

A decorative graphic on the left side of the slide, consisting of white lines and circles on a purple background, resembling a circuit board or a stylized tree structure.

SEMIOTICS & MEANING

UNDERSTANDING VISUAL LANGUAGE

What is Semiotics?

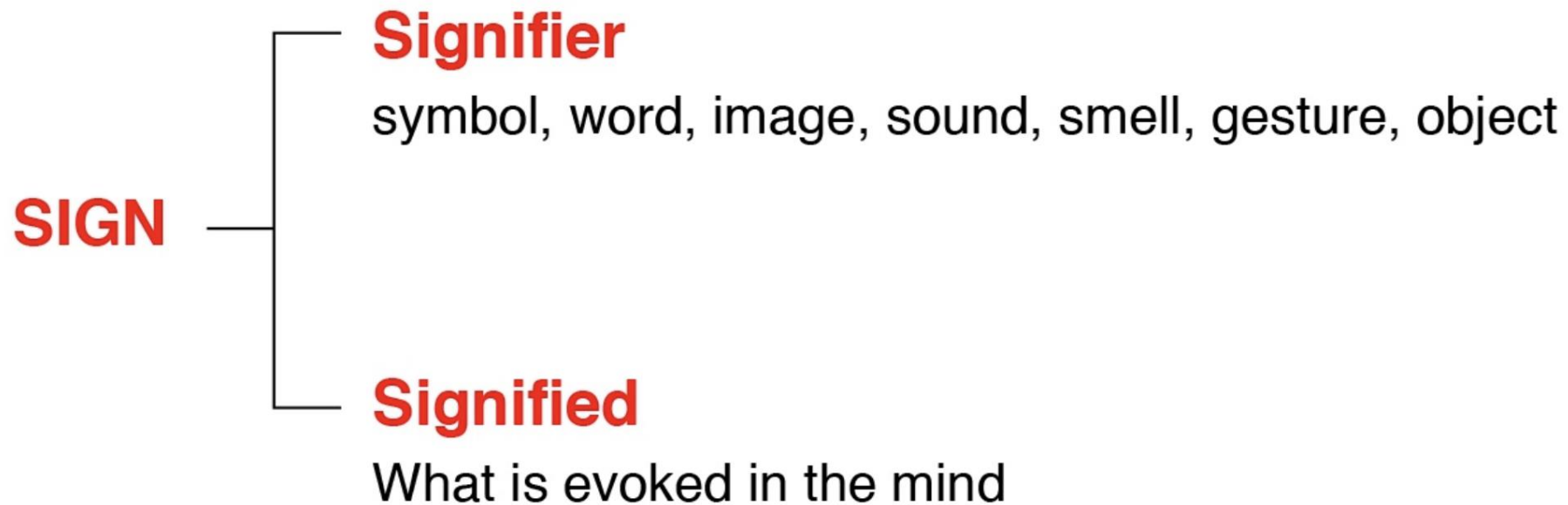
- It is the interpretation of symbols, words, images, sounds, smells, gestures and objects.
- Understanding how things can be interpreted will enable you to manipulate, educate, persuade, guide and instruct your audience.



Saussure's Theory. (So-soor)

- A good place to start with semiotic theory is with Ferdinand de Saussure (1857 - 1913).
- His theory is comprised of two parts:
the **Signifier** and the **Signified**

Saussure's Theory. (So-soor)



Saussure's Theory. (So-soor)



Barthes' Theory. (Bar-ths)

- Roland Barthes (1915 - 1980) expands on Saussure's theory by indicating that a sign has two levels of meaning:
a **Denotative** Level
and **Connotative** Level.

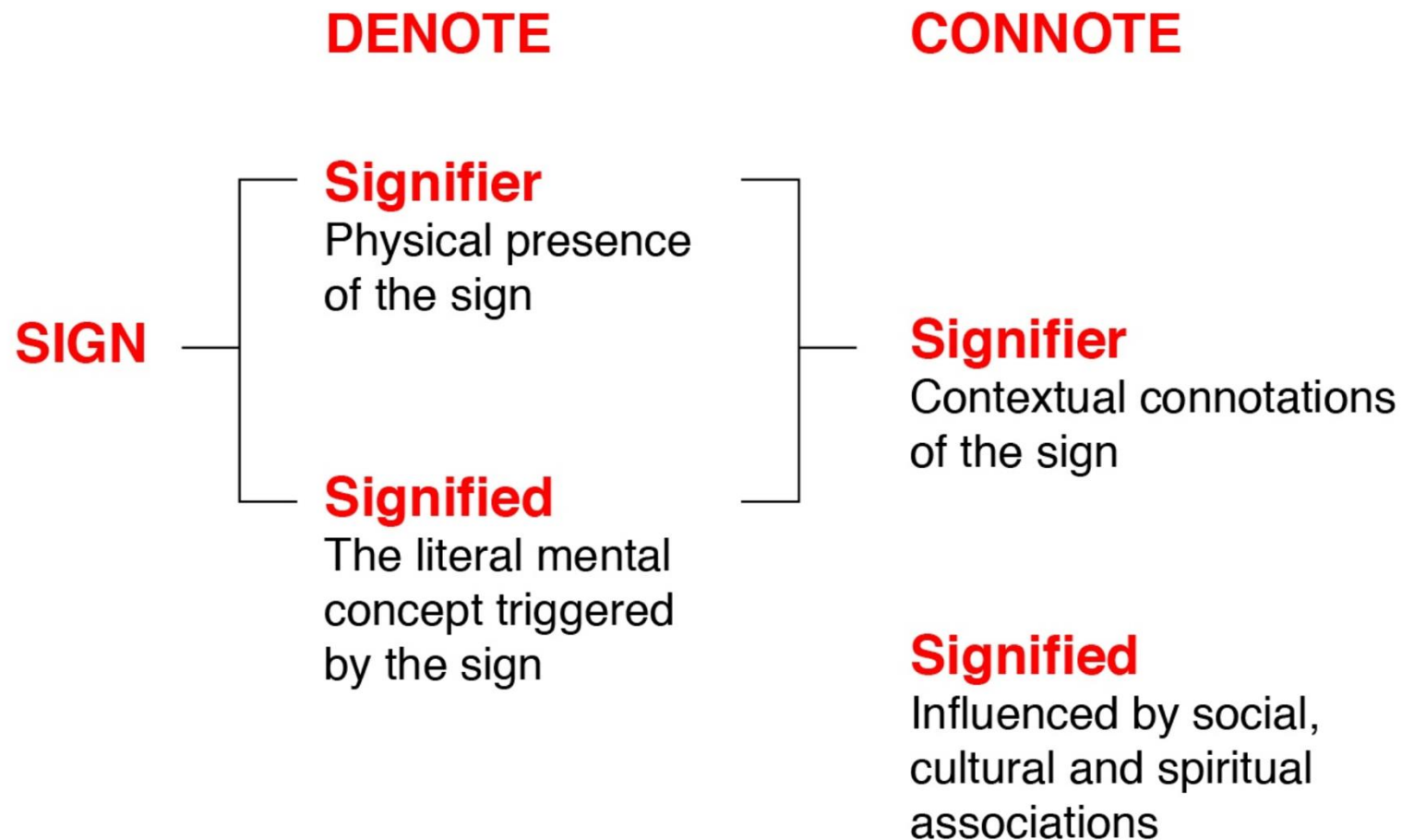
Barthes' Theory. (Bar-ths)

- **Denotative.**
- This is the surface level of the meaning which is outside of any social context. This level is, essentially the same as Saussure's theory.
- It is the more literal meaning of the sign - Apple means apple.

Barthes' Theory. (Bar-ths)

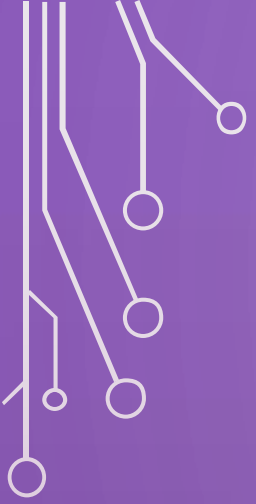
- **Connotative.**
- This is the deeper level of meaning which is within a social context. The interpretation can be influenced by social, cultural and spiritual associations.
- This level also has a **signifier** and a **signified**.

Barthes' Theory. (Bar-ths)

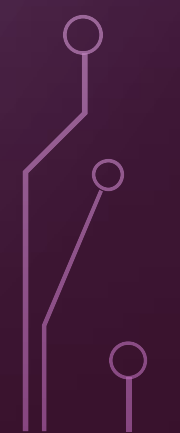


Barthes' Theory. (Bar-ths)

		DENOTE	CONNOTE			DENOTE	CONNOTE
SIGN	Signifier		Modern Sleek Design Quality		Signifier		Toilet Washroom WC
	Signified	Technology iPhone Mac Expensive	Knowledge Forbidden Fruit Isaac Newton Adan and Eve		Signified	Man Gents Male	Gender specific Segregation



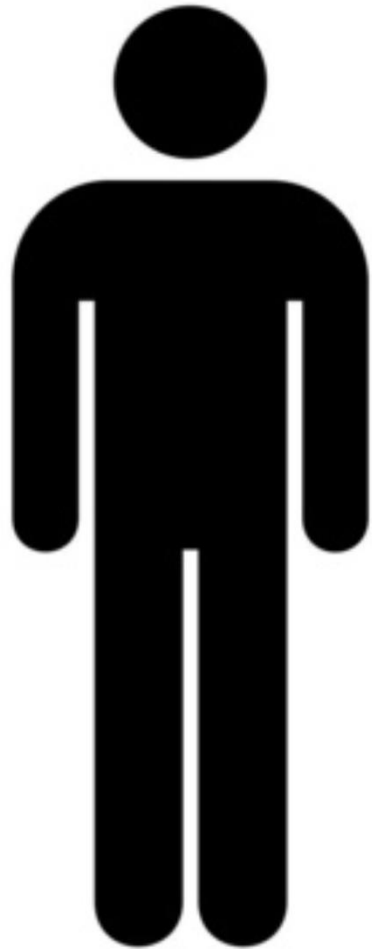
Context and Sequencing.

- **Context.** Where a sign is encountered will set a context to how the sign is meant to be interpreted.
 - This can either help to guide the thinking of the viewer to respond in a particular way or it can cause confusion depending on the sign being encountered.
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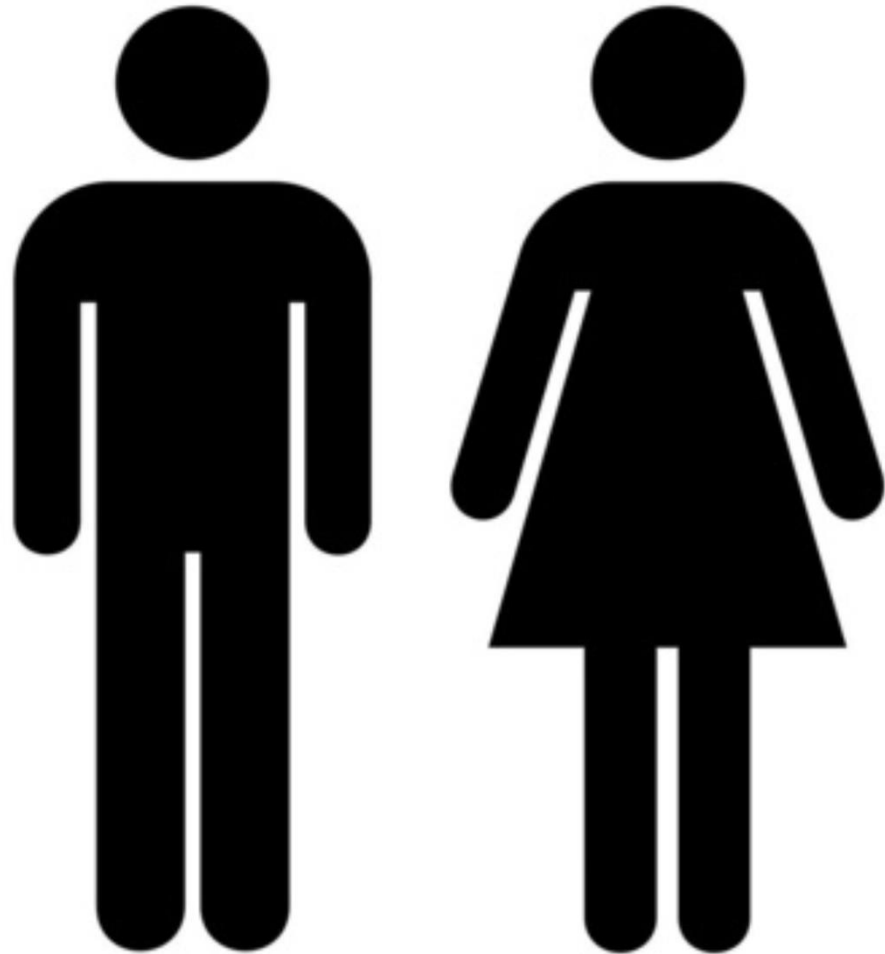
Context and Sequencing.

- **Sequencing.** Consistent encountering of a sign helps to form an expected sequence in the mind of the viewer. You encounter these everywhere.
- They can help to organize and regulate information making things easier for the viewer to understand.
- It can also help to form narrative and visual story telling within your designs.

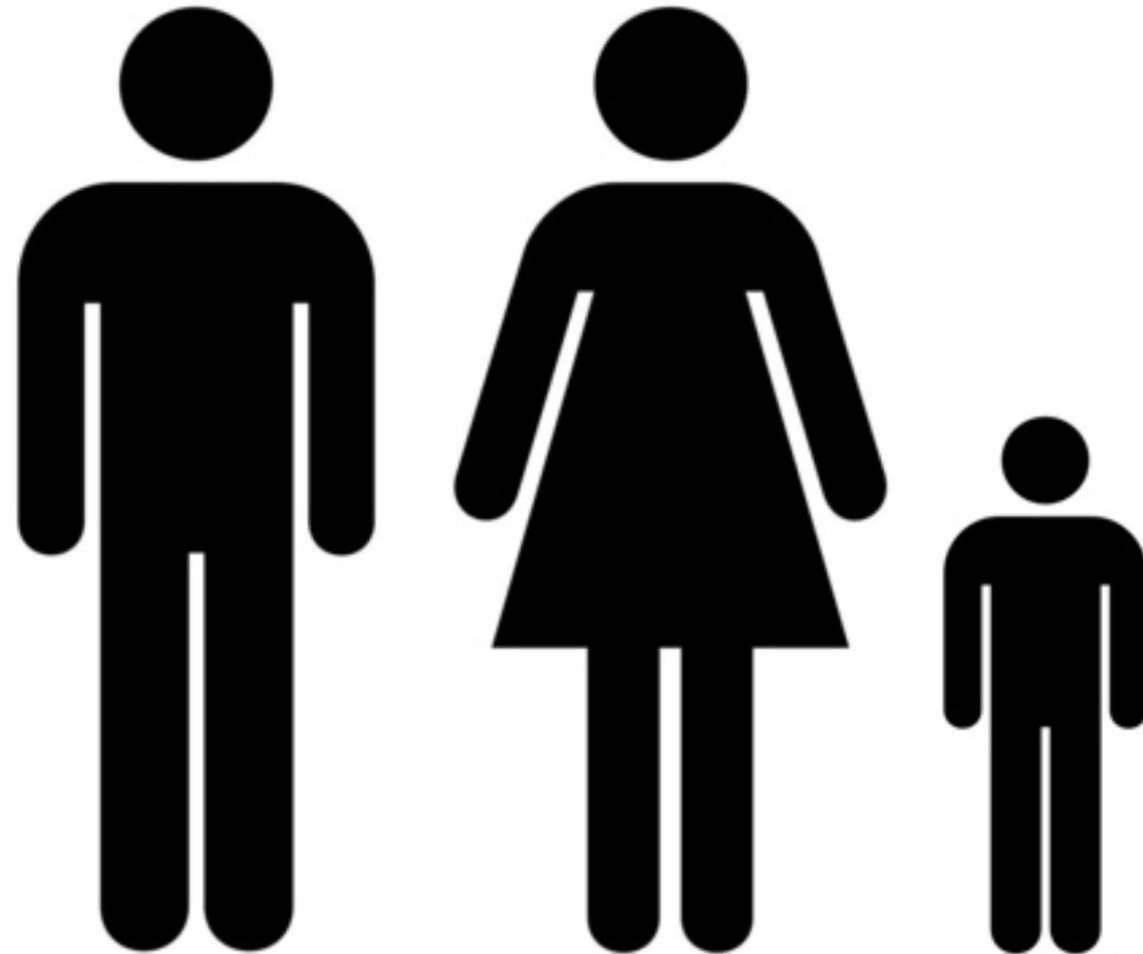
Context and Sequencing.



Context and Sequencing.



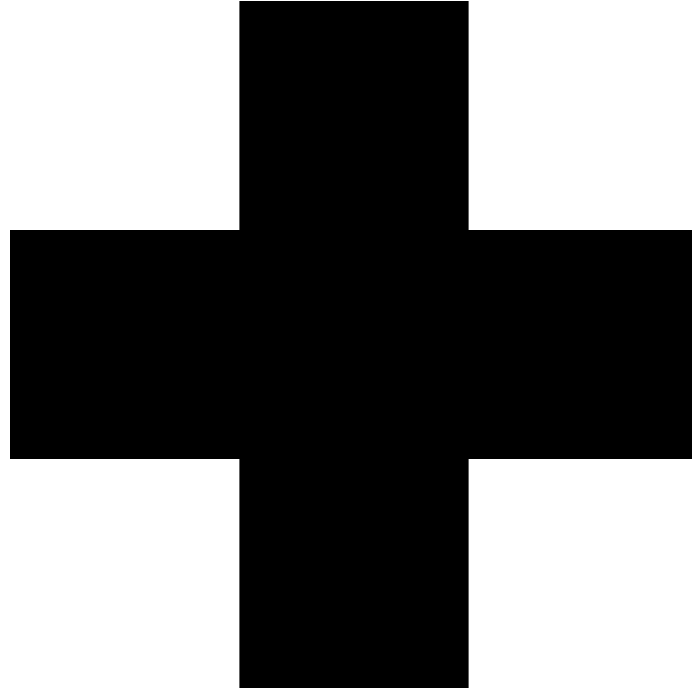
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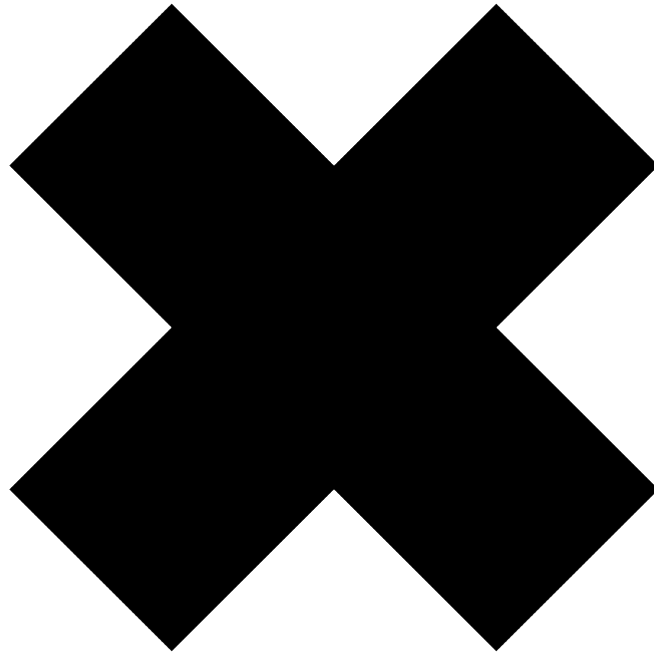
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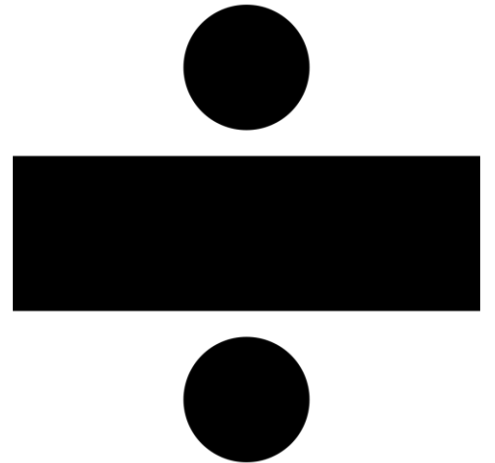
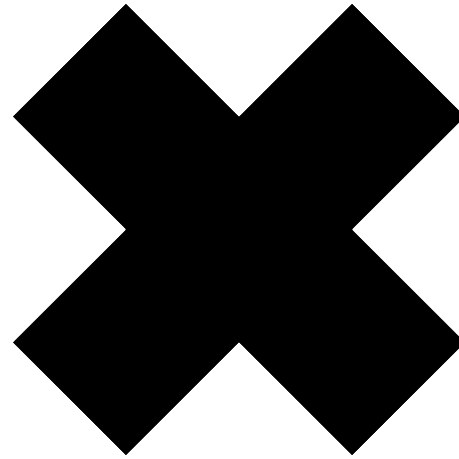
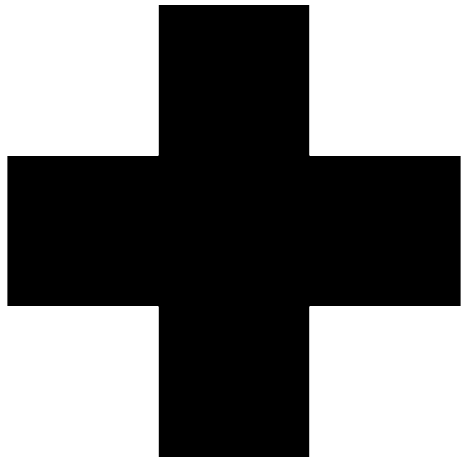
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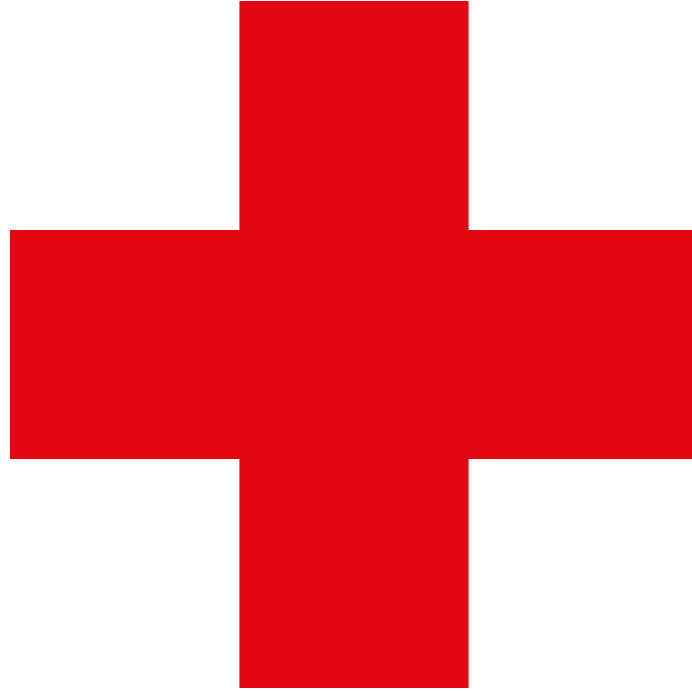
Context and Sequencing.



Context and Sequencing.



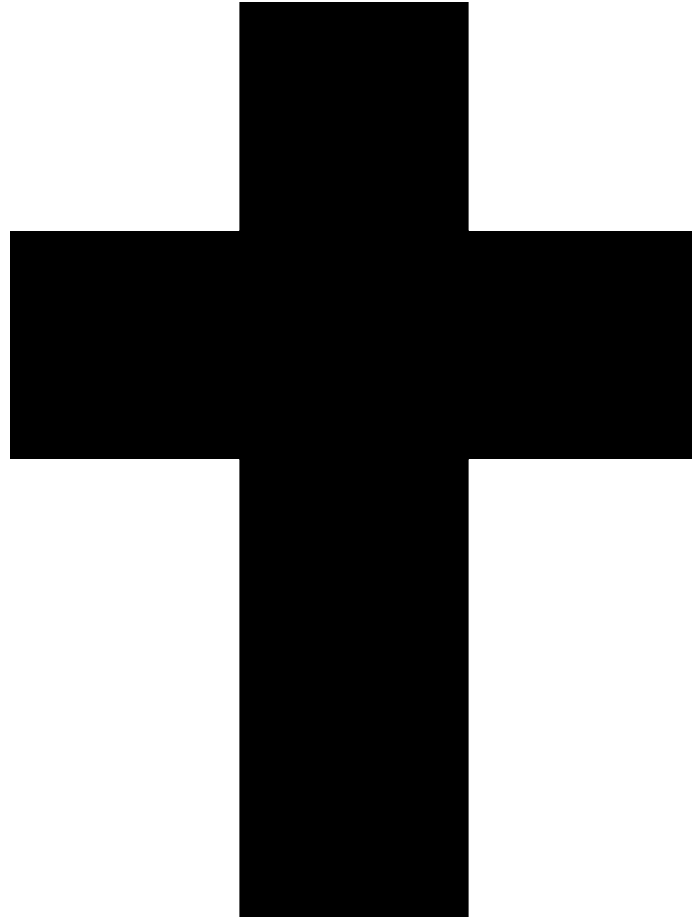
Context and Sequencing.



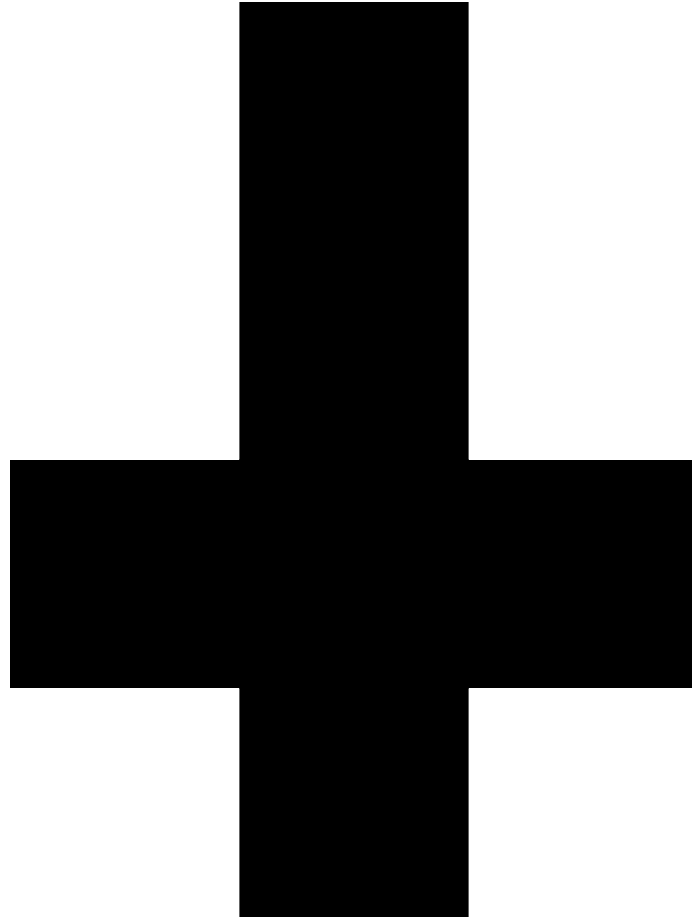
Context and Sequencing.



Context and Sequencing.



Context and Sequencing.





The Graham Norton Show, Series 25 Episode 12, BBC.

Context and Sequencing.

- As Graphic Designers we use these cultural associations to help guide the viewer to think in a particular way.
- Just with the changing of a typeface we can hint towards a particular way of thinking. This may set a time period, level of formality, location, or mood.

Story

Story

Story

STORY

Story

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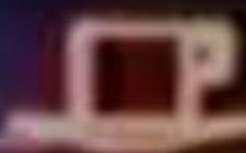
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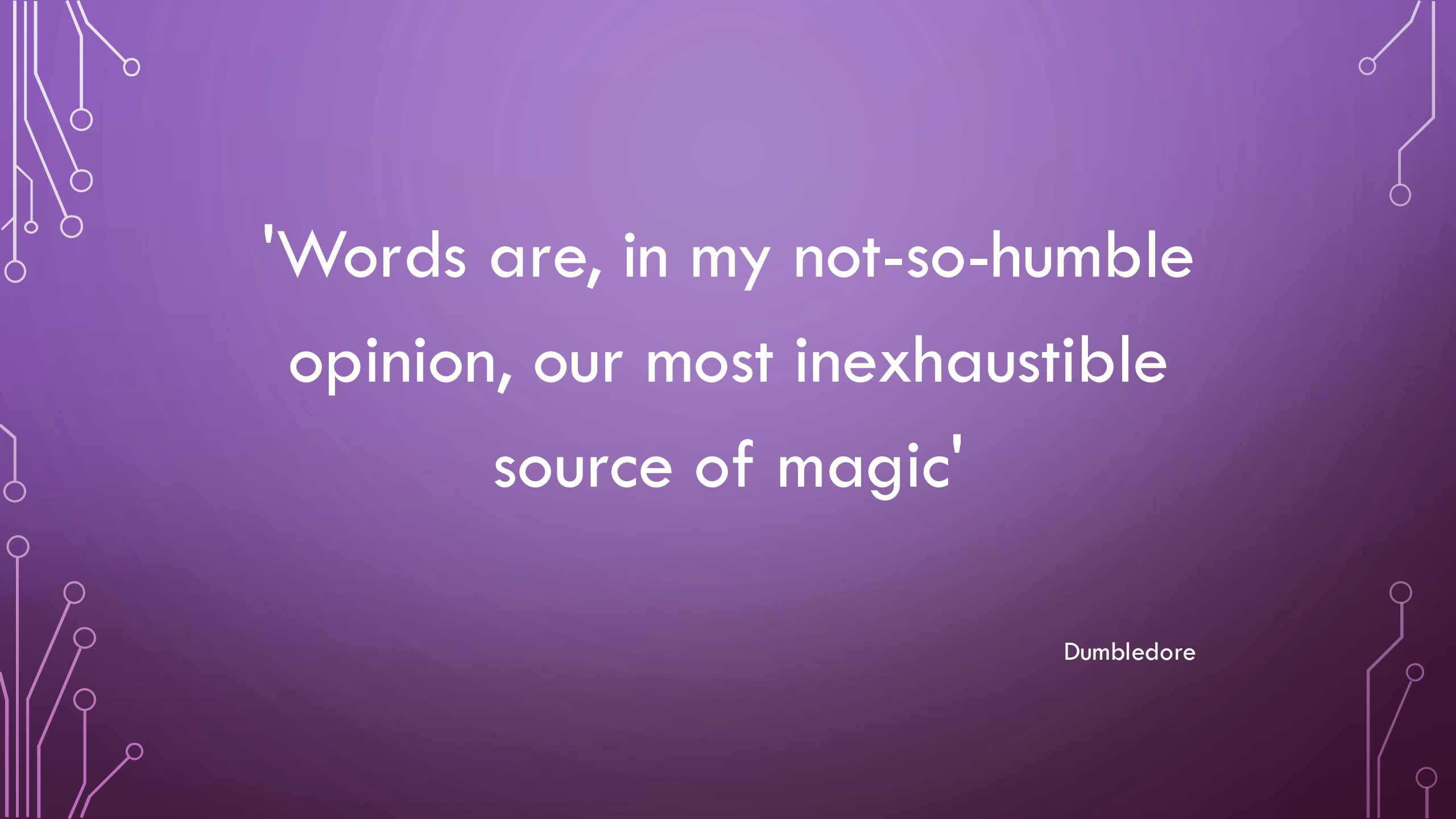


INTERMISSION

A decorative graphic on the left side of the slide, consisting of white lines and circles on a purple background, resembling a circuit board or a stylized tree structure.

METAPHOR & SIMILE

USING SEMIOTICS IN VISUAL STORY TELLS

The background is a solid purple color. In the four corners, there are decorative white line art elements that resemble circuit boards or neural network connections, with lines and small circles extending from the edges.

'Words are, in my not-so-humble
opinion, our most inexhaustible
source of magic'

Dumbledore

Simile – Signifiers and Signified values.

- A comparison of one thing to another (x is **like** y).
The signifiers give addition meaning to the statement through a perceived shared value.
 - Dropped like a stone
 - Float like a butterfly
 - Sting like a bee
 - Smelling like a rose
 - Slept like a log
 - Ate like a pig

Simile in Visual Communication.

- Simile in visual communication can be an effective method of getting the message across.
- It is used a lot on branding and marketing where adverts are saying you can be like X if you buy our product.
- However, it can be disastrous if miss used.

#BE LIKE MIKE





Michael Jordan Gatorade Commercial 1992.



'Accrington Stanley' Milk Advert 1989.

A black and white profile photograph of Serena Williams, looking down and to the right. She is wearing a patterned headband and a dark athletic top. The background is a dark, textured grey.

**AGE IS JUST
A NUMBER.**

SERENA'S IS #1.





EXPLOSIVE
SPEED



MERCURIAL
THE NEW VAPOR 8

Simile in Visual Communication.

- Get the comparison wrong and it can be insulting or cringe worthy. However, there are examples where this is used in a suitable context or to highlight major social issues.

SMELL LIKE A MAN, MAN.

Old Spice



Look like a girl
Act like a lady
Think like a man
Work like a boss



#HappyWomensDay



LOTTERY FUNDED | SPORT ENGLAND

#thisgirlcan

Sweating
like a pig,
feeling
like a fox.

THIS
GIRL
CAN

Always #LikeAGirl

always



Metaphor – Signifiers and Signified values.

- The swapping of two dissimilar things that share a certain quality. In many cases, this requires the viewer to theorise the quality connecting the two things (x is y).

- Romeo and Juliet

'Who's that in the window?

It's Juliet, my love.'

'What light through yonder window breaks?

It is the East, and Juliet is the Sun.'

Metaphor in Visual Communication.

- A very powerful tool when used correctly. This is due to the directness of the visual statement as it is stating that THIS is THAT.
- It is a method used a great deal when looking at sensitive or adult issues.

TOUCH THE RAINBOW



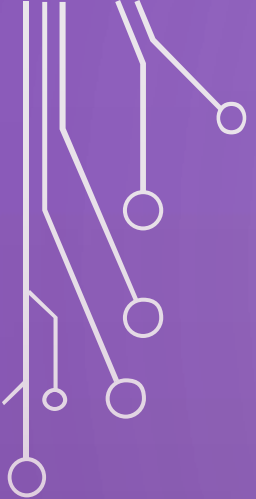
TASTE THE RAINBOW

PEPERAMI

**IT'S A BIT OF
AN ANIMAL**



RED BULL GIVES YOU WINGS





Tampax Pearl Advert.



Bodyform Commercial 2017



#KnowYourBalls



YOU CAN DETECT
BREAST CANCER EARLY
BEAT THE DISEASE
BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE

A simple self examination of the breast once a month can help you detect breast cancer early. Consult your doctor at once if you notice any change in your breasts.



**FIGHT
BREAST
CANCER**

Issued in the public interest by
Pencil Advertising, Kuwait



Concerned about lung cancer?

Lung cancer is by far the leading cause of cancer death among both men and women, and nearly half of all cases are in the most advanced stage at diagnosis. Fortunately, Carolinas Imaging Services now offers a lung cancer screening that can detect cancer before it becomes symptomatic. The National Comprehensive Cancer Network recommends the screening for individuals 55+ with a history of heavy smoking (at least 30 pack-years), and individuals 50+ with a 20-pack-year history coupled with another risk factor, such as asbestos exposure. The cost is only \$250—well worth the peace of mind that comes with finally having answers.

Schedule your lung cancer screening today at 704.442.4390.



Carolinas
Imaging
Services



Before it's too late. wwf.org



Metonymy and Synecdoche (Sinek-De-Key).

- **Metonymy.** Imagery that has a strong association with the actual but is not part of it.







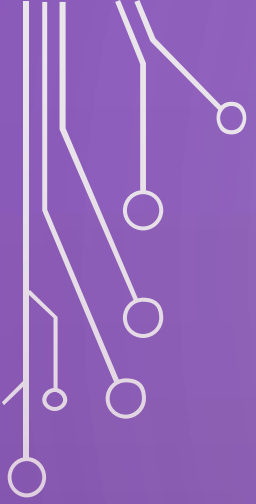
Metonymy and Synecdoche (Sinek-De-Key).

- **Synecdoche.** Similar to metonymy but refers to a thing that is part of the actual.

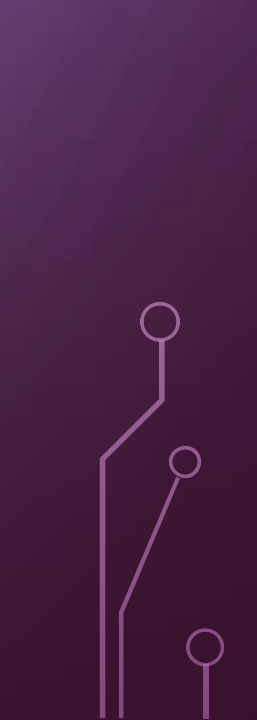








What Next?

- Hopefully, I have opened your eyes to how you have been molded by the varying methods of semiotic communication you have been exposed to.
 - Hopefully, you have a better understanding on how powerful visual language can be.
 - Start thinking about how you consume it and what is it trying to communicate to you.
 - Ask yourself, 'What is it trying to make me do?'
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Thanks for listening

