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A CRITICAL READER OF “NEW” MEDIA

07. gamer Wittgenstein

in this class

- Last week's activity
- Interaction and analysis
- Wittgenstein and the logic of an object

last week's activity



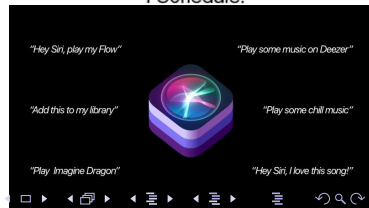
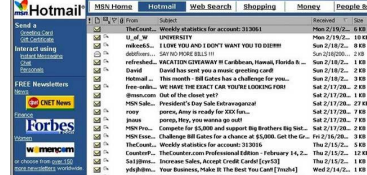
We asked two (2) questions about a specific cultural object:

- How would you characterize this particular interaction following the concepts we used in our previous class?
- What is the interface you're actually using? Describe following modeling systems theory



interaction and reference

- One of the big things we want to explore is how we interact with cultural objects that we may not be used to—novel approaches, technologies or systems.
- When we interact with cultural objects, we do it within our *grasp*: That is, we use our own reach, bodily and intellectual, to interact with the objects we're presented with



areas of analysis, revisited

We can now establish **boundaries** for how we analyze things:

- The graspable, interactive area of the object
- The intangible, logical core of the object
- The relative position of the object

These three boundaries mark a general theoretical perspective through which we can face new cultural objects, including new media



interaction through interfacing

- When we interact with a cultural object, we **grasp** it
- But what does it mean to **grasp** something?
- Grasping something may be a physical or metaphorical act
- Remember the talk about interfaces and modeling systems?
- We made a distinction between a base-level interaction and higher complexity interaction
- Let's revisit those ideas and flesh them out more concretely



levels of interaction

- Base-level interaction depends on our cognitive interface (primary modeling system)
- This interface is situational: We make sense of things through our cognitive infrastructure
- But the way we comprehend and act upon cultural objects is usually far more complex
- What is **graspable** about different cultural objects is the way these objects lend themselves to being part of your **lifeworld**



- This is a phenomenological point of view in that we assume that interaction is relevant to us because it is part of the context we experience
- A more concrete technicality here would be that the coupling of our perceptual and action-oriented system acts in cycles (think Uexküll)



high level interaction and graspability

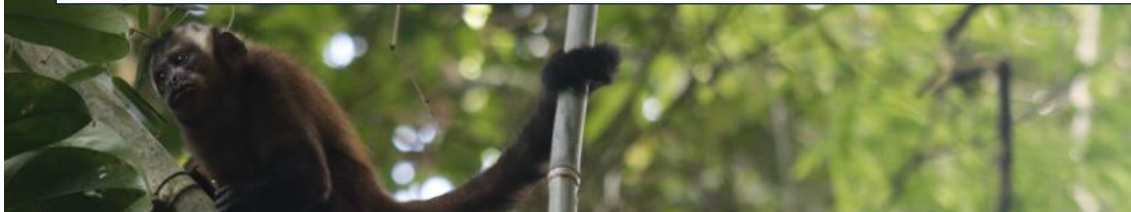
- The principle here is that the elements that populate your world of experience are **significant**
- This in turn translates to the principle that cultural elements play some role in the perception-action arc



cultural complexity in objects

- Our semiotic competence, whether we're aware of it or not, plays a **fundamental** role in our interaction with cultural objects
- The dynamics are related to the complexity of the object and the individual interacting with it
- The higher our degree of “semiotic freedom”, the more complex our capabilities of interacting with the object are
- If **graspability** is a property of a cultural object, how do we describe it properly?
- We mentioned earlier that it can come as a physical or metaphorical situation, but what does that mean?

graspability defined



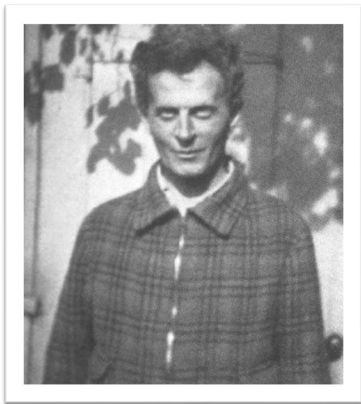
- Graspability is the way something makes sense to one of the parts in the interaction
- Does it feel like you can grab it? Does it feel like it refers to something? Does it seem to do anything you can describe?
- Of course, these questions can become more abstract when the object seems more symbolically loaded
- What are the symbolic references that we can grasp? What are the elements of the object that elicit a specific emotional response?
- Basically then, by asking **how do we interact with the object**, we ask what the aspects of the object we can grasp, notwithstanding their intention

the logic of the object

what lies at the core of the cultural object?

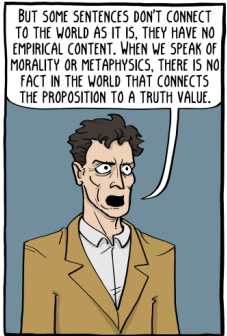
- The second area we are exploring is related to how a cultural object is internally composed
- We make the claim that cultural objects have some inner logic, or at least a **perceived** inner logic
- Once again, we do not want to play on the field of authorial intentions, because the variety of cultural objects will not necessarily allow us to use an author theory to describe this logic

positivism as an experimental method



1889-1951

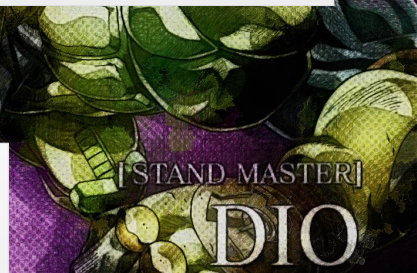
- In order to describe the potential logic of a cultural object, we need to do a number of operations:
- We describe it as a text—this will be our unit of analysis
- As a text, we understand it as a system
- As a system, we posit it as a **world**



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the world

- The world is everything that is the case
- The world can be mapped to truth conditions
- Propositions are meaningful only by reference to said truth conditions
- How does this actually help us understand the logic of an object?





logic as an ad-hoc construct

- In a way, cultural objects can establish their own rules. The more complex the cultural object, the more nuanced and clear its rules will probably be
- We can axiomatize this in our approach by assigning perceived complexity, but it's tricky, as it depends on the positioning of the object and the graspability of its components (in other words, it's part of a holistic analysis)
- It's easy to see what the logic of a certain work of art is, but what is the logic of a **spork**?
- As we ask such questions then, the assigned complexity of the object will determine the complexity of its logic and how detached it is from its graspability



The logic of the object may be functionally related to its graspability, but the more symbolically involved the object is, the more detached its logic will be from the way we interact with it

