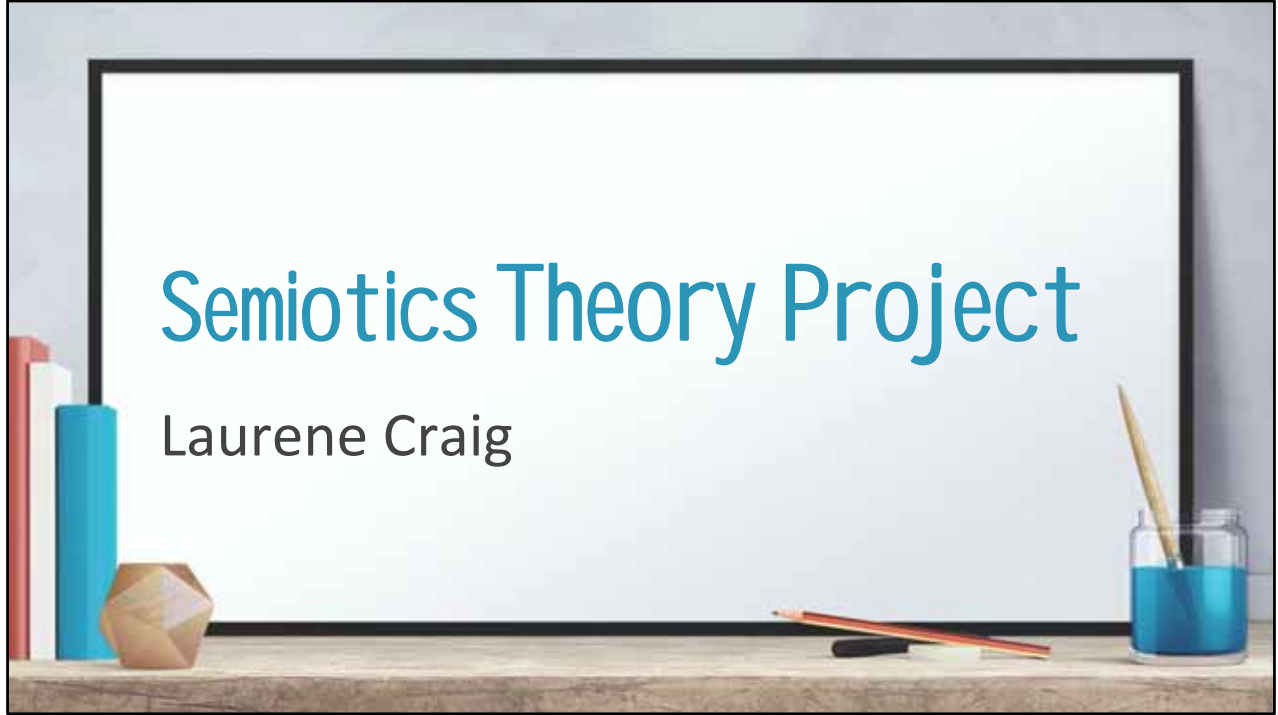
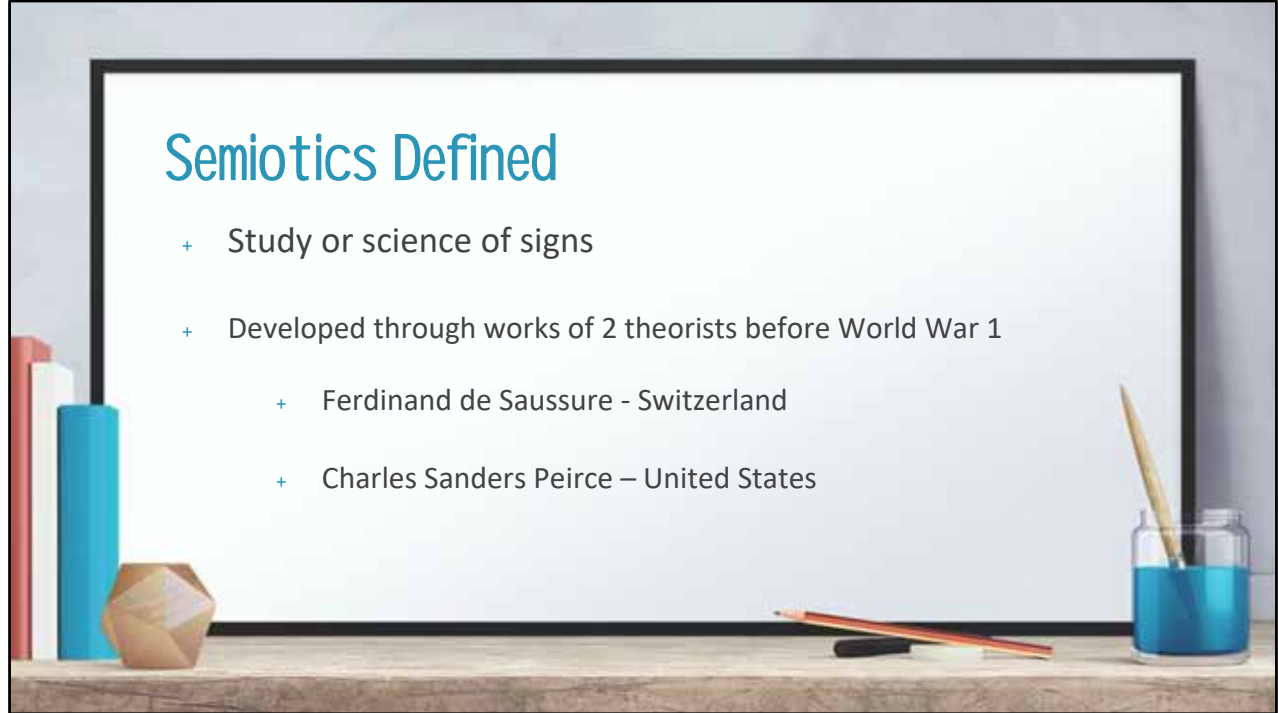


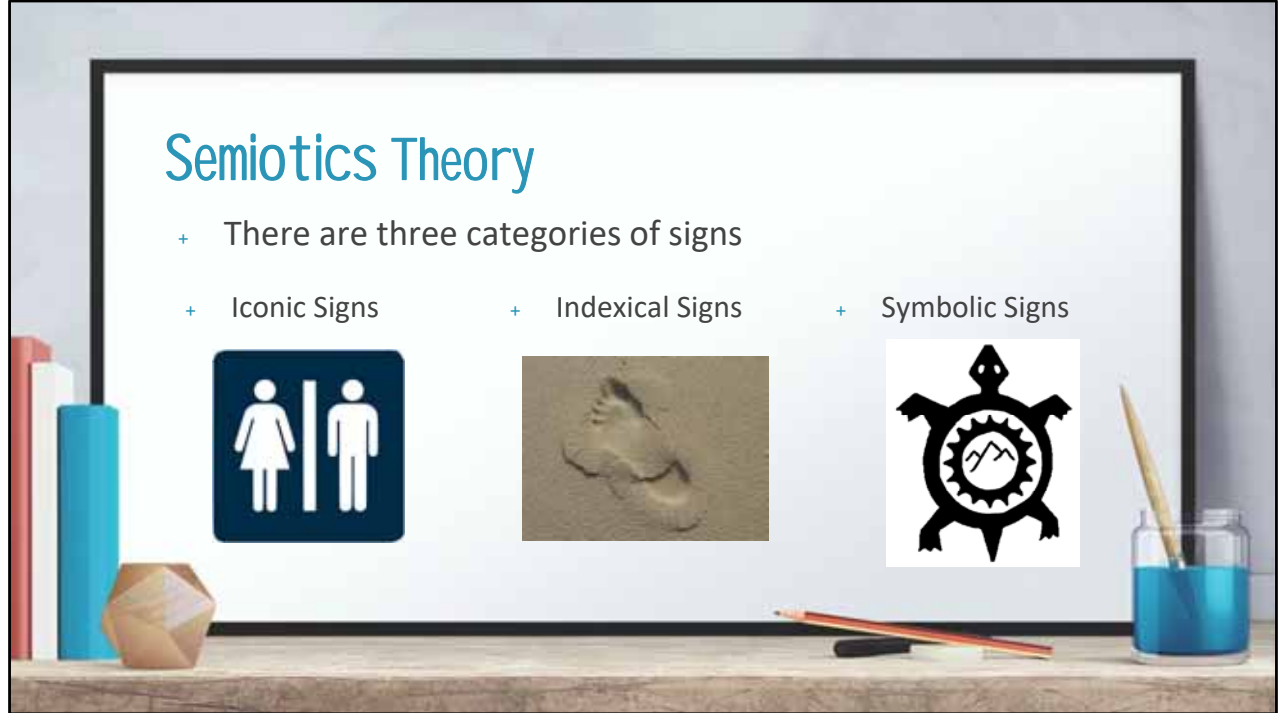
Semiotics Theory Project

Laurene Craig



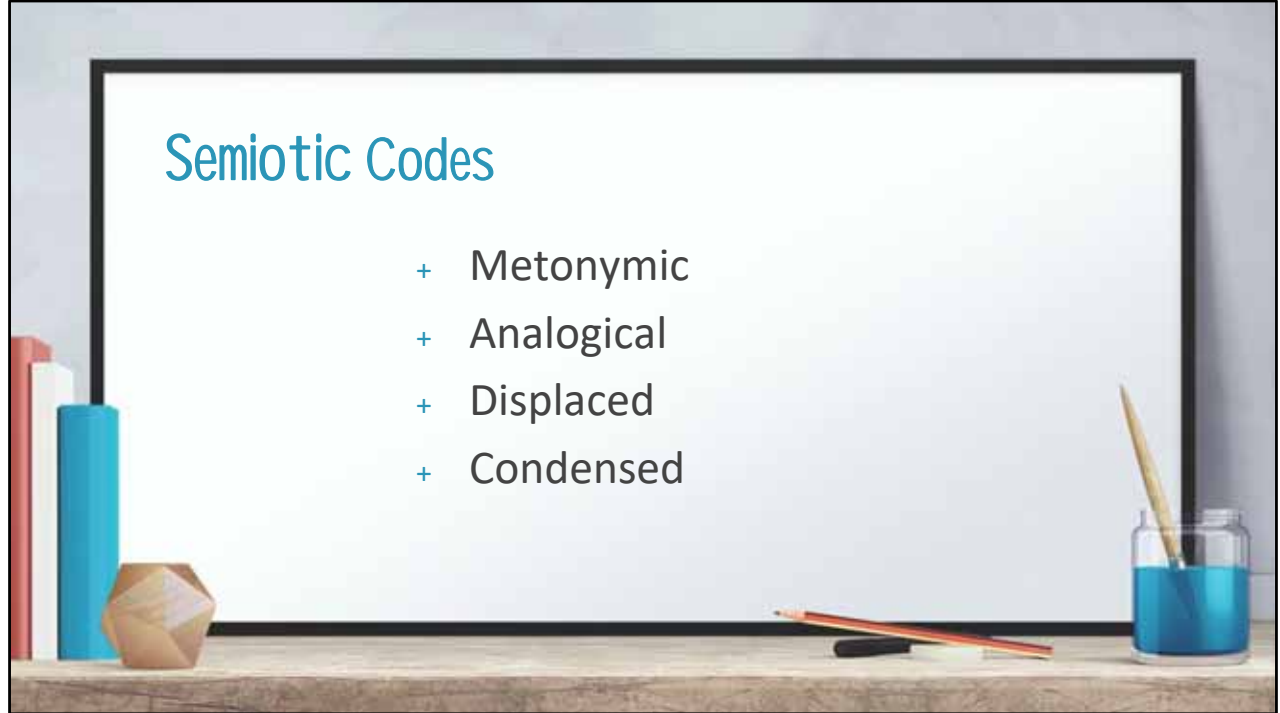


- Semiotics is the study or science of signs.
- Lester defines signs as anything that stands for something else.
- Just about anything can be a sign if it has meaning beyond the object itself. For example, an orange jumpsuit in the United States stands for prison wear. If a person in another country sees the same jumpsuit, it is just a brightly colored piece of clothing.
- Augustine of Hippo, a Roman philosopher, linguist, and bishop of the Roman Catholic Church initially studied semiotics in 397 AD.
- Just before World War 1, two theorists developed the current Semiotic Perceptual Theory; Ferdinand de Saussure, a Swiss-born professor, and Charles Sanders Peirce, an American born philosopher, and scientist.
- Although the two men were scientists, they were more interested in studying the way words were used to communicate meaning through written accounts of connected events, or stories.
- Lester states that semiotics has evolved into a theory of perception that involves the use of images in unexpected ways.

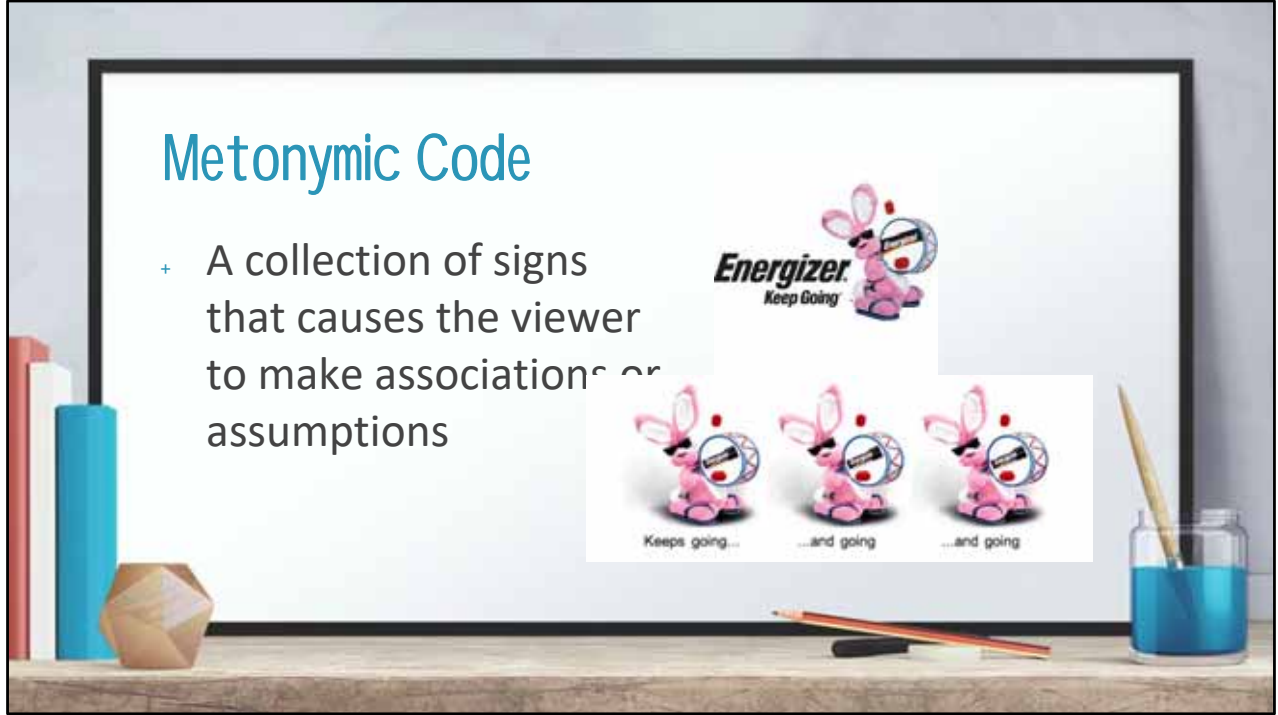


- There are three categories of signs
 - **Iconic** signs closely resemble the object they are meant to represent. In this example, the universal symbol for male and female bathroom signs is an iconic sign. Other examples include simple drawings, street signs, and photographs.
 - **Indexical** signs have a logical, common sense connection to the thing or idea they represent rather than a direct resemblance to the object. Unlike icons, indexical signs take longer to interpret and are learned through life experiences. In this example, the footprint in the sand represents the person that left that footprint. Other examples include smoke that can come from a factory represents pollution, and a child with a fever indicates that he or she is suffering from an infection.
 - **Symbolic** signs are the most abstract sign. Symbols must be taught because they have no logical connection between them and what they represent. A person's social and cultural upbringing influences the meaning of symbols. In this example, the Native American turtle symbol represents different things to different Indian tribes. The most common definition is the mother earth. For other tribes, it is a symbol for

perseverance, fertility, and long life.



Inspired by de Saussure and Peirce, Arthur Asa Berger identified four types of Semiotic Codes: Metonymic, analogical, displaced, and condensed.



The **metonymic** code is a collection of signs that causes the viewer to make assumptions about what they see. Most advertisements use this type of code. An example is the Energizer bunny ads. The Energizer Bunny ad helps us associate Energizer batteries with long life. When we buy batteries, this ad may sway our buying because we want batteries that last a long time.



The next code is **Analogical Code**. This type of code takes a group of signs and causes the viewer to make mental comparisons. An example is a Heinz ketchup ad. The stem of the tomato rests on the bottom of a ketchup bottle. The brain creates a comparison to a tomato.

Displaced Code

- + Images that transfer meaning from one set of signs to another



Displaced code transfers the meaning of one object to another. Widespread use of this type of code is sexual symbolism. Many commercials and advertisements use phallically shaped objects to insinuate sexual situations. In this Winston cigarette ad, the text says it's what's up front that counts, meaning the tobacco, but the mind will transfer the image to a sexual meaning.

Condensed Code

- + Several signs combined to form a new, composite message



The final code is a **condensed** code that takes several signs and combines them to form a new, composite message. These pictures usually have unique and unexpected meanings. Lester notes that within the culture the message is intended for, a condensed code has important significance. For those outside that culture, the images may be confusing. In this example, a pregnant nun eats ice cream with the caption “Immaculately Conceived.” The ad implies a supernatural experience if you eat this ice cream. If you are not aware of the Roman Catholic religion, this ad may not have any meaning.



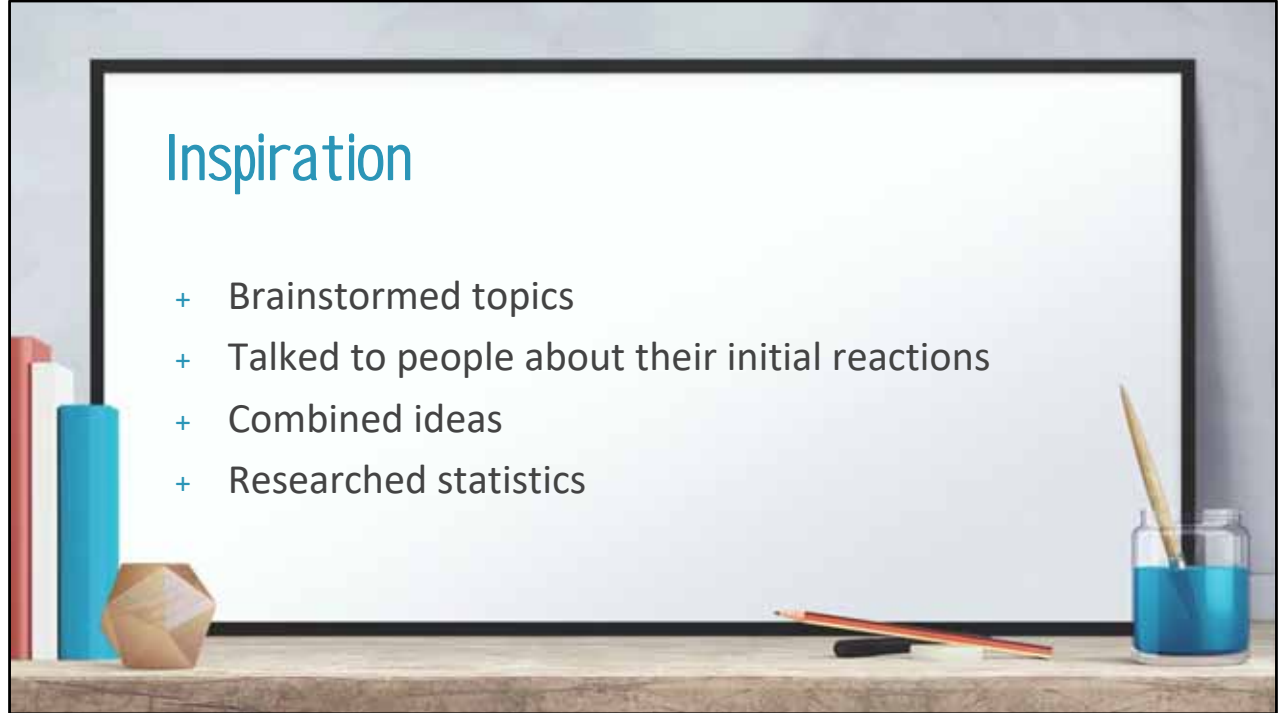
My Semiotic picture is of Cell Phone Addiction.



- The picture is of a prescription pill bottle turned over, and cell phones are spilling out of the bottle into an open palm.
- The words on the bottom right of the picture say Cell Phone Addiction is Real, listing three statistics.



- I believe my picture covers all three of the semiotic categories.
- The **iconic** sign is a medicine bottle and the cell phones. People recognize these everyday items.
- The **indexical** sign are the phones that logically can be connected to pills that are supposed to be in the medicine bottle.
- The **symbolic** sign are the phones coming out of the bottle that can represent an illness, disease, or addiction.



- My inspiration for this picture was a long process.
 - I brainstormed ideas for over a week with little hope of narrowing the field of choices.
 - I wrote down a dozen major themes, put them in a bowl, and picked one at random.
- After picking cell phone addiction, I wrote ideas on what came to my mind when I thought of the topic. I then asked four other people what instantly came to mind when I said the word cellphone, the word addiction, and then cellphone addiction together.
- I looked at a dozen websites for statistics and picked the most consistent facts.



- With the data in hand, I was able to sketch out an idea.
- I searched Google for the cell phone pictures.
- I took a picture of my son's hands with a prescription bottle we had.



- I used Photoshop to create my image. The cell phones are layered and skewed to change their perspective just a bit.



- I used black as the background so that the images would stand out.



- Like other Public Service Announcement ads, I decided to use just a little bit of text in the corner in smaller font size than usual. I did this, so the viewer has to look closely at the text and concentrate on what it says.
- The text is from several sources but is relatively consistent across many different surveys done within a 5-year period.
- The message is supposed to show how addicted Americans are to their cell phones.
 - The average American looks at their phone nine times an hour.
 - 84 percent, or about 8 out of 10 people, cannot go an entire day without their cell phone.
 - This last statistic is the funny shocker – 20 percent of adults, that’s 1 in 5 people, have used their phones during sex!



CELL PHONE ADDICTION IS REAL

The average adult looks at his or her cell phone 110 times per day.
That works out to be 9 times every hour.

84% of adults cannot go an entire day without their phones in their hands.

20% of adults have used their smartphones during sex.

The final product.



These are the works I cited for my research.



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