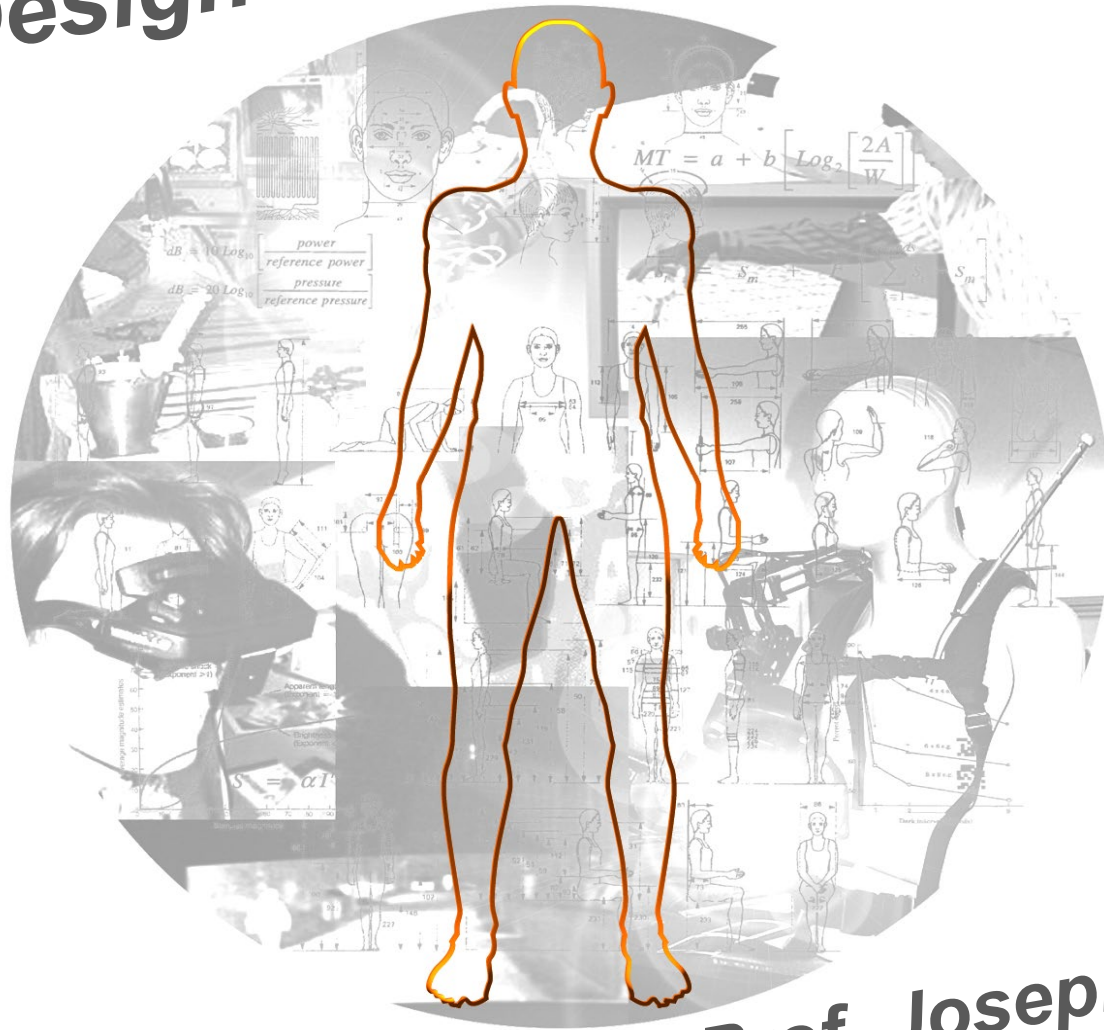
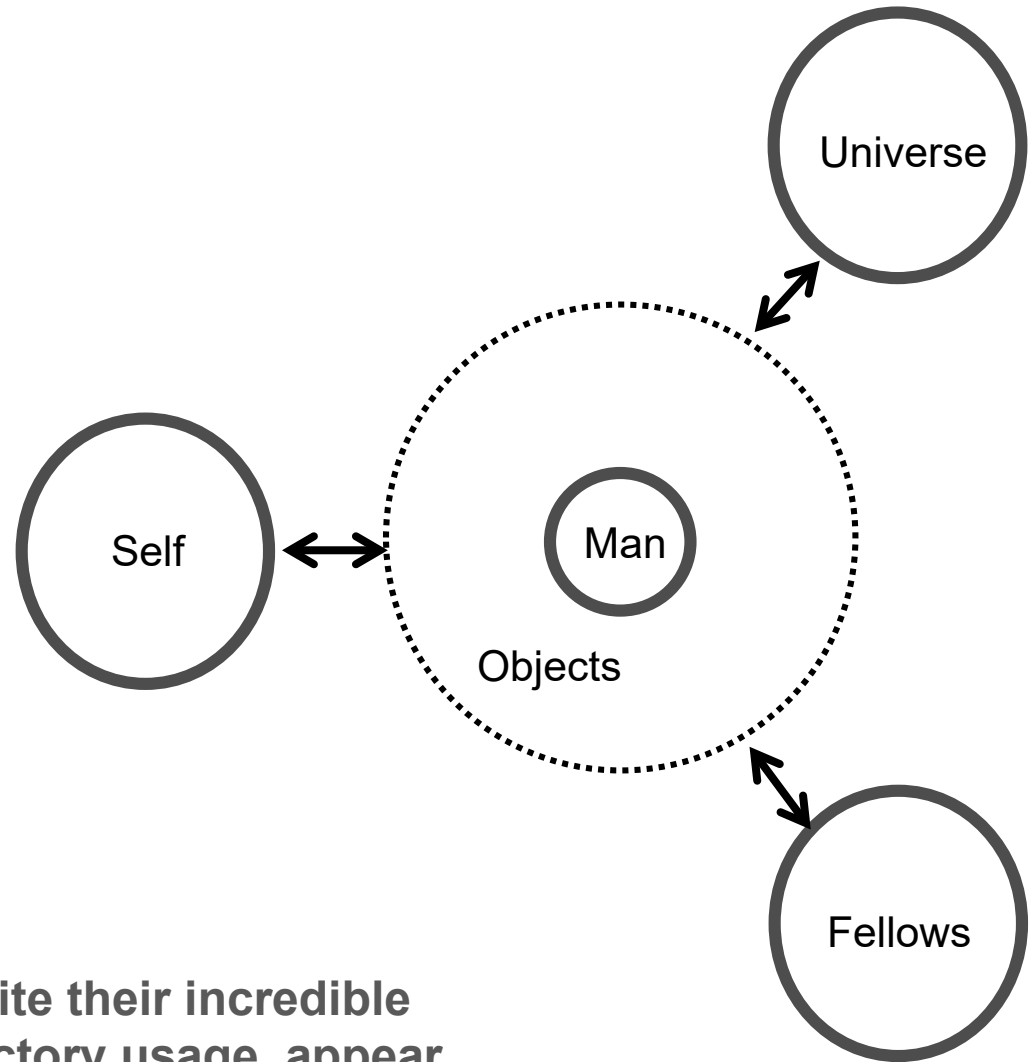


What is Design for Meaning ?



Prof. Joseph Giacomin

Why Worry About Meaning ?



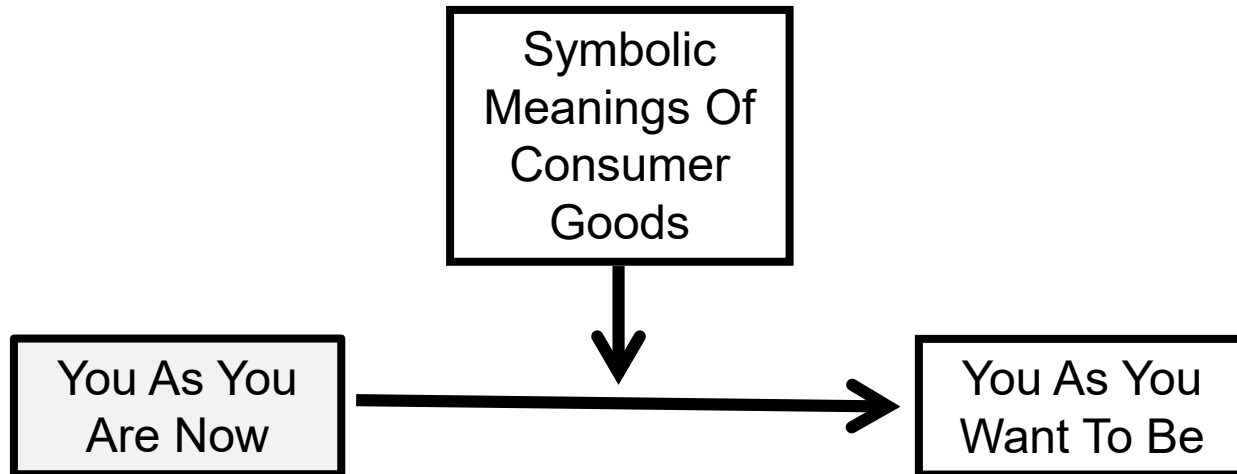
Artefacts as Facilitators

The objects that people use, despite their incredible diversity and sometimes contradictory usage, appear to be signs of a blueprint that represent the relation of man to himself, to his fellows, and to the universe.

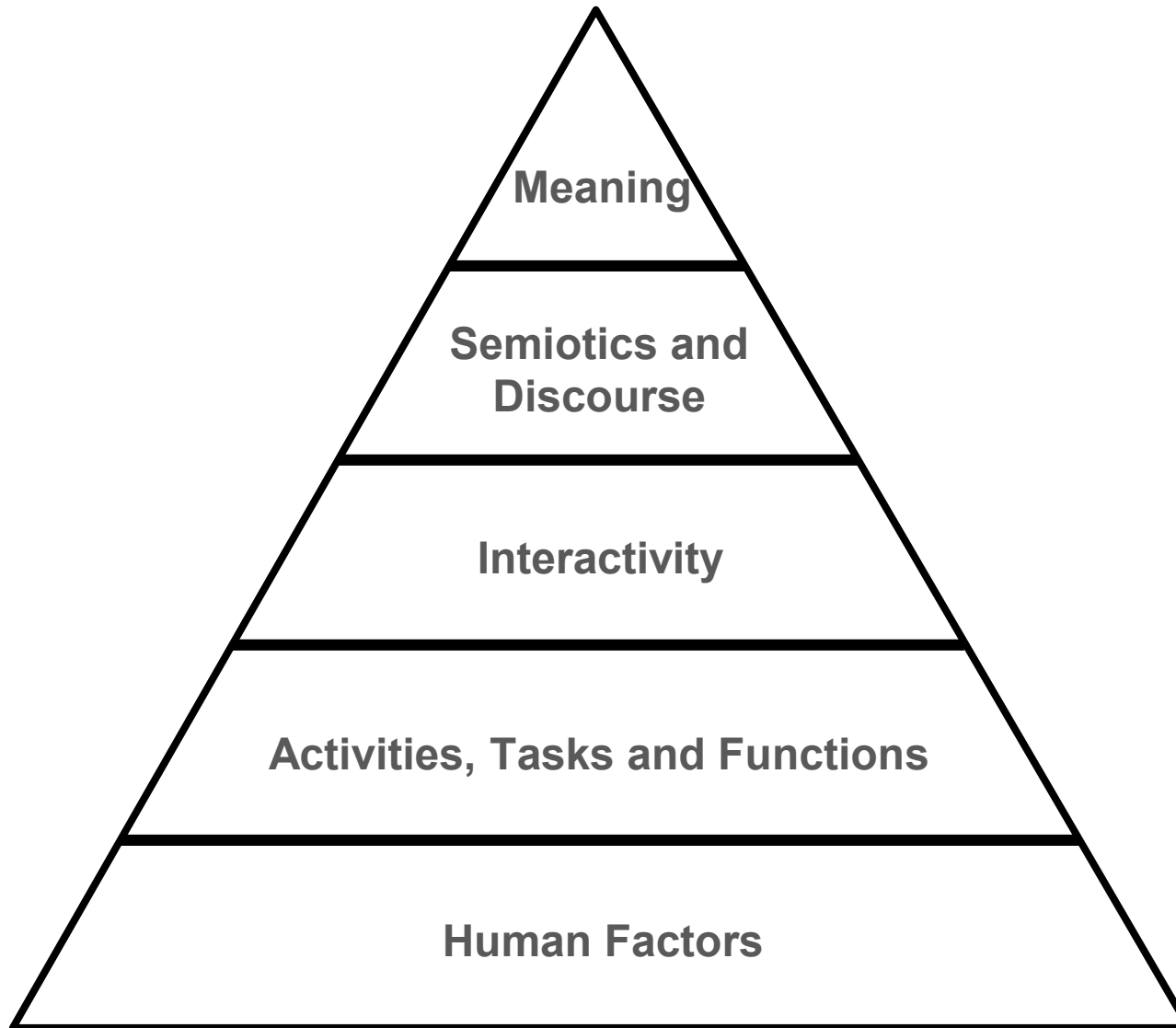
Artefacts As Sources of Value

Type of Value	This possession is important to me because it...
Utilitarian	... allows me to be efficient in my daily life or work ... has a lot of practical usefulness ... provides me freedom or independence
Enjoyment	... provides enjoyment, entertainment or relaxation ... improves my mood ... provides comfort or emotional security
Represents Interpersonal Ties	... reminds me of my relationship to a particular person ... reminds me of my family or a group of people I belong to ... represents my family heritage or history
Facilitates Interpersonal Ties	... allows me to spend time or share activities with other people
Self Expression	... allows me to express myself ... expresses what is unique about me, different from others
Represents Achievement	... required a lot of effort to acquire or maintain ... reminds me of my skills, achievements, or goals
Symbolises Personal History	... reminds me of my childhood ... reminds me of particular events or places ... is a record of my personal history
Financial Aspects	... is valuable in terms of money
Appearance Related	... is beautiful or attractive in appearance ... improves my appearance or the way I look
Status	... has social prestige value, gives me social status ... makes others think well of me
Spiritual	... provides a spiritual link to divine or higher forces

The Identity Message of Advertising



The Human Centred Design Pyramid



What Is Meaning ?



Car

Semiotic Meaning

- **the object, action or concept which a word or a symbol refers to.**



Value Meaning

- the significance, purpose or underlying truth of something (*the what*);
- the motive or intention of something (*the why*).



Statue of Atlas (1937) by Lee Lawrie
at Rockefeller Center, New York

Objectivist Approach

Objectivists maintain that reality exists independently of consciousness, that human beings have direct contact with reality through sense perception, that people can achieve objective knowledge from perception and that the proper moral purpose of life is the pursuit of one's own happiness.

Wikipedia

Constructivist Approach

Constructivists maintain that reality is not an objective truth but instead a construct of the interaction between people.

Constructivists maintain that language does not mirror reality, but instead creates it.



Types Of Meaning

Function

- the way something works or operates;
- the natural purpose of something or the duty of a person.



Some things need doing,
with or without aesthetic
or semiotic content.

Function



Ritual

- a series of actions or a type of behaviour which is regularly and invariably followed by someone;
- a set of fixed actions and sometimes words performed consistently and regularly, especially as part of a ceremony or collectively.



Some actions are performed for their aesthetic and semiotic content. The motions and actions send messages.

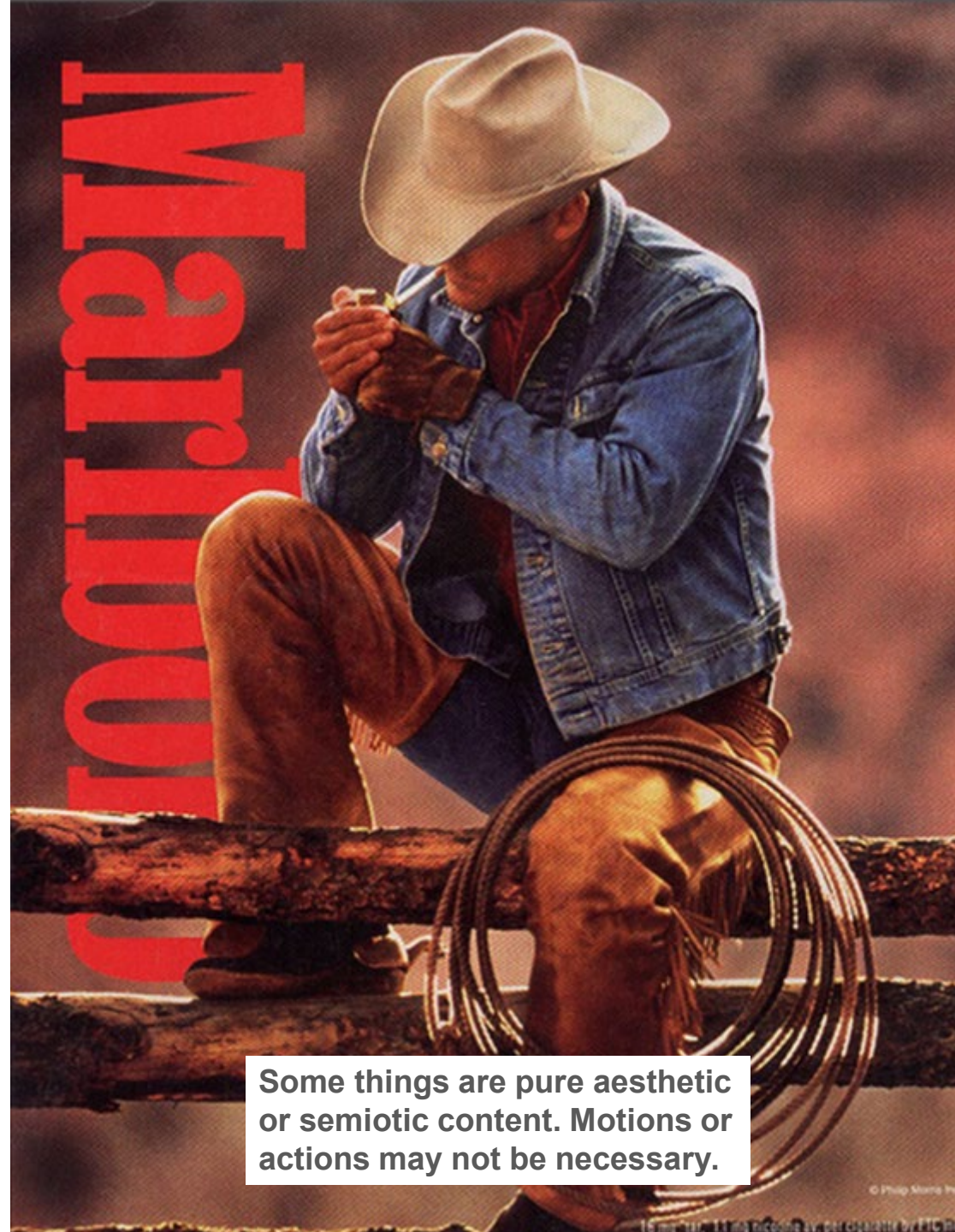


Ritual

Many products and services appear to be designed based on a ritual...

Myth

- a traditional story, especially one concerning the early history of a people or explaining a natural or social phenomenon;
- an idealised, exaggerated or fictitious conception of a thing or person.



Some things are pure aesthetic or semiotic content. Motions or actions may not be necessary.



Myth

Many products and services appear to be designed based on a myth...

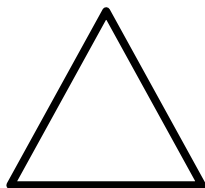
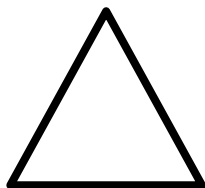
Meaning Depends On The Scenario

Meaning Changes With Context

Natural Description For the Leftmost Object...



“the triangle”



“the small one”



“the large one”

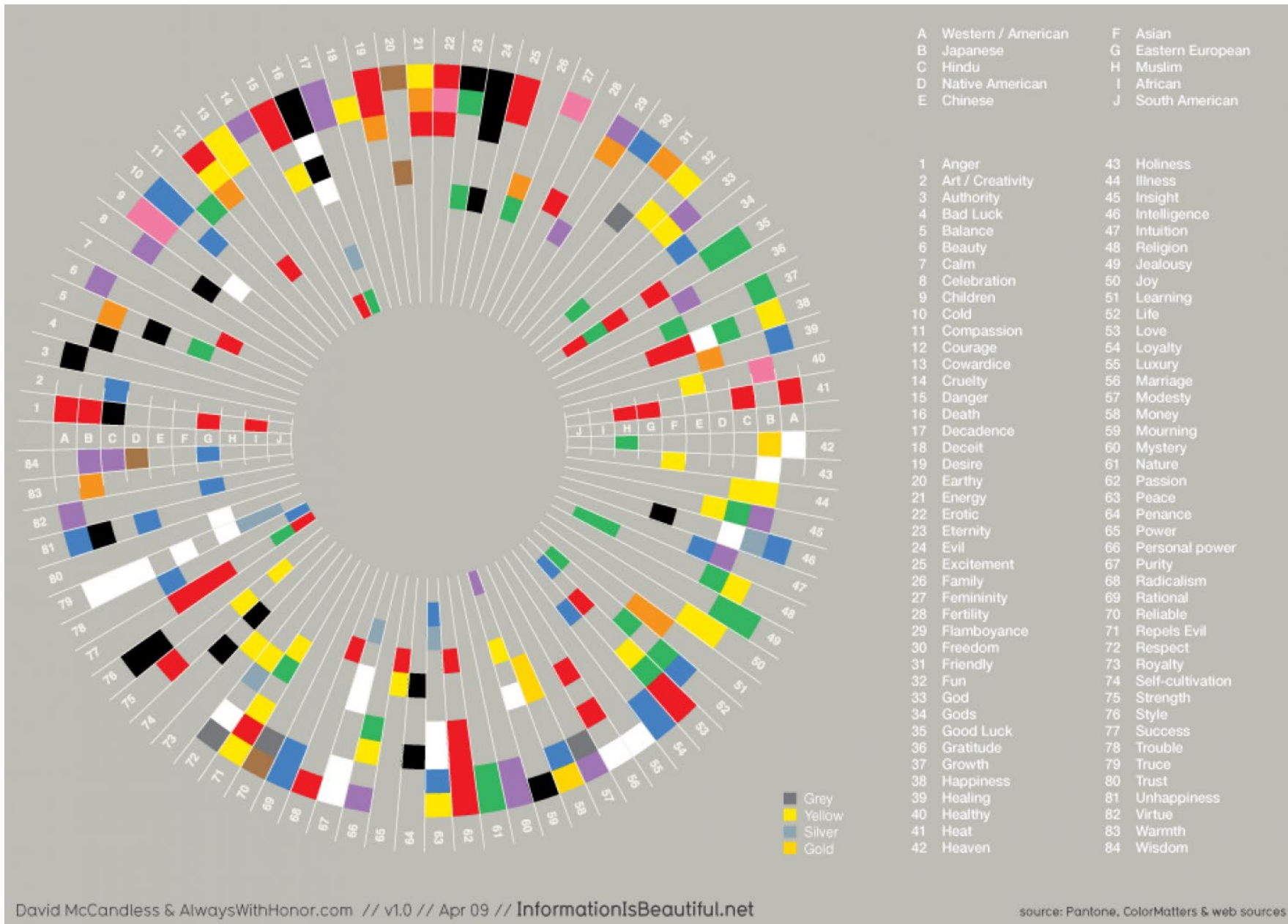


“the equilateral one”



“the white one”

Meaning Changes With Culture



Meaning Depends On The Person

Meaning Changes With Gender

Table 4.3. *Most frequently named objects mentioned by each sex*

Males (N = 141)	Percentage	Females (N = 174)	Percentage
1. Furniture	32.6 ^a	1. Furniture	38.5
2. TV	29.1	2. Photographs	30.5
3. Stereos	28.4	3. Visual art	27.0
4. Visual art	24.1	4. Sculpture	25.9
5. Musical instruments	20.6	5. Books	24.1
6. Books	19.9	6. Plants	23.0
7. Sports equipment	17.7	7. Musical instruments	22.4
8. Collectibles	14.9	8. Plates	20.1
9. Photographs	14.2	9. Appliances	16.7
10. Beds	12.1	10. Stereos	16.1
11. Pets	11.3	11. Beds	14.9
12. Sculpture	10.6	12. TV	14.4
13. Vehicles	9.9	13. Glass	12.8
14. Appliances	9.9	14. Textiles	12.6
15. Trophies	8.5	15. Collectibles	12.1

^aPercentage of respondents mentioning at least one object in each category.

Meaning Changes With Age

Table 4.1. *Special objects mentioned at least once by respondents of three different generations*

Children (N = 79)	Percentage mentioned	Parents (N = 150)	Percentage mentioned	Grandparents (N = 86)	Percentage mentioned
1. Stereos	45.6	1. Furniture	38.1	1. Photos	37.2
2. TV	36.7	2. Visual art	36.7	2. Furniture	33.7
3. Furniture	32.9	3. Sculpture	26.7	3. Books	25.6
4. Musical inst.	31.6	4. Books	24.0	4. TV	23.3
5. Beds	29.1	5. Musical inst.	22.7	5. Visual art	22.1
6. Pets	24.1	6. Photos	22.0	6. Plates	22.1
7. Miscellaneous	20.3	7. Plants	19.3	7. Sculpture	17.4
8. Sports equipment	17.7	8. Stereos	18.0	8. Appliances	15.1
9. Collectibles	17.7	9. Appliances	17.3	9. Miscellaneous	15.1
10. Books	15.2	10. Miscellaneous	16.7	10. Plants	12.8
11. Vehicles	12.7	11. Plates	14.7	11. Collectibles	11.6
12. Radios	11.4	12. Collectibles	12.0	12. Silverware	10.5
13. Refrigerators	11.4	13. TV	11.3	13. Musical inst.	10.5
14. Stuffed animals	11.4	14. Glass	11.3	14. Weavings	10.5
15. Clothes	10.1	15. Jewelry	11.3	15. Whole room	10.5
16. Photos	10.1				

**Meaning Depends On The
Passage Of Time**

Meaning Changes With Time

(Myth → Ritual → Function)

There seems to be a metamorphoses of novelties from “toys” to “instruments”, from “luxuries” to “necessities”, from “pleasure” to “comfort”, or from “sensation” to “routine”.

When commodities are integrated with each other, e.g., within lifestyles, dwellings, neighbourhoods, etc., there is less and less room for spontaneity.

From the perspective of a single consumer, daily choices, of say, using cars, become increasingly dictated by situational factors, routines, and social norms, and less and less by individual preferences.



Meaning Changes With Time

(Function → Ritual → Myth)

Spectacles have become eyewear...you wear glasses rather than carry or just use them.

This acknowledges the shift in perspective from a medical model to a social model of prescription.

In the past, spectacles were seen almost exclusively in terms of their vision correction.

This broader perspective acknowledges the significance of the perceptions of those around you.



Meaning Is Ideological



Ideology

- a set of beliefs characteristic of an individual or of a social group;
- a system of ideas and ideals which forms the basis of economic or political theory or policy.

Designing Based On Ideology

Ideology of combative solo willpower.



Myth of “just do it” to overcome societal discrimination through sport.



Cultural Codes such as adverts involving poor black youths and housing projects, and packaging/accessories imprinted with “just do it”.



Meaning Is Metaphorical



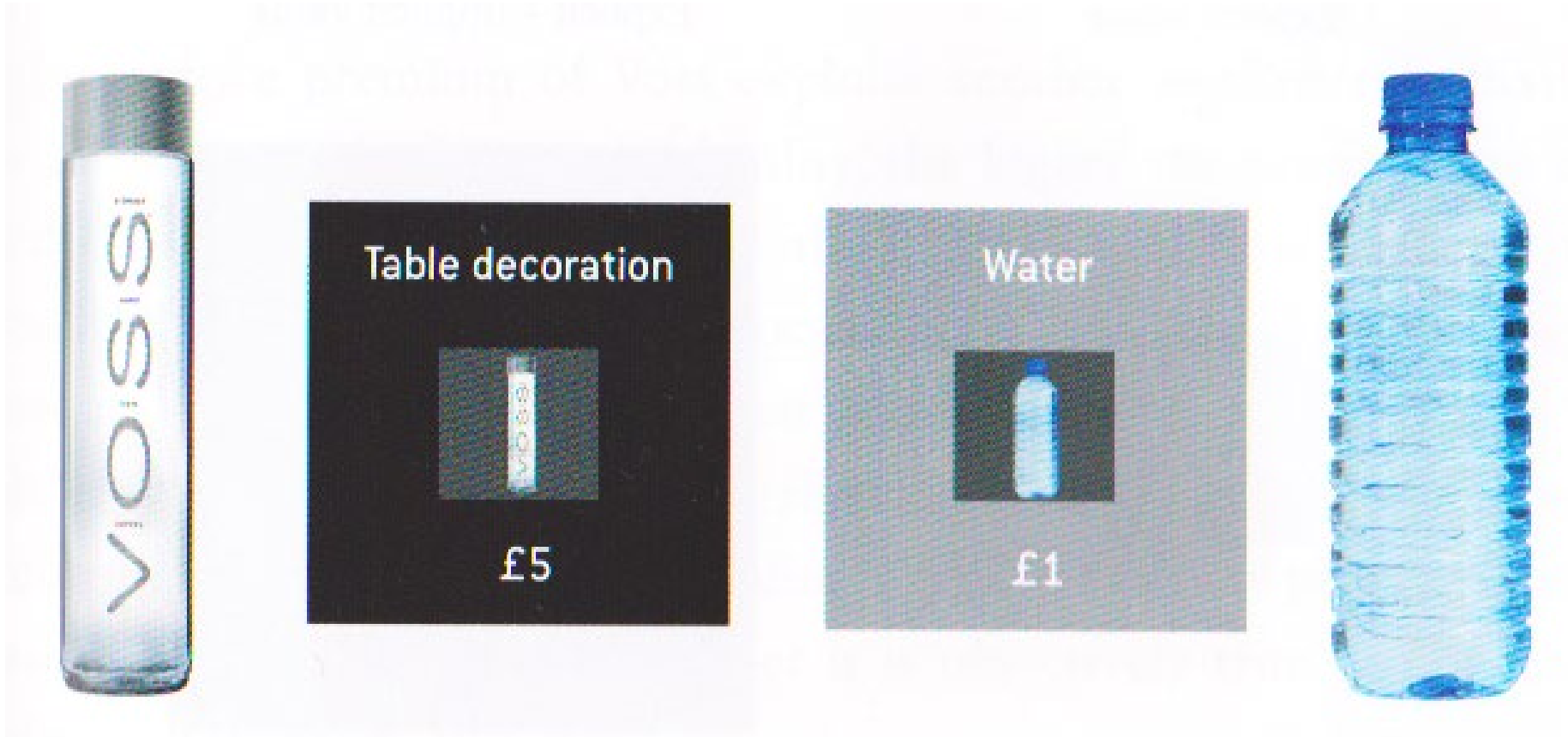
THE NEW PAJERO FULL
WITH ABC-B™.
IT'S MORE
THAN TECHNOLOGY.
IT'S INSTINCT.

ABC-B stability
in terms of braking,
steering
and cornering
keeps you
without help
from the driver.



Metaphor

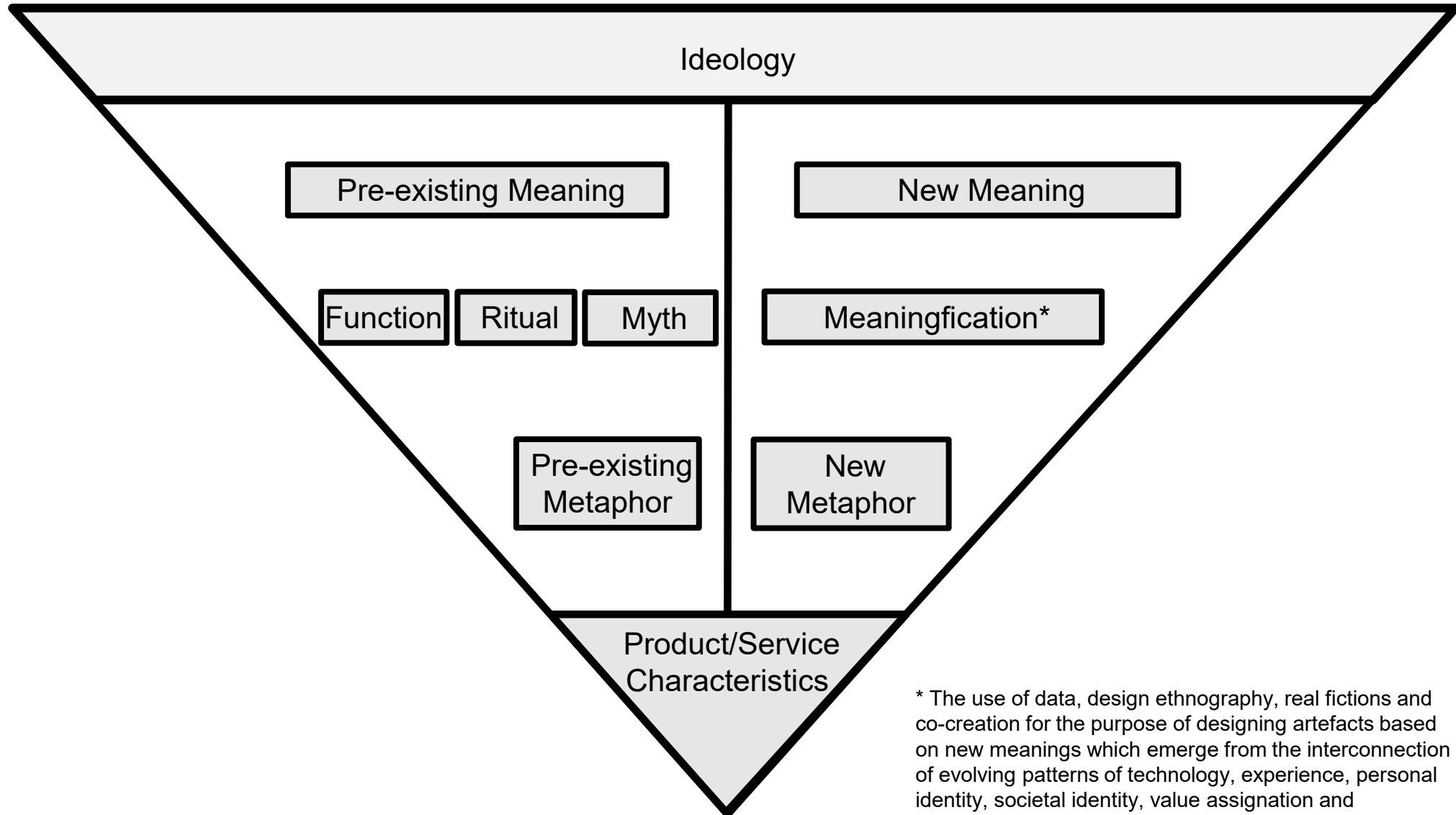
- a figure of speech in which a word or phrase is applied to an object or action that it does not literally denote, in order to imply a resemblance;
- a thing regarded as representative or symbolic of something else.



Metaphor can be used to change a meaning...

What's The Big Picture ?

Designing For Meaning Framework



* The use of data, design ethnography, real fictions and co-creation for the purpose of designing artefacts based on new meanings which emerge from the interconnection of evolving patterns of technology, experience, personal identity, societal identity, value assignation and consumption.

Thank you.

