 consistently follows another, we hypothesise that the two events are linked by causation. In King Lear, Gloucester's cynical account to Kent of his sons' parentage establishes the play's competing schemata of BALANCE and LINKS. Links of divine ordination and divine love join the elements of the Great Chain which, shorn of its theology, is alive and well today (see Lakoff and Turner 1989: 160–213). The lion is still the king of the beasts, and gold is still the premier investment commodity, whereas platinum, rarer and more expensive, is merely an industrial commodity. Gloucester demonstrates that like Lear, he understands parental relationships through the CHILDREN ARE FINANCIAL ASSETS metaphor, one that the audience is shortly to see played out fully in the ritual of Lear's retirement. These two powerful perceptual structures give a local habitation and a name to previously unjustified and unrelated critical commonplaces. For example, it is a staple of Shakespearean criticism to say that in the opening scene the playwright establishes the atmosphere of a play's world. What are established, in fact, are the play's dominating schemata.

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