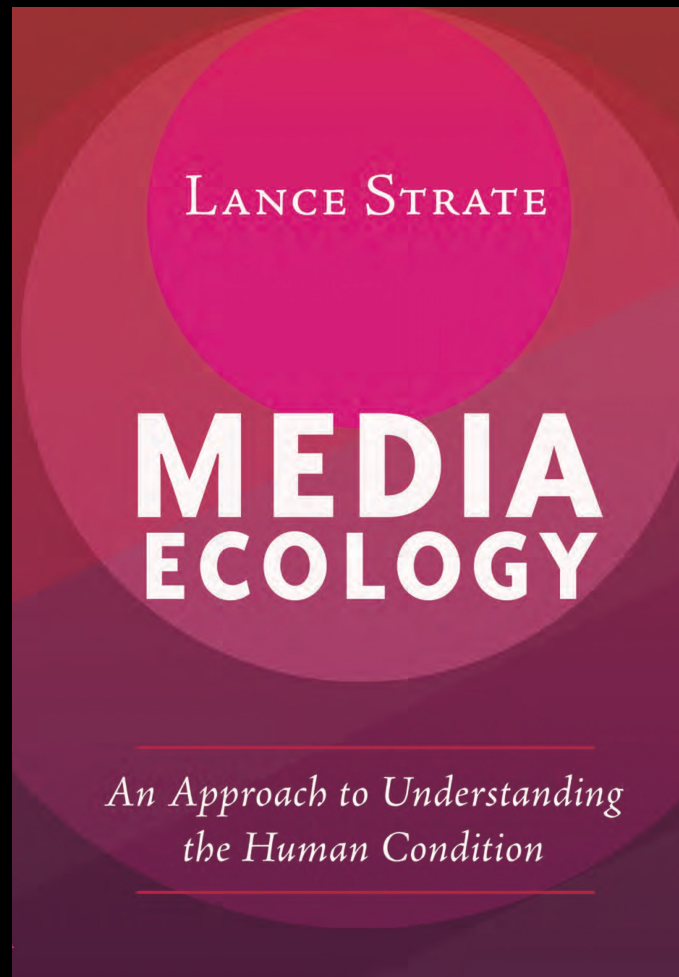
Media Ecology
the Human Condition
and
Ethical Evaluation

Lance Strate



Blessing

Curse

Benefit

Cost

Stupidity

Media Ecology

~~Stupidity~~

Media Ecology

Sanity

Communication

Messages

Means
Methods
Modes
Mediation

Media

Communication

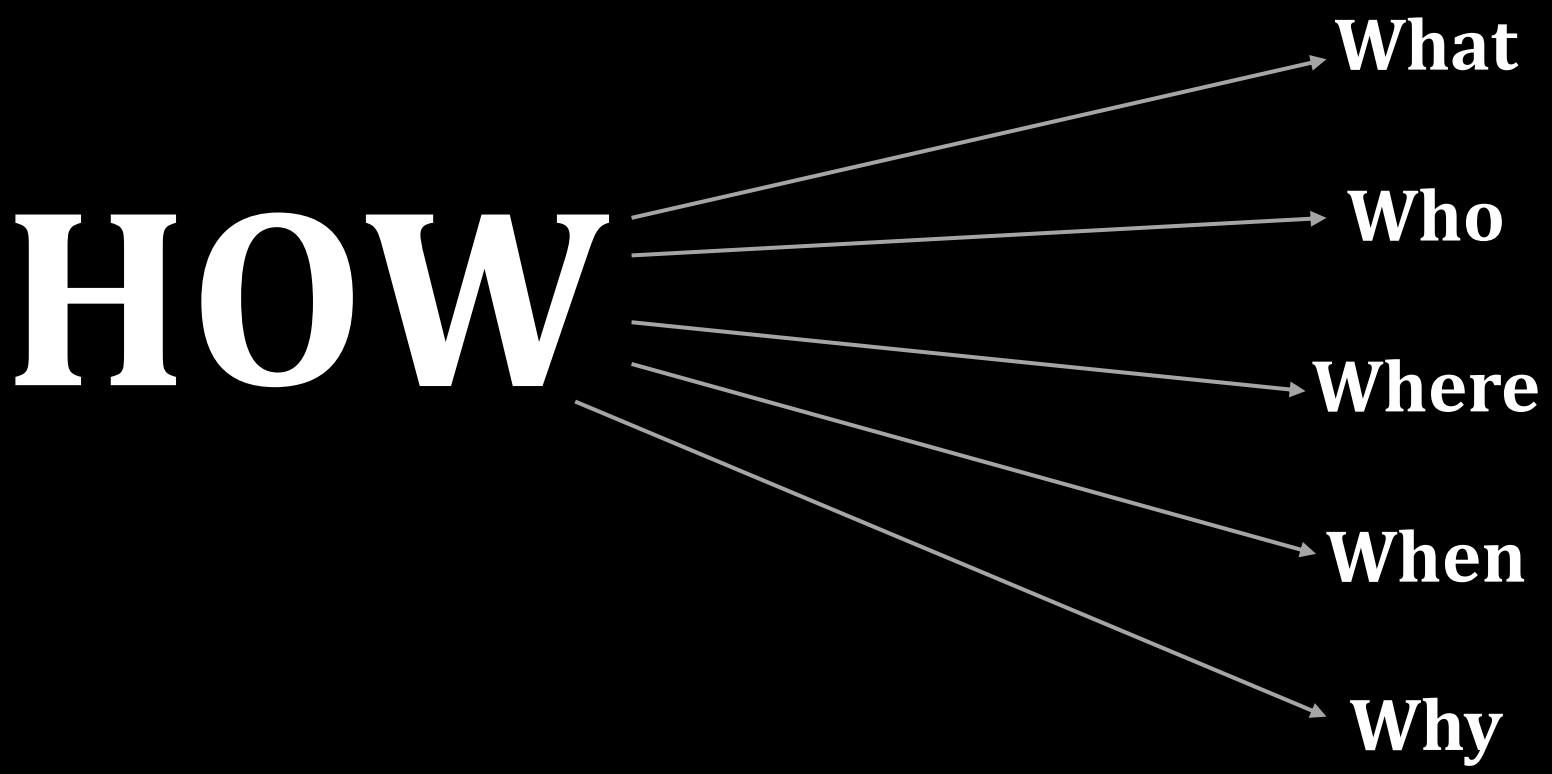
Messages

Media

HOW?

Communication

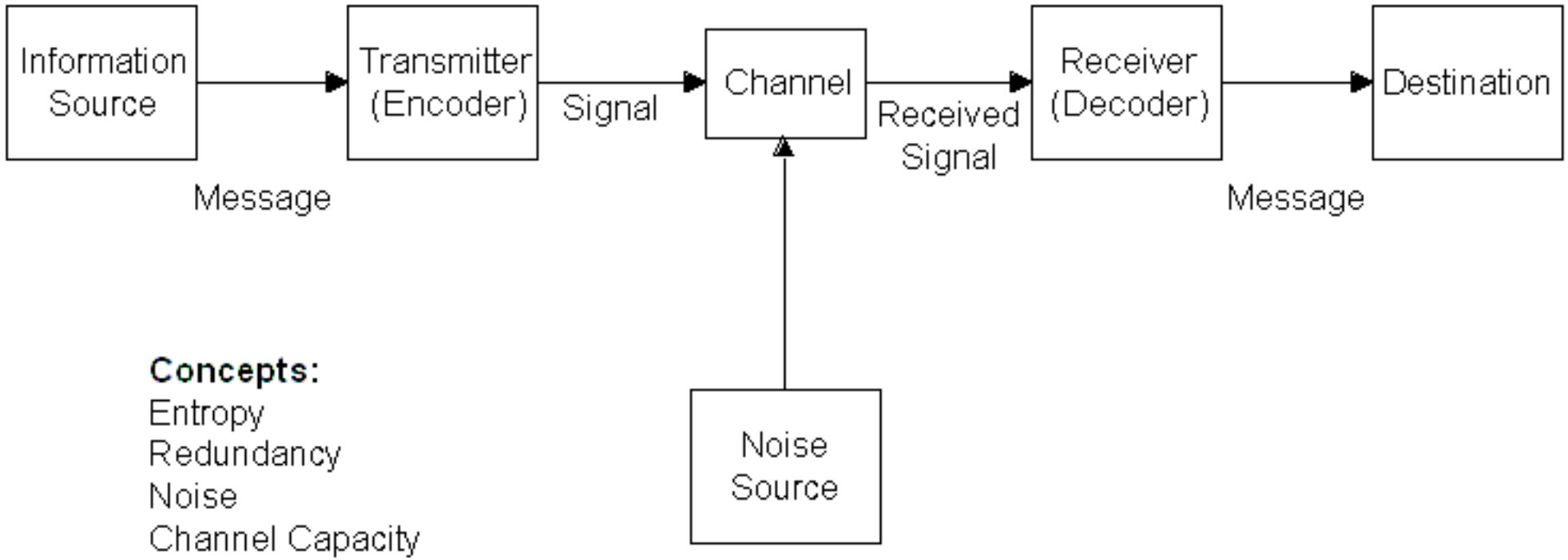
Messages



Marshall McLuhan

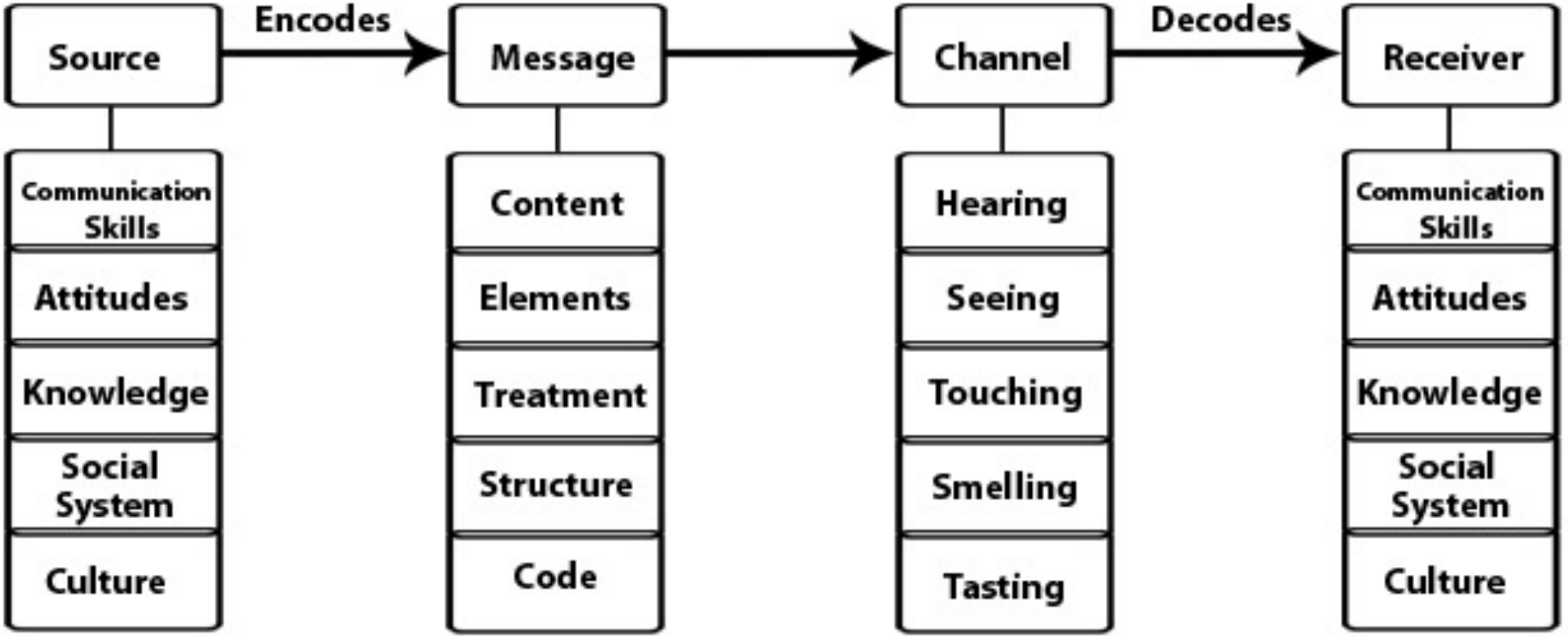
The Medium Is The Message

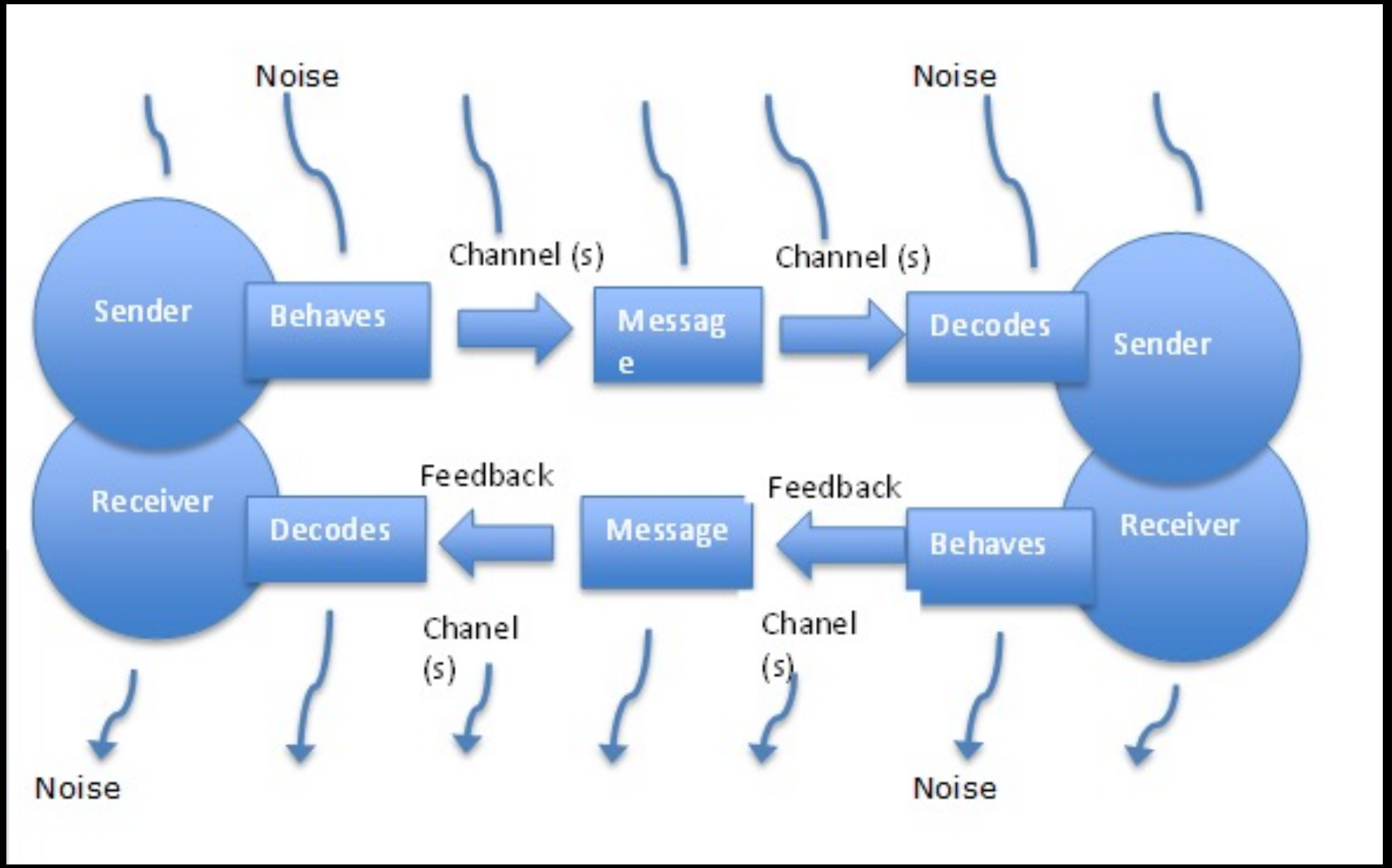
The Shannon-Weaver Mathematical Model, 1949

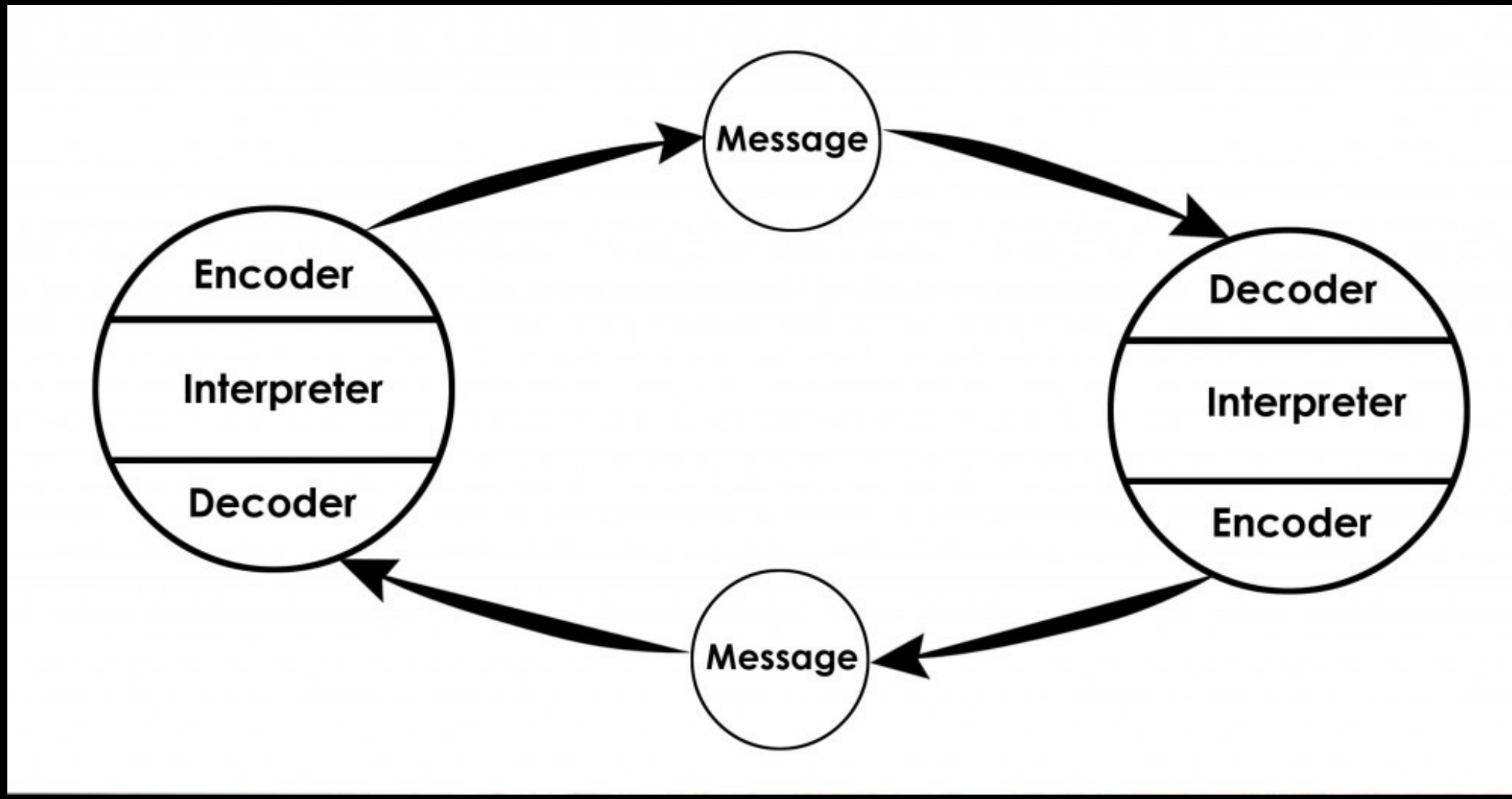


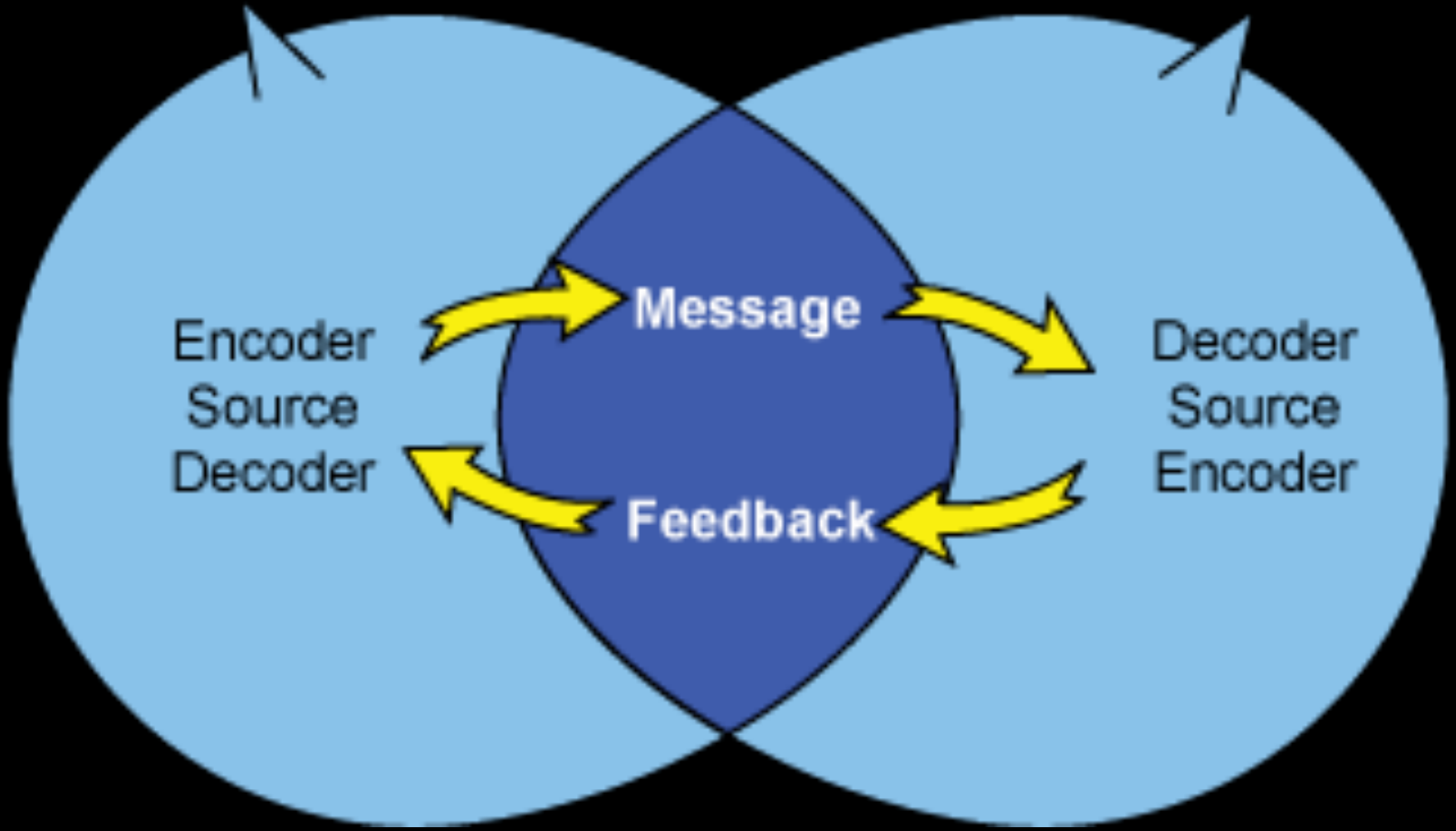
Concepts:
Entropy
Redundancy
Noise
Channel Capacity

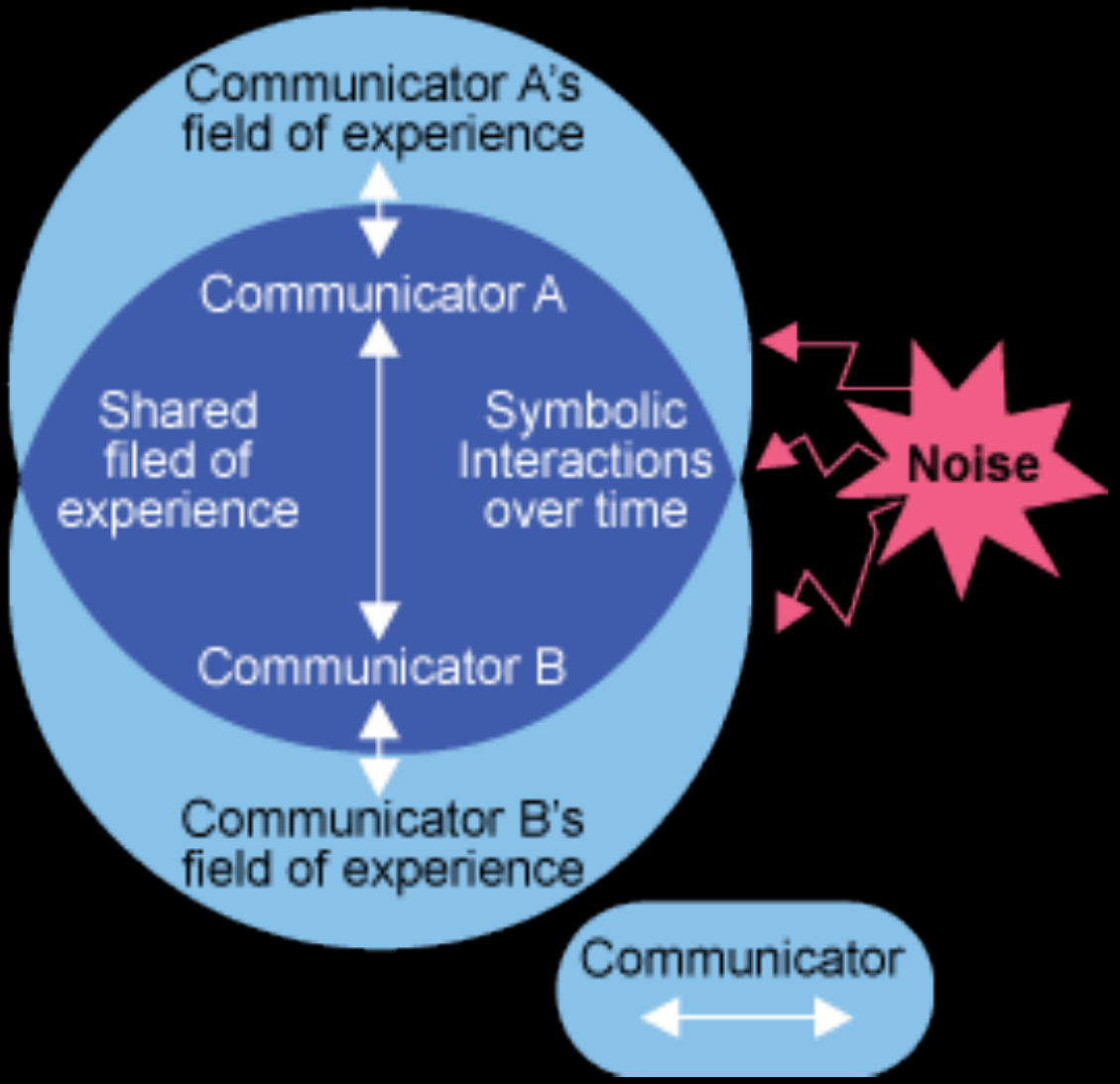
Berlos's SMCR Model of communication



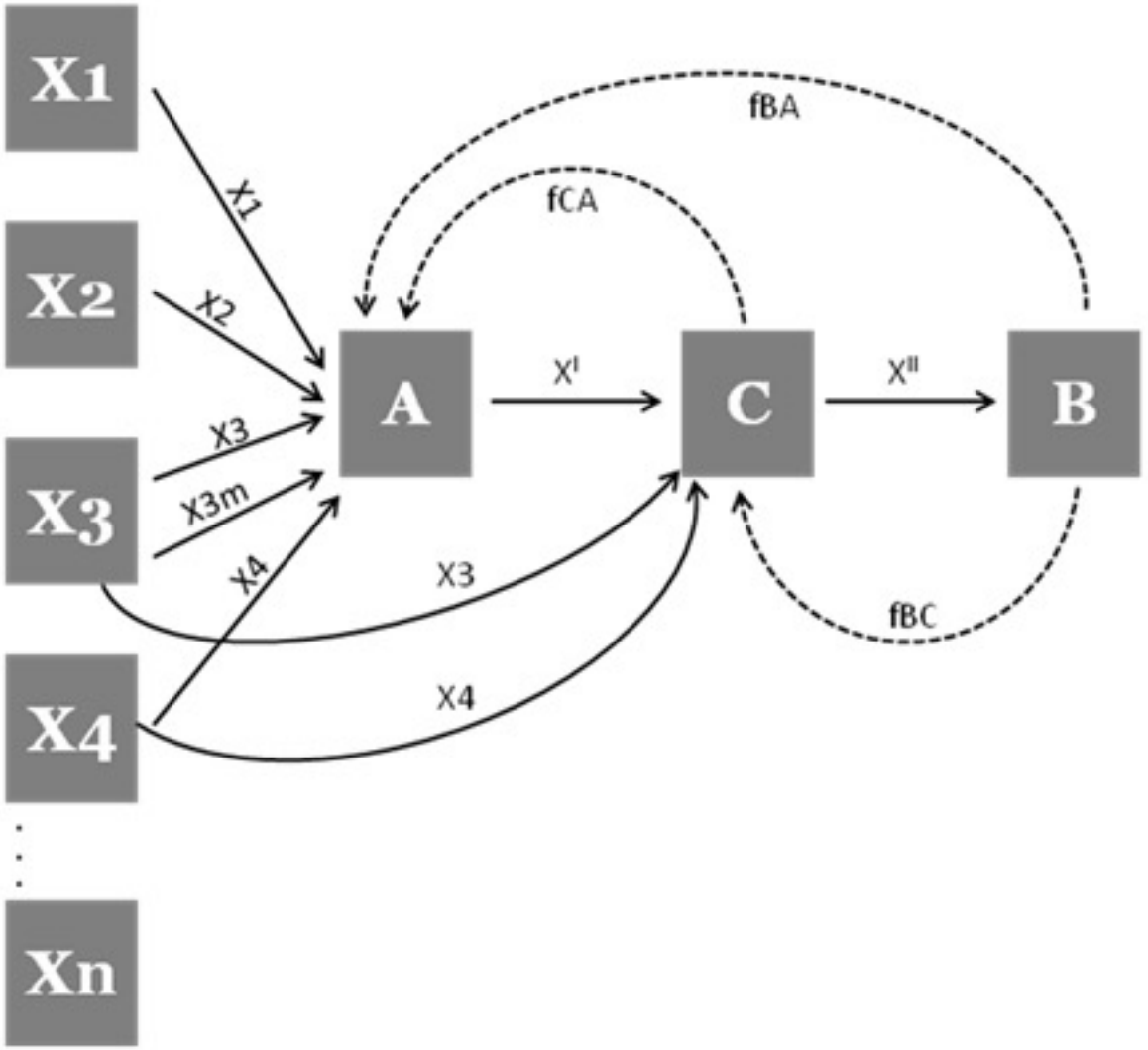

Noise
Noise
Sender
Behaves
Channel (s)
Messag
e
Channel (s)
Decodes
Sender
Receiver
Decodes
Feedback
Message
Feedback
Behaves
Receiver
Chanel
(s)
Chanel
(s)
Noise
Noise

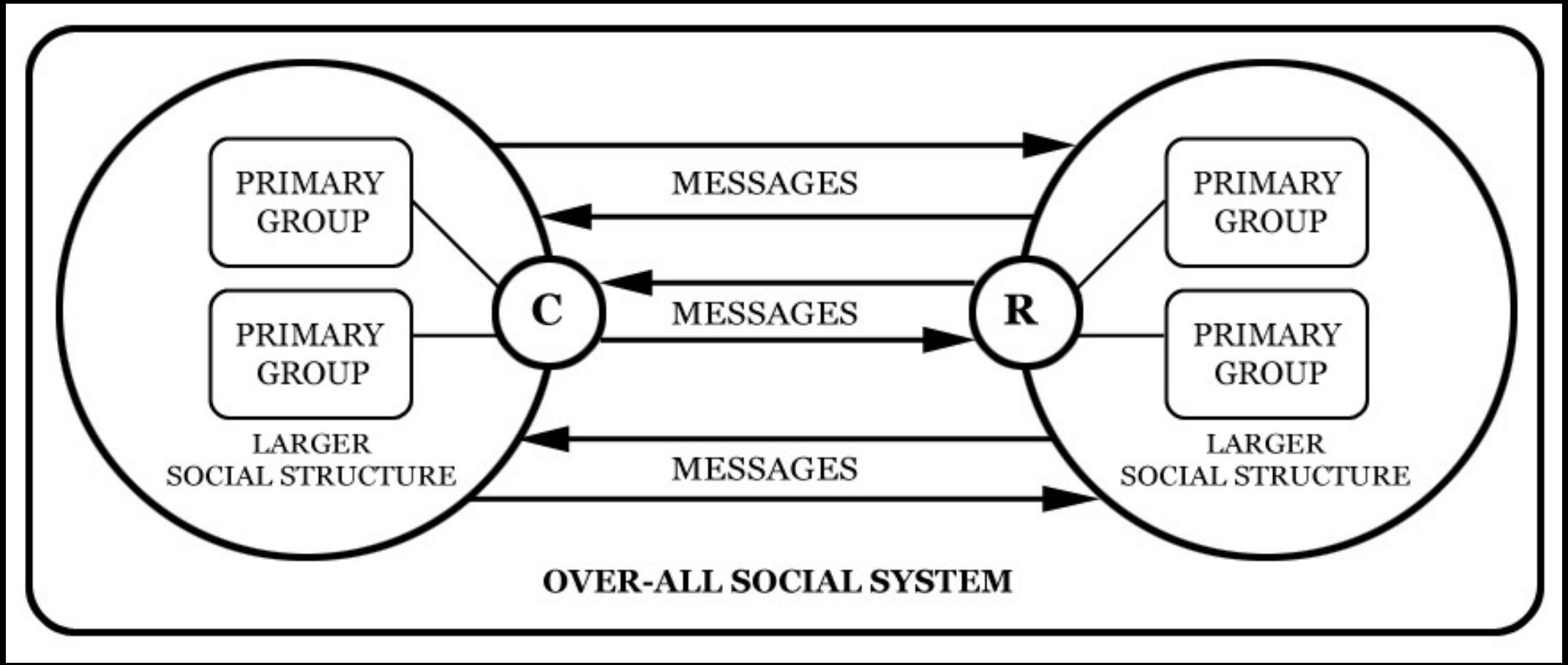

Message
Encoder
Interpreter
Decoder
Decoder
Interpreter
Encoder
Message

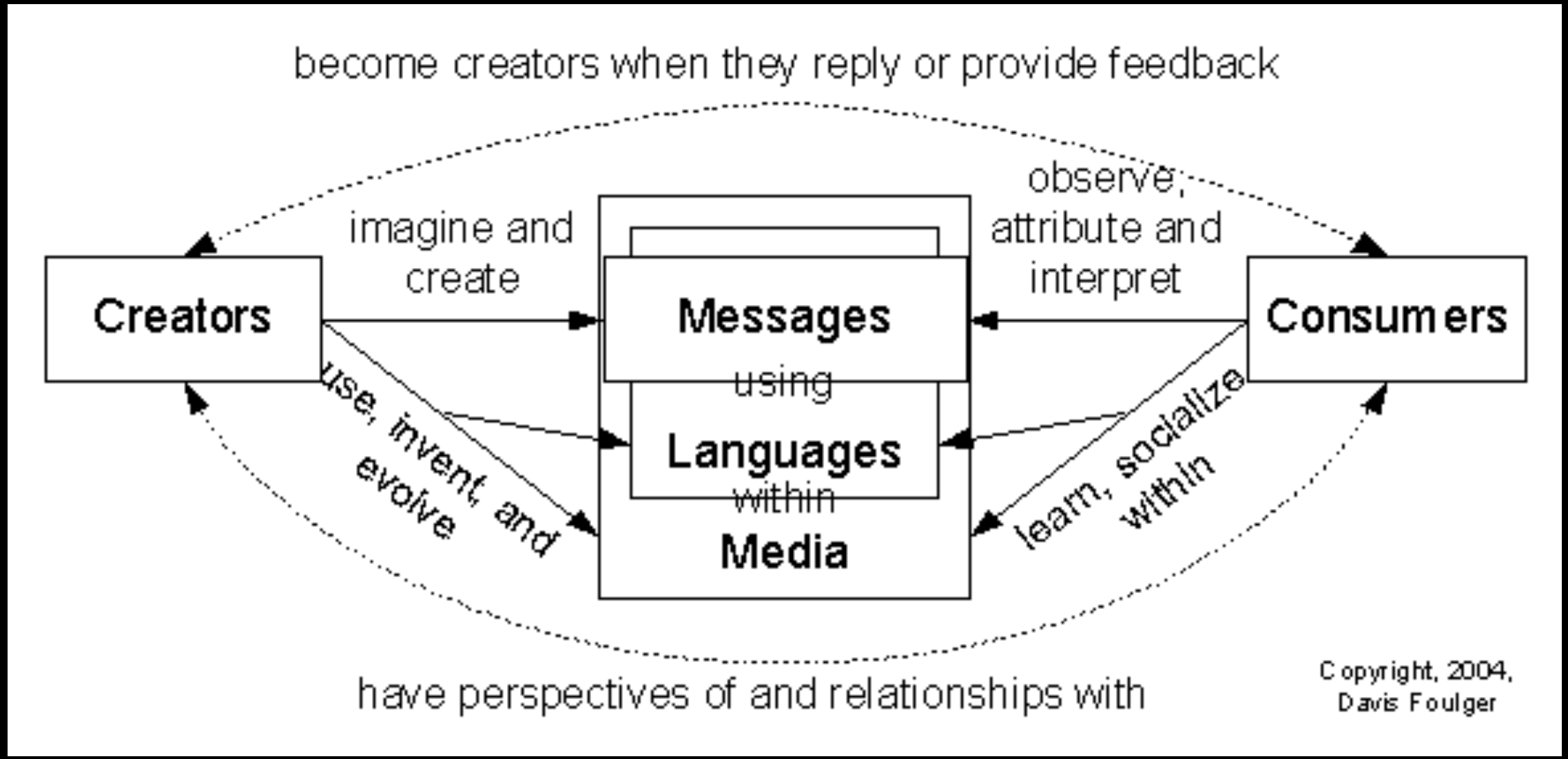

Encoder
Source
Decoder
Message
Feedback
Decoder
Source
Encoder


Communicator A's field of experience
Communicator A
Shared filed of experience
Symbolic Interactions over time
Communicator B
Communicator B's field of experience
Noise
Communicator

Westley and MacLean's Model of Communication




PRIMARY GROUP
PRIMARY GROUP
LARGER SOCIAL STRUCTURE
C
MESSAGES
MESSAGES
MESSAGES
R
PRIMARY GROUP
PRIMARY GROUP
LARGER SOCIAL STRUCTURE
OVER-ALL SOCIAL SYSTEM


become creators when they reply or provide feedback
imagine and create
observe; attribute and interpret
Creators
Messages
Consumers
using
Languages
within
Media
use, invent, and evolve
learn, socialize within
have perspectives of and relationships with
Copyright, 2004, Davis Foulger

Standard View of Communication:

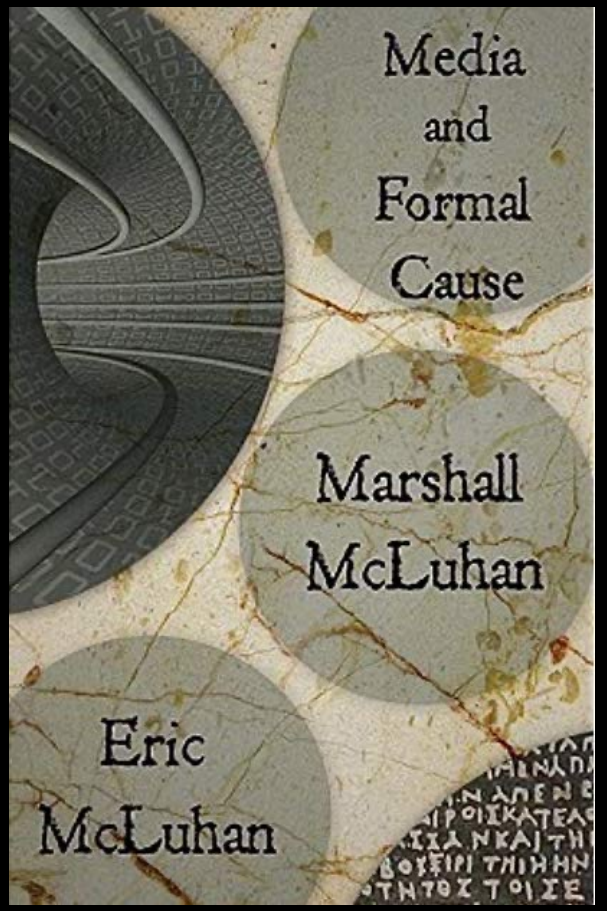
- Transportation
- Pipeline
- Transmission

Vs.

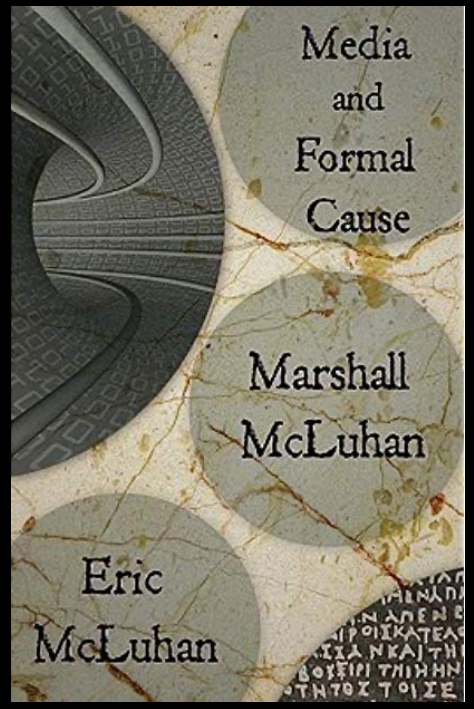
Media Ecology View of Communication:

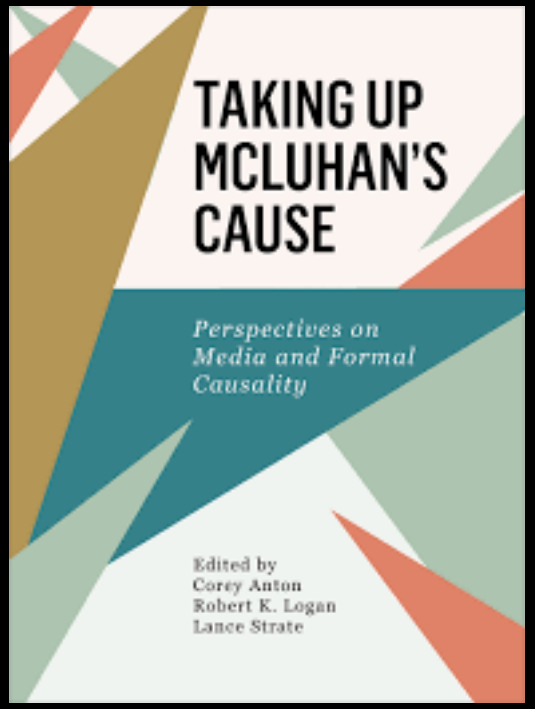
- Transformation (Marshall McLuhan)
- Resonance (Tony Schwartz)
- Ritual (James W. Carey)
- Environment

Formal Cause

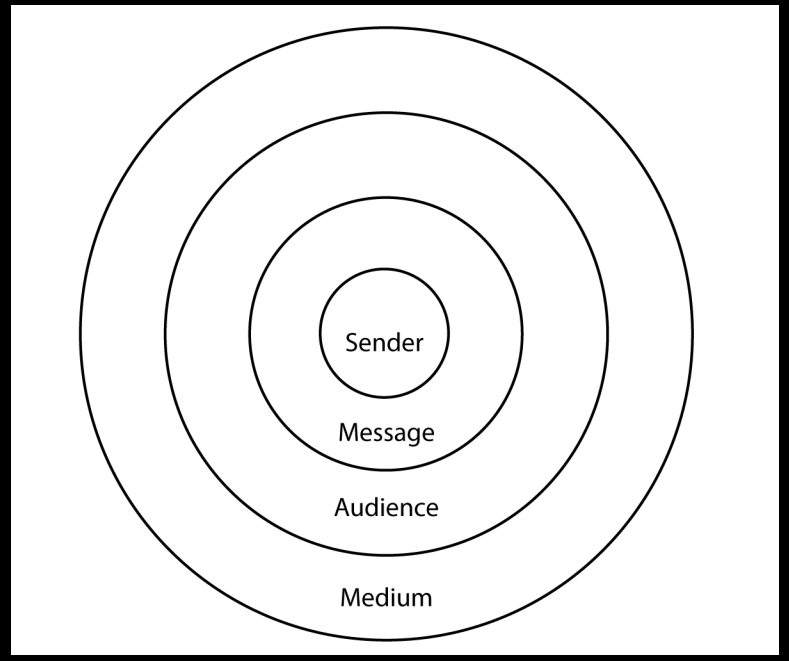


Formal Cause

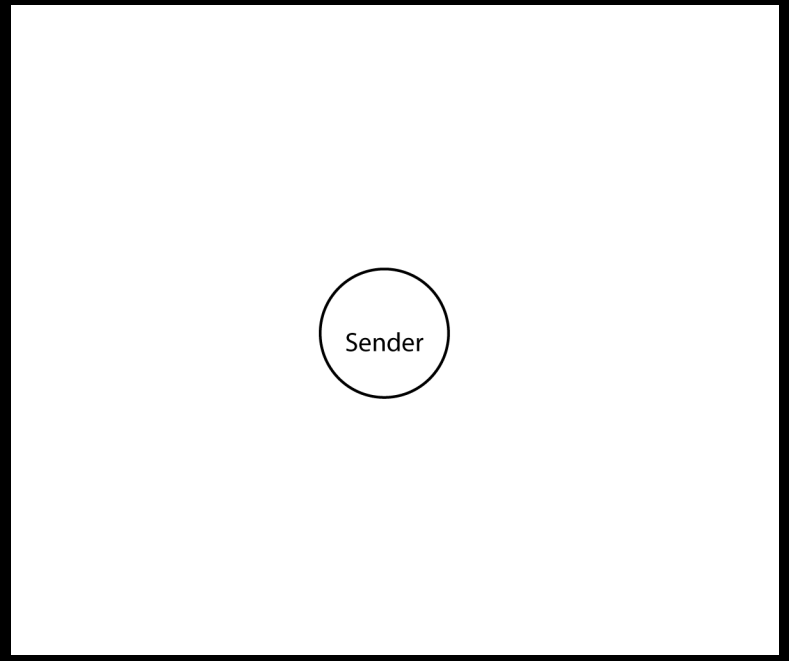




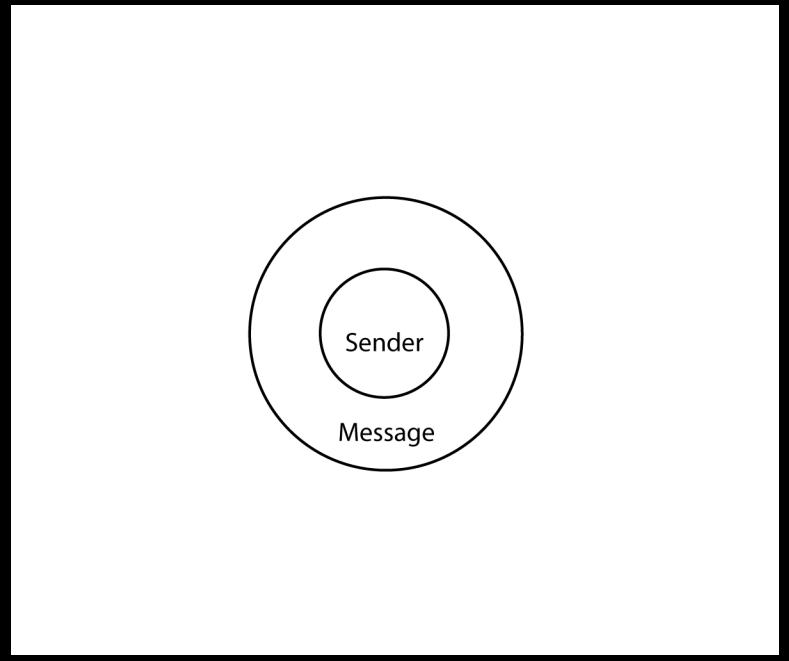
Formal Cause



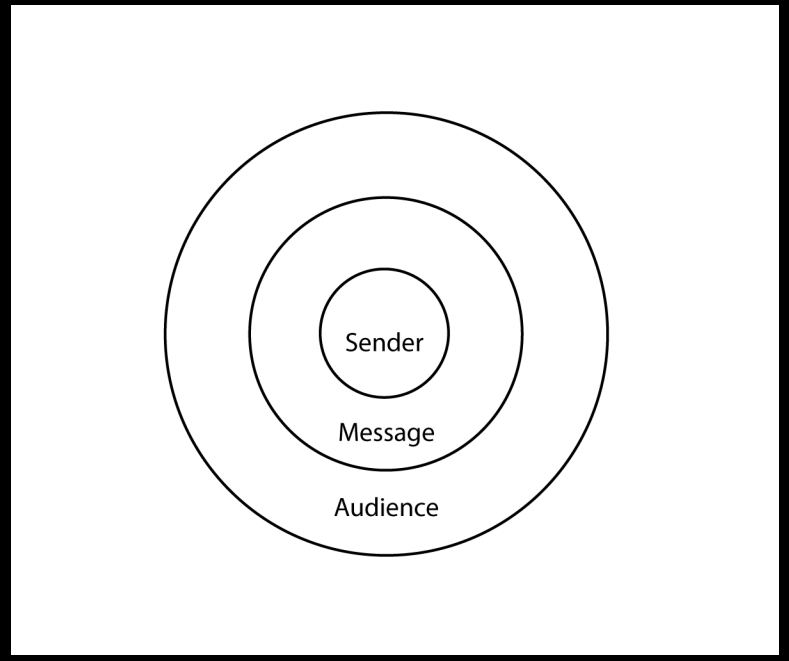
Formal Cause



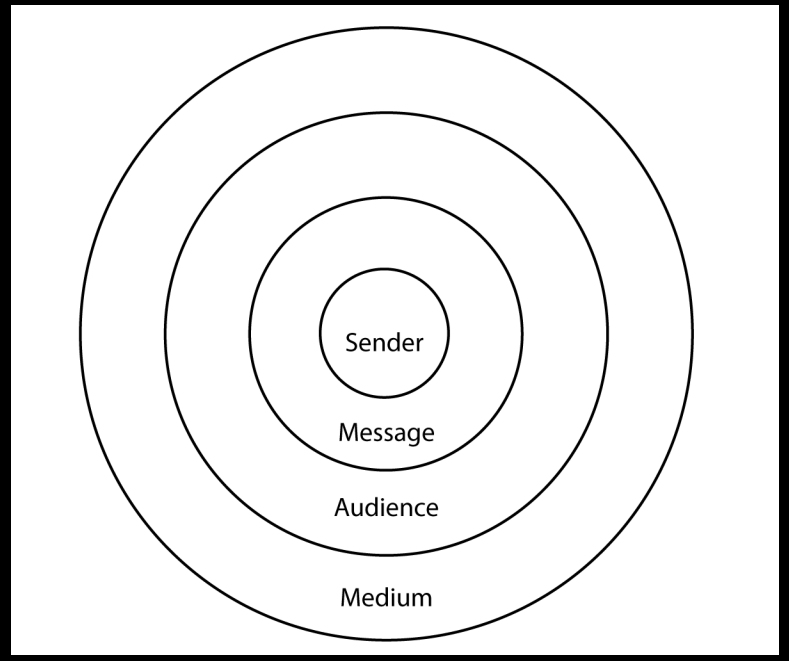
Formal Cause



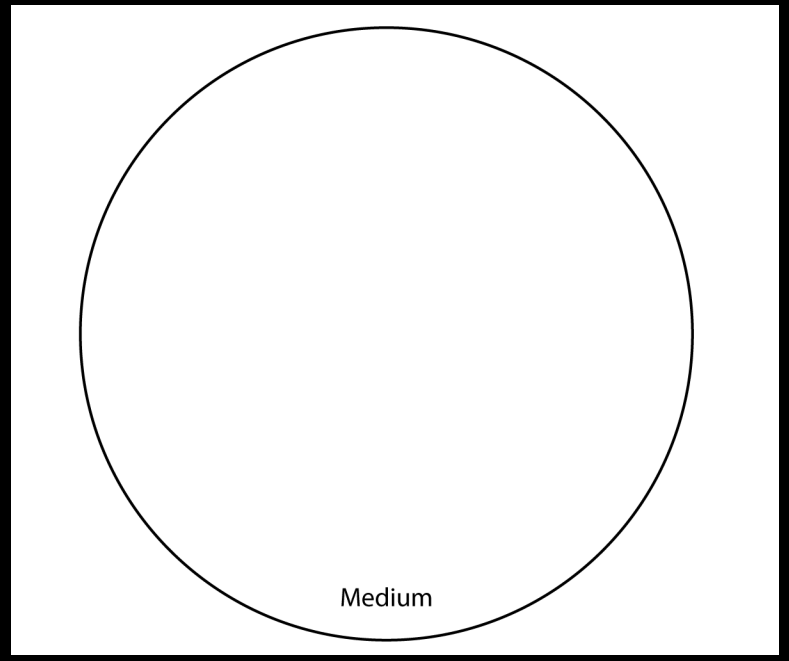
Formal Cause



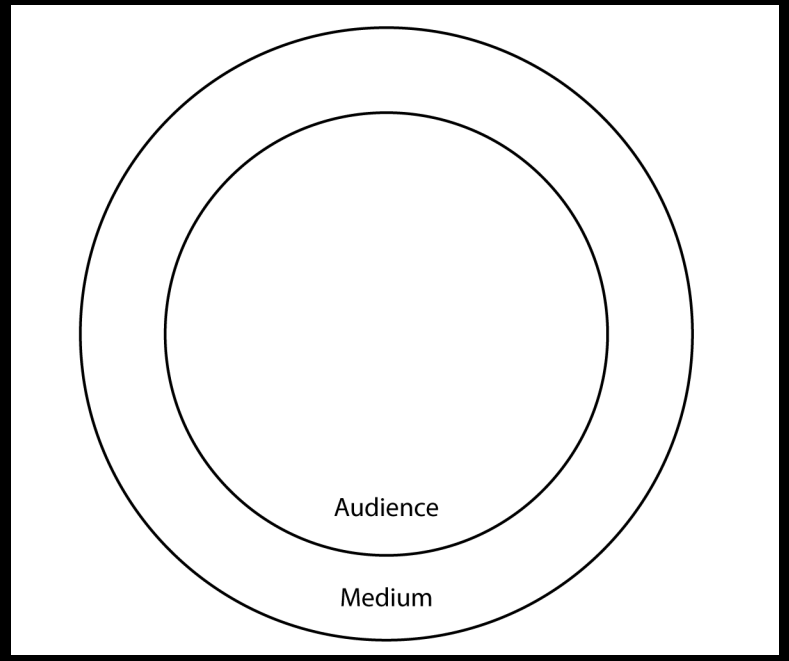
Formal Cause



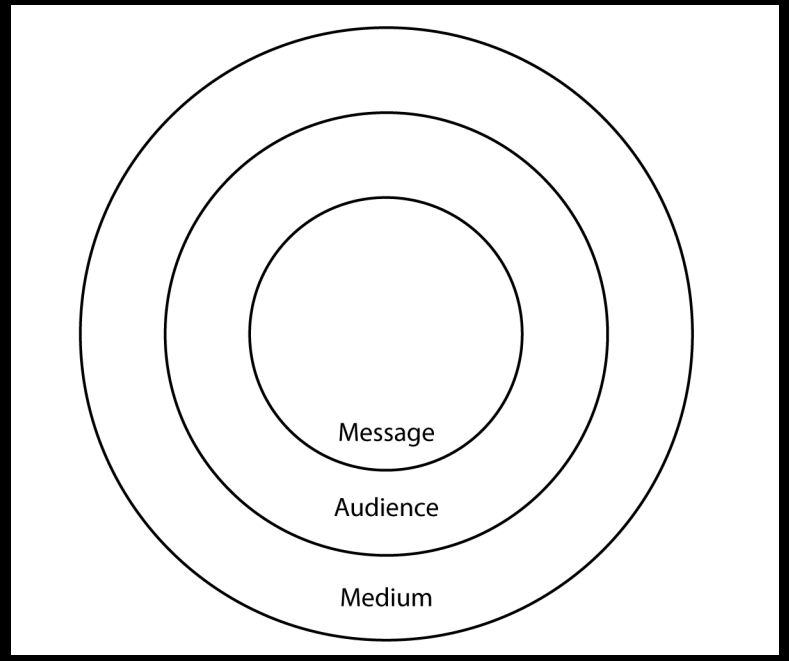
Formal Cause



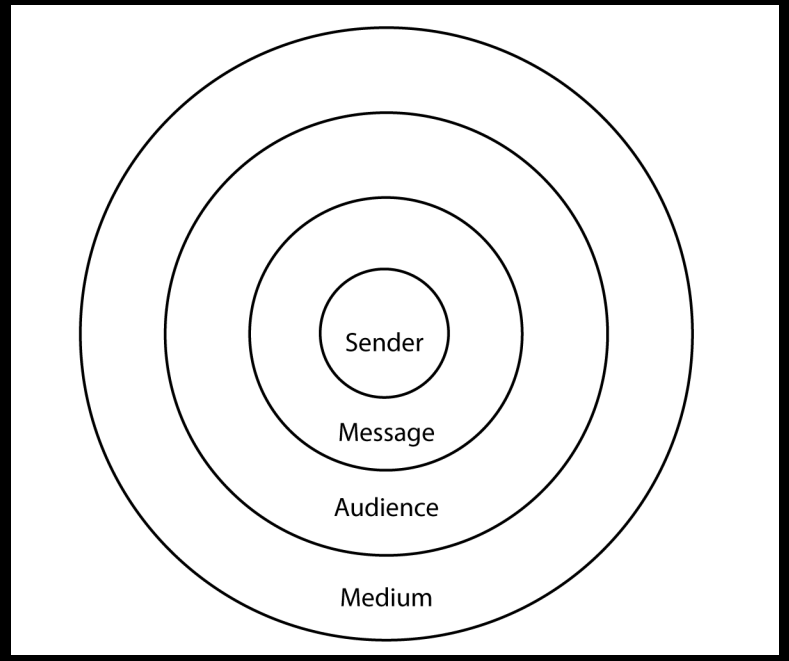
Formal Cause



Formal Cause



Formal Cause



Neil Postman

Media Ecology

the study of
media
as
environments

Neil Postman

“An environment is, after all, a complex message system which imposes on human beings certain ways of thinking, feeling, and behaving. It structures what we can see, and say, and, therefore, do. It assigns roles to us and insists on our playing them. It specifies what we are permitted to do and what we are not.”

Media Ecology

the study of media as environments

and

the study of environments as media

Media Ecology

media

=

environments

Media Ecology

media

=

environments

=

conditions

Lance Strate

MEDIA ECOLOGY

An Approach to Understanding the Human Condition

HANNAH ARENDT

THE HUMAN CONDITION

With an Introduction by Margaret Canovan

SECOND EDITION

LANCE STRATE

MEDIA ECOLOGY

An Approach to Understanding the Human Condition

Conditions

Conditions

- ✓the conditions of life on earth

Conditions

- ✓the conditions of life on earth
- ✓the conditions we create

Conditions

- ✓the conditions of life on earth
- ✓the conditions we create

"All forms of life modify their contexts"
–Lynn White, Jr.

Conditions

we create
the conditions that
condition us

John Culkin

we shape our tools
and thereafter
they shape us

the medium is the message

Conditions

Environment

Media

Conditions

external

+

internal

Three Basic Types of Media/Environments/Conditions

Three Basic Types of Media/Environments/Conditions

✓Symbolic

Three Basic Types of Media/Environments/Conditions

✓Symbolic
✓Technological

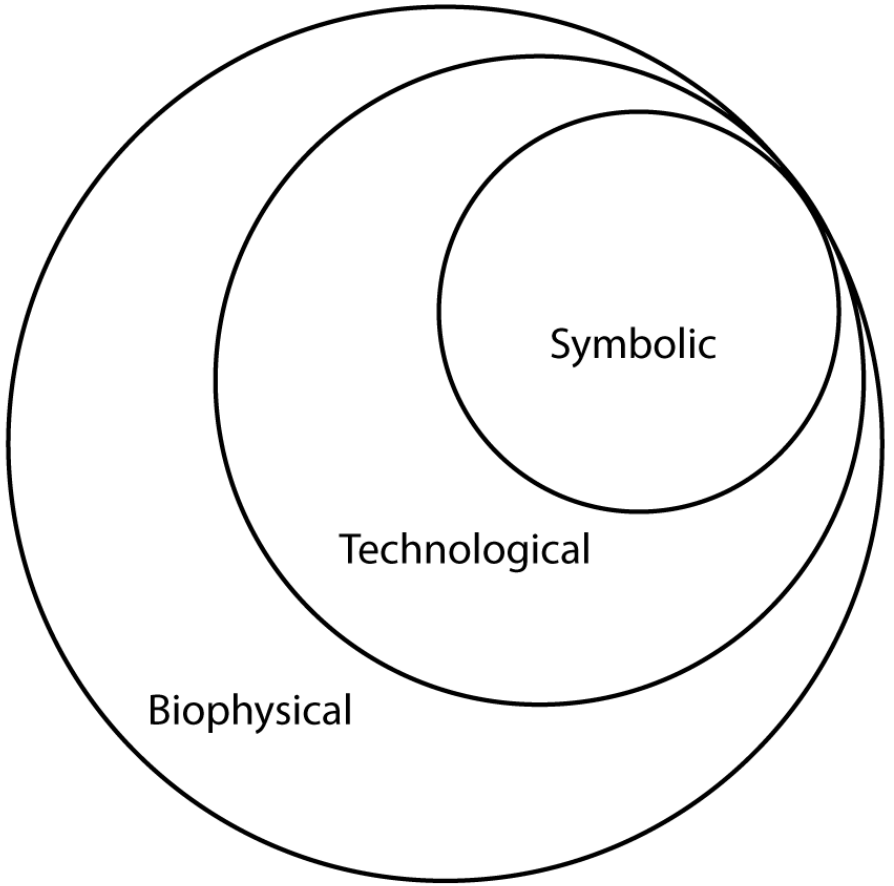
Three Basic Types of Media/Environments/Conditions

✓Symbolic
✓Technological
✓Biophysical

LANCE STRATE

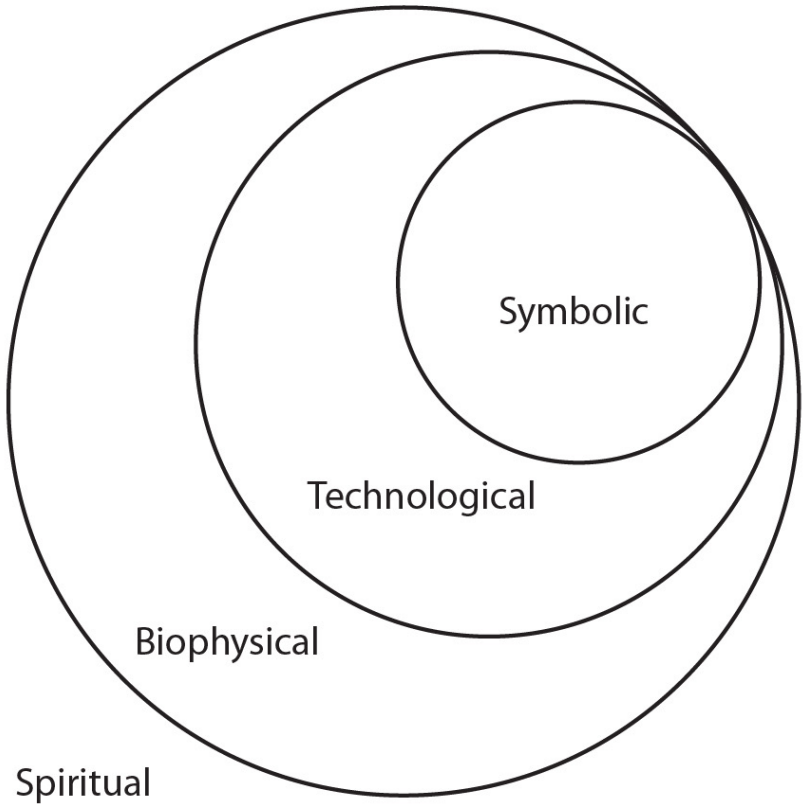
MEDIA ECOLOGY

An Approach to Understanding the Human Condition



Four Basic Types of Media/Environments/Conditions

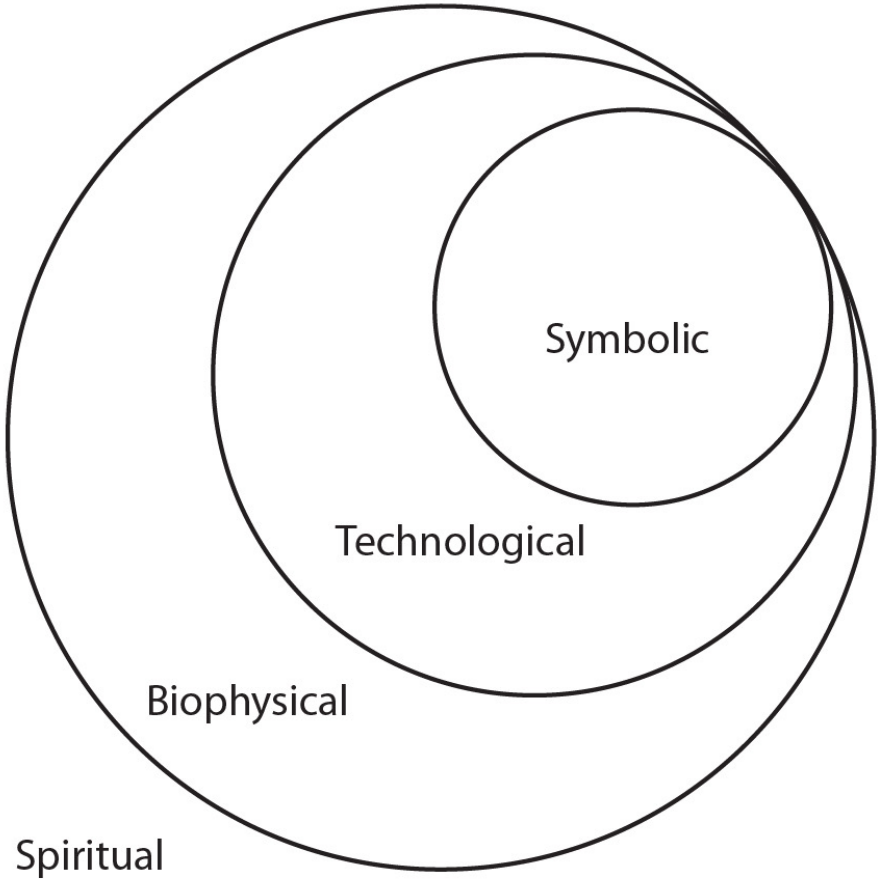
- ✓Symbolic
- ✓Technological
- ✓Biophysical
- ✓Spiritual



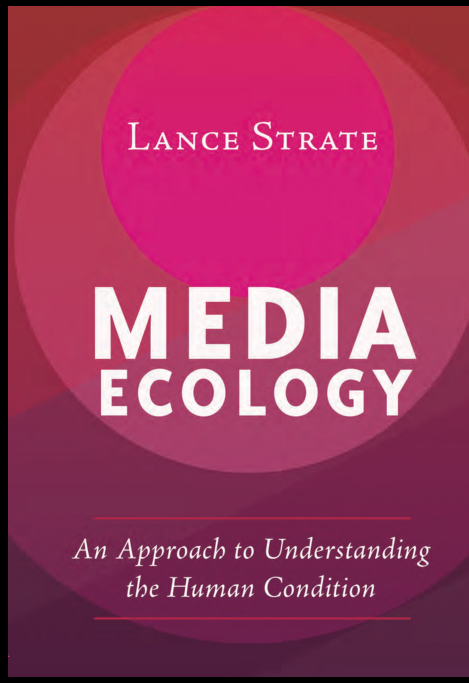
LANCE STRATE

MEDIA ECOLOGY

An Approach to Understanding the Human Condition



Understanding Media = Understanding the Human Condition



Ethics

Ethics

=

Media

Ethics

The Message of the Medium:

Ethics

The Message of the Medium:

- ✓Rules

Ethics

The Message of the Medium:

- ✓Rules
- ✓Negation

Ethics

The Message of the Medium:

- ✓Rules
- ✓Negation
- ✓Empathy

Ethics

Oral Media Environment:

Ethics

Oral Media Environment:

- ✓concrete (e.g., parables, sayings)

Ethics

Oral Media Environment:

- ✓concrete (e.g., parables, sayings)
- ✓strongly adhered to

Ethics

Oral Media Environment:

- ✓concrete (e.g., parables, sayings)
- ✓strongly adhered to
- ✓particularistic

Ethics

Chirographic/Typographic Media Environment:

Ethics

Chirographic/Typographic Media Environment:

- ✓abstract (e.g., commandments, philosophy)

Ethics

Chirographic/Typographic Media Environment:

- ✓abstract (e.g., commandments, philosophy)
- ✓universal

Ethics

Chirographic/Typographic Media Environment:

- ✓abstract (e.g., commandments, philosophy)
- ✓universal
- ✓individual decision-making (conscience)

Ethics

Electronic Media Environment:

Ethics

Electronic Media Environment:

- ✓concrete (e.g., audiovisual media)

Ethics

Electronic Media Environment:

- ✓concrete (e.g., audiovisual media)
- ✓images eliciting moral outrage

Ethics

Electronic Media Environment:

- ✓concrete (e.g., audiovisual media)
- ✓images eliciting moral outrage
- ✓relativism

Media Ecology Ethics

Media Ecology Ethics

The medium is the morality

Media Ecology Ethics

“The ends cannot justify the means, for the simple and obvious reason that the means employed determine the nature of the ends produced.” –Aldous Huxley

Media Ecology

medium

=

means

=

how?

Technological Imperative

efficiency

=

meta-means

ought

Media Ecology Ethics

- ✓Questions

Media Ecology Ethics

- ✓Questions
- ✓Context

Media Ecology Ethics

- ✓Questions
- ✓Context
- ✓Balance

Media Ecology Ethics

- ✓Questions
- ✓Context
- ✓Balance
- ✓Change, Transformation and Evolution

Media Ecology Ethics

- ✓Questions
- ✓Context
- ✓Balance
- ✓Change, Transformation and Evolution
- ✓Progress

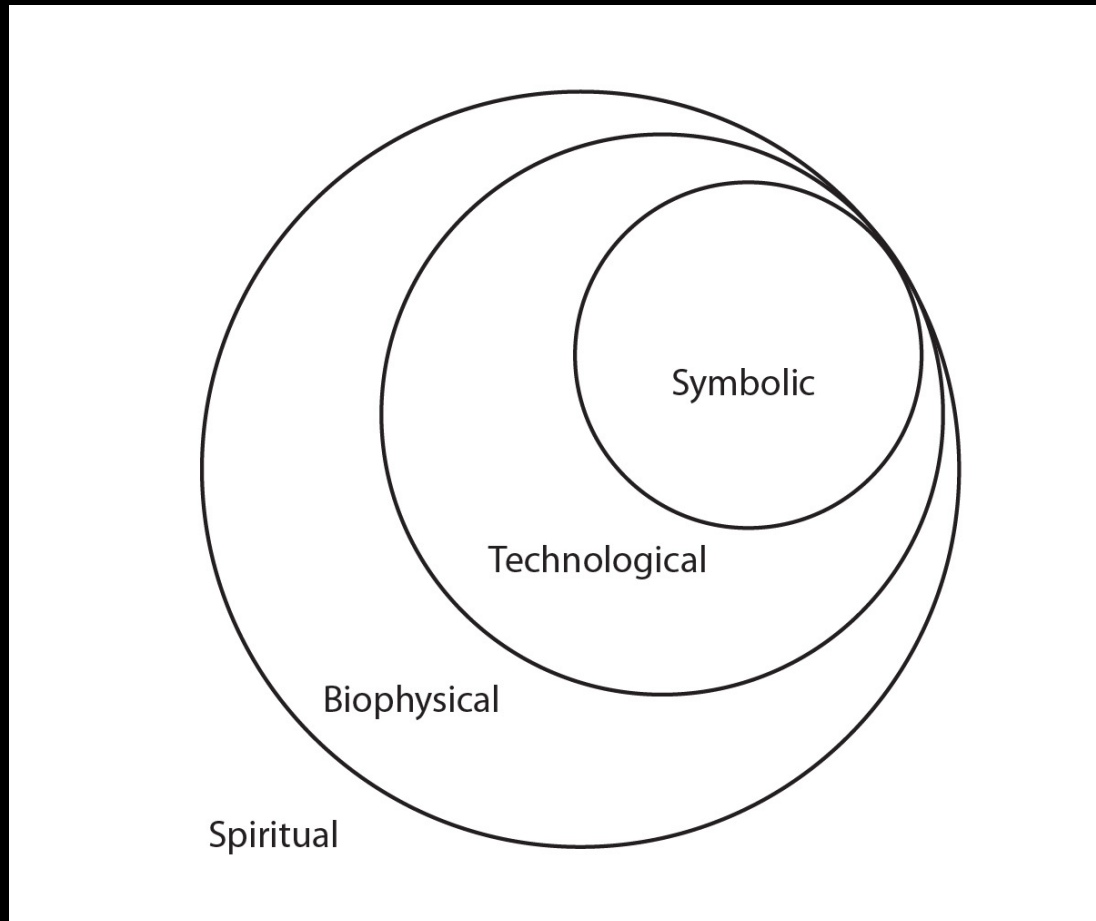
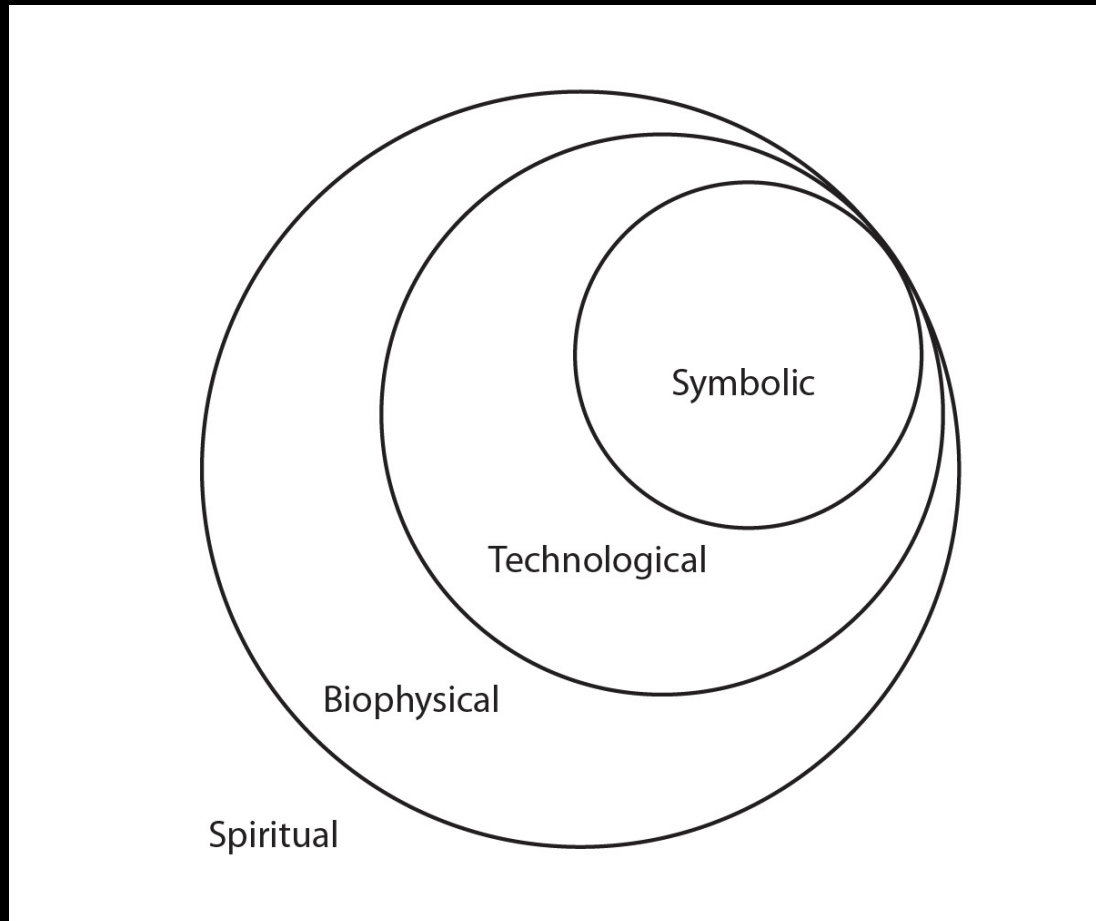
Media Ecology Ethics

- ✓Questions
- ✓Context
- ✓Balance
- ✓Change, Transformation and Evolution
- ✓Progress
- ✓Truth, Facts, Science

Media Ecology Ethics

- ✓Questions
- ✓Context
- ✓Balance
- ✓Change, Transformation and Evolution
- ✓Progress
- ✓Truth, Facts, Science
- ✓Time

Media Ecology Ethics



Media Ecology