Colour Psychology

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# 2. Colour Psychology

Colour Psychology is the study of hoe colours can influents the mind. From making you more aggressive, to making you more calm and understanding. Colour Psychology was first thought of by Sir Isaac Newton with the creation of the colour wheel. As he discovered in 1666 that the pure white colour can be split up with a prism to make every other colour. And so would mean that colours were just all different light wavelengths. And that when you combine colour lights you were just combining those wavelengths. As a red light and a yellow light would make an orange light were the meet. And Newton thought that it would also explain how paint colours worked. And so, he made the colour wheel to show people what colours you need to make certain colours.

Colours are not just pretty, as they can influence people mentally. Study found that seeing red before an exam can negatively influence your final score. As red can be seen as exciting, threatening, or arousing. This is not the reason why bulls in bull fighting charge at the red flag, bulls cannot see red. And because of that people could not concentrate on their exams. And of course, every colour has their own feeling associated with it. Several ancient civilisations knew that colour had some weird properties on the minds of people, so they used it as a kind of medicine. They used red as a stimulant for the body and soul, Yellow for purifying the body and stimulate the nerves, Orange to increase energy and to heal the lungs, blue to threat pain and shades of Indigo to help the skin.

(Cherry, verywellmind, 2020)  
  
To find out what people thought of certain colours. In the survey I asked what people thought of 26 colours. It was a mix of colours and different shades of set colours. I made the survey in such a way that I never said the name of the colour. I did that to avoid influencing the result. As I used colours as aqua. And I want to avoid things like that as aqua is the Latin word for water. And it looks like I avoided that perfectly as it is a mix now of answers of the sky, young children and of course the sea. And in the next section I will tell the name of the colour, the hex colour code, the underlying result of the survey result, what I would think of when seeing that colour and then we will compare it with what papers have to say about those colours. For the colours where I cannot find a scientific match for, I will use the closest colour possible. And if I could not find a common ground between the answers, I will tell you the biggest underlying groups. I have to do the last one because colour like everything else is subjective and can be influenced by memes.

## 2.1 Survey results

I asked people 26 questions about different colours of those colours I will pick 13 to talk about. I am doing that because sometimes I cannot find the common ground between answers. As I did not give any direction on what kind of answer I wanted. I wanted it that way.

### 2.1.1 Yellow

The first colour I am going to talk about is yellow. In the survey I saw a lot of answers calling the colour two words “Energy” and “Sun”. Logical as the colour is used in for example cartoons and kids shows to represent the sun. And Energy is also linked to the sun as we need the sun to fuel our vitamin D supply. And its looks like Psychology agrees with these results as they say Yellows Characteristics are “Attention-grabbing”, “Difficult to read”, “Energetic”, “Frustration” and “Warm”. (Cherry, verywellmind, 2020)

While on the surface it does not look like those two answers match. They match well, as you can see the Sun as Warm, Attention-grabbing, and Difficult to read. But for that last one you must interpret reading as looking at it. As Yellow is one of the most reflective colour that we normally have. It will have the stereotype of hard to read.

### 2.1.2 Green

For green I did not have such a clear answer and because of that I will combine the greens together to find the full answer. The words I got were Nature and Radioactivity. One heals you one damages you. And while psychology agrees on the Nature part it does not 100% agree on the Radioactivity part. Green can stand for envy, and you can see envy as a kind of poison/illness. Just like Radioactivity but even then, you are stretching the definition a lot. As one is mental and the other more psychical. But Nature does have a connection as it connects to our brain as a positive thing. As green means forest and a forest contains life/food. That is why we see green as health and why we buy more things if its green. As it is just hard wired to be attracted to green stuff. (Cherry, verywellmind, 2022)

### 2.1.3 Turquoise

For turquoise the main underlining theme was the sky and childhood. The reason of that is because if you are on a beach and look at the sea you usually do not see land. Just the sea. It represents a bit of serenity. You can look at the sea without seeing conflict of the land or the conflict of under the sea. And looks like Psychology agrees. As it does invoke the feeling of serenity and childhood innocents. But also, Balance and support. All words you can see as a state of calm. It is partly because of that link to childhood innocents from boys and girls. It is a light colour and so is also linked to white, the colour of a new begin. And Turquoise is also the colour of a clear sky and if there are no clouds in the sky it looks so innocence. As usually there are clouds in the sky that blocks the sun a bit and when there are no clouds it is just the clear sky. Nothing to block it. Just the peaceful sky.

(colorpsychology, 2022)

### 2.1.4 Tael

Tael in the survey represents something being boring or unchanging. As even as a unique colour you do not think about it when you see it. It is just there as a colour between turquoise and blue. What I meant to say about it is that it is a boring colour, it does not do anything crazy. It just does its normal planned thing. And Psychology agrees a little with the survey answers. As Tael is seen as an introverted colour. A colour that stands for uniqueness, but not standing out too much. It does not just represent the word “boring”, but also unique. Maybe it does fit the word “boring” after all as an extrovert maybe sees an introvert’s life as boring while the introvert sees it as unique. It is that contrast that makes Tael so unique. (CPM, 2022)

### 2.1.5 Blue

Blue is the colour of the unchanging ocean. What the survey means by that is that if you look at the ocean it looks like it never changes even if under the surface it constantly changes. Fitting as people think that blue is a true boy’s colour when in fact it changed from pink around 80 years ago. I should not be shocked with the amount of water related answers as people do use this kind of blue (#0000ff) for water related stuff or at least the deep-water areas.

And if you look at the colour psychology of blue you can see the same kind of meaning. That is its more of a man’s colour now, that the colour invokes feelings of stability. Just like the surface of a body of water. But if you include the meaning of turquoise, another shade of blue you also get the feeling of calm and serenity.   
But what my survey did miss was the productivity part of the colour. How being in a blue room makes you more productive. Its also one of the colours that is the most avoided. As outside of a body of water, the clear sky, plums, and blue berries blue is usually reserved for poisonous things. It is probably because it both screams look at me and it is also a good camouflage colour as at night-time its harder to see blue. As at pure night-time the sky is also a dark shade of blue. The reason why it looks more black for us is the light pollution that is happening. If you go to a forest where there is no artificial light, you will see a bit of the natural colour of the night sky. (Cherry, verywellmind, 2020)

### 2.1.6 Violet

Violet in the survey represented the plant, Lavender. In the flower world Lavender represents the ideas of purity, silence, devotion, serenity, grace, and calmness. And it was used as early as 2500 years ago to cure people. Later the romans used it more for its oils. That is also where the word came from. From the Latin word “lavere” it means “to wash”. So, it still had that purity aspect and calmness aspects to it. As it would clean the body and soul of the one cleaning with it. And if you look at the colour meaning of violet/purple you will see common traits. As it represents the future, imagination, dreams, and the calming of emotions. You can see that both my survey as the psychological results talk about the calming effect of the subject. The survey results by thinking about lavender, and the colour by looking at the meaning of the colour. (Maffia, 2022) (empower yourself with color psychology, 2022)

### 2.1.7 Crimson

Crimson represents blood. What I mean by that is of course blood but also the feeling of passion. It is of course related to blood as most blood will be around that colour when there is no oxygen in the red blood cells. And the passion part is related to crimson because of the feeling of love towards something or someone. And because we see love as a red hart, we also see related words as that same thing. Of course, the shade of love and passion is a bit different. But that is more because while the core meaning is the same. The feeling is a bit different. As passion is more towards lust. Psychology calls Crimson as a colour representing passion, love, determination to succeed and excitement. So, you can see how the colour Crimson is linked both to blood and love through passion. As it is that funny feeling you get that sparks that feeling of love. (Wikipedia, 2022) (SURESH, 2020)

### 2.1.8 Red

Red represents the feeling of danger. In that category is warnings, stop signs, errors, and fire. It is the colour that gives you the feeling that you should not come near it. As it is a warm colour and that could mean hot. And we do not want to burn our hand on something hot. It is just a part of a kind of fight or flight response. It also partly because of blood. If you see yourself bleeding your brain wants to get out of there as quickly as possible. But there is something weird going on as Crimson got all the positive attributes of red. While pure red got more of the negative parts of red. So, its anger and revenge part of the characteristics. And of course, that includes danger. As red is an aggressive colour and people try to stay away from aggressive things as we do not want to endanger ourselves to something harmful. It is the monkey brain that keeps us from danger doing its thing. It is also just because red has such a broad meaning that it is used as a warning sign. Because it is the colour of opposites, love, and danger. (colorpsychology, 2022)

### 2.1.9 Tan

The next colour is Tan. The survey result concluded that Tan is the colour of sand and other natural colours. What I mean by that is that that you can see tan in sand and some wood types. It was also used a lot in the 50th for home decoration. So, you can see the colour as outdated and boring. I can see outdated, as books also colour that kind of colour if you leave them out for years. And psychology agrees with the association with nature. As it symbolises protection and flexibility, but also sorrow and segregation. Fitting for when it was popular… although a bit sad. (gotodesigno, 2022)

### 2.1.10 Brown

Brown is the colour of nature, of wood and dirt. It makes sense as those are seen as very natural colours. And so, people will trust things more when its brown as it can be seen as sturdy and secure. Just like things like wood and some stone variants. It is just part of who we are. If you go out in the wild with nothing at all and you see some brown wood, you will think: “Good at least I can maybe make some shelter and a fire.” You can almost see it as a transcended primal meme that is put there to easily find good materials for our survival.

Psychology says that brown is the colour of strength, nature, loneliness, and warmth. And You can see the direct connection. As nature is one of the answers that the survey gave. And the rests of the Psychology answers also fit the whole nature thing. As you do need strength to survive in nature. And not just physical strength but also mental strength. And as Brown is one of the dark colours it also represents negative emotions. So, Brown pulls double duty. As a provider feelings like loneliness and defeater of loneliness. But the reason why people like this colour now is just its connection to nature and strength. As survival is not really a part of regular life now anymore. (Cherry, verywellmind, 2020)

### 2.1.11 White

White represents nothingness and the cold. Fitting as it is the colour that reflects all light. And so, gives way all its warmth. And so is both everything and nothing at the same time. And so is also the colour of neutrality because it is does not have any identity.

Psychology says that White is mainly used to represent purity/innocence, positive or negative meaning to objects. What I mean by that is that white can be seen as clean, fresh, and simple but also seen as boring, bland, and cold. But White a weird colour as it has a different meaning in the east. As it is a pure death colour there. As it symbolises death and sadness and so is most used in rituals and funerals. (Cherry, verywellmind, 2021)

### 2.1.12 Grey

The greys are the colour of Industry and a kind of melancholy. Fitting how those two words are mixed as the industrial theming is usually seen as cold and, in a way, sad. As it avoids nature and goes full dull colours. It triggers our minds that are used to seeing natural nature colours to think that something is wrong. Its also because the colour is between white and black and so caries the ideas of the two colours with it. Life and Death, the beginning, and the end. It is the colour that is in limbo until its used as a contrast colour. Then it can be shown as positive or negative. As if you use for example green and browns with the greys it can see as something hopeful in some situations. As nature takes back from the abandoned industry. That can be seen as slightly hopeful. As while it’s said that it was abandoned, its hopeful because of the fact that nature and so also life still prevails.

Psychology has a different look at grey as it the colour of neutrality and sadness. While I also talked about that the survey was more focused on “industry” and things linked to sadness. What I mean with “industry” is of course the word industry, but also steel, concrete, tarmac, technological and other words linked to unnatural industry things. But even then, you can see the links as psychology mentions that grey is controlling but neutral just like what I said about how grey changes its meaning when used with certain colours. As grey on itself it is depressing. As its is almost devoid of character because of its neutrality. You can also say it is the boring colour. (empoweredbybolour, 2022)

### 2.1.13 Black

The colour black is represented with the concept of void and darkness. Fitting as the fear of the dark is a primal fear and so any colour associated with it will be seen as an ‘evil’ colour. The main reason why we feel uneasy at night is because we are not adept at looking in the dark and so we do not know what things are in our surroundings. All animals like to be in control of there own situation and the darkness just takes it away for certain animals. Of course, not every animal has that problem. But that is why I said certain animals. Its also has the sadness part because it is a low-energy colour. It does not really take in light. It just keeps a very small bit, and the rest is reflected. And because of the low-energy people can get al feeling of end and despair from it. (sensationalcolor, 2022)

# 3. Summary

If I have to say what the colour is about in one word then I would say that Yellow is warmth, Green is nature, Turquoise is sky, tael is boring, Blue is ocean, Violet is Lavender, Crimson is passion, Red is blood, Tan is sand, Brown is wood, white is nothingness, grey is melancholy and black is void.

In short, all the colours have different meaning given by them by people and there surrounding. Darker colours usually have more negative meaning while lighter colours have positive meanings. Ofcourse there are outliers. As the dark red colour crimson is seen more as the colour of passion while the true red colour is more seen as violence. In that case the roles are reversed. But of course, that is natural as we made those meanings ourselves and people have induvial opinions. I just wanted to see what people thought of certain colours myself. In that aspect this research paper was a success. As I know now what colour to avoid using in my game.

# 4. Definition of words

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| Meaning of the word | |
| Meme | an idea, behaviour, or style that spreads by means of imitation from person to person within a culture and often carries symbolic meaning representing a particular phenomenon or theme. (Wikipedia, 2022)  Not to be confused by an internet meme. |
| melancholy | a feeling of pensive sadness, typically with no obvious cause. |

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