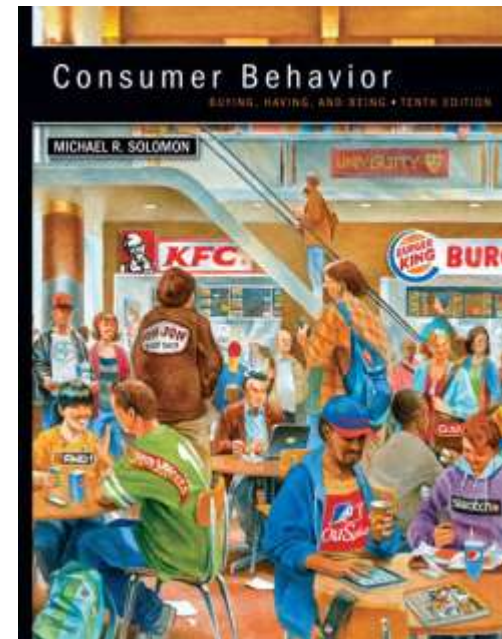


Chapter 2

Perception

CONSUMER BEHAVIOR, 10e

Michael R. Solomon



Learning Objective 1

- Perception is a three-stage process that translates raw stimuli into meaning.



Source: LensKiss/Shutterstock.

Sensations

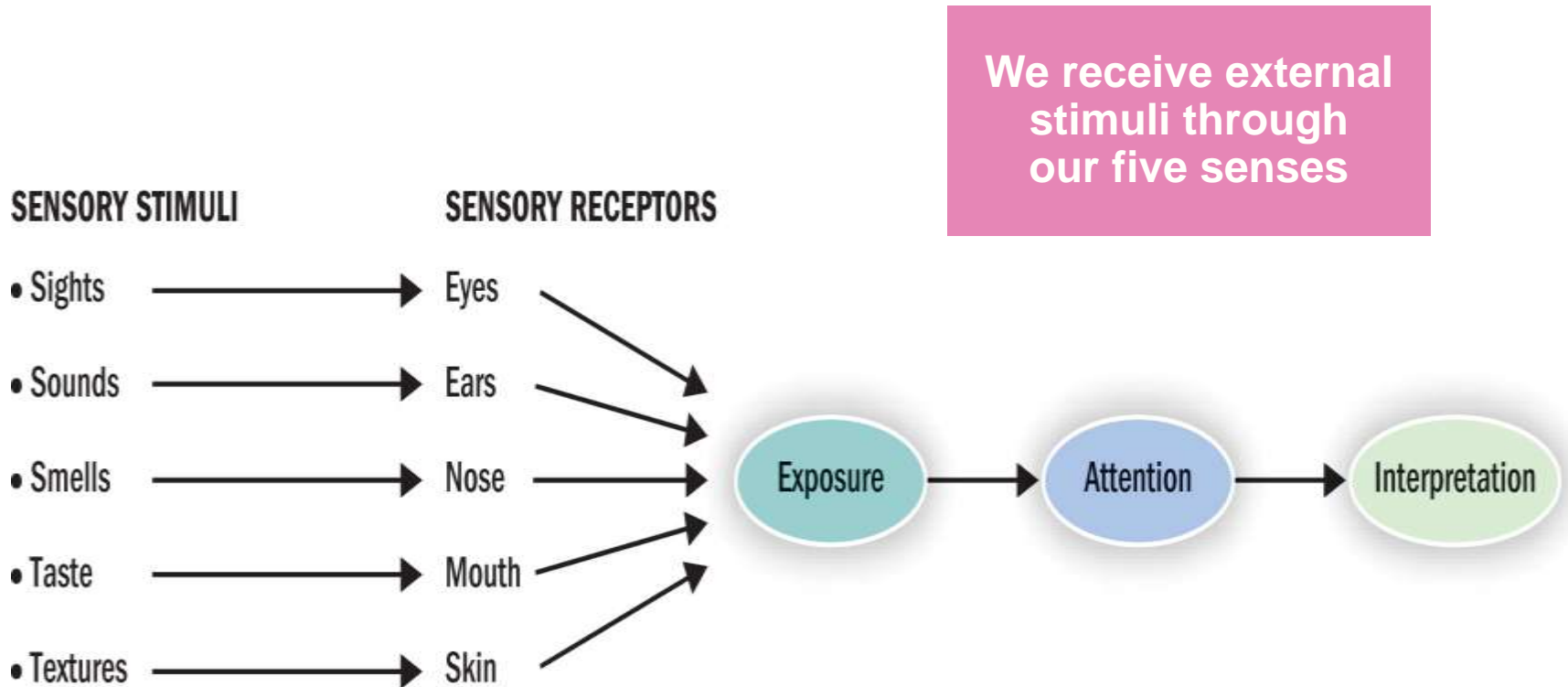


Sensation and Perception

- Sensation is the immediate response of our sensory receptors (eyes, ears, nose, mouth, and fingers) to basic stimuli (light, color, sound, odor, and texture).
- Perception is the process by which sensations are selected, organized, and interpreted.



Figure 2.1 Perceptual Process





Sensory marketing

The image shows a high-end clothing boutique. The floor is covered in a vibrant red carpet. In the foreground, there is a seating area with three ornate, patterned armchairs and a small round coffee table. The background features clothing racks, display cases, and a fireplace. The ceiling is decorated with recessed lighting and a large, glowing blue light fixture. The overall atmosphere is elegant and sophisticated.

OBJECTIVE:

For Reflection

- Some studies suggest that as we age, our sensory detection abilities decline. What are the implications of this phenomenon for marketers who target elderly consumers?

Learning Objective 2

- The design of a product is now a key driver of its success or failure.



OBJECTIVE:



Design and perception

For Reflection

- Imagine you are the marketing consultant for the package design of a new brand of premium chocolate
- What recommendations would you make?

Learning Objective 3

- Products and commercial messages often appeal to our senses, but because of the profusion of these messages, most won't influence us.



Sensory Systems



- Vision
- Scent
- Sound
- Touch
- Taste

For Reflection

- How has your sense of touch influenced your reaction to a product?
- Which of your senses do you feel is most influential in your perceptions of products?

Learning Objective 4

- The concept of sensory threshold is important for marketing communications

PEPSI 1940:



PEPSI 1962:



PEPSI 1987:



PEPSI 2009:



Sensory Thresholds

- The **absolute threshold** refers to the minimum amount of stimulation a person can detect on any given sensory channel
- The **differential threshold** refers to the ability of a sensory system to detect changes in or differences between two stimuli

Sensory Thresholds

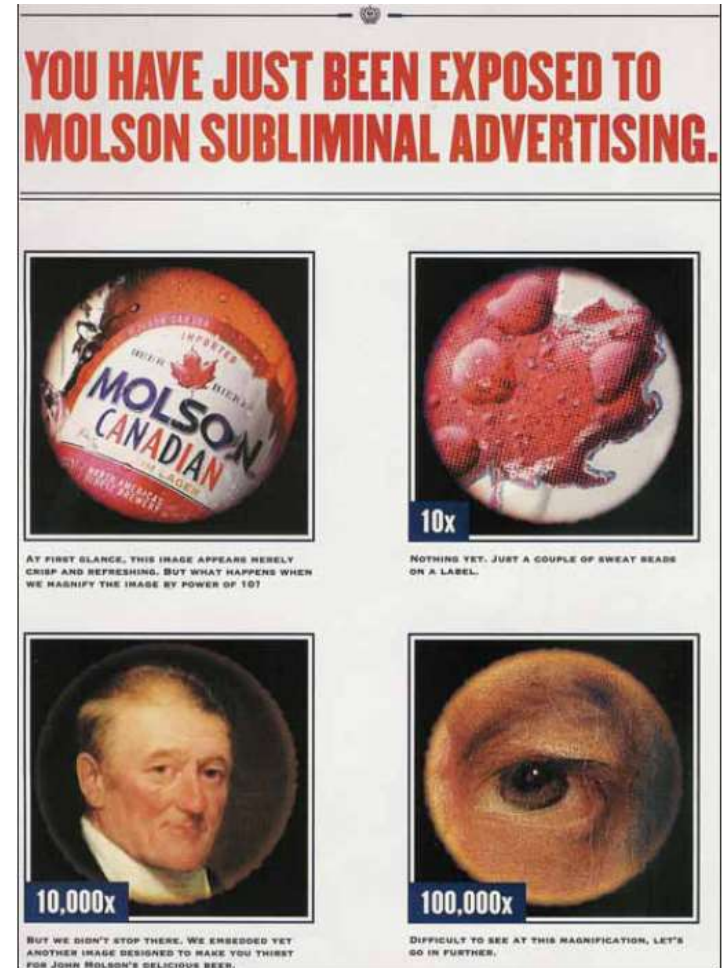
- The absolute threshold means that the stimulation used by marketers must be sufficient to register. For instance, a highway billboard might have the most entertaining copy ever written, but this genius is wasted if the print is too small for passing motorists to see it. The differential threshold refers to the ability of a sensory system to detect changes in or differences between two stimuli. The minimum difference we can detect between two stimuli is the j.n.d. (just noticeable difference). Sometimes a marketer may want to ensure that consumers notice a change, as when a retailer offers merchandise at a discount. In other situations, the marketer may want to downplay the fact that it has made a change, such as when a store raises a price or a manufacturer reduces the size of a package.
- A consumer's ability to detect a difference between two stimuli is relative. A psychophysicist named Ernst Weber found that the amount of change required for the perceiver to notice a change systematically relates to the intensity of the original stimulus. The stronger the initial stimulus, the greater a change must be for us to notice it. This relationship is known as Weber's Law.

For Reflection

- How much of a change would be needed in a favorite brand's price, package size, or logo would be needed for you to notice the difference?
- How would differences in these variables affect your purchase decisions?

Learning Objective 5

- Subliminal advertising is a controversial but largely ineffective way to talk to consumers



Subliminal Techniques

- Embeds: figures that are inserted into magazine advertising by using high-speed photography or airbrushing.
- Subliminal auditory perception: sounds, music, or voice text inserted into advertising.

For Reflection

- Do you think that subliminal perception works?
- Under what conditions could it work?

Learning Objective 6

- We interpret the stimuli to which we do pay attention according to learned patterns and expectations.



Attention

- Attention is the extent to which processing activity is devoted to a particular stimulus
- Consumers experience sensory overload
- Marketers need to break through the clutter



How Do Marketers Get Attention?

- Personal Selection
 - Experience
 - Perceptual filters
 - Perceptual vigilance
 - Perceptual defense
 - Adaptation
- Stimulus Selection
 - Contrast
 - Size
 - Color
 - Position
 - Novelty

Perceptual **selection**

Perceptual
Vigilance

Perceptual
Defense

Adaptation

Adaptation

Intensity

Duration

Exposure

Relevance

Discrimination



Factors Leading to Adaptation

Intensity

Duration

Discrimination

Exposure

Relevance

Attention and **Contrast**

Size

Color

Position

Novelty



Interpretation

- Interpretation refers to the meaning we assign to sensory stimuli, which is based on a schema



Interpretation

Schema

Priming

OBJECTIVE:



Stimulus Organization

- *Gestalt*: the whole is greater than the sum of its parts
 - Closure: people perceive an incomplete picture as complete
 - Similarity: consumers group together objects that share similar physical characteristics
 - Figure-ground: one part of the stimulus will dominate (the figure) while the other parts recede into the background (ground)



Principle of closure



Principle of similarity



Principle of figure-ground

Application of the Figure-Ground Principle

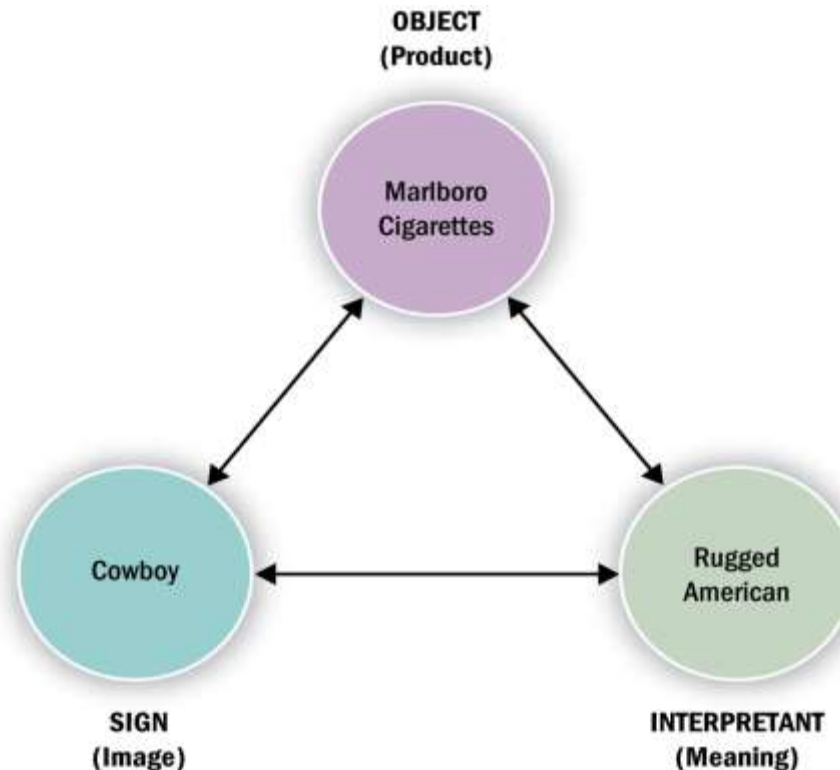


For Reflection

- How have you seen brands use size, color, and novelty to encourage you to pay attention to a message?
- Were the techniques effective?

Learning Objective 7

- The field of semiotics helps us to understand how marketers use symbols to create meaning



Perceptual Positioning

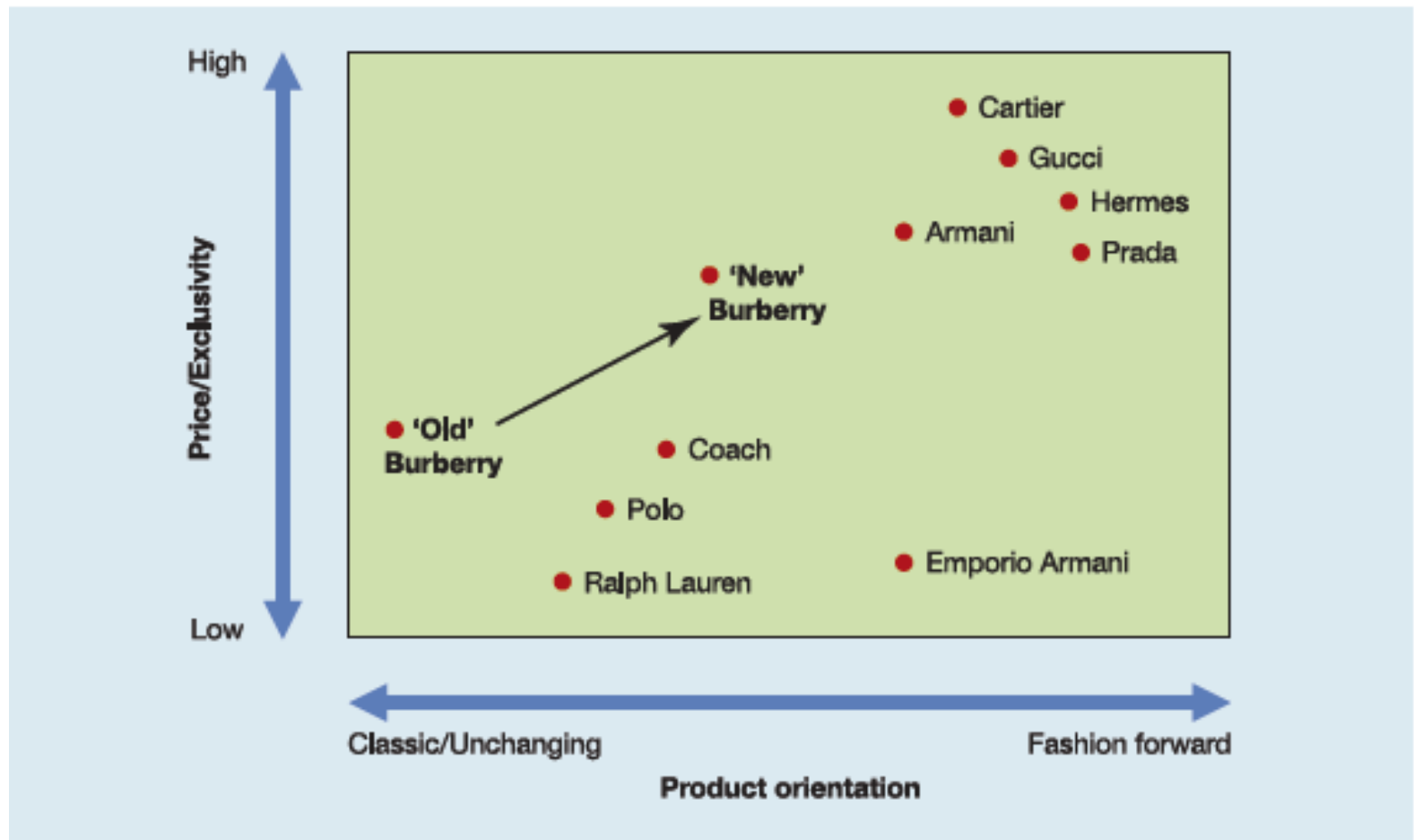
- Brand perceptions = functional attributes + symbolic attributes
- Perceptual map: map of where brands are perceived in consumers' minds
 - Used to determine how brands are currently perceived to determine future positioning

Examples of Brand Positioning

Lifestyle	Grey Poupon is “high class”
Price leadership	Southwest Airlines is “no frills”
Attributes	Bounty is “quicker picker upper”
Product class	Mazda Miata is sporty convertible
Competitors	Northwestern Insurance is the quiet company
Occasions	Use Wrigley’s gum when you can’t smoke
Users	Levi’s Dockers targeted to young men
Quality	At Ford, “Quality is Job 1”

Perceptual **Positioning**





For Reflection

- How do your favorite brands position themselves in the marketplace?
- Which possible positioning strategies seem to be most effective?

Chapter Summary

- Perception is a three-stage process that translates raw stimuli into meaning.
- Products and messages may appeal to our senses.
- The design of a product affects our perception of it.
- Subliminal advertising is controversial.
- We interpret stimuli using learned patterns.
- Marketers use symbols to create meaning.