

STRAT_SCRAPS | alex morris |
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WHY I DON'T CONSIDER
CULTURE IN THE 4 Cs.

LAST WEEK, I INCLUDED A FOOTNOTE THAT LED TO A NUMBER OF PEOPLE REACHING OUT AND ASKING FOR AN EXPLANATION.

RATHER THAN HASTILY RESPOND TO EACH PERSON, I DEDICATED SOME THOUGHT TO THE TOPIC AND AM FOCUSING THIS WEEK'S VOL AROUND THE TOPIC.

to preface

IT'S NOT THAT CONSIDERING CULTURE IS WORTHLESS.

I JUST DON'T FIND IT WORTH THE TIME..

THIS IS FOR A FEW REASONS;

1. There is no consensus on what "culture" means.
2. Culture is invisible to those within it.
3. Culture is slow and therefore not surprising
4. Culture is a creative consideration, not a strategic one.



Culture is expansive across time and scale. Do we mean the behaviors of a select few or the actions of many? what is the tipping point. What is the balance in value between new but ephemeral and well established but irrelevant?

The answers to these things are subjective to the individual and therefore can too easily be defined on a case by case basis depending on what best serves the narrative.

NO SINGLE DEFINITION

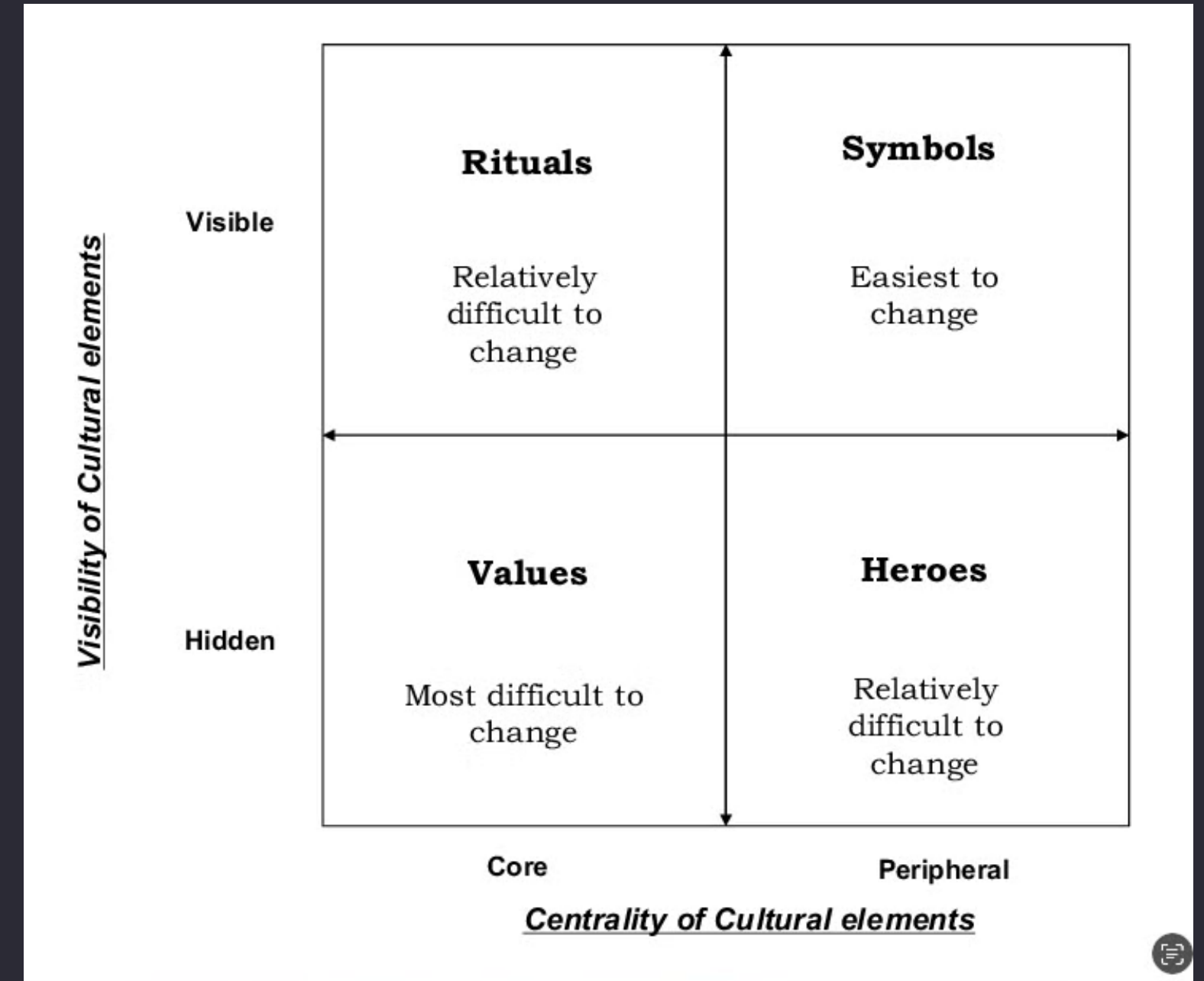
NO SINGLE DEFINITION

It's "insights" all over again.

- 🔍 the * elements of culture
- 🔍 **what are the 12 elements of cu**
- 🔍 elements of culture **pdf**
- 🔍 **10 elements of culture**
- 🔍 **what are the 5 elements of cult**
- 🔍 **4 elements of culture**
- 🔍 elements of culture **examples**
- 🔍 elements of culture in **sociolog**
- 🔍 **8 components of culture**

NO SINGLE DEFINITION

There are existing frameworks from the social sciences, but they are rarely used or considered.



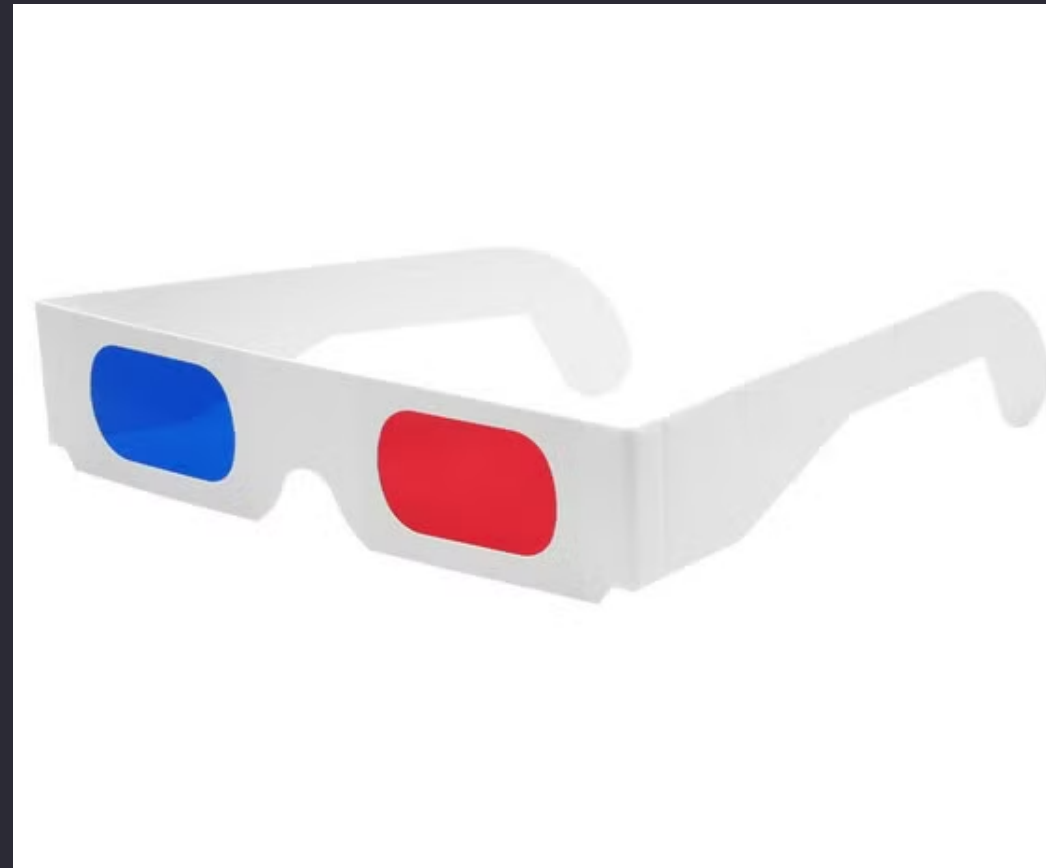
NO SINGLE DEFINITION

So it ends up being
defined like this...



elecwizard · 7 yr. ago

Shit people do because other people did it



CULTURE IS INVISIBLE

CULTURE IS INVISIBLE

without a common definition, I often lean on A metaphor;

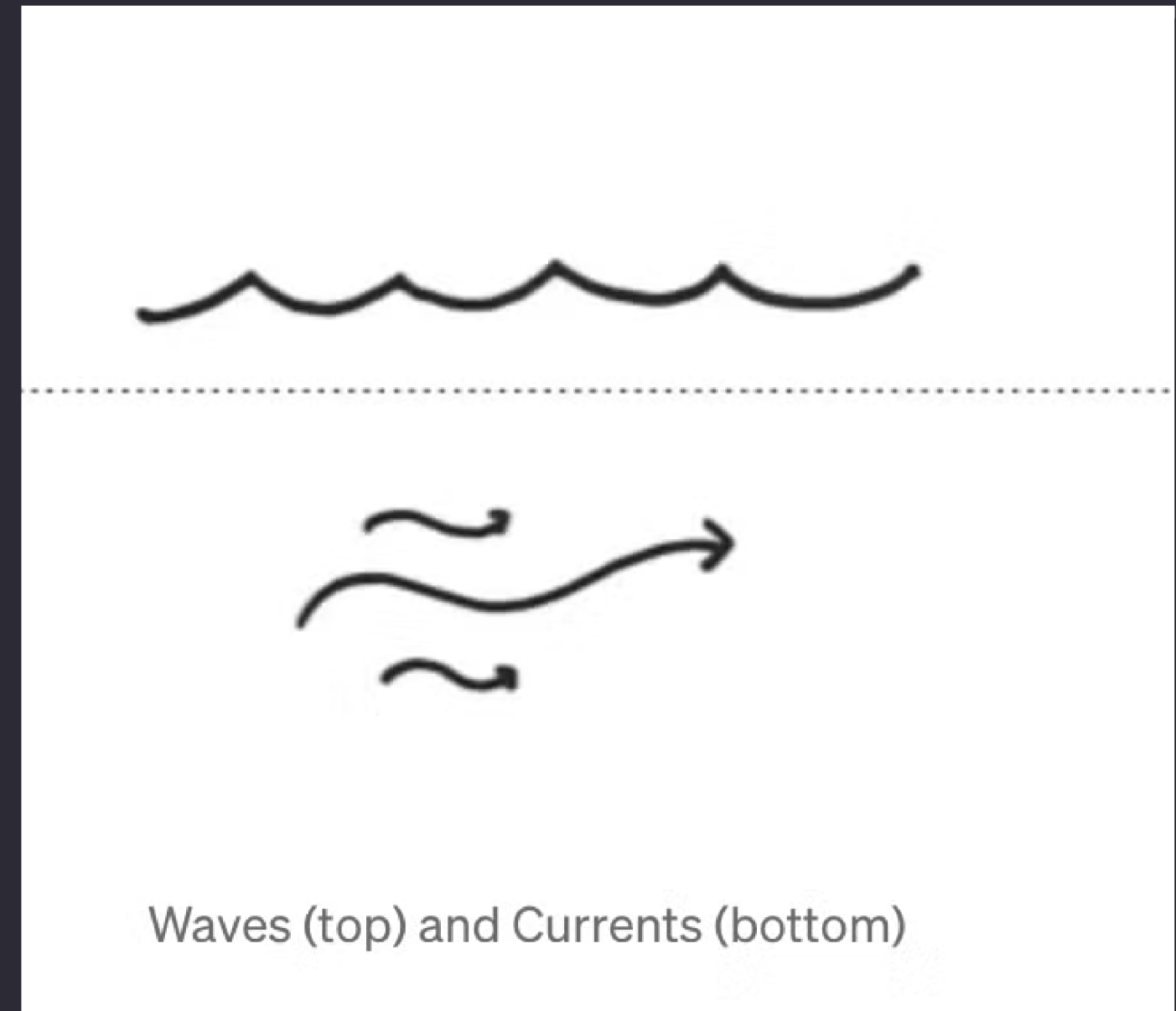
Looking at the ocean, we only see the waves – but we understand they are moved by the wind and currents.

Culture is only visible by the things it creates. by its waves.

Culture is invisible like wind or ocean currents.

So we look at the waves and pretend they matter.

But a signal is not the same as it's source.

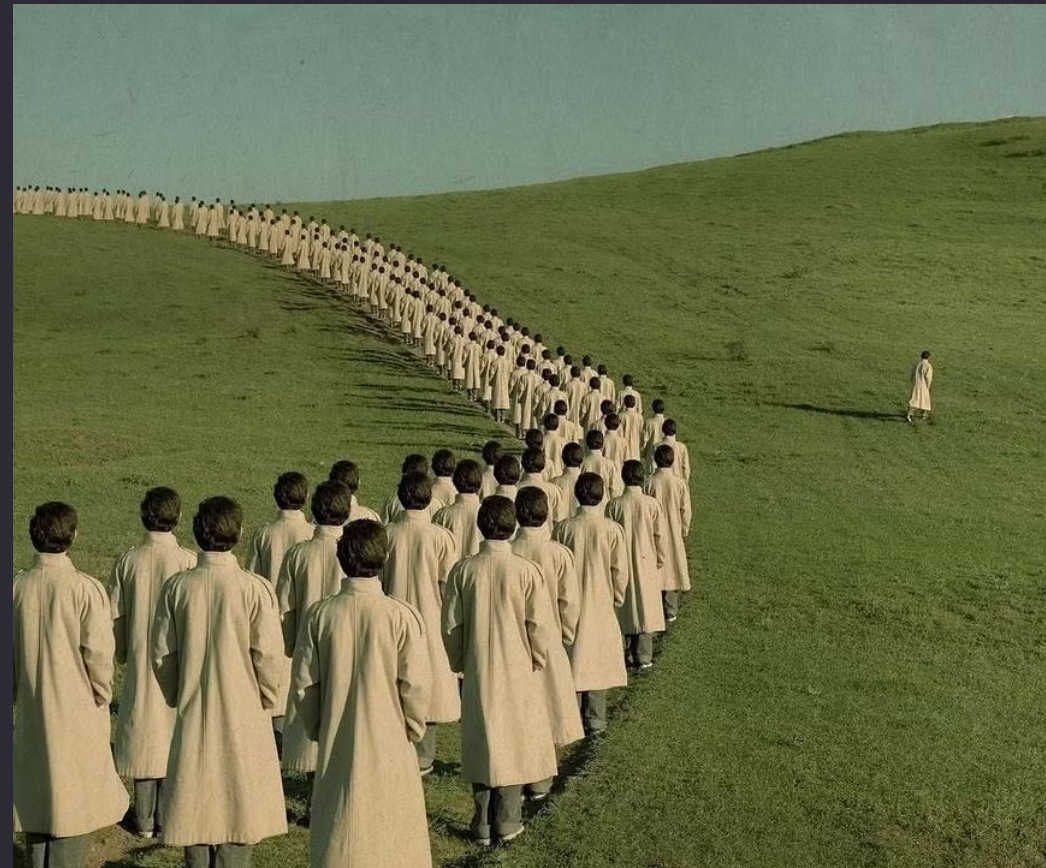


CULTURE IS INVISIBLE

A signal is not the same as it's source.

And we treat the signals like gospel
when they are just noise.

(I HAVE WRITTEN ABOUT THIS BEFORE..)



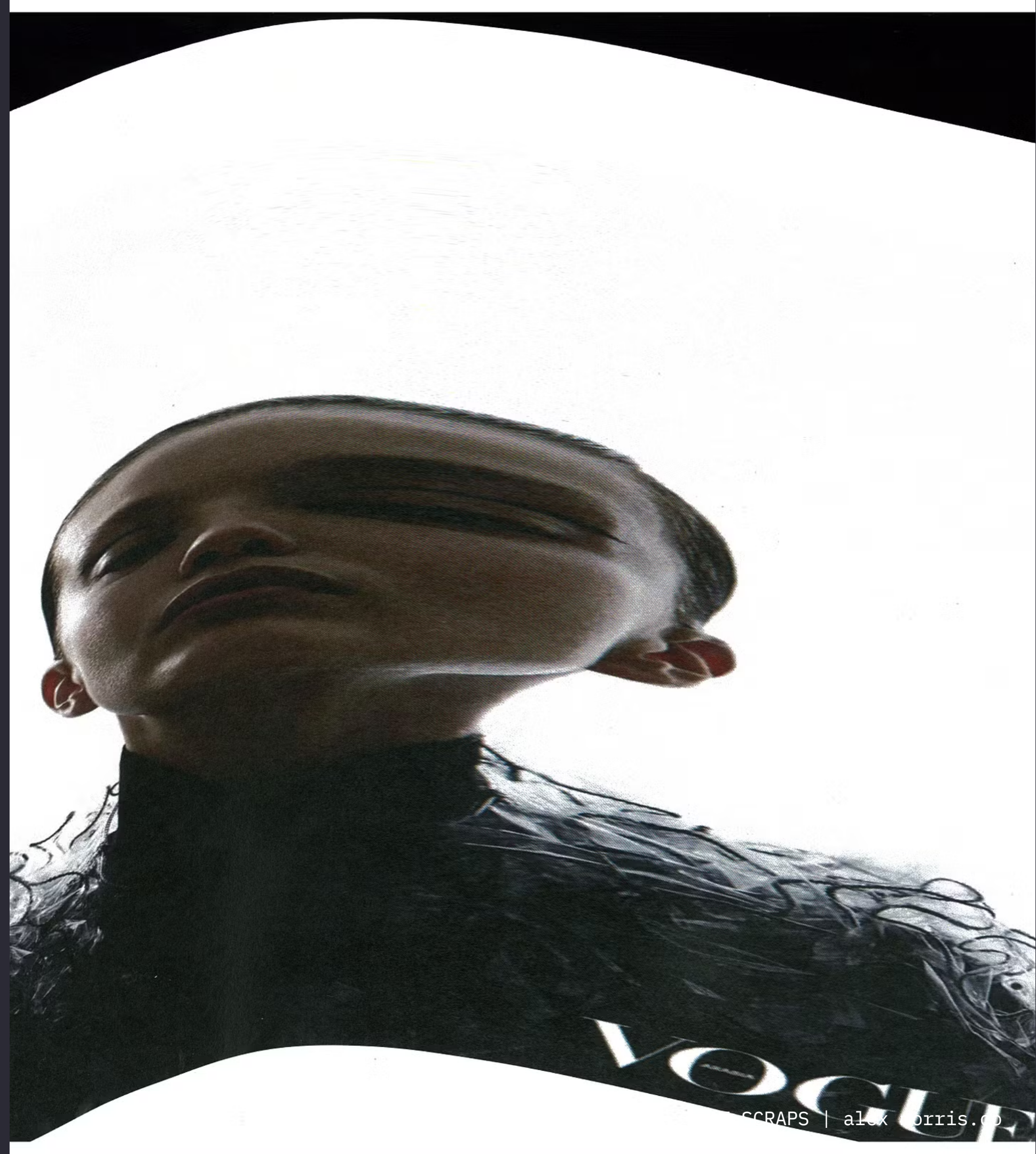
CULTURE IS SLOW

CULTURE IS SLOW

We put a pressure for newness on ourselves when doing research work... But culture doesn't move as fast as we think it does. Trends are fast, culture is slow.

Telling a client or a creative team *we live in an individualistic society* doesn't win the pitch. there is no "aha!" or big reveal. So we lean on the inconsequential rather than simply not including it.

But the slower the cultural current, the more influence it has.



CULTURE IS FOR THE CREATIVE TEAM

Culture should be part of the output, not the input. In other words, it is the creative teams' realm to consider how culture influences or is influenced by the work.

Incorporating cultural "truths" in the strategy potentially limits what creative can do.





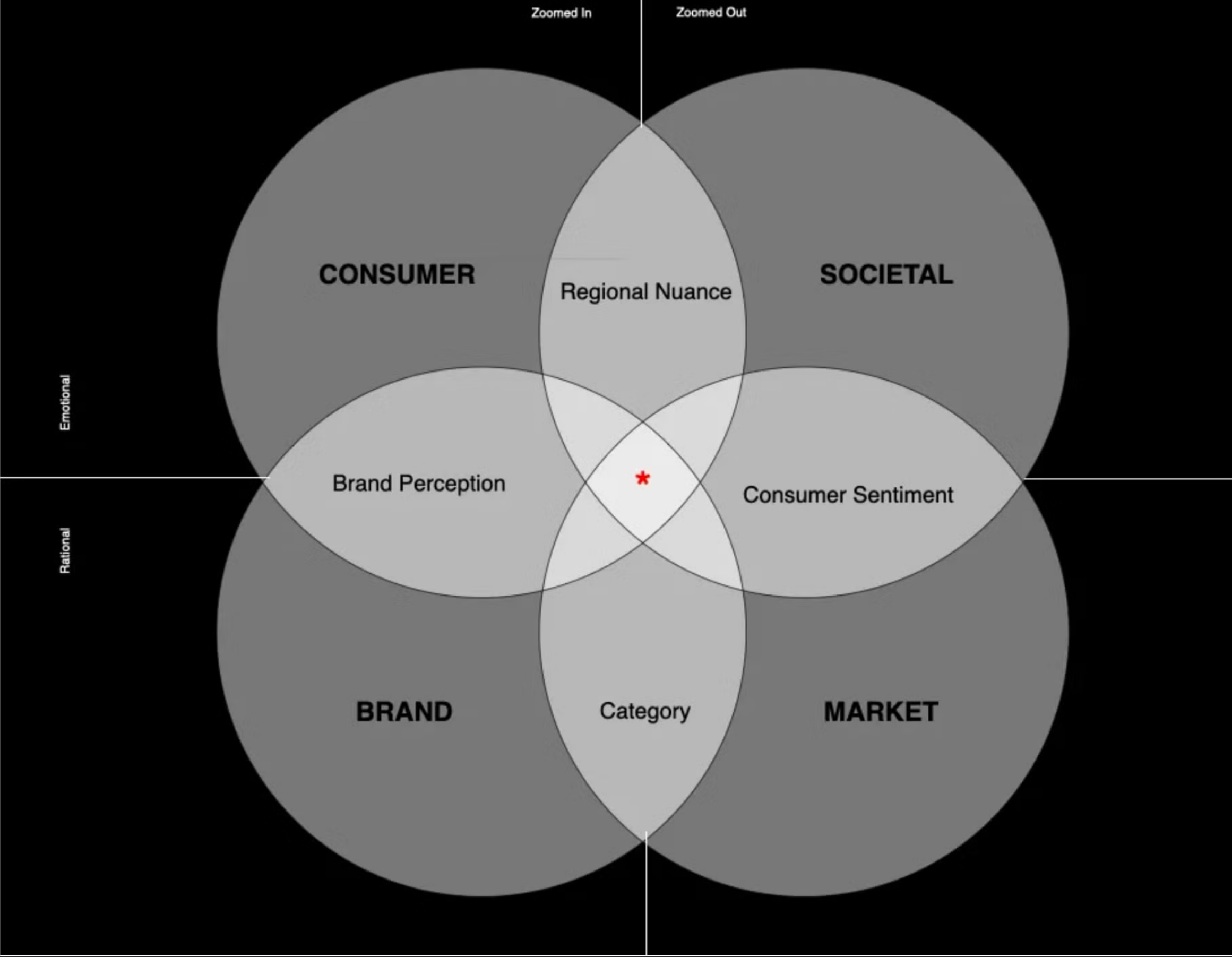
MORE ABOUT THE 4 CS.

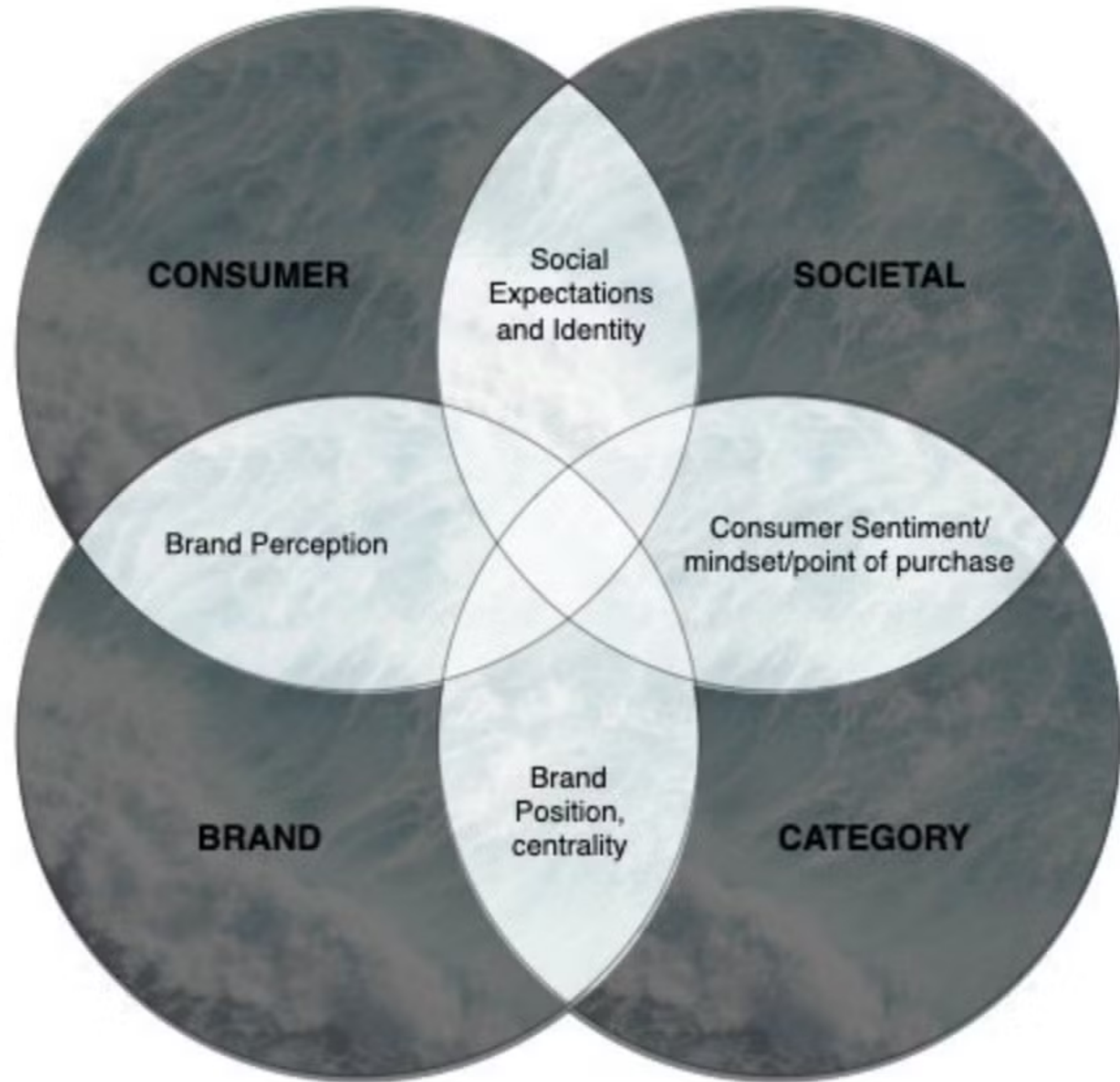
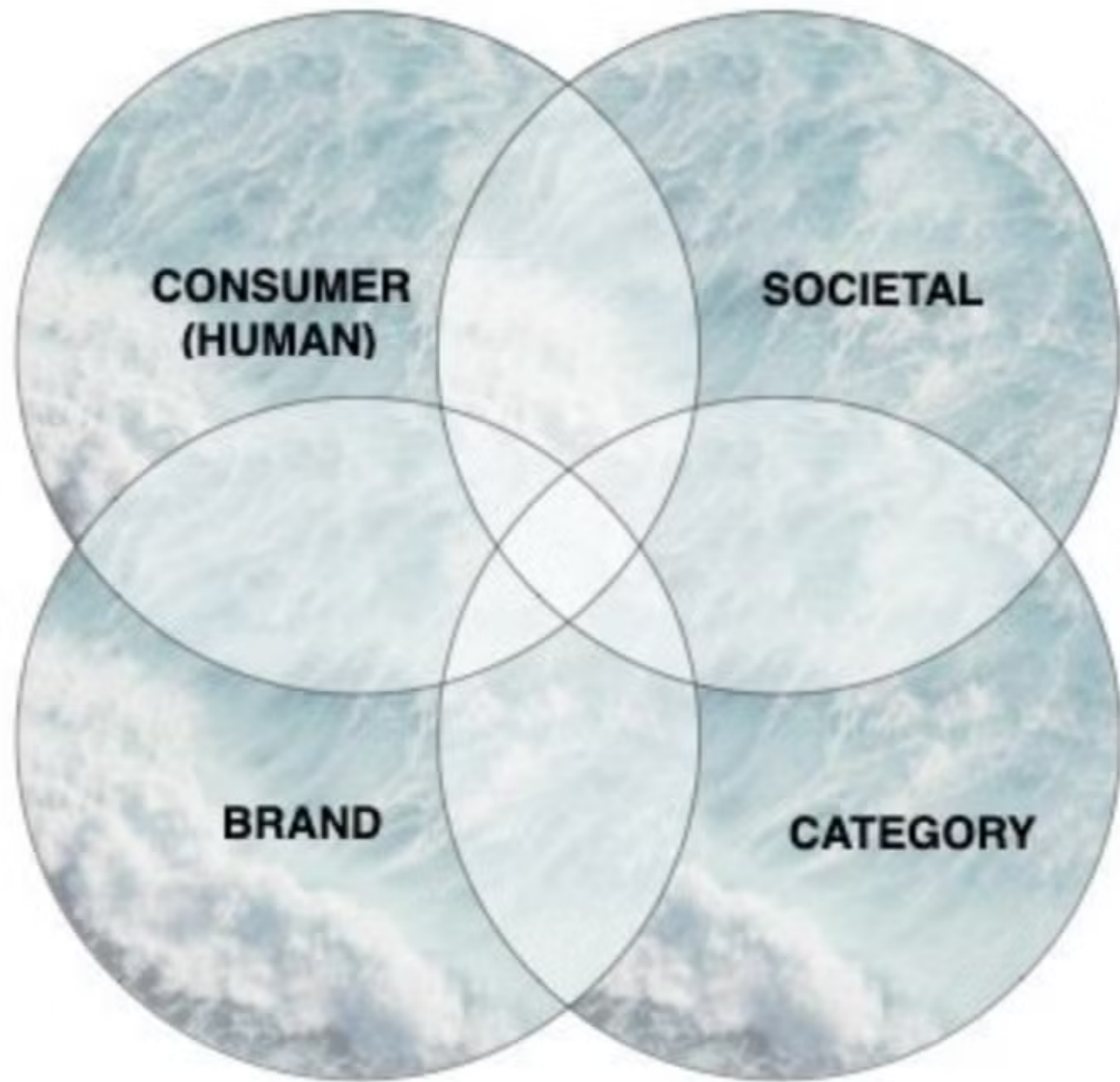
JUST ONE GUY'S RECOMMENDATIONS.

THERE ARE NO RULES.

THE OVERLAP MATTERS MORE THAN
THE CIRCLE ITSELF

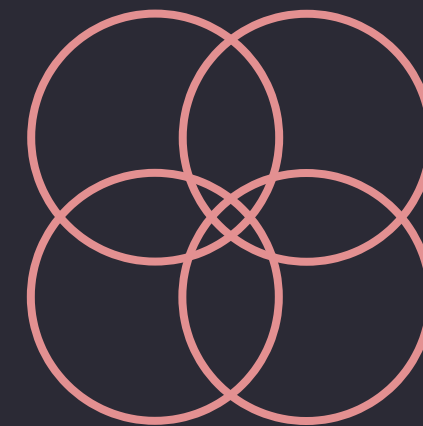
**THE POINT ISN'T WHAT A CIRCLE IS LABELED.
IT'S AN EXERCISE OF FINDING CONFLICT IN THE OVERLAPS**



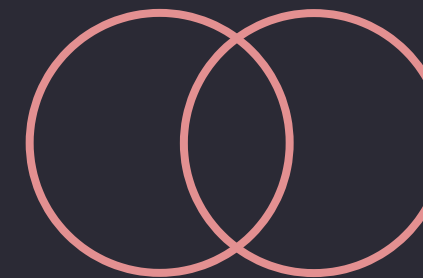


**ANY NUMBER OF "C" CIRCLES IS VALID.
AS WITH ALL THINGS, WHEN SHARING
INFORMATION, LESS IS ALWAYS BETTER
THAN MORE.**

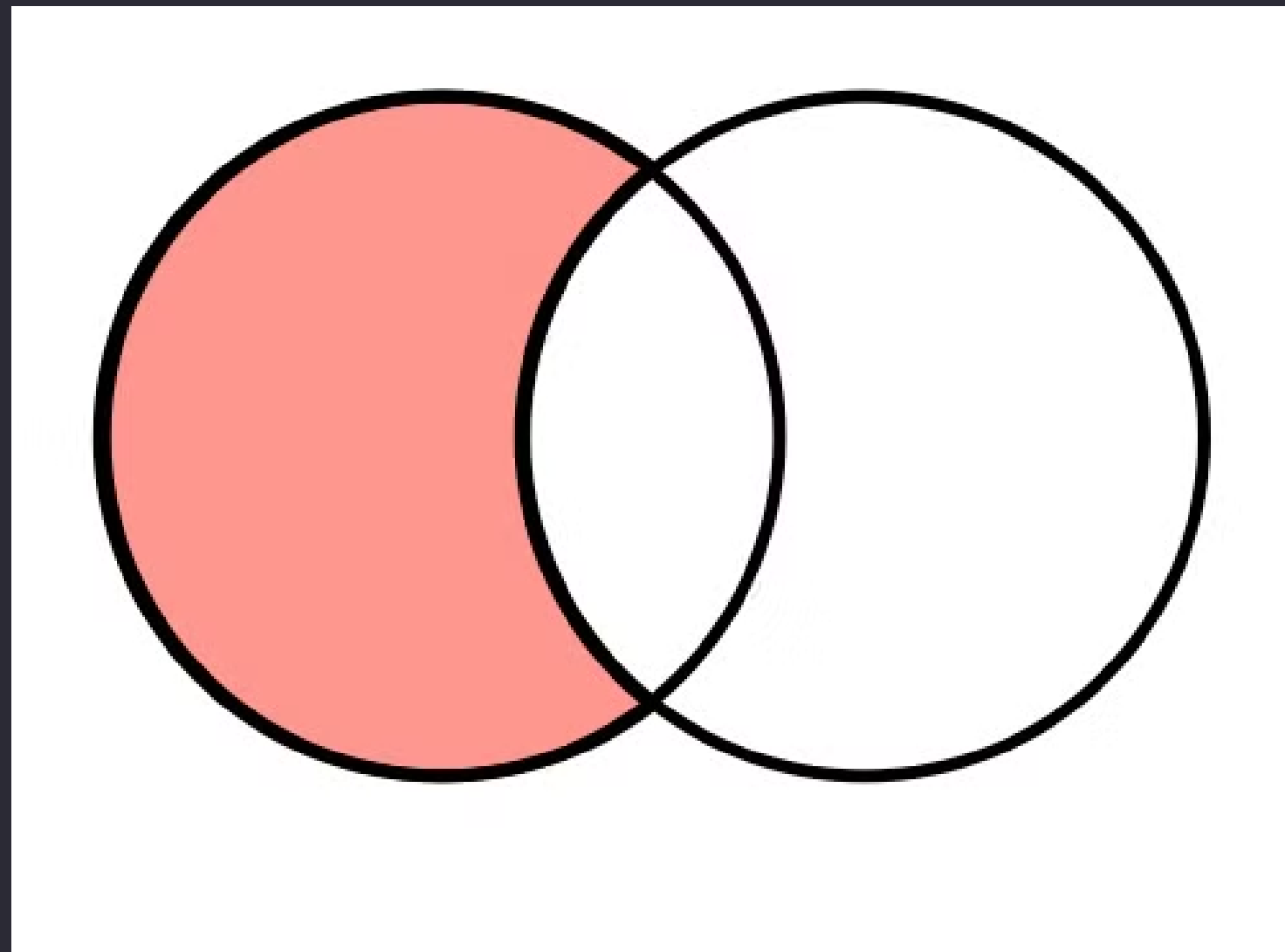
*you might use something
like this as a framework
for exploratory research*



*but still present
findings focused only
here.*



(and sometimes what matters
is what **doesn't** overlap.)





ONE GUY'S ADVICE ON HOW TO DO SOME CS

CLIENT
COMPANY
CATEGORY
CONSUMER

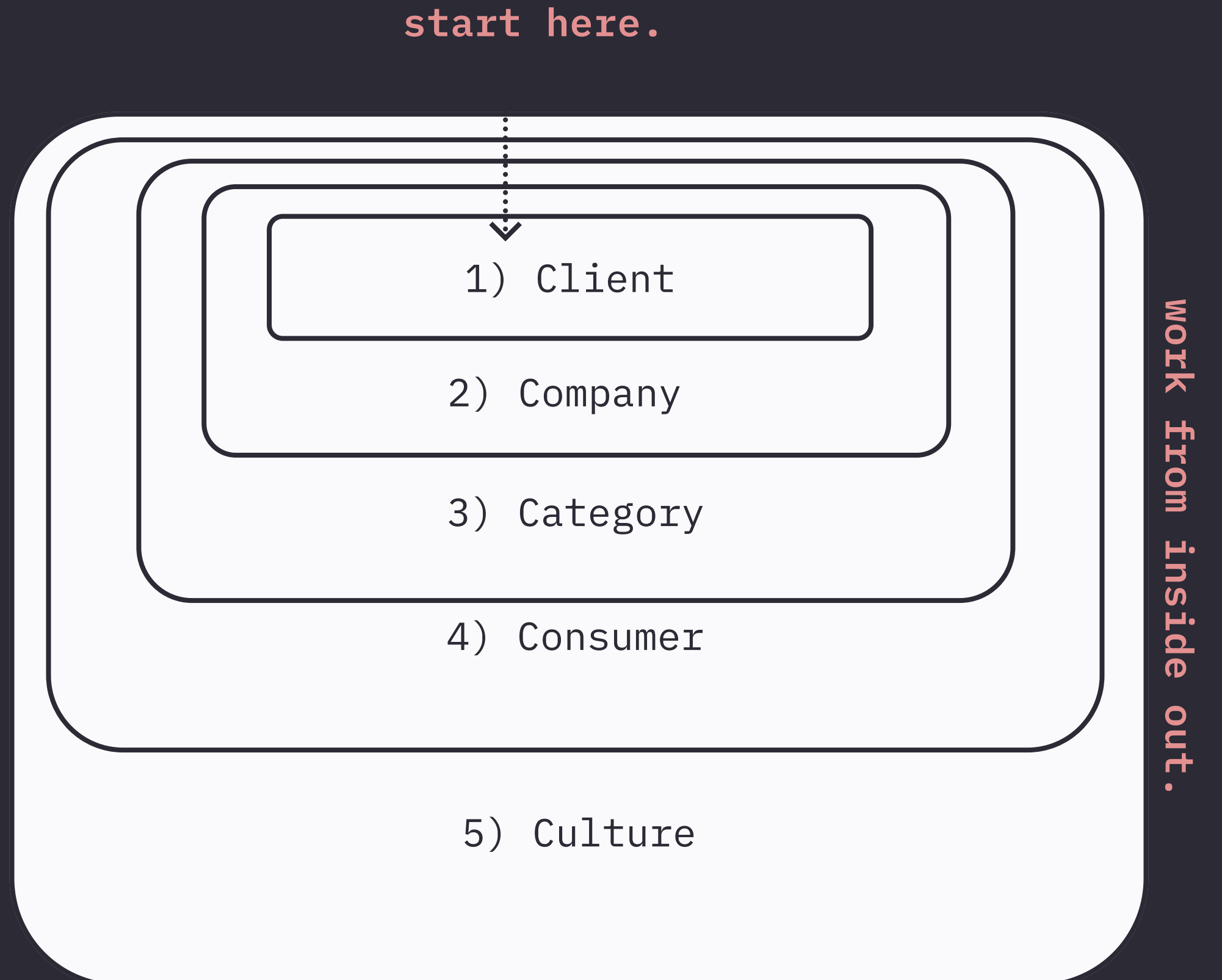
CULTURE, THE 5TH C.

HOW TO THINK ABOUT CULTURE, IF YOU MUST

THE TRUTH IS WE OFTEN BUY AND SELL IN THE IDEA OF CULTURAL FLUENCY AND IT'S IMPACT ON A BUSINESS. SO IF IT IS STILL GOING TO BE IN YOUR WORK, AT LEAST CONSIDER DOING IT LIKE THS...

ORDER OF OPERATIONS MATTERS

Nothing exists as it's own silo.
A company is part of a category.
Categories are defined by consumers.
All of this is submerged in culture.



EACH "C" HAS ITS OWN SET OF QUESTIONS

Client

Before we look out into the world, it is crucial to be completely aligned with the clients. This is the time to challenge the brief, talk about internal hurdles and risks.

QUESTIONS

What is the problem that needs to be solved?

- Is it a brand or product problem?
- Can advertising solve it?

What does success look like?

- in the long term? short term?

Are we looking to impact attitude or behavior?

What business context should influence our thinking?

- Where will growth come from?
- What other stakeholders exist?
- Are there other brands in portfolio to consider?
- Distribution/Manufacturing realities,
- Product surplus/shortage..

What does the client think from the get go?

- What's client's instinct for what will work?
- What are the biggest concerns they have?
- What are the risks? External and internal.
- What don't they want to see?

How will work be evaluated? Approved?
Who else will be involved?

EACH "C" HAS ITS OWN SET OF QUESTIONS

This is especially true the farther in you go.

Brand / Product (Company)

Starting here helps avoid the retrofitting later that occurs when you start with anything other than the brand, it's place in people's minds and the role the product plays.

Understand the brand, then look beyond it.

QUESTIONS

Is this a brand or a product issue?

Awareness, Salience, perception or Trial?

Do we need to...

- Correct negative perception
 - Remind of brand benefits
 - Bring brand to their attention
-

Where will growth come from?*

- New buyers to the category
 - Buyers stolen from competition
 - Same buyers, Increased Frequency
 - New buyers in new market
 - Who are the current buyers?
 - Why aren't people buying it?
-

Perception of the brand:

- Brand = product | Brand = benefit | Brand = product category | Brand represents domain expertise | Brand is origin | Brand represents style | Brand equals personality | Brand expresses an ideology or culture | Brand is low price | Brand is a luxury
-

What memory structures already exist?

Category

Write up about the objective, process, people involved.

QUESTIONS

- High vs. Low consideration?
- Category entry / purchase points?
- Where/when/with who is the category purchase?
- What motivates purchase in the category?
- Frequent vs. Infrequent purchase?
- Category barriers?
- What has worked/Not worked in category?
- What have/are competitors doing?
- What aren't they doing?

Consumer

Given what you find for the brand, the category, and the product, what is relevant beyond the world of business?

“People” and “culture” are such broad spaces, we need to have a sense of what we’re looking for before we dive in.

QUESTIONS pg 1 (Consumer Basics)

- Demographics
 - Region
 - Age
 - Sex
 - Media Consumption
 - Income
 - Family (married, kids, etc)
- Psychographics
 - Who are they/how do they see themselves?
 - Behaviors/Anxieties/Fears/Beliefs
 - Future optimism
 - Self descriptors

QUESTIONS pg 2 (Consumer x Product)

- Satisficing vs. Maximizing brand?
 - Satisficing: goal = loss aversion
 - Maximizing: goal = product/brand benefit
- Consumption/Purchase moments
 - In the presence of others?
 - Purchase frequency? Associated emotions?
- Functional AND emotional brand/product benefits? Why do these benefits matter to them?
- What is the context of the product usage? What really matters in these moments? What happens if they don't have what they need?

CULTURE

An uncomfortable relationship between alcohol and mental health

THE CONSUMER

THE CATEGORY Provenance is not a differentiator

A brand that is able to flex

Healthy planet, healthy mind, healthy body

Moderation versus hedonism

Brands must earn their right to play in a cultural sphere

Cultural connection

BRAND & BUSINESS

Product credentials

Needs redefining as craft and non-alcoholic grow

Alternative methods of intoxication are growing

A growing trend towards moderation

A global brand that's instantly recognised

Smirnoff are present and salient in the LGBTQ space

Health, both mental and physical is their number one priority

Entertainment and indulging passions as relief from the pressures of daily life

THE



END

thank you to everyone who commented, emailed or otherwise expressed an interest.

<https://stratscraps.substack.com/>



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