

SPR 4106 Syntax and Semantics in Formal Terms

Semantics Assignment

Due date: Monday, April 27, 2015, 23:59

Consider the crossword puzzle in *The Cornell Daily Sun* of Tue, Nov 3, 1964 (3.pdf) and the solution in the Nov 4 edition of the same newspaper (4.pdf).

Task 1: Homonymy and Polysemy

In the following cases, either the keyword or the crossword has two readings. Discuss whether the ambiguity is a matter of **homonymy** or of **polysemy**.

- 24 across
- 11 down
- 23 down

※ [Zimmermann and Sternefeld \(2013\) *IntoSem* Chapter 2, Section 2](#)

Task 2: Synonymy and Hyponymy

The folk notion has it that the typical relation between key- and crossword is **synonymy**. Discuss this notion critically in the light of the puzzle under consideration, with particular reference to two of the following:

- 31 across
- 41 across
- 26 down

※ [Zimmermann and Sternefeld \(2013\) *IntoSem* Chapter 2, Section 3](#)

Until 1972, all rabbis were men (and even today, all imams and priests are). Still, it would be strange if a 1964 puzzle were to contain the keyword *man* for the crossword *rabbi*. Why?

※ [Zimmermann and Sternefeld \(2013\) *IntoSem* Chapter 8, Section 3](#)

Task 3: Nominal Modification

The following keywords (or rather phrases) are complex expressions where a noun is modified by an adjective:

- 5 down
- 9 down

What relation is there between the noun – or adjective – and the crossword? Explain why, given the relation between the key phrase and the crossword.

※ [Zimmermann and Sternefeld \(2013\) *IntoSem* Chapter 5, Section 5.2; Chapter 8, Section 3](#)

Task 4: Referential Expressions

What makes the following cases different, from the rest and from each other, in terms of the extensions of the key expressions and the crosswords, and in terms of the relation between the key expressions and the crosswords?

- 18 down
- 39 down

※ [Zimmermann and Sternefeld \(2013\) *IntoSem* Chapter 4, Section 3.1–3.3; Chapter 5, Section 4](#)

How do the key expressions and the crosswords differ in terms of **meaning**? And how can the crossword of 39 down be **wrong** in relation to the key?

※ [Zimmermann and Sternefeld \(2013\) *IntoSem* Chapter 8, Sections 1–2](#)