors based on Coëgnarts and Kravanja (2012), Forceville and Renkens (2013), Winter (2014), Fahlenbrach (2016), Ortiz (2011, 2014, 2023).

- KNOWING/UNDERSTANDING IS SEEING: Image out of focus to express that a character is confused, puzzled, or disoriented.
- HAPPY/CONTROL IS UP: Characters placed near the top of the frame to suggest power, authority, and aspiration, or near the bottom to evoke subservience, vulnerability, and powerlessness.
- IMPORTANCE IS SIZE/VOLUME: The apparent size of characters to convey their power or relevance
- IMPORTANCE IS CENTRAL: Character placed in a central to reflect his or her significance
- MENTAL STATES ARE PLACES: A character against a certain background to expresses the character's situation, mental state or circumstances.
- AGREEMENT IS BEING ON THE SAME SIDE: Characters shown on different sides of the frame to convey the conflict.
- BAD IS DARK: Shadows to express an ominous presence or to convey negative feelings.
- CONDITION IS SHAPE: Distorted images to express abnormal consciousness or altered perception of reality.
- CERTAIN IS FIRM: Curved images to express uncertainty.
- RELATIONSHIPS ARE ENCLOSURES: Characters isolated within his or her own frame to convey a deteriorated relationship.
- EXISTENCE IS VISIBILITY: Framing someone as almost out of sight to convey his or her disappearance.

Conceptual metaphors of emotions derived from EMOTIONS ARE FORCES and examples. (Kövecses, 2008, 2014).

- EMOTION IS A FLUID IN A CONTAINER ("Sadness *fills* my heart").
- EMOTION IS HEAT ("It makes my blood *boil*").
- EMOTION IS A PHYSICAL FORCE ("I was *hit* by her happiness").
- EMOTION IS A SOCIAL SUPERIOR ("He was *ruled* by anger").
- EMOTION IS AN OPPONENT ("I was *overcome* by nostalgia").
- EMOTION IS A CAPTIVE ANIMAL ("Let your anger *out*").
- EMOTION IS A FORCE DISLOCATING THE SELF ("I was *outside* myself").
- EMOTION IS A BURDEN ("We *felt weighed* down by grief").

Visual metaphors of depression in graphic books and animation films according to Fahlenbrach (2017), Fahlenbrach and Reinert (2018), Forceville and Paling (2018), and El Refaie (2019).

- DEPRESSION IS FALLING DOWN/BEING DOWN.
- DEPRESSION IS DARKNESS.
- DEPRESSION IS LACK OF CONTROL/MOVEMENT.
- DEPRESSIONS IS BEING TRAPPED.
- DEPRESSION IS A CONFINING SPACE/ENTRAPMENT.

- DEPRESSION IS A BURDEN.
- DEPRESSION IS A HUGE WILD ANIMAL/MONSTER.
- DEPRESSION IS A STORM.
- THE DEPRESSED SELF AS FRACTURED/SPLIT.
- COPING WITH DEPRESSION IS GOING UP.
- COPING WITH DEPRESSION IS TAMING A MONSTER.
- COPING WITH DEPRESSION IS ESCAPING FROM THE CONFINEMENT.

Types of visual metaphors according to El Refaie (2019).

- Stylistic metaphor.
  - Isomorphic. Visual attributes of shapes, colours, textures, etc.
  - Indexical. Sudden break in the visual style of a fragment as compared with other parts.
- Spatial metaphors. Linked to primary metaphors. They exploit correlations between our bodily experience and abstract concepts or emotions.

Types of humorous metaphors (Attardo, 2015).

- Funny metaphors. Unappropriated connections between domains.
- Metaphors with funny referents. The source domain is hilarious.
- Unmetaphors. The domains map upon themselves, preserving the construction that signals the metaphor but failing in the meaning. The incongruity between the expected metaphor and the failure causes the humour.
- Mixed metaphors. Unrelated metaphors united.
- Overdone metaphor. Metaphors that violate primary metaphors relations providing excessive details or because are exaggerated.