

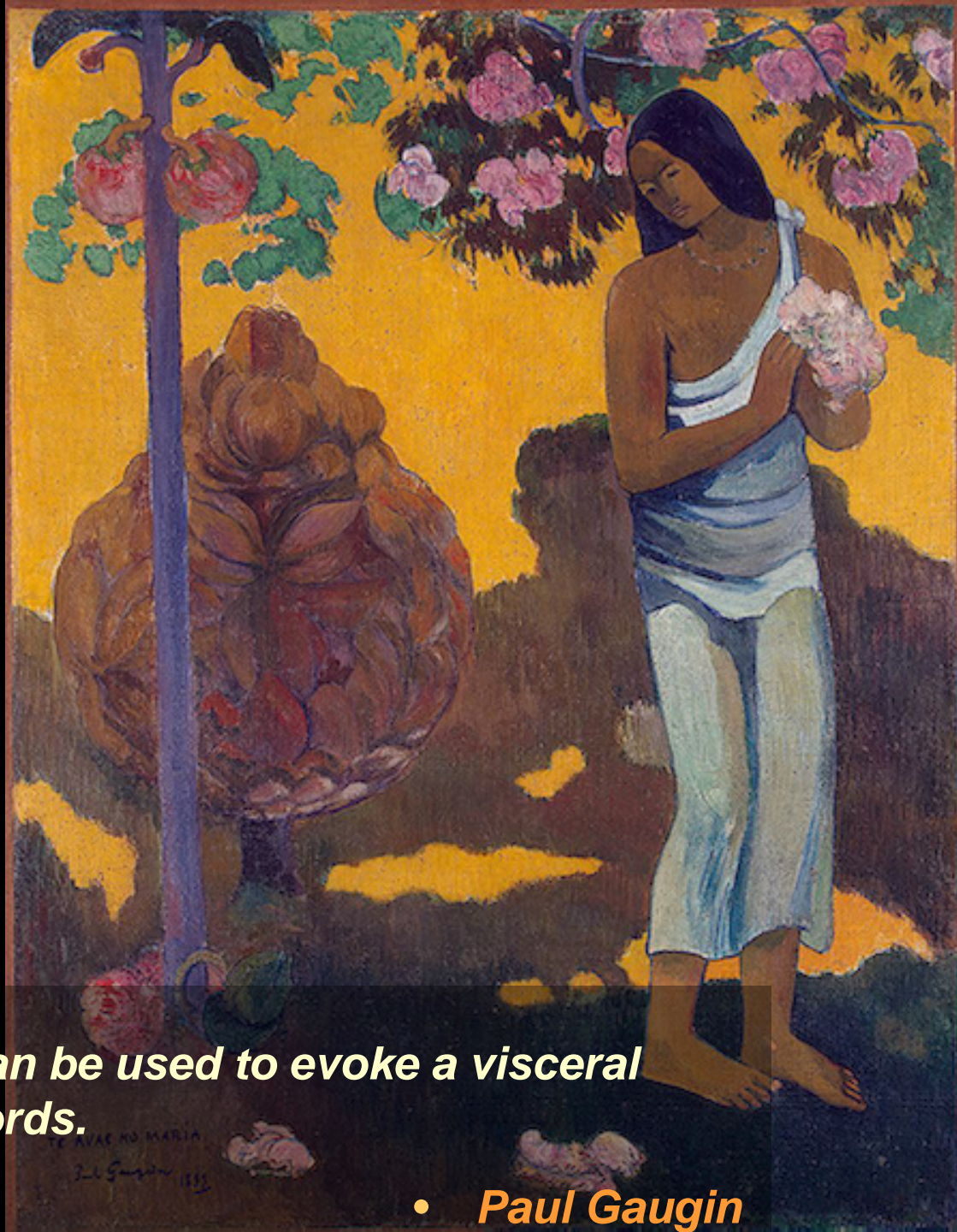
- Ch. 4
Psychological
Effects of Color

*Color
Psychology
Emotion
Personality
Preferences*



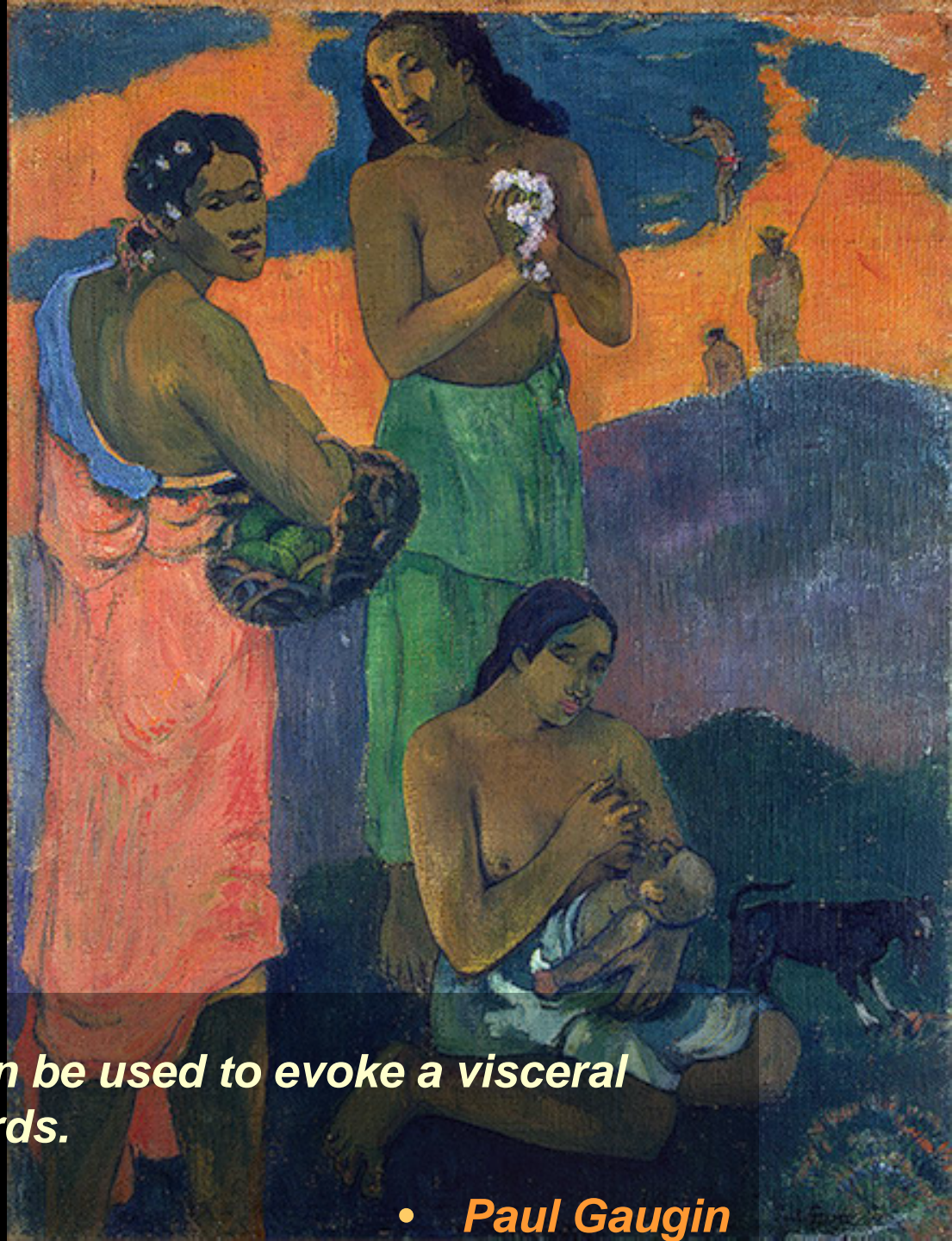
- ***By trial and error, color can be used to evoke a visceral reaction antecedent to words.***

• ***Paul Gauguin***



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Color & Emotions

- ***What do color preferences disclose about a person?***
- ***What emotions or responses can color evoke?***
- ***What colors tend to evoke particular responses?***
- ***Are color associations universal, personal, or cultural?***

Applications of color-emotion knowledge:

- **Graphic Design & Merchandising-**
 - POP response
 - Establish connotations appropriate to client/product/message
- **Color Packaging Quiz**





Applications of color-emotion knowledge:

- ***Interiors -
evoke mood and attitude
appropriate to function of space
-appeal to client preferences***
- ***Counseling/Therapy -
assessing client emotive
state/issues.***
- ***Fine Art —
selected or intuitive use of color
for symbolic associations
...for evoking emotional
response.
...for expressing emotional
connotations.***

- ***Color can express emotion***
- ***Color can evoke emotion***

- ***But what colors are associated with what emotions?***
- ***...and how consistent or reliable are those associations?***

Personal Preferences

- ***Our preferences are often powerful...
...evoking memories and/or visceral
reactions.***
- ***But our preferences are generally
influenced by personal experiences,
and thus hard for others to
anticipate.***

From Hue to Emotion

- *Many designers and colorists claim that particular hues can evoke particular emotions.*
- *While some general statements may be made, specific and consistent connections are not well-established.*
- *Some color associations are cultural, some seem innate/universal.*

Cultural Associations

- Every culture, and every period of history, varies in color associations.
- Each group assigns/evolves meanings over time.

- White wedding dress?
Not in Asia.

Western Cultural Associations?

- **Purple and gold**
- **Red, White and Blue**
- **Green**
- **Red, orange, yellow, and brown**
- **Orange and Black.**
- **Red and Green**
- **Lavender and Yellow**

- **Black and Gold**

Western Culture

- **Purple and gold** are often associated with Royalty, wealth and opulence
- **Red, White and Blue** reminiscent of the American flag, immediately convey notions of patriotism and, to some extent, conservatism.
- **Green** has taken on a very strong connotation as the color representing ecology and concern for the environment, however, it also conveys meanings associated with money — greenback — and the suggestion "to go ahead" which is obviously derived from traffic lights.

American Culture

- Colors represent our holidays and our seasons.
- The Fall foliage colors of **Red, orange, yellow, and brown** are clearly expressive of Thanksgiving.
- Halloween: **Orange and Black**.
- **Red and Green** represent Christmas.
- **Purple and Yellow** and other pastels colors represent Easter.



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Asian Color Symbolism

- “Asian culture” is far too broad and diverse to simplify into a single set of traits, nevertheless the reliance on intense warm hues and, in ceremonial garb, very high chroma in contrasting hues is common.



Asian Color Symbolism

- **Red:** Happiness, marriage, prosperity
- **Pink:** Marriage
- **Yellow:** Against evil, for the dead, geomantic blessings
- **Green:** Eternity, family, harmony, health, peace, posterity
- **Blue:** Self-cultivation, wealth
- **Purple:** Wealth
- **White:** Children, helpful people, marriage, mourning, peace, purity, travel
- **Gold:** Strength, wealth
- **Gray:** Helpful people, travel
- **Black:** Career, evil influences, knowledge, mourning, penance, self-cultivation



China Palatial Color

Summer Palace
Beijing, China



China Festive Color

Shanghai Shi, Shanghai



Chinese good luck knots
(at a dragonboat festival in Denver)

Tibetan Festive Color

Tibetan Horse Festival
Qinghai, China

*“A time of laughter, song,
and equestrian skills”*



Native American Color — Cherokee

Colors were associated with the four directions.

Blue represented **North** which meant cold, defeat and trouble.

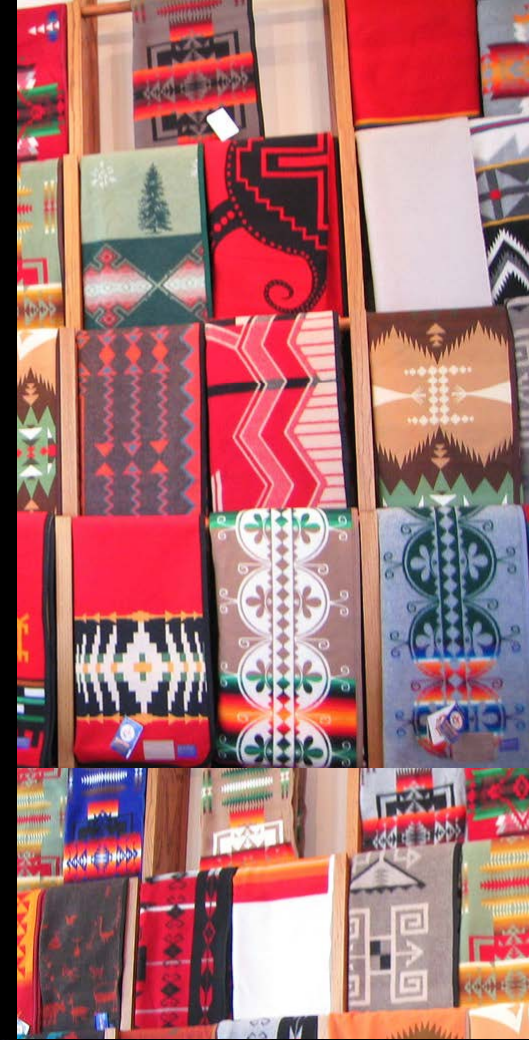
White was **South** representing warmth, peace and happiness.

Red was **East**, the color of the Sacred Fire, blood, and success.

West was **black**— the color meaning problems and death.

Other colors also had special meanings.

Brown was good but **yellow** meant trouble and strife.



Native American Color Symbolism

(from another source)

- (meaning varies by particular ethnic group - this source was not "authoritative" and quite generic)
- **Red** (Faith): Communication
- **Yellow** (Love): Overcoming challenges through unconditional love
- **Blue** (Intuition): Using intuition to teach and serve
- **Green** (Will): Living willfully
- **Pink** (Creativity): Working
- **White** (Magnetism): Sharing
- **Purple** (Wisdom): Gratitude/healing
- **Orange** (Learning): Kinship
- **Gray** (Honoring): Friendship
- **Brown** (Knowing): Self-discipline
- **Rose** (Seeing): Motivation
- **Black** (Hearing) Harmony; listening
- **Crystal** (Clarity): Wholeness



From Hue to Emotion

- ***The following pages offer one web-posted listing of hue-mood relationships.***
- ***Note the terms used to describe the emotions that are evoked.***

Red



Red is warm, bold, stirring, and energetic. In its pure form it can increase heart rate and raise body temperature.

Use red in rooms where activity occurs, like a family room, or where sleeping and resting is not a priority.

For a deep, intense setting, use other colors sparingly in a red room.

The eye is drawn to red, so it also makes an eye-catching accent color.

Blue



Blue, the color of sky and water, creates **fresh, cool, and restful** feelings.

Blue walls can make a south- or west-facing room feel cooler.

Because it "**recedes**," blue also creates the illusion of **space and distance**, conjuring up emotions of **haughtiness, formality, reserve, and sadness**.

In spite of evoking such contradictory reactions, blue is a favorite because it is easy on the eyes and the nerves, making it an excellent choice for rooms where you want to **relax** or sleep.



Blue-Violet

Chroma
Variation

What impact?





Blue- Violet

Hue Variation



Green

Green is the dominant color in **nature**.

It is a pleasing, organic, fresh, **calming**, and **restful** color.

It is a great color for any room where you want a **relaxed** and **fresh** atmosphere.

Green





Green

Chroma
variations

Fresh...
relaxing...
traditional...
bright?



Green
Violet
Red

Hue variations

Fresh...

Cool...

Warm..

relaxing...

traditional...

bright?



Green
vs.
Violet

Hue &
Chroma
variations

Fresh...
relaxing...
traditional...
bright?



Yellow & Orange

Yellow and orange are just as **exciting** as red, but they are more **cheerful** than bold, more **bright** than stimulating.

Yellow and orange warm and **enliven** any room where they are used, but work especially well to brighten dark rooms.

On large surfaces they are best used in light values.



Purple is lush, regal, and passionate.

It is an intense and highly emotional color, partly because it straddles the line between the warm red and cool blue.

This makes it a difficult color to use in interior design, and it is usually confined to the role of an accent.

Purple/Violet





- ...or purple is reserved for settings in which intense, dynamic, fantasy-like moods are intended.

Purple/ Violet

“Green house night club specially designed before the new year 2010.” [link](#)



- ...or purple is reserved for settings in high intense, dynamic fantasy-like

Purple/

Greenhouse Nightclub NYC
[link](#)



In subdued chromas, purple creates a somewhat exotic effect due, if nothing else, to the scarcity of its use.



Purple/Violet





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Purple/Violet





Black & White

Black and white are **pure contrasts and intensifiers** -- light and dark, yin and yang, all or nothing.

Dramatic and elegant together, they lend **sophistication** in decor that is **stylish and urban**.





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***Well-established
dominant...
or bold, contrasting
color fields?***

- Monochromatic designs behave quite differently than design with large masses of contrasting hues.
How does the formal difference *feel*?

Tezuka - The Marvel of Manga
exhibition
National Gallery of Victoria



Well-established dominant... or bold, contrasting color fields?

How does the formal difference feel?



Note how unity by dominating hue feels very different than hue-contrast. Both are useful, but quite different in effect.



*Tezuka - The Marvel of Manga exhibition
National Gallery of Victoria*

- **Design and Color-emotion:**
conceive viewer-experience *before* selecting color

- Sight is our most important sense when we enter a room.
Colors conveys atmosphere instantly make us feel relaxed or uneasy.

- **Design concept strategy:**
First, decide how you want the room to *feel*.
Consider descriptors that apply. Brainstorm mood words.

Clean	Cozy	Modern	Other Adjectives?
Refreshing	Snug	Contemporary	
Calm	Intimate	Country	
Cool	Bright	Victorian	
Warm	Dim	Sleek	

- **Design and Color-emotion:**
conceive viewer-experience *before* selecting color
- Here are some typical descriptions for different rooms in a home.
- **Bathroom:** clean, refreshing, bright, cool
- **Living room:** warm, cozy, dim, calm
- **Bedroom:** calm, snug, dim, intimate
- **Dinning room:** intimate, dim, warm
- **Kitchen:** clean, bright, warm or cool
- Other spaces?
- *Graphic Design/Marketing/Art/Drama: Consider the same sorts of distinctions for products/services/clients/viewers.*