

SEMIOTICS PROJECT  
MUDIT CHAND NARAYAN

# Cigarette Branding

REFERENCES: PACKAGING AS A WEAPON OF INFLUENCE

ICONS FOR HEALTH EFFECTS OF CIGARETTE SMOKE: A TEST OF SEMIOTIC TYPE

SEMIOTICS ANALYSIS OF MORAL MESSAGE IN CIGARETTE PACKS

DESIGNING CIGARETTES FOR WOMEN: NEW FINDINGS FROM THE TOBACCO INDUSTRY DOCUMENTS



# But Why Cigarettes?

In 1970s, American cigarette brand Camel decided to introduce an anthropomorphic Camel called **Joe as their mascot**. I wonder If anyone would like to make a guess what followed?

- A 1991 study found out that Joe Camel ad campaign was appealing to children.
- They found that Joe Camel and the Disney Channel logo were recognized equally among six-year-olds.
- Camel's share of smokers under 18 had ***risen from 0.5% to 32.8%*** during the campaign's three years at that point.
- A lawyer alleged that Camel sales to teenagers increased from ***\$6 million to \$476 million over the four years*** since the campaign began.
- Resulted in ***one of the biggest lawsuits*** in American History.



*The Joe Camel ad campaign*



# But Why Cigarettes?

Reference: Designing Cigarettes for Women

## What the advertisers saw

- A 1976 British-American Tobacco Company review of gender differences concluded that women were more motivated to smoke, smoked more for ***insecurity reasons and exhibited more neurotic traits.***
- a 1973 Lorillard study cited national survey data (n =37,000 households) to suggest that women, ***particularly working women, smoked to reduce tension more than their male counterparts***

## What the advertisers did

- Introduction of 'light' (low-tar), ***slimmer and longer-style cigarettes.***
- Approaching smoking with appealing attributes including ***female liberation, glamour, success and thinness.***
- ***RJ Reynolds created a sleek pink and black cigarette package that was linked with a substantial increase in adolescent female smoking***



60s advertisements directed towards women



# And what is my point?

*thinness*

*clubs*

*tuxedo*

*colours*

SIGNS

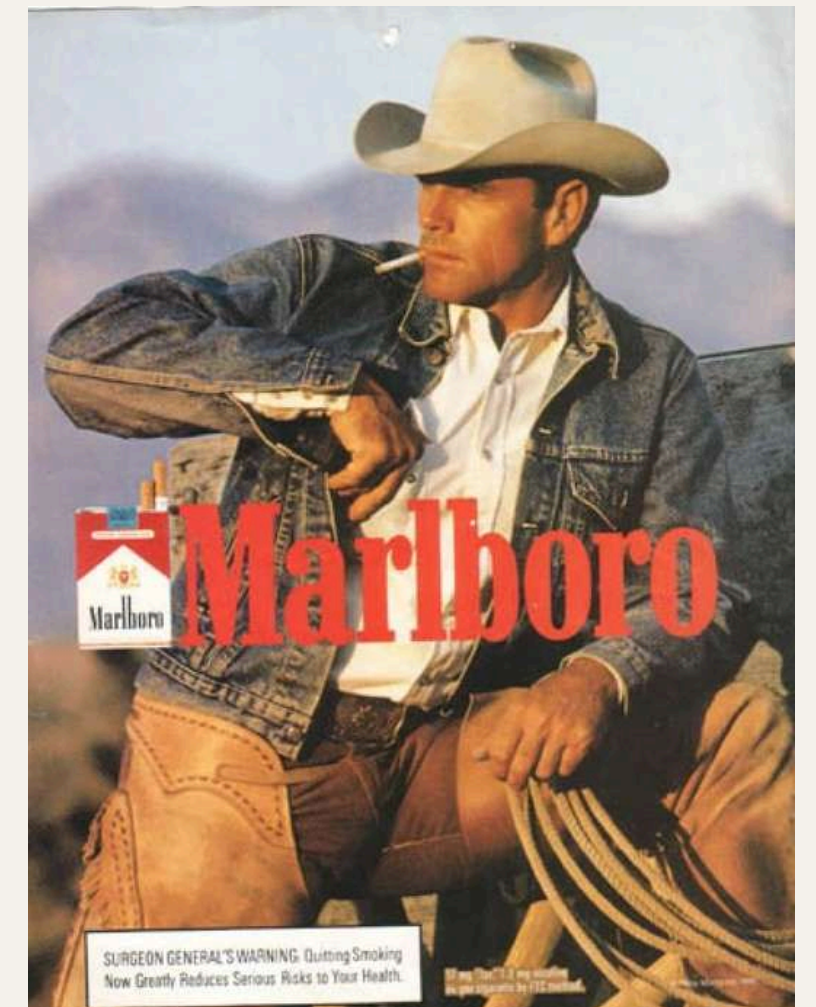
*flavour*

*cartoon character*

*confident models*



# Brand Identity and Personality



*Marlboro Man (1954 - 1999) RIP*



# The Questionnaire

- How old are you?
- What brand are you smoking?
- Why this brand?
- So, how do you see yourself financially?
- When was the first time you started to smoke?
- Any favourite brand you have?
- Do you like the brand you smoke or you prefer it for price?
- What is something you hate about cigarettes?
- Do you think about packaging of a cigarette?
- If you do, what are your opinions on the packaging?
- Do you think that the distinctions between cigarettes matter?
- What is your opinion on the warning label?
- How large of an effect has media played on your cigarette smoking?

# The Dataset

**8 BRANDS**

The Brands that showed up in the conversations varied between Marlboro, B&H, Dunhill, Davidoff, Wills and Gold Flake.

**AGE RANGE :20-60**

The Brand Variety seemed to be highly dependent on the age group and the societal classes.

**23 PEOPLE, AND SOME RESEARCH PAPERS**

The habitats varied from a bar to the roadside. 6 people considered themselves dedicated smokers, 3 were casual and 2 explicitly expressed a willingness to quit. 1 candidate did not smoke but was added to obtain a non-biased opinion.



# Brand Loyalty

- The chief reason given for Brand Loyalty given when asked was availability and ease.
- People using street vendors tended to prefer the Popular Brands.
- Cigarettes with an acquired taste (too mild or too strong) saw less consumers.
- Very few really cared about the packaging that much.
- Those who did care about packaging, held strong emotions towards it.
- The aesthetic value of the product played a role in the selection.



# Answers About Colour

*"Well like the Reds, the Lights, the Ultralights but the packages have stayed the red, gold and silver and green for menthol so there's no guessing. If you smoke you just know that red means the strong one, yellow is a little low and white is nothing at all."*

- *SH, Lower class construction worker*
- *Signifier: Colour*
- *Signified: Flavour Profile, Class*

*"You've got your typical Marlboro Reds with the red and white, you've got your 100s with the gold and white, you've got your lights with like a light Gray and white, then, when you get into the menthols, you've got the black and green, the green and white, the black and white. To me, it just helps me identify the difference in the flavours or the styles of cigarette."*

- *J, Teacher by profession*
- *Signifier: Colour*
- *Signified: Reliability*



# Answers About Packaging

*"Well I have tried cigarettes just because they introduced a totally new variant with new packaging and if you see something new you wanna try it don't you?"*

- *VSB, 24 year old, college student*
- *Signifier: New Packaging*
- *Signified: Change*

*"When I was in America I bought natural spirit and you just look at the packaging and you feel like this is freshest tobacco i can get. That blue packaging and the logo all seemed very "natural" you know?"*

- *SD, Professor at an esteemed university*
- *Signifier: Colour, Country, Experience*
- *Signified: Poshness, Memory, Rarity*



# Answers About Price

*"I could really care less one way or the other if they change the pack style. I don't smoke because of the pack style. I don't choose my brands because of the pack style. All I care is if i can afford it or whatever."*

- *PJ, middle class student, at a bar*
- *Signifier: Price*
- *Signified: Comfort, Commodity*

*"Might matter to the young ones, never mattered to me. its the same cigarette i have smoked since like forever so i don't really care but if they want to change they can do all they want"*

- *KV, 62, at a tea stall*
- *Signifier: Age*
- *Signified: Nostalgia. Change*



# Answers That were unexpected

*"I've been to Japan twice and I have brought cigarette packs from there every time i went there. Just because how pretty they are. I don't know why they make the packaging like that but you don't feel like you are being judged by the brand that you are smoking."*

- MG, 20, young with rich parents
- Signifier: Beautiful Packaging
- Signified: Rarity, Special

*"I just stopped smoking because it started to feel the same and all, and the whole process is a chore anyway. I rarely go out on the road to buy one anymore, has helped me a lot."*

- AR, Student somewhere
- Signifier: Boredom
- signified: Uniformity, Willingness to quit



# Some Funny Observations

- Dissonance was a very common thing. People often smoke the brands they don't really like.
- A lot of people's first experience with cigarettes was a flavoured one.
- Universal disdain for slim cigarettes was heart-breaking. But I understand and agree.
- Did you know that bakeries don't keep cigarettes?
- People with an appreciation for aesthetic were also always the people who romanticized the experience.
- The role of the "Caution Sticker" was considered a necessary evil. (?)
- The Mukesh Advertisement has it's own effects.



# Final Brand

- The brand name represents a legacy, and entrusts assurance.
- The logo Represents Multiple aspects,
  - The logo is designed to resemble a phoenix.
  - The wings also represent tobacco leaves.
  - The tail of the Phoenix represents smoke, and fading nature of life.
- Three Product Lines, according to flavour profile.
- Named after phases of moon.



Heritage

*Branding Text*



*Logo*

F U L L M O O N

C R E S C E N T

N E W M O O N

*Product Lines*

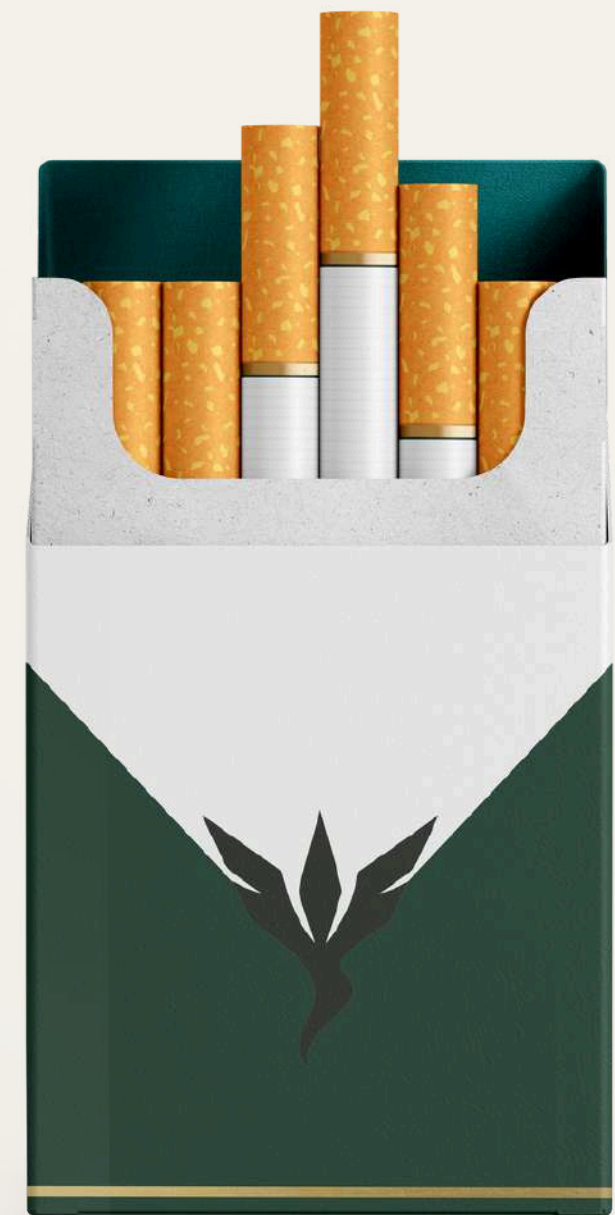


# Final Product Line

*Line : Premium*

*Colour : Phthalo Green (Symbolizing Nature)*

*Decoration : Gold strips (Luxury)*





# Final Product Line

*Line : Strong*

*Colour : Marlboro Red (Symbolizing Strength and Reliability)*

*Decoration : Chevron Stripes (Movement, Speed, Fast Life)*





# Final Product Line

*Line : Lite*

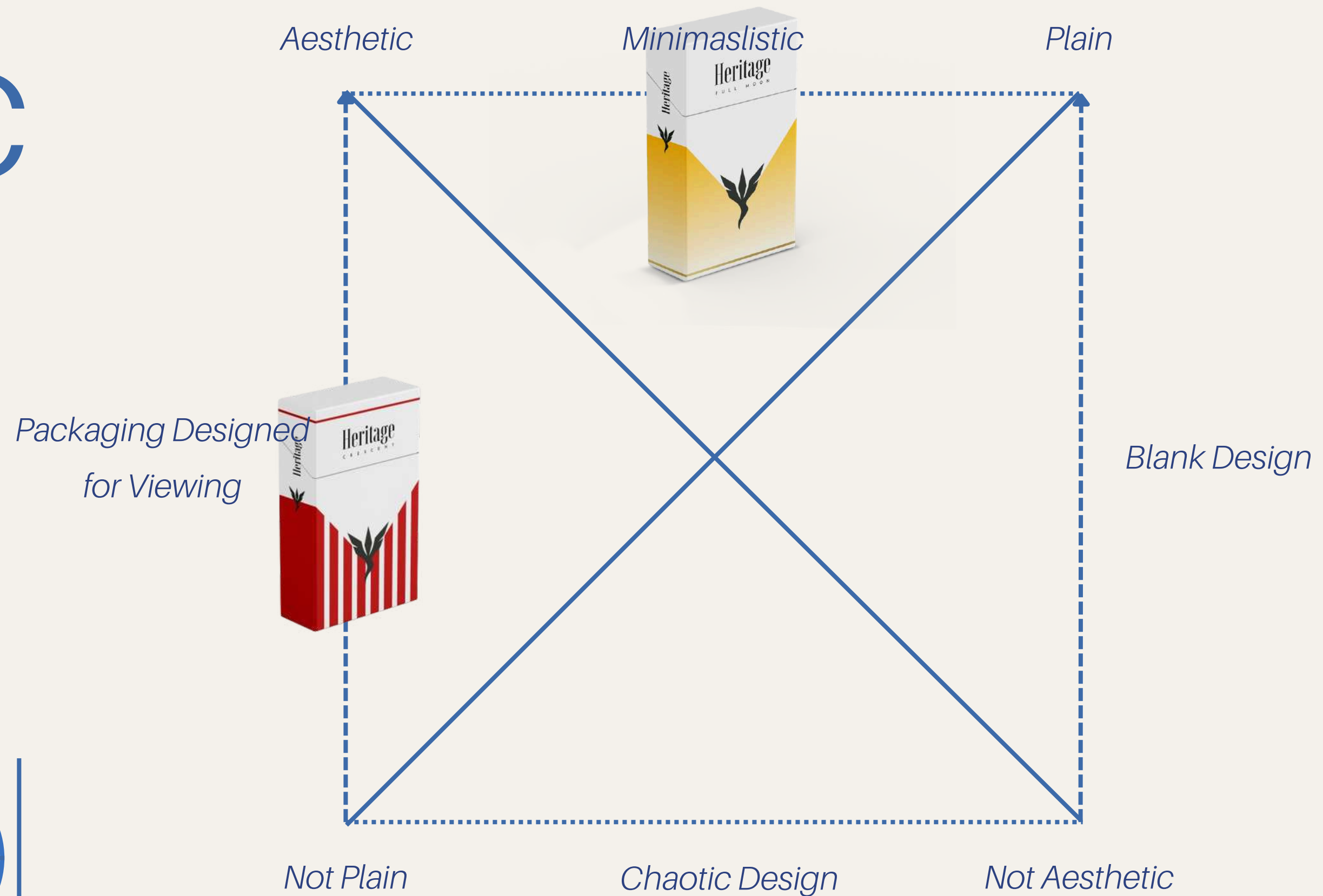
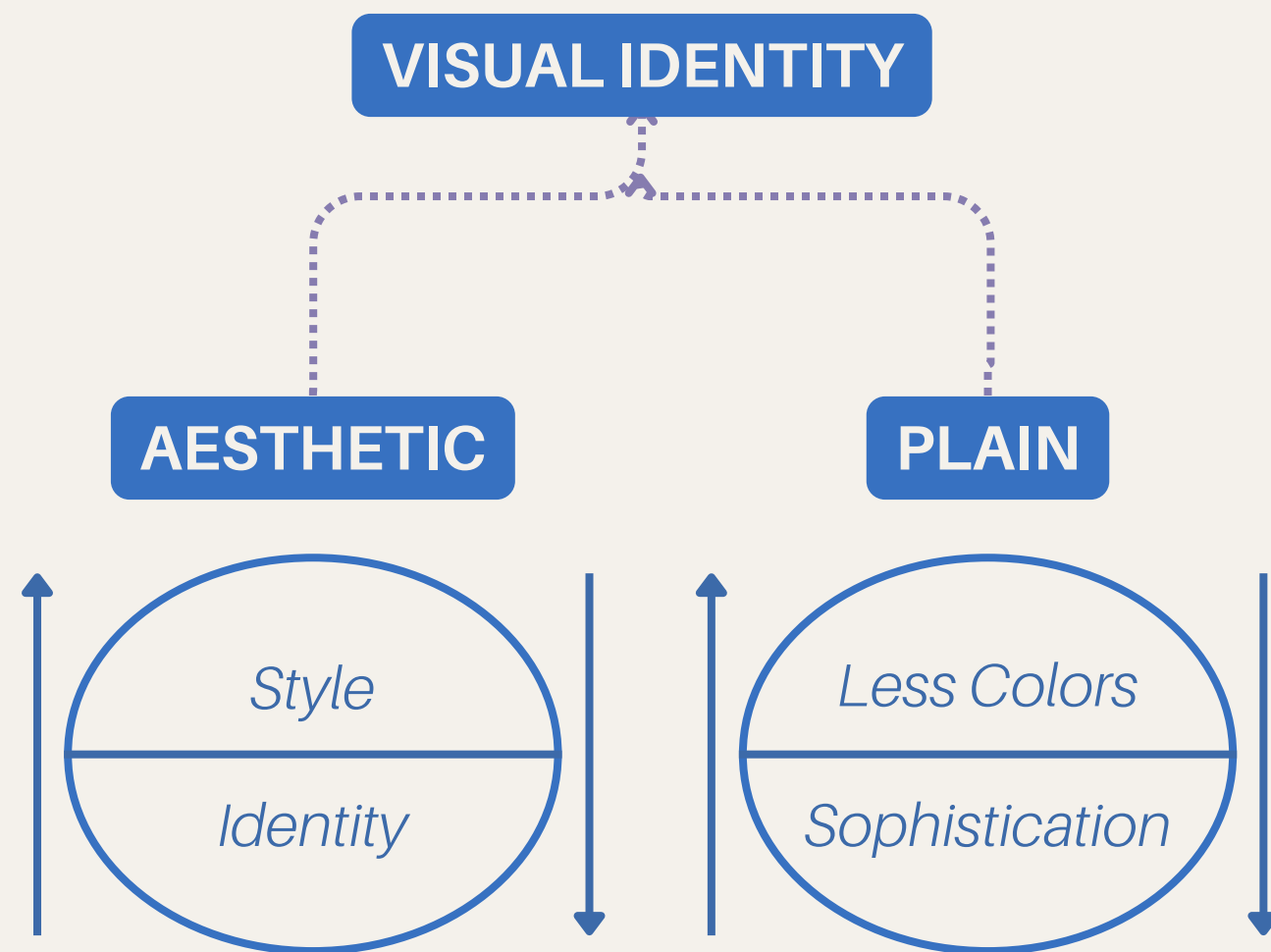
*Colour : Amber Yellow (Symbolizing Optimism, Rest, Relief)*

*Decoration : Gradient (Fading Flavour, Approachable)*



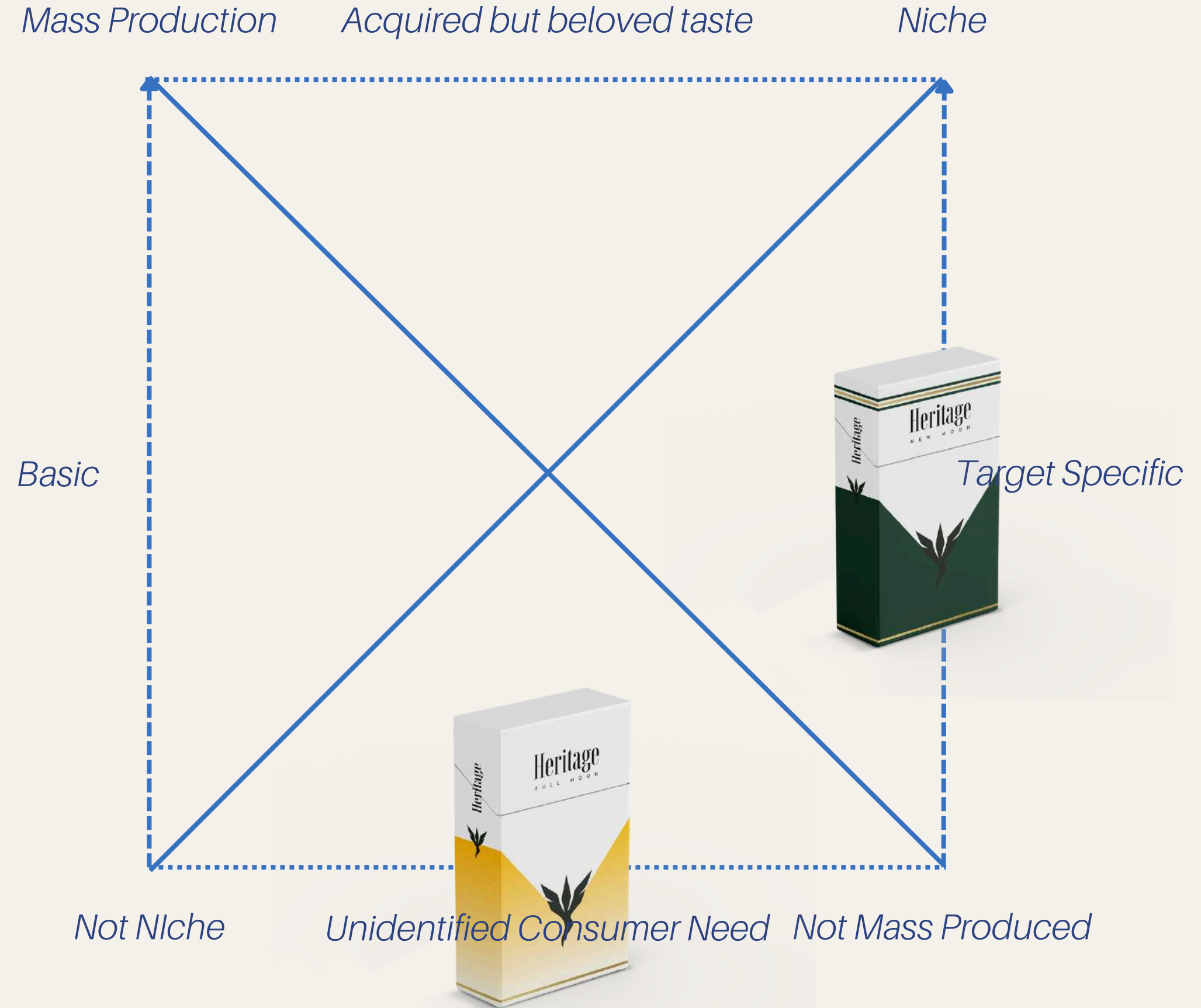
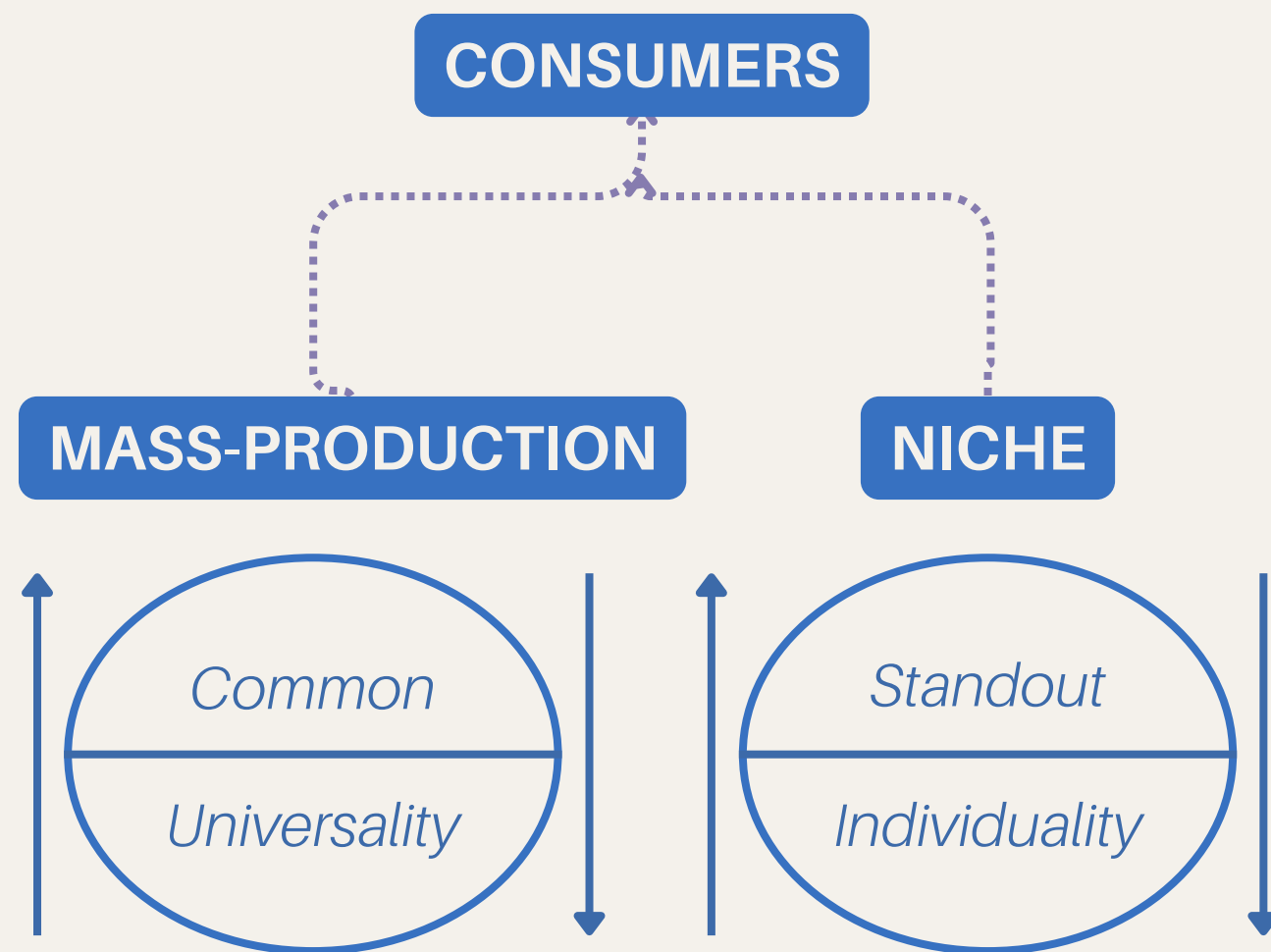


# Semiotic Square





# Semiotic Square







Thank you