☐ SUGGESTIONS FOR DEVELOPING A "CSS SYSTEM"
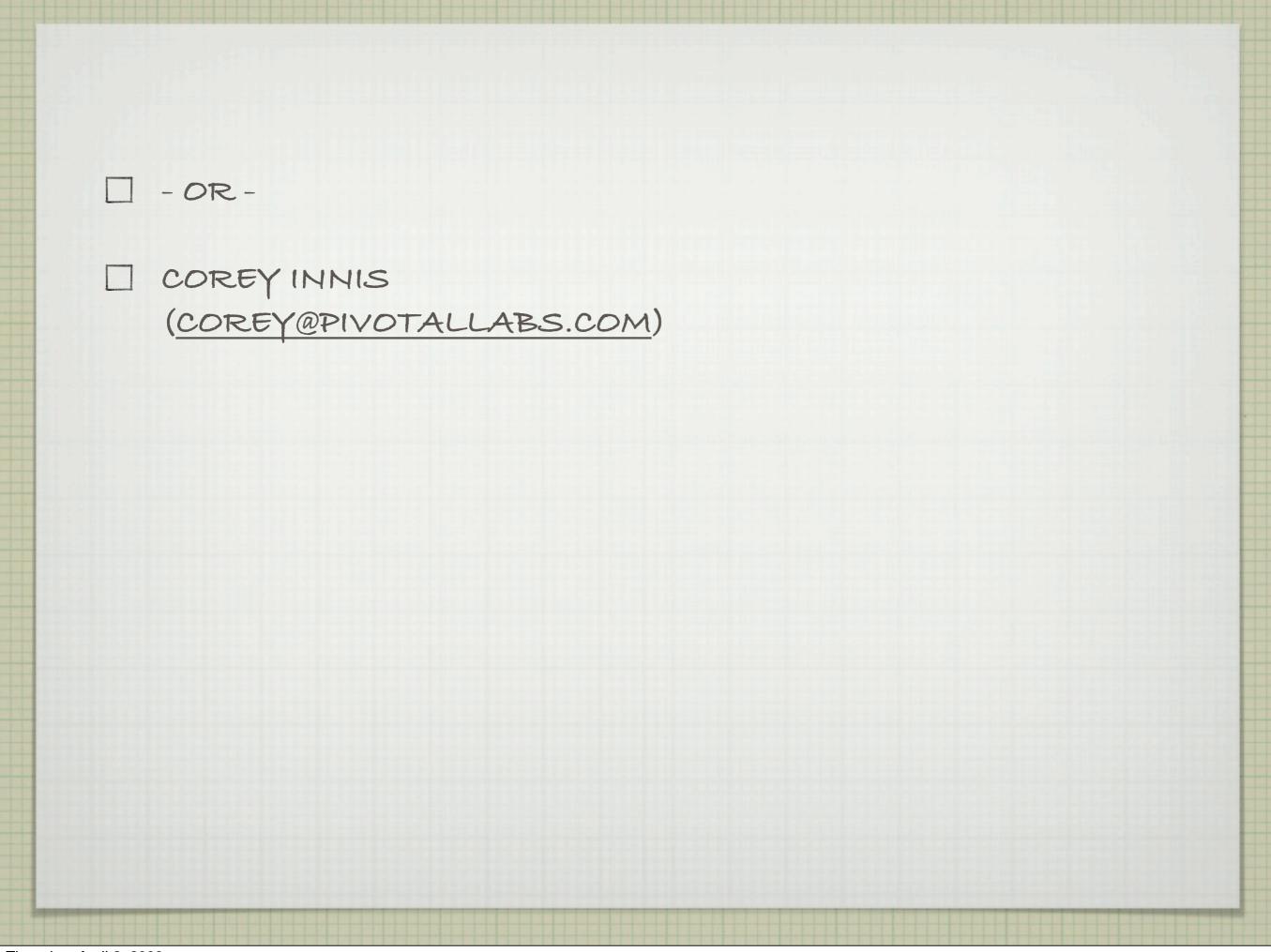
☐ COREY INNIS
   (COREY@PIVOTALLABS.COM)

- ☐ SUGGESTIONS FOR DEVELOPING A "CSS SYSTEM" ...WITH SEMANTIC MEANING
- ☐ COREY INNIS (COREY@PIVOTALLABS.COM)

☐ - OR -

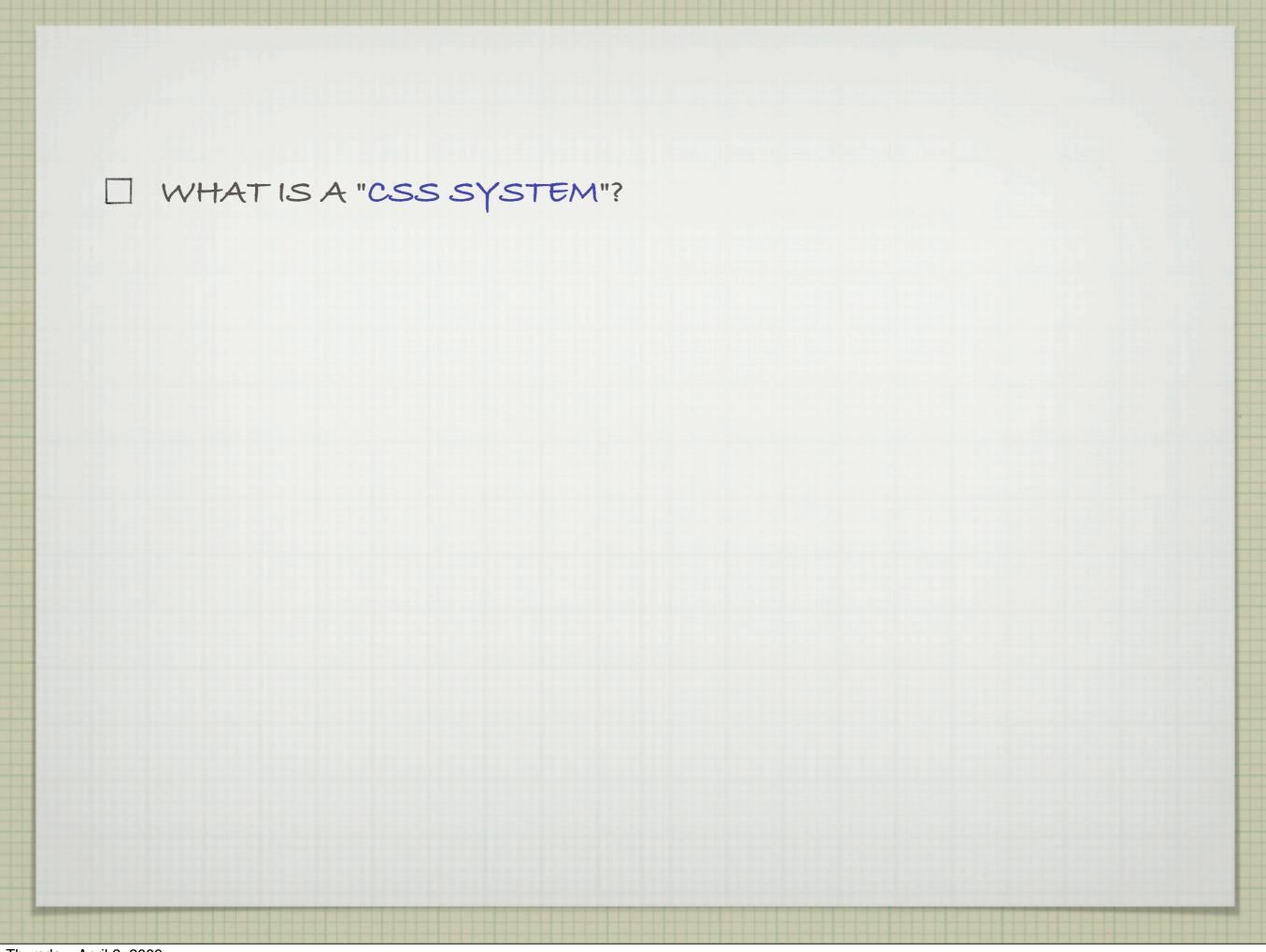☐ COREY INNIS
(COREY@PIVOTALLABS.COM)

- ☐ THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS A "CSS CLASS"
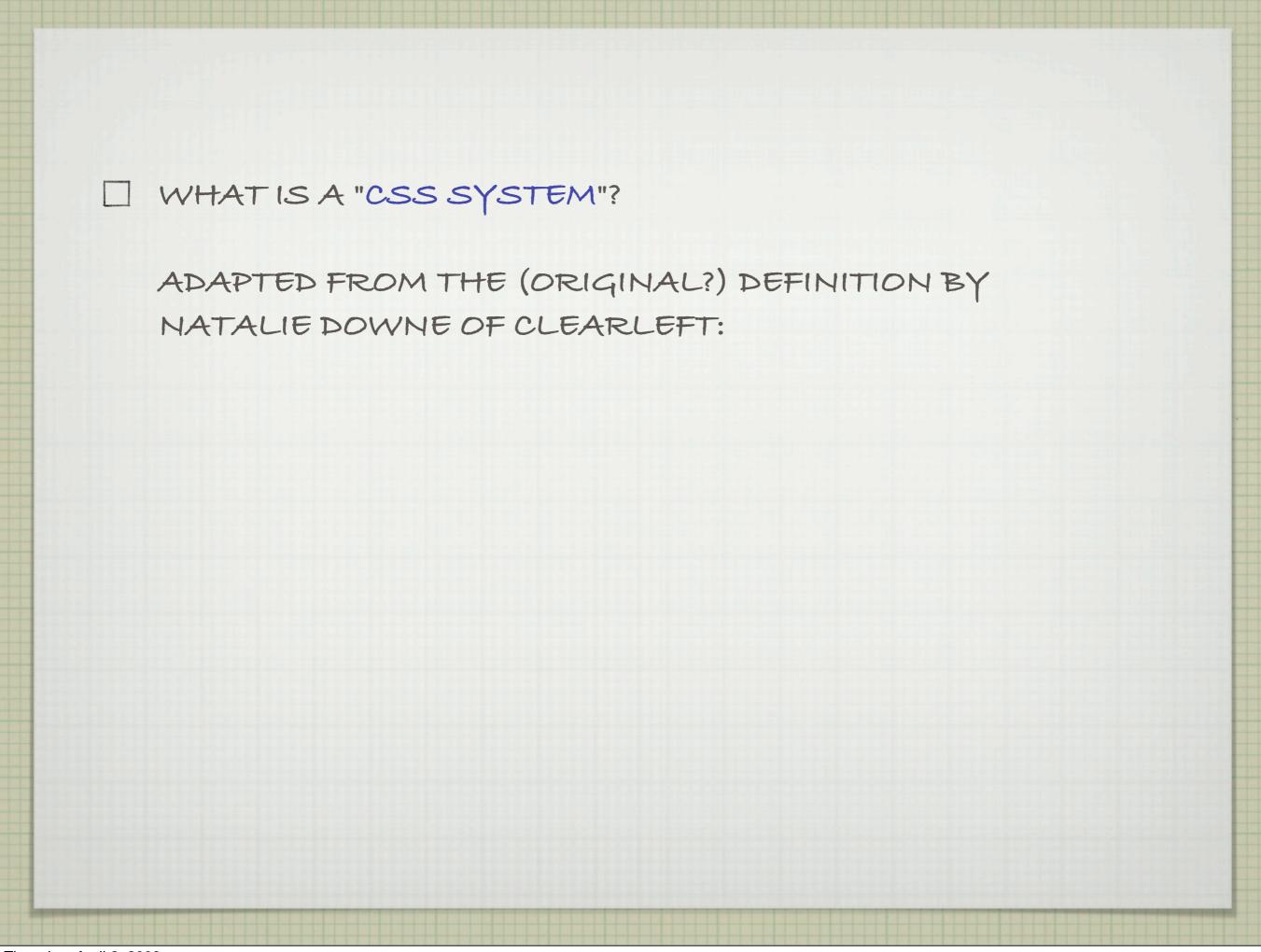- ☐ COREY INNIS (COREY@PIVOTALLABS.COM)

☐ ASSUMPTIONS
  ☐ YOU ARE PROFICIENT WITH HTML AND CSS
  ☐ YOU WANT TO AUTHOR
  * QUALITY
  * COMPREHENSIBLE
  * MAINTAINABLE
  "CODE"

- [ ] THE PROBLEM
  - [ ] MAINTENANCE OF CLIENT-SIDE CODE, ESPECIALLY CSS, CAN BE DIFFICULT
- [ ] WHY
  - [ ] WHILE THERE ARE MANY CSS "FRAMEWORKS" AND "TRICKS" TO BE FOUND, NOT ENOUGH ATTENTION IS SPENT ON DEVELOPING HEALTHY TECHNIQUES AND PATTERNS FOR QUALITY MARKUP & CSS
  - [ ] WITHOUT GUIDELINES & PATTERNS, A "SYSTEM", THERE'S <u>TOO MUCH</u> FREEDOM

☐ (A) SOLUTION

   ☐ DEFINE A "CSS SYSTEM" FOR YOUR PROJECT

☐ WHY

   ☐ EMBRACE LIMITATIONS...

      FIND COMFORT AND EASE THEREIN

☐ WHAT IS A "CSS SYSTEM"?

☐ WHAT IS A "CSS SYSTEM"?

TO START WITH, A "CSS SYSTEM"
IS <u>NOT</u> A CSS FRAMEWORK

(MORE ON THAT SOON)

☐ WHAT IS A "CSS SYSTEM"?

ADAPTED FROM THE (ORIGINAL?) DEFINITION BY
NATALIE DOWNE OF CLEARLEFT:

□ WHAT IS A "CSS SYSTEM"?

ADAPTED FROM THE (ORIGINAL?) DEFINITION BY
NATALIE DOWNE OF CLEARLEFT:

□ (1) A TOP-DOWN APPROACH

☐ WHAT IS A "CSS SYSTEM"?

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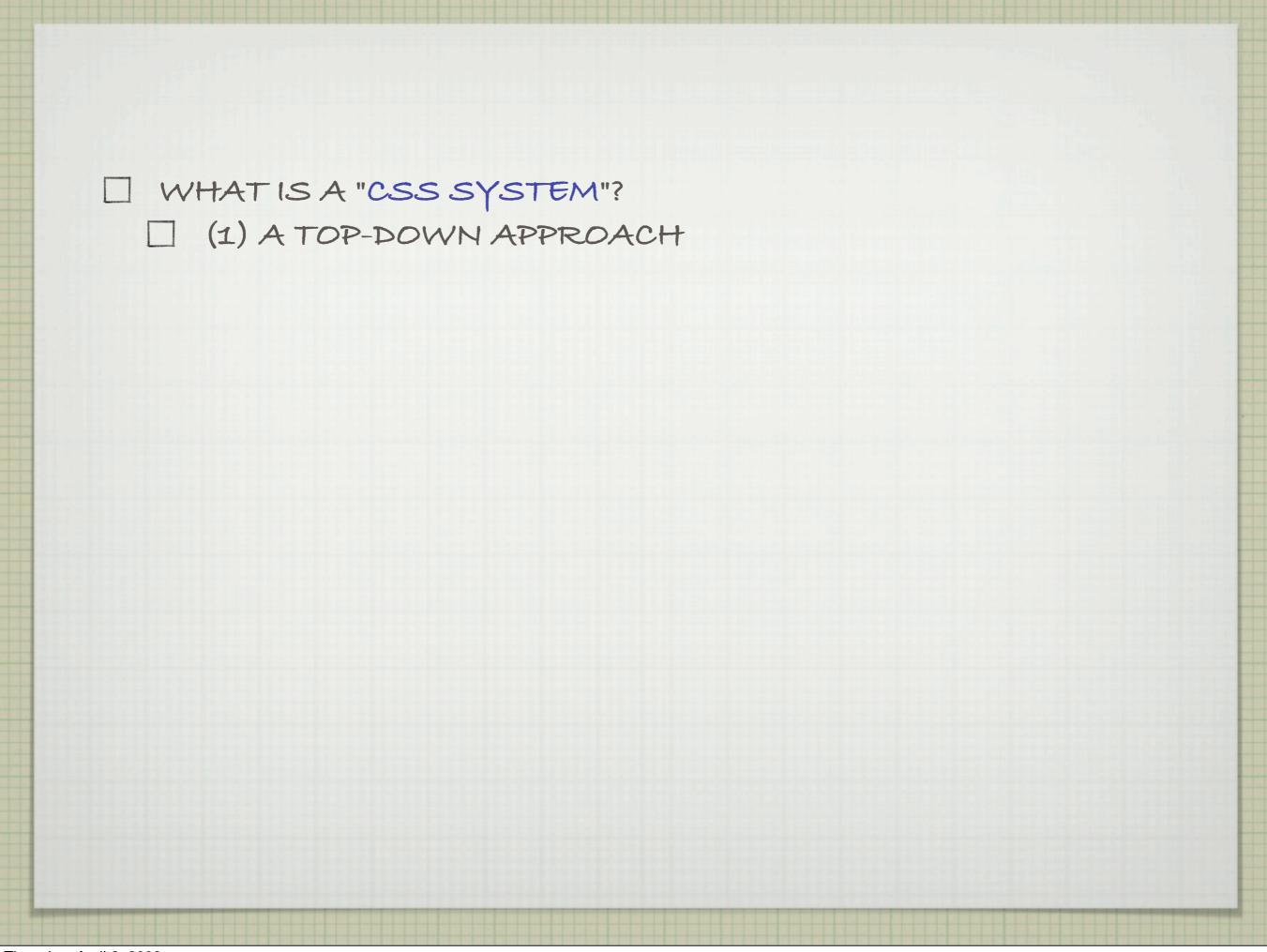
☐ (1) A TOP-DOWN APPROACH
☐ (2) SITE-PERSONALIZED

☐ WHAT IS A "CSS SYSTEM"?

ADAPTED FROM THE (ORIGINAL?) DEFINITION BY
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☐ (1) A TOP-DOWN APPROACH
☐ (2) SITE-PERSONALIZED
☐ (3) A SET OF MARKUP AND CSS PATTERNS

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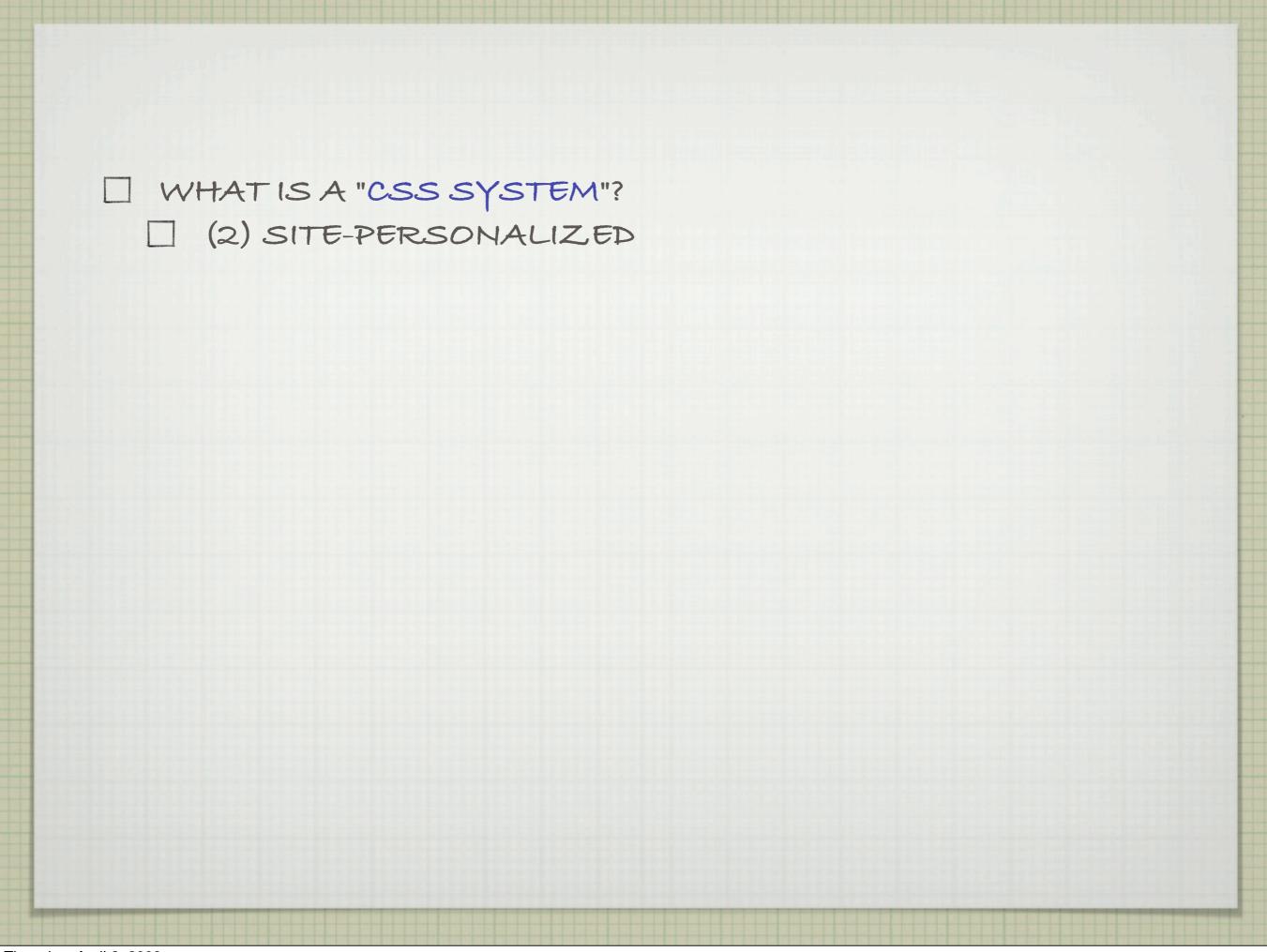☐ (4) ADDRESSES OVERALL STRUCTURE & WIDGETS

☐ WHAT IS A "CSS SYSTEM"?

ADAPTED FROM THE (ORIGINAL?) DEFINITION BY
NATALIE DOWNE OF CLEARLEFT:

☐ (1) A TOP-DOWN APPROACH
☐ (2) SITE-PERSONALIZED
☐ (3) A SET OF MARKUP AND CSS PATTERNS
☐ (4) ADDRESSES OVERALL STRUCTURE & WIDGETS
☐ (5) A SHARED VOCABULARY FOR SITE DEVELOPERS

☐ WHAT IS A "CSS SYSTEM"?
  ☐ (1) A TOP-DOWN APPROACH

☐ WHAT IS A "CSS SYSTEM"?
   ☐ (1) A TOP-DOWN APPROACH

     TAKE A HOLISTIC LOOK AT YOUR SITE.

     UNDERSTAND WHAT IT IS YOU ARE BUILDING

     ☐ WHAT IS ITS STRUCTURE
     ☐ WHAT IS CONTENT
     ☐ WHAT IS PRESENTATION/DECORATION
     ☐ WHAT LOGICAL CONCEPTS REPEAT

☐ WHAT IS A "CSS SYSTEM"?
  ☐ (2) SITE-PERSONALIZED

☐ WHAT IS A "CSS SYSTEM"?
  ☐ (2) SITE-PERSONALIZED

  I RECOMMEND AGAINST CSS FRAMEWORKS.

  THERE ARE A NUMBER OF THEM AVAILABLE;
  MANY ARE QUITE GOOD, FOR THEIR PURPOSE.

☐ WHAT IS A "CSS SYSTEM"?
  ☐ (2) SITE-PERSONALIZED

   I RECOMMEND AGAINST CSS FRAMEWORKS.
   ADOPTING A FRAMEWORK MEANS:
   ☐ BY DEFINITION, YOU ARE USING CODE WRITTEN TO
     BE MORE GENERALLY APPLICABLE THAN YOU NEED
   ☐ YOU <u>WILL</u> BE REQUIRED TO USE MARKUP TO MEET
     THE NEEDS OF THE TOOL, WHICH ALWAYS MEANS:
     * INTRODUCING NON-SEMANTICALLY RELEVANT
     MARKUP AND CLASSES
     * OBSCURING FROM WHAT IS ACTUALLY GOING ON
     IN YOUR SITE

☐ WHAT IS A "CSS SYSTEM"?
  ☐ (2) SITE-PERSONALIZED

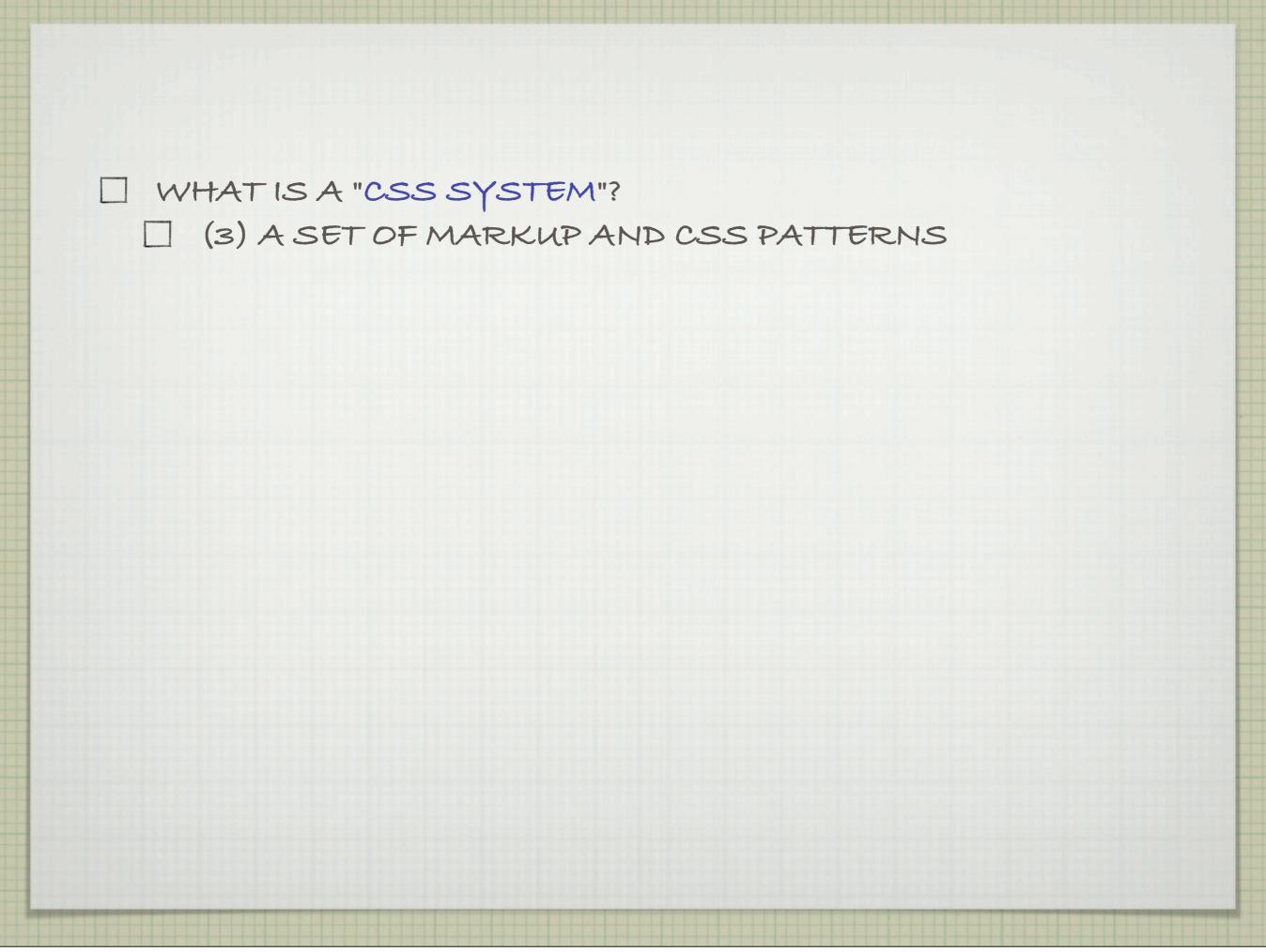   I RECOMMEND AGAINST CSS FRAMEWORKS...
    IN PRODUCTION.

    USING A FRAMEWORK TO GET UP AND RUNNING IN
    DEVELOPMENT CAN BE GREAT. IF YOU FIND
    SOMETHING THAT ASSISTS WITH THE INITIAL
    IMPLEMENTATION AND HELPS TO ACHIEVE EARLY
    RESULTS AND EARLY FEEDBACK,

    ABSOLUTELY USE IT.

☐ WHAT IS A "CSS SYSTEM"?

☐ (2) SITE-PERSONALIZED

ONCE YOU'VE GOT YOUR INITIAL FEEDBACK AND SEEM TO BE HEADING THE RIGHT DIRECTION, RE-IMPLEMENT. USE THE FRAMEWORK AS A REFERENCE, BUT REWRITE TO MEET YOUR OWN NEEDS AND DROP THE THINGS YOU DON'T USE.

YOU'LL END UP WITH LESS CODE, NO EXTERNALLY-IMPOSED RESTRICTIONS, FREEDOM TO MODIFY ANYWAY YOU LIKE WITHOUT MERGE ISSUES, AND A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT'S GOING ON.

☐ WHAT IS A "CSS SYSTEM"?

   ☐ (3) A SET OF MARKUP AND CSS PATTERNS

☐ WHAT IS A "CSS SYSTEM"?

    ☐ (3) A SET OF MARKUP AND CSS PATTERNS

      THERE IS SO MUCH FREEDOM WHEN AUTHORING HTML & CSS... A BLESSING; A CURSE.

      MANY SITES END UP WITH INCONSISTENT MECHANISMS FOR MARKING-UP SIMILAR CONCEPTS AND AN IMMENSE VOCABULARY OF CLASS NAMES.

      THE COGNITIVE OVERHEAD IS HIGH.

☐ WHAT IS A "CSS SYSTEM"?
    ☐ (3) A SET OF MARKUP AND CSS PATTERNS

    IF YOU RELY ON OVERLY-DETAILED &
    PRESENTATION-SPECIFIC CLASS NAMES, YOU'LL:
        ☐ END UP WITH WAY TOO MANY TO TRACK WITHOUT
        CROSS-REFERENCING THE HTML, CSS, AND
        CONTENT EVERY TIME YOU NEED TO FIGURE OUT
        WHAT'S GOING ON.
        ☐ OFTEN RESORT TO OBSCURE CLASS NAMING
        RESULTING IN...

☐ WHAT IS A "CSS SYSTEM"?

☐ (3) A SET OF MARKUP AND CSS PATTERNS

```
<DIV CLASS='SPECIAL_WIDGET01_WRAPPER'>
 <DIV CLASS='SPECIAL_WIDGET01_CONTENT_TOP'>
  <UL CLASS='SPECIAL_WIDGET01_TOP_LIST'>
   <LI CLASS='SPECIAL_WIDGET01_TOP_ITEM_FIRST' />
   <LI CLASS='SPECIAL_WIDGET01_TOP_ITEM' />
   <LI CLASS='SPECIAL_WIDGET01_TOP_ITEM_LAST' />
  </UL>
 </DIV>
 <DIV CLASS='SPECIAL_WIDGET01_CONTENT_BOTTOM'>
  <UL CLASS='SPECIAL_WIDGET01_BOTTOM_LIST'>
   <LI CLASS='SPECIAL_WIDGET01_BOTTOM_LIST_ITEM' />
  </UL>
 </DIV>
</DIV>

LI.SPECIAL_WIDGET01_TOP_ITEM_FIRST { COLOR: ORANGE; }
```
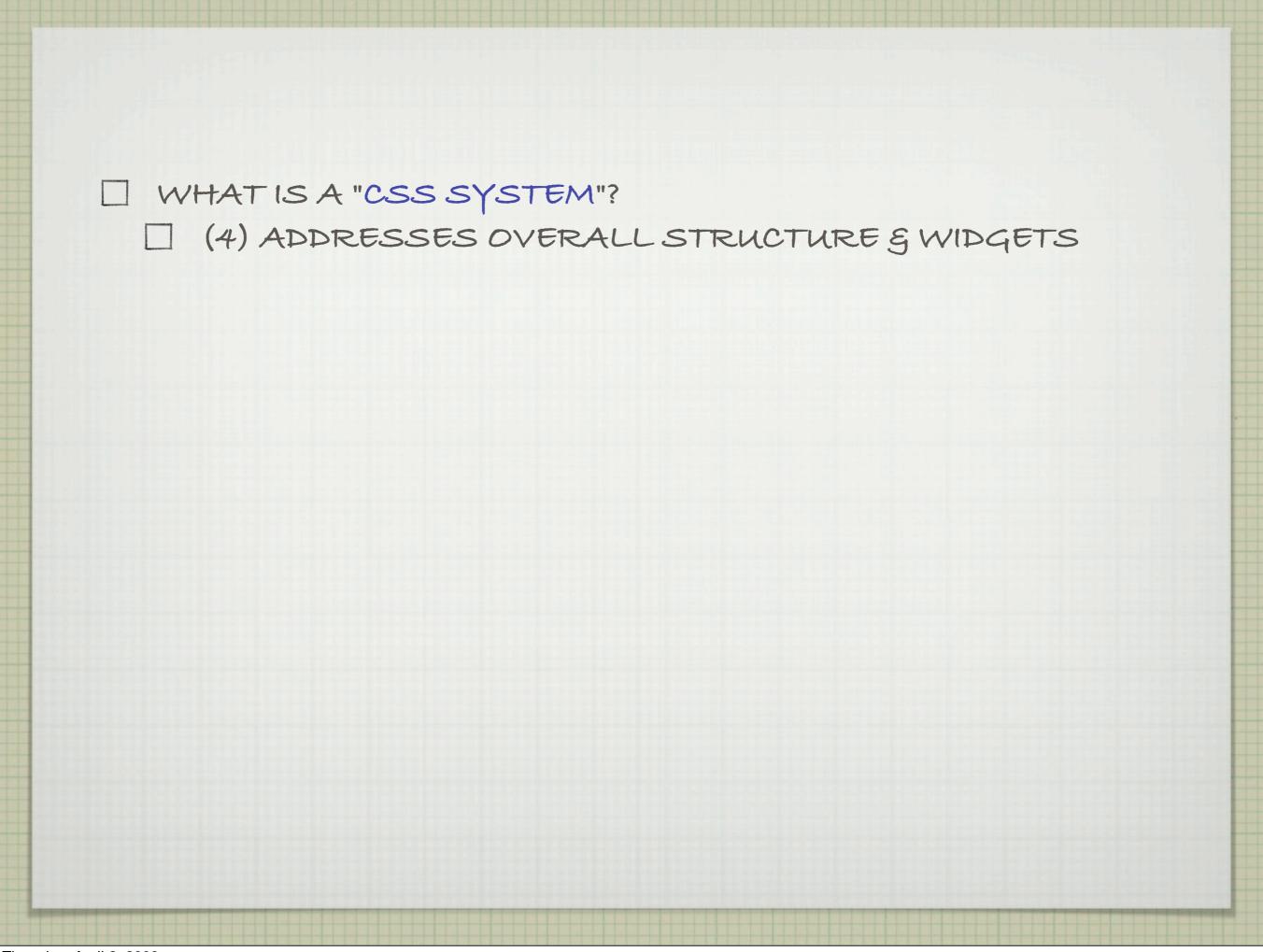
☐ WHAT IS A "CSS SYSTEM"?

   ☐ (3) A SET OF MARKUP AND CSS PATTERNS

     WHEREAS, ADOPTING A "CSS SYSTEM", AND USING THE POWER OF CSS, YOU GET...

☐ WHAT IS A "CSS SYSTEM"?

☐ (3) A SET OF MARKUP AND CSS PATTERNS

```
<DIV CLASS='NAV'>
 <DIV CLASS='SECTION'>
  <UL>
   <LI/>
   <LI/>
   <LI/>
  </UL>
 </DIV>
 <DIV CLASS='SECTION'>
   <UL>
    <LI/>
   </UL>
  </DIV>
 </DIV>

DIV.NAV > DIV.SECTION:FIRST-CHILD > UL> LI:FIRST-CHILD { COLOR: ORANGE; }
```
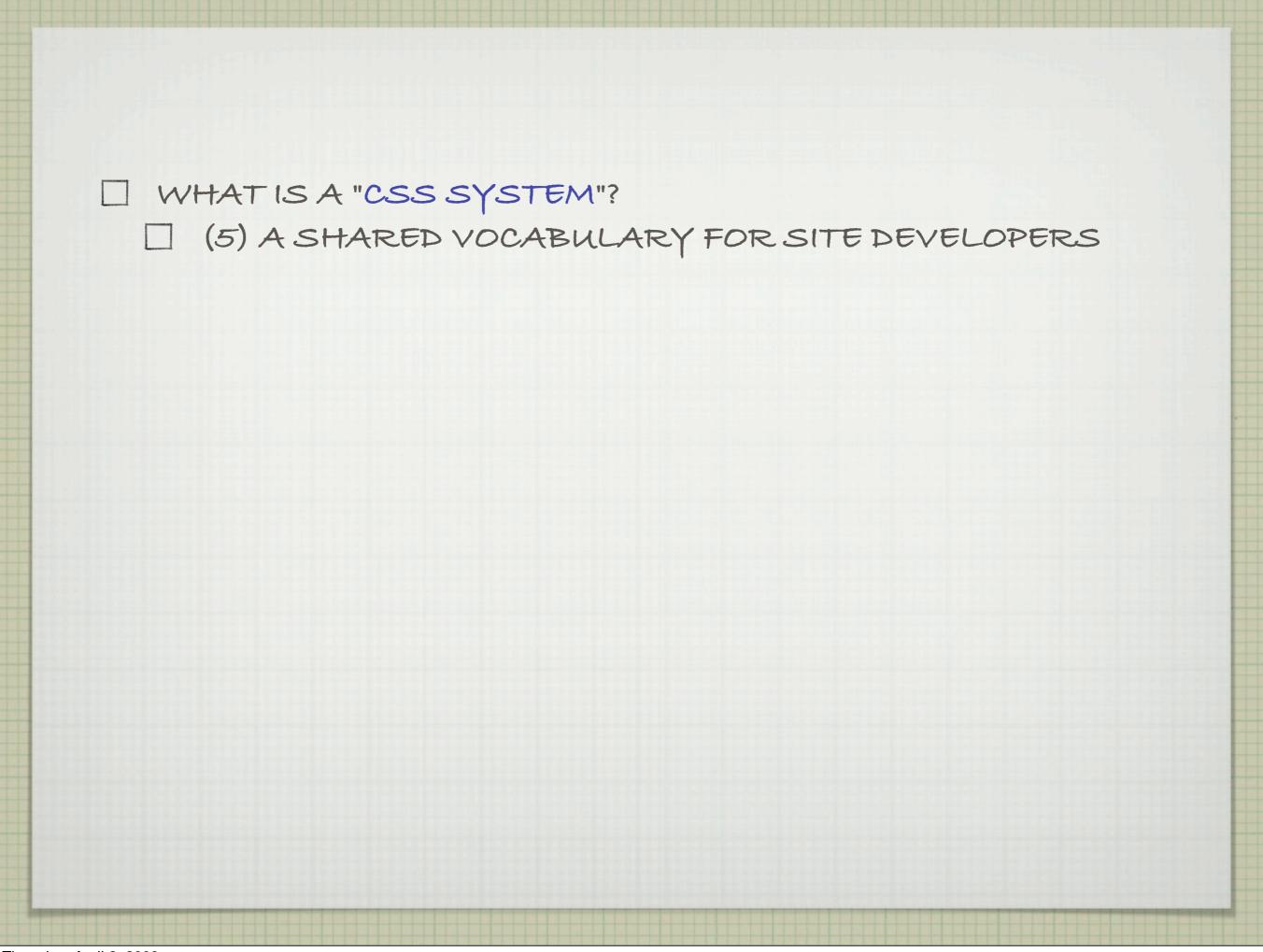
☐ WHAT IS A "CSS SYSTEM"?

☐ (4) ADDRESSES OVERALL STRUCTURE & WIDGETS

☐ WHAT IS A "CSS SYSTEM"?

   ☐ (4) ADDRESSES OVERALL STRUCTURE & WIDGETS

   WHEN COMING TO UNDERSTAND YOUR SITE BETTER,
   BE SURE TO TAKE A LOOK AT THINGS AT THE PAGE
   LEVEL AS WELL AS AT THE COMPONENT LEVEL.

   MANY CONCEPTS ARE RE-USABLE WHEN NARROWING
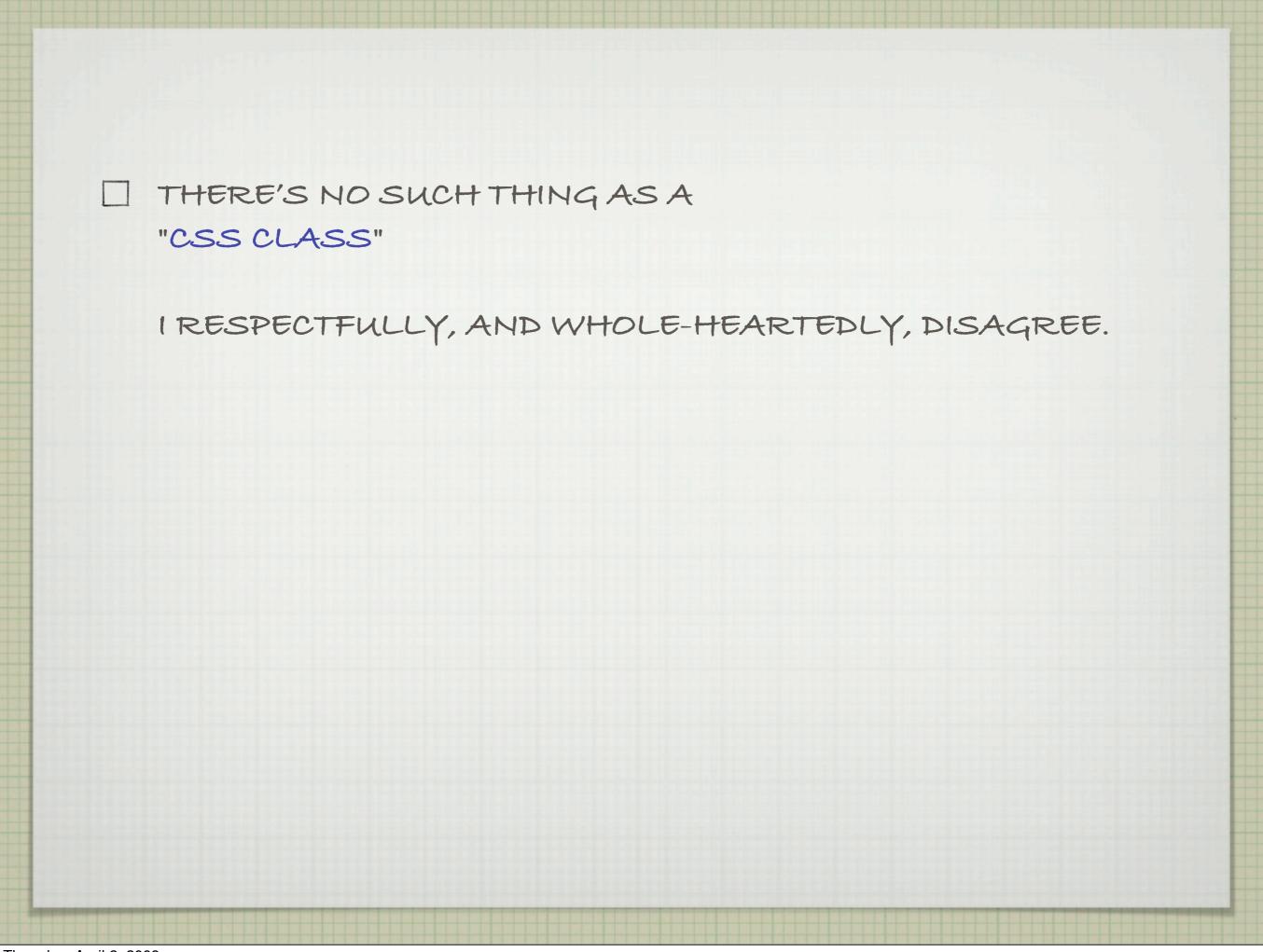   YOUR FOCUS TO THE APPROPRIATE CONTEXT.

☐ WHAT IS A "CSS SYSTEM"?
    ☐ (5) A SHARED VOCABULARY FOR SITE DEVELOPERS

☐ WHAT IS A "CSS SYSTEM"?

    ☐ (5) A SHARED VOCABULARY FOR SITE DEVELOPERS

    IT'S EASY TO WRAP YOUR HEAD AROUND STUFF LIKE:
    'HEADER'
    'FOOTER'
    'ARTICLE'
    'SECTION'
    'ASIDE'
    'NAVIGATION'
    'BRANDING'
    'AUTHENTICATION'
    ETC.

    ☐ IDEAS
      ☐ HTTP://ALISTAPART.COM/ARTICLES/SEMANTICSINHTML5
      ☐ HTTP://WWW.W3.ORG/1999/XHTML/VOCAB/
      ☐ HTTP://WWW.W3.ORG/TR/XHTML-ROLE/

☐ THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS A
"CSS CLASS"

"CLASS AND ID NAMES ADD NO SEMANTIC INFORMATION TO A WEBSITE, NOR DOES THE
ACTUAL CONTENT ITSELF BECOME LESS SEMANTIC WHEN THE SOURCE CODE IS
ENRICHED BY CSS FRAMEWORKS CLASS NAMES. CLASS AND ID NAMES ARE INTENDED
PURELY TO MATCH CSS SELECTORS TO HTML ELEMENTS: NOTHING MORE."

- DIRK JESSE (AUTHOR OF THE "YAML" FRAMEWORK)

☐ THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS A
"CSS CLASS"

I RESPECTFULLY, AND WHOLE-HEARTEDLY, DISAGREE.

☐ THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS A
"CSS CLASS"

I RESPECTFULLY, AND WHOLE-HEARTEDLY, DISAGREE.

CLASS NAMES AND IDS ARE <u>NOT</u> CSS "HOOKS".
THEY ARE MECHANISMS FOR CLASSIFICATION AND
IDENTIFICATION, RESPECTIVELY.

THOSE THAT DO NOT ENRICH THE MARKUP DO DECREASE
THE SEMANTIC INTEGRITY BY WAY OF POLLUTION.

CLASSIFY APPROPRIATELY... ADD STYLE

☐ SUGGESTIONS FOR CLASS NAMES
WITH SEMANTIC MEANING:

'HEADER'
'FOOTER'
'ARTICLE'
'SECTION'
'ASIDE'
'NAVIGATION'
'BRANDING'
'AUTHENTICATION'

...

☐   HTTP://ALISTAPART.COM/ARTICLES/SEMANTICSINHTML5
☐   HTTP://WWW.W3.ORG/1999/XHTML/VOCAB/
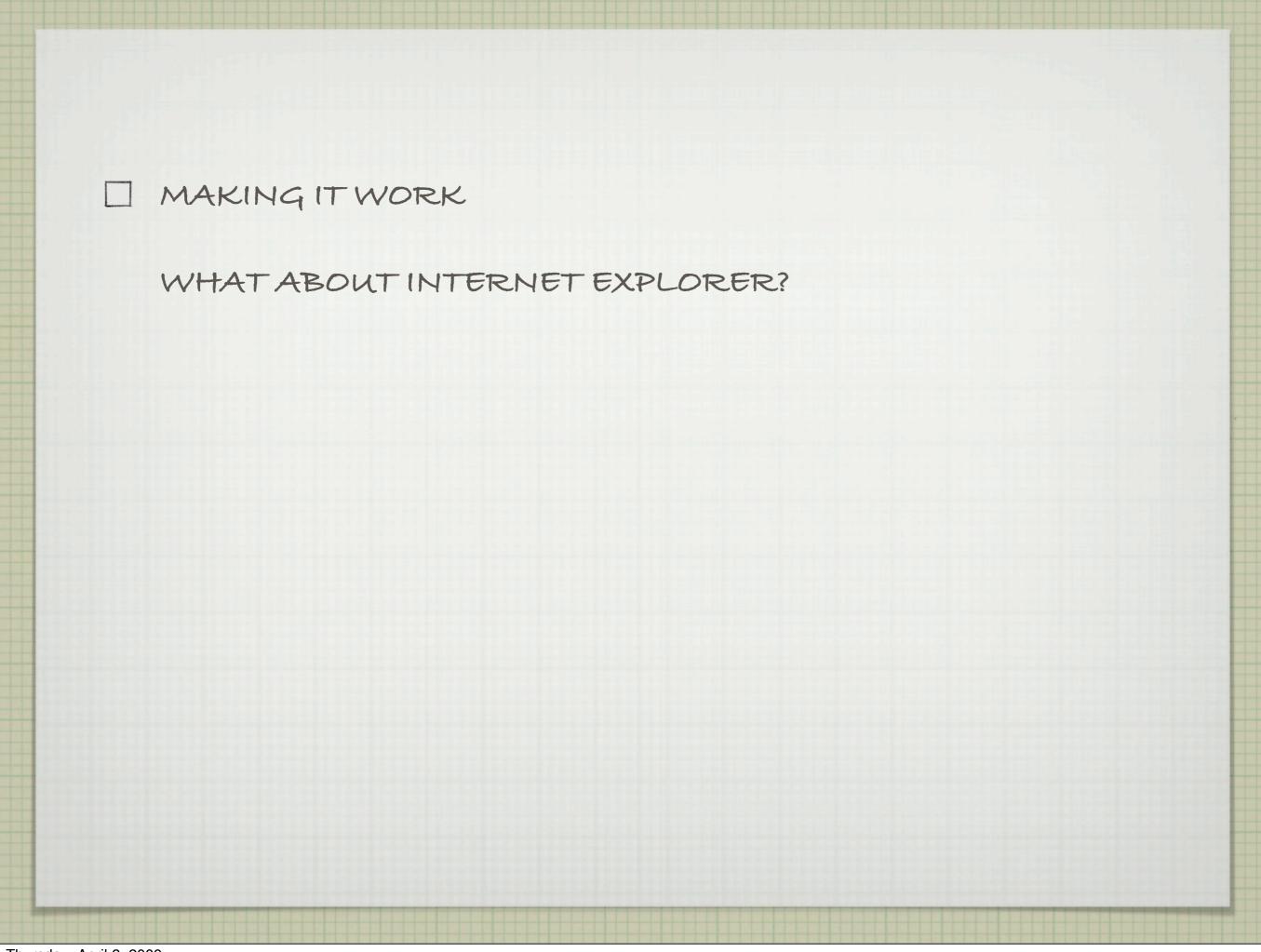☐   HTTP://WWW.W3.ORG/TR/XHTML-ROLE/

☐ MAKING IT WORK

USING CURRENT CAPABILITIES OF CSS, IT'S NOT HARD
TO SHARE CLASS NAMES ACROSS SHARED CONCEPTS,
WHILE APPLYING INDIVIDUAL STYLES:

```html
<DIV CLASS='HEADER'>
  <UL CLASS='NAVIGATION' />
</DIV>


<DIV CLASS='ARTICLE'>
  <UL CLASS='NAVIGATION' />
</DIV>
```

```css
DIV.HEADER > UL.NAVIGATION { COLOR: ORANGE; }
DIV.ARTICLE > UL.NAVIGATION { COLOR: BLACK; }
```

☐ MAKING IT WORK

WHAT ABOUT INTERNET EXPLORER?

☐ MAKING IT WORK

WHAT ABOUT INTERNET EXPLORER?

MUCH OF THE CSS CAPABILITIES YOU'D NEED ARE IN
IE 7 AND UP.

IE 6?

IF POSSIBLE, MOVE AWAY FROM SUPPORTING IT.

* USAGE IS DROPPING (APPROACHING 15% CURRENTLY)

OTHERWISE, USE IE7.JS:

HTTP://CODE.GOOGLE.COM/P/IE7-JS/

☐ SUGGESTIONS FOR DEVELOPING A "CSS SYSTEM"

☐ COMMENTS?
☐ QUESTIONS?