Some Challenges of Color

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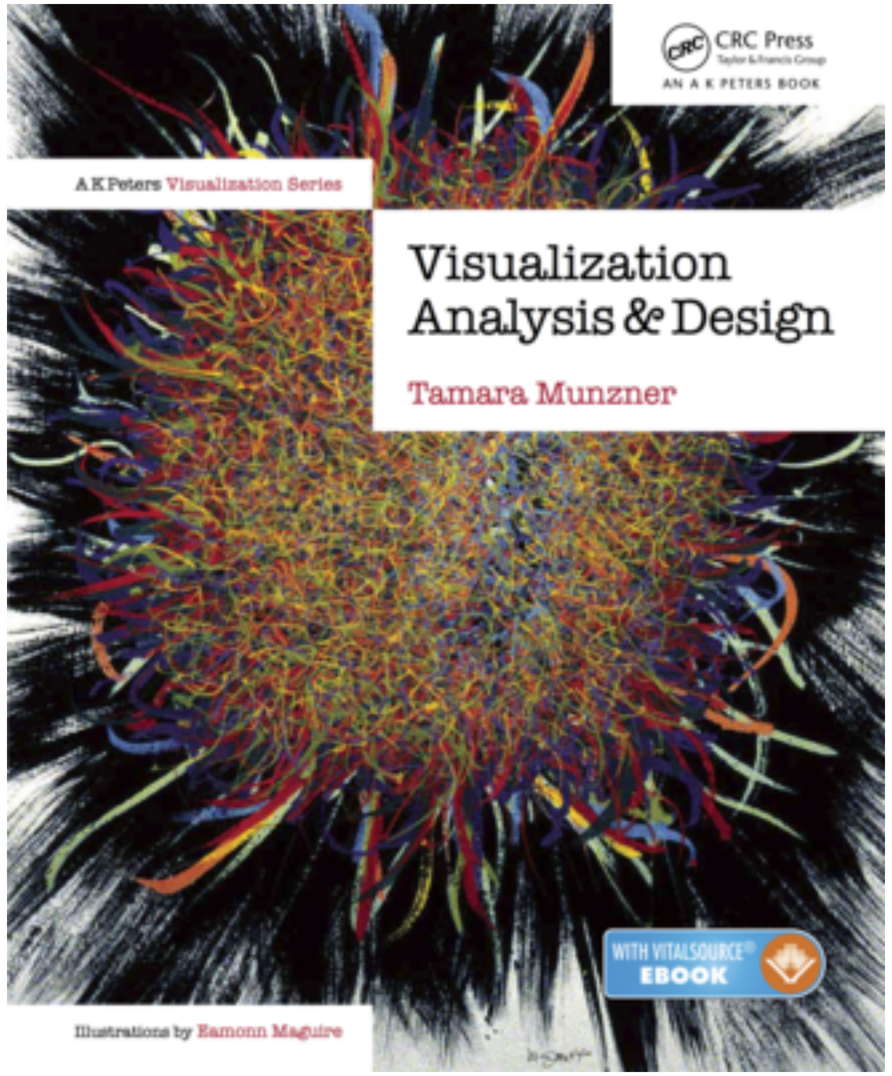

THINK Conference 33, Santa Cruz CA
5 November 2017

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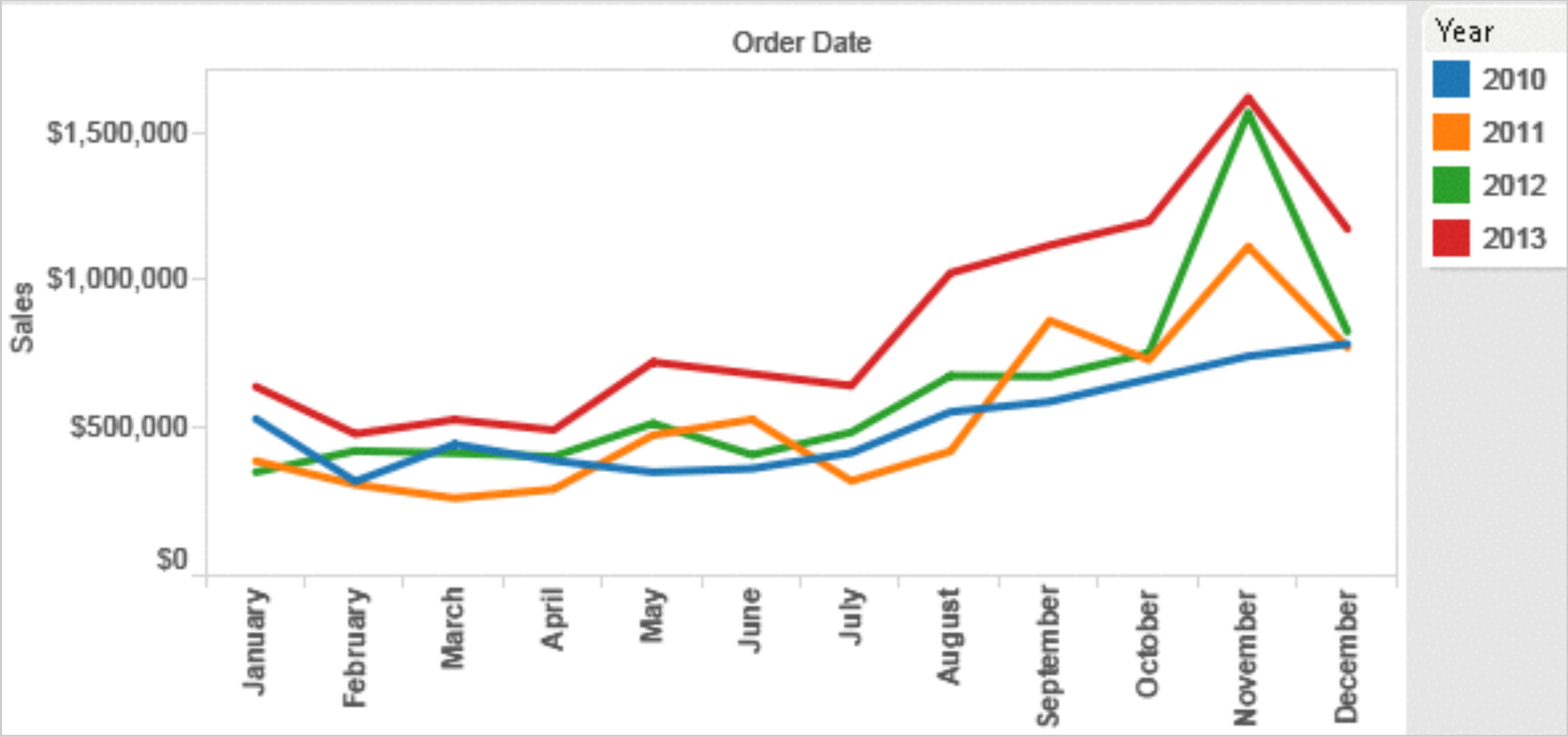
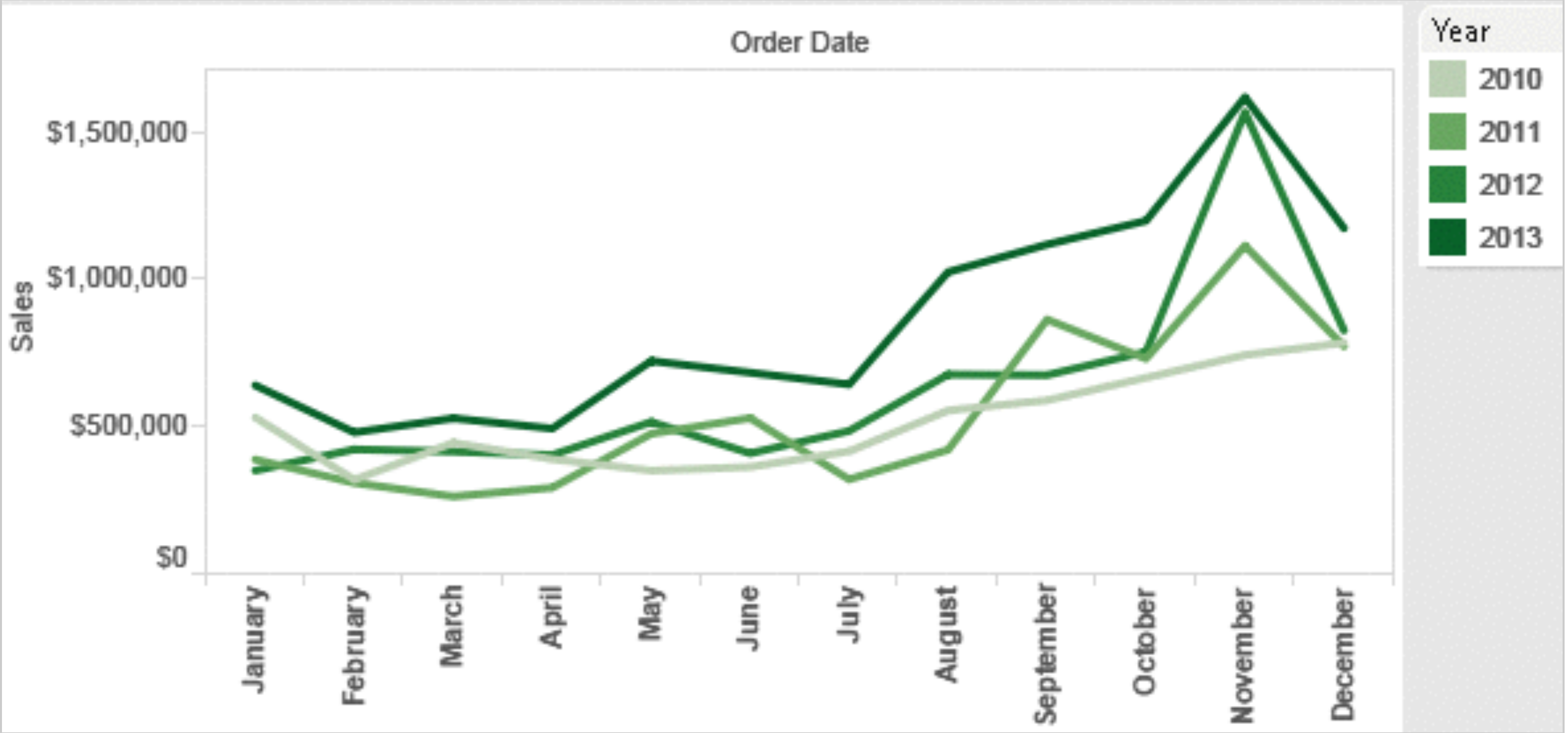
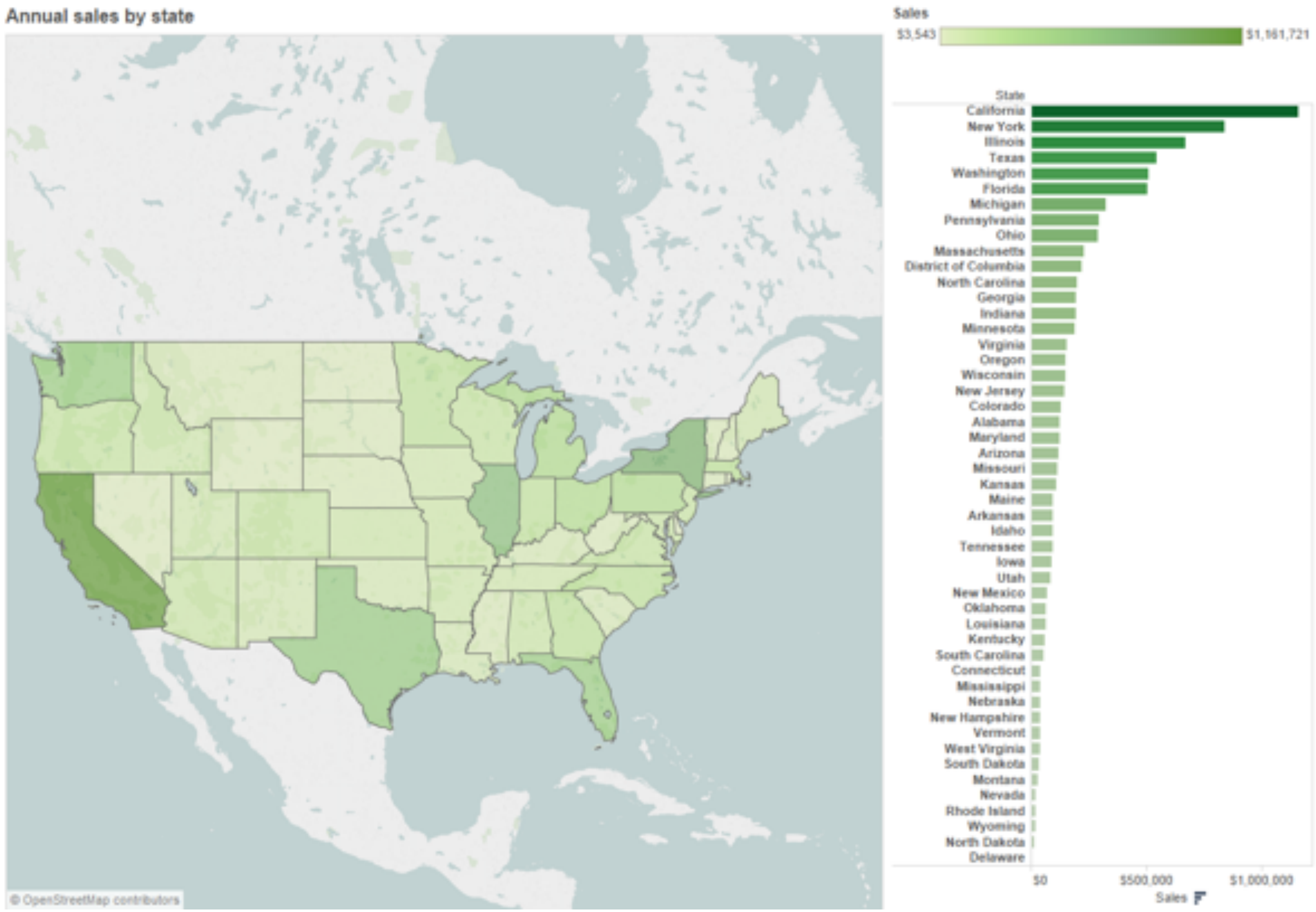
@tamaramunzner

Categorical vs ordered color







[Seriously Colorful: Advanced Color Principles & Practices. Stone. Tableau Customer Conference 2014.]

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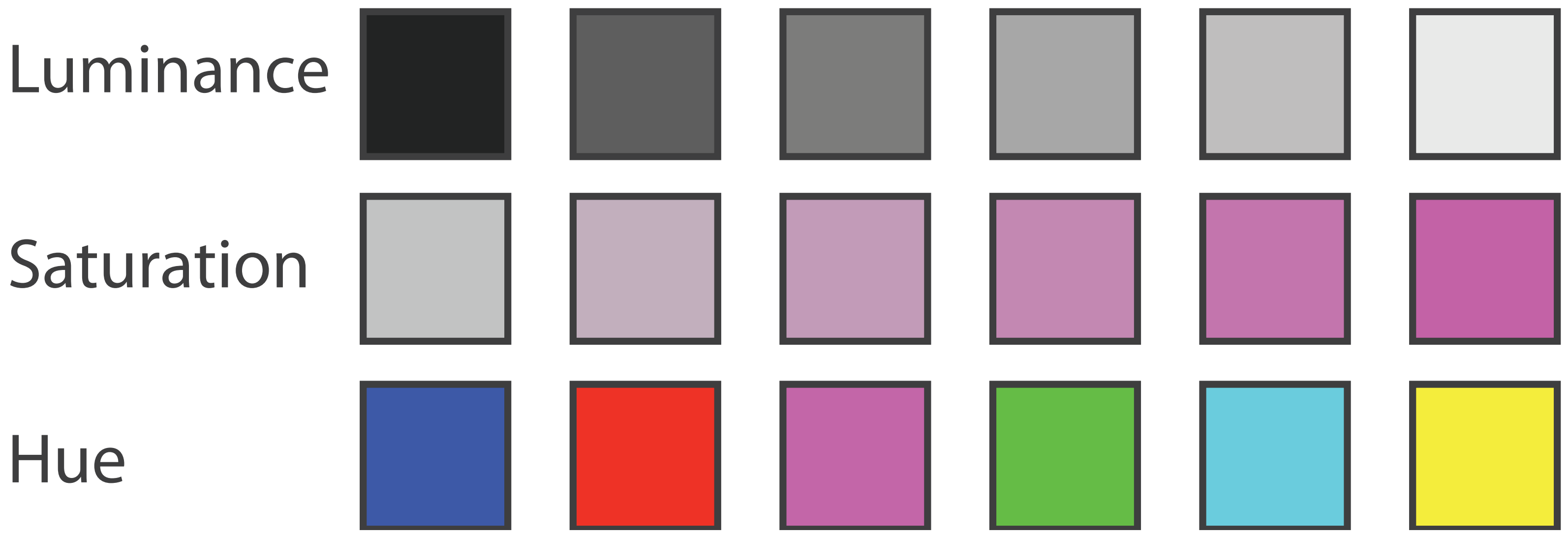
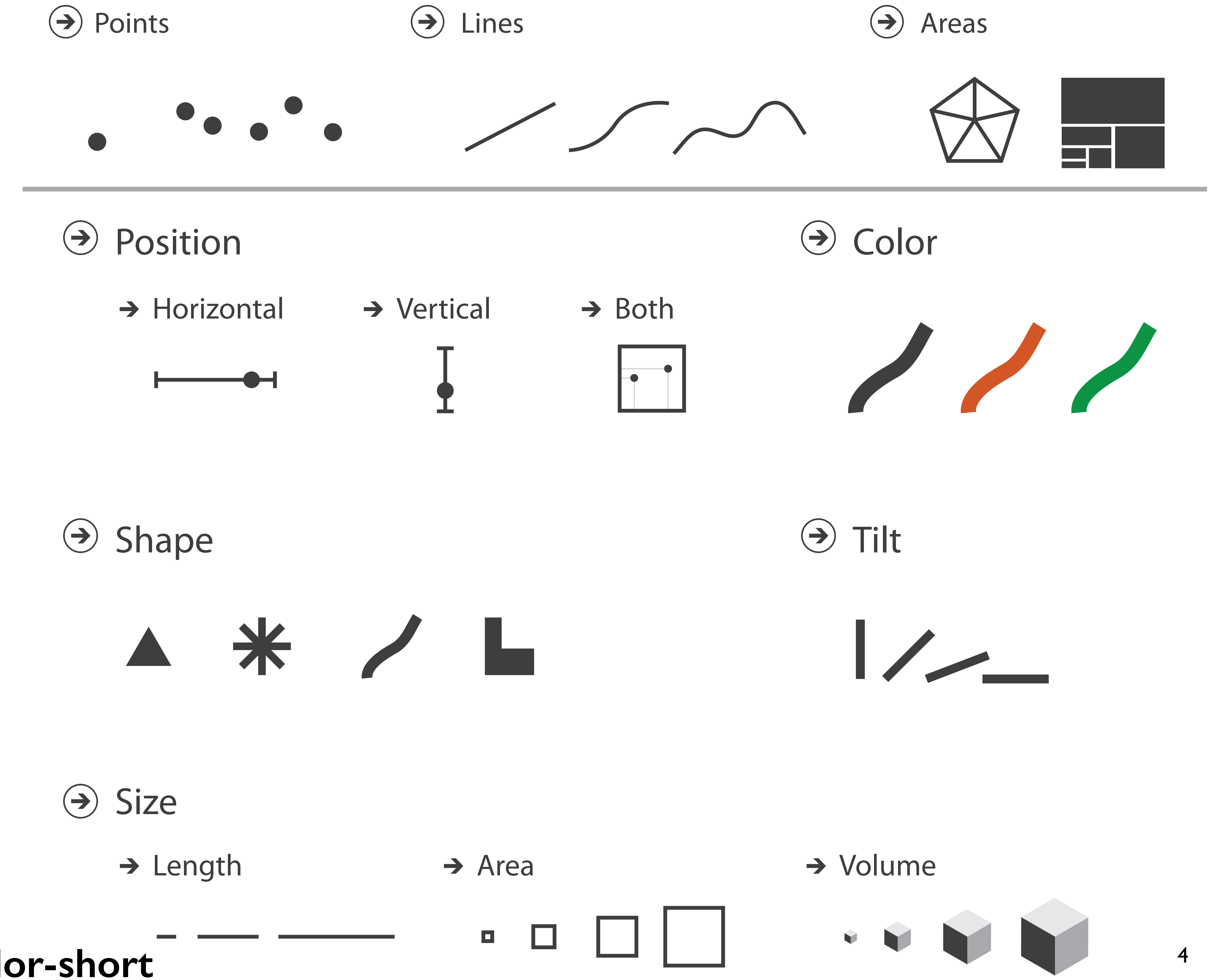
Decomposing color

- first rule of color: do not talk about color!
  - color is confusing if treated as monolithic
- decompose into three channels
  - ordered can show magnitude
    - luminance: how bright
    - saturation: how colorful
  - categorical can show identity
    - hue: what color
- channels have different properties
  - what they convey directly to perceptual system
  - how much they can convey: how many discriminable bins can we use?



Definitions: Marks and channels

- marks
  - geometric primitives
- channels
  - control appearance of marks
  - can redundantly code with multiple channels



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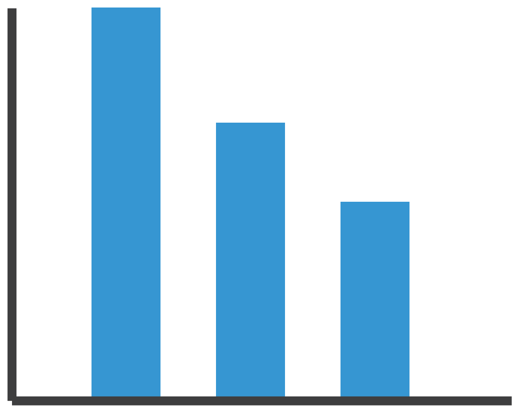
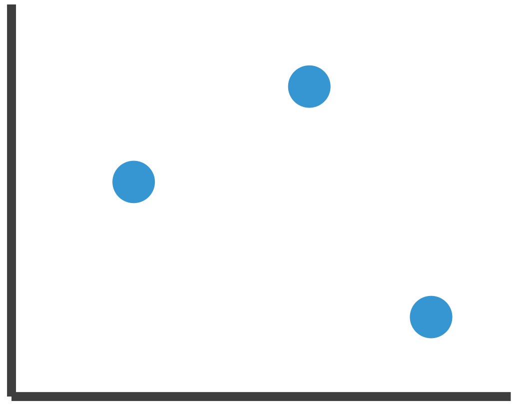
Visual encoding

- analyze idiom structure
  - as combination of marks and channels



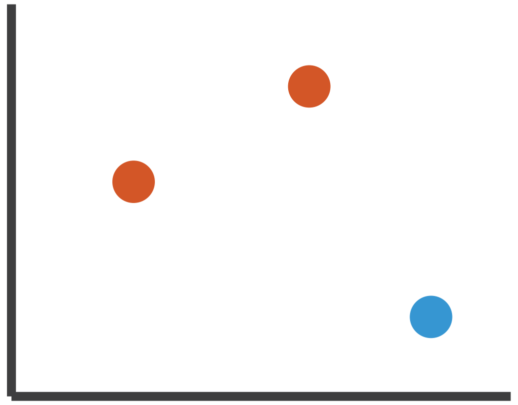
1:
vertical position

mark: line



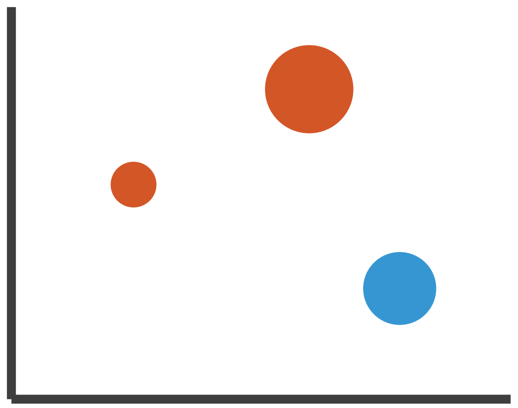
2:
vertical position
horizontal position

mark: point



3:
vertical position
horizontal position
color hue

mark: point



4:
vertical position
horizontal position
color hue
size (area)

mark: point

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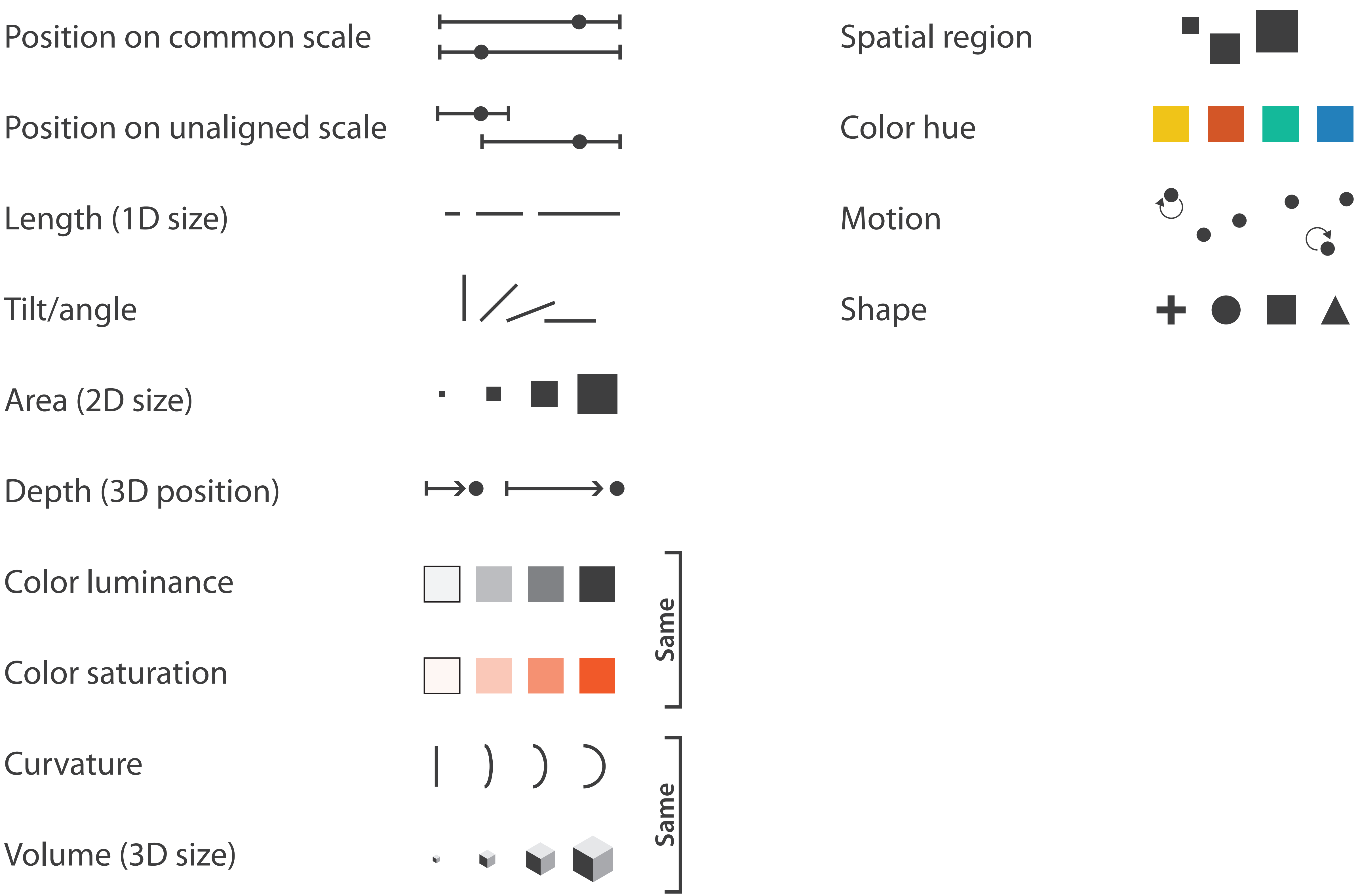
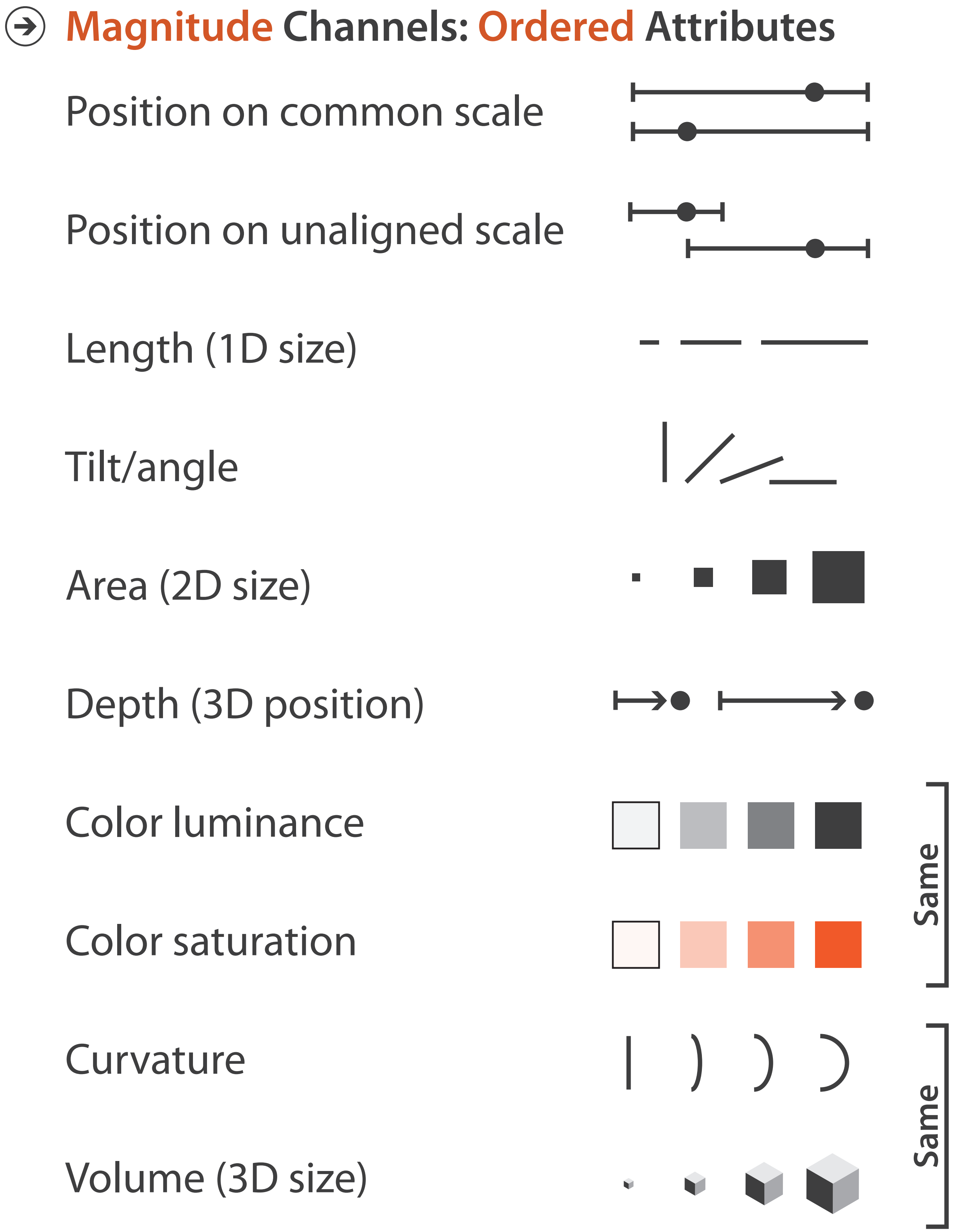
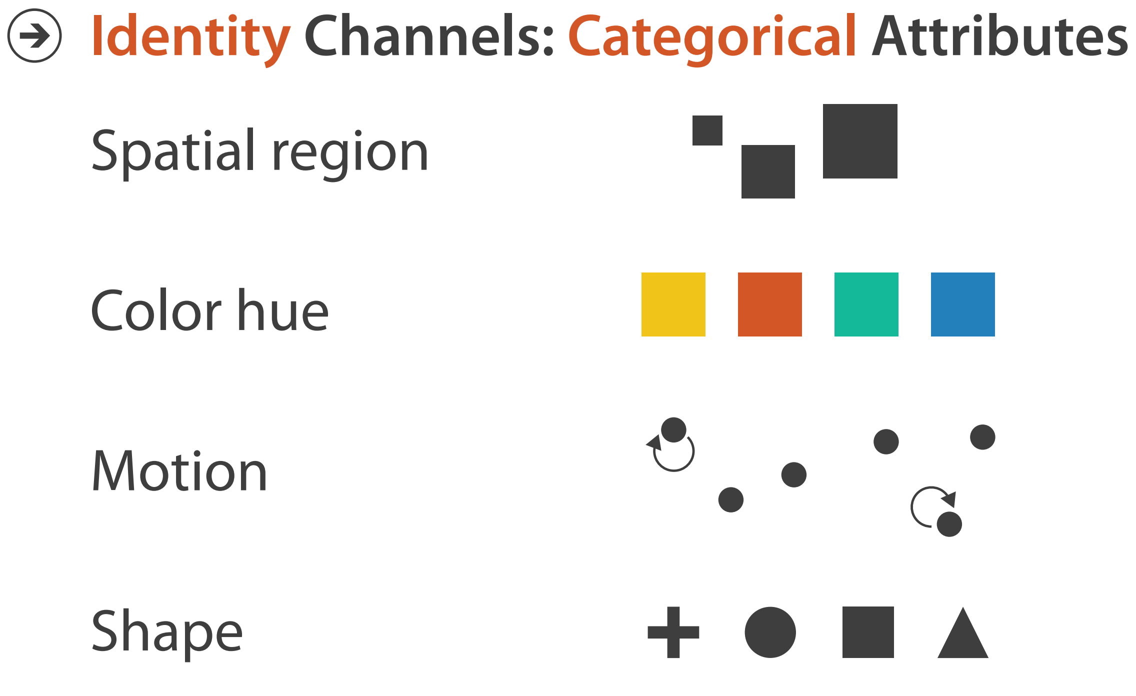
Channels


Position on common scale
Position on unaligned scale
Length (1D size)
Tilt/angle
Area (2D size)
Depth (3D position)
Color luminance
Color saturation
Curvature
Volume (3D size)
Same
Same
Spatial region
Color hue
Motion
Shape

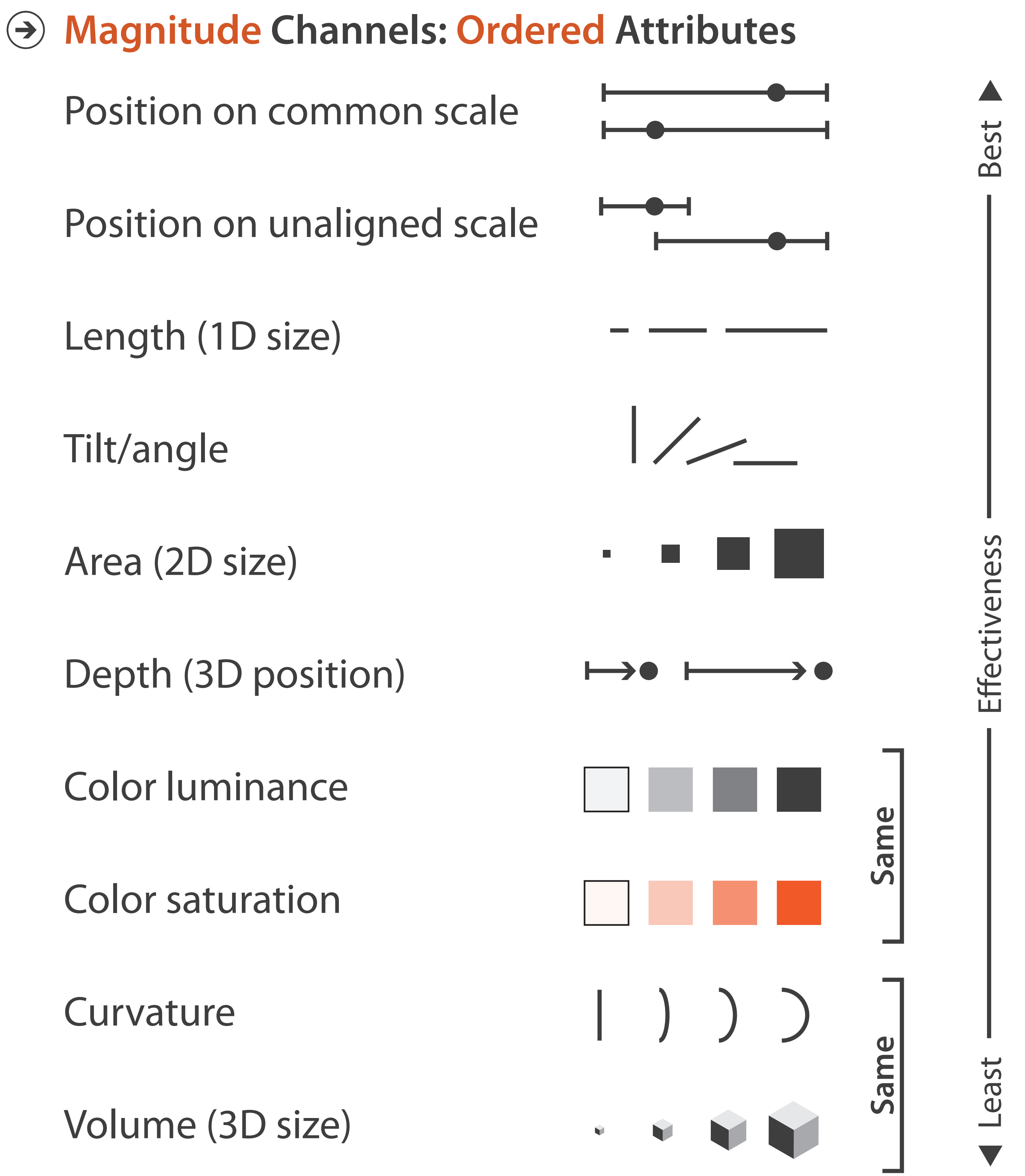
Channels: Matching Types

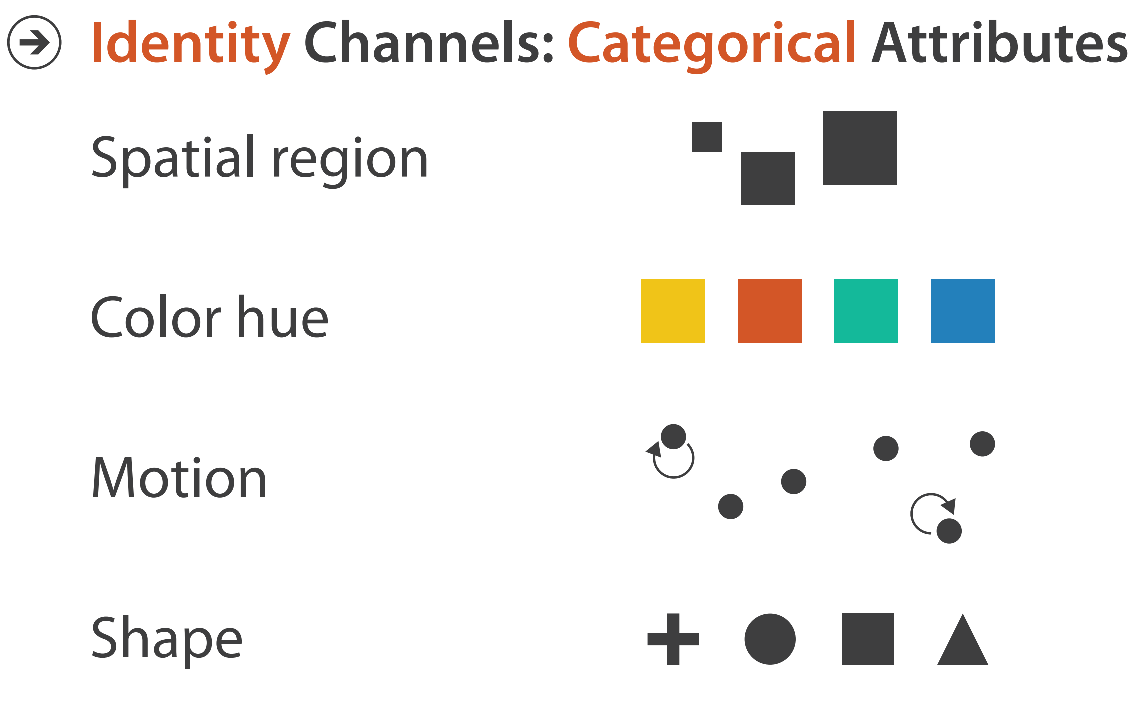




- expressiveness principle
  - match channel and data characteristics

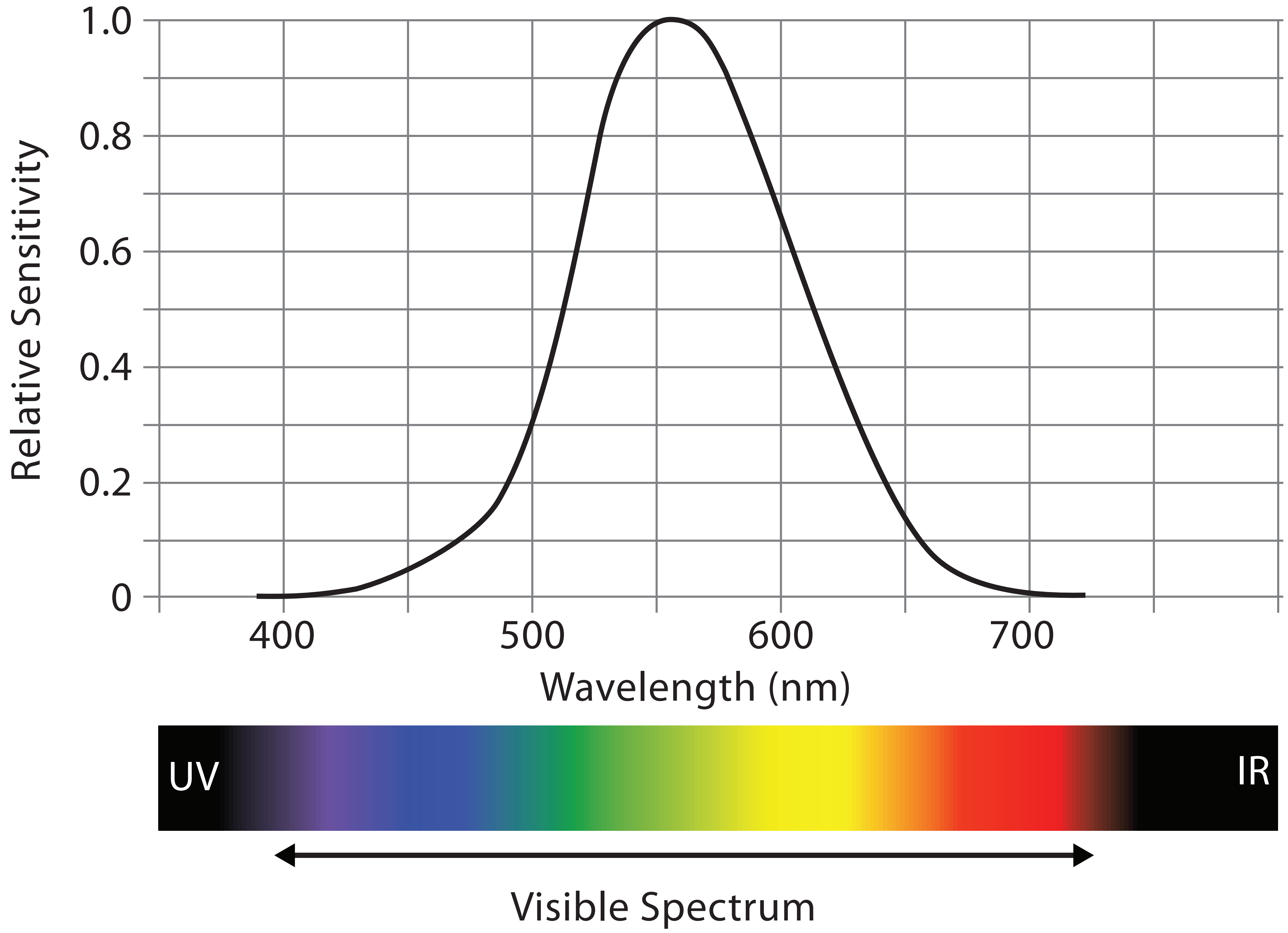
Channels: Rankings





- expressiveness principle
  - match channel and data characteristics
- effectiveness principle
  - encode most important attributes with highest ranked channels
- distinguishability
  - enough levels in channel to match data

Spectral sensitivity



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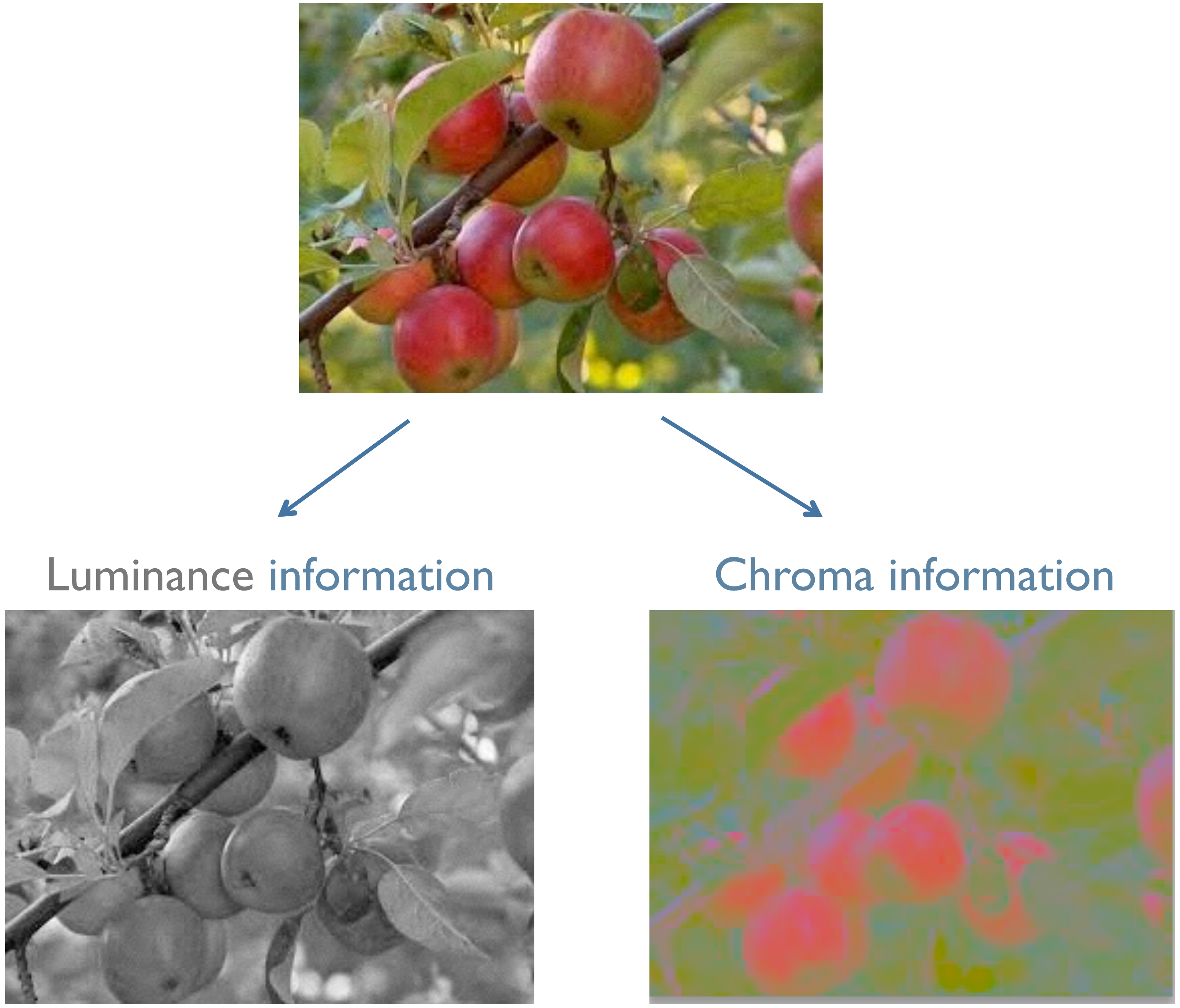
Luminance

- need luminance for edge detection
  - fine-grained detail only visible through luminance contrast
  - legible text requires luminance contrast!

- intrinsic perceptual ordering



[Seriously Colorful: Advanced Color Principles & Practices. Stone.Tableau Customer Conference 2014.]

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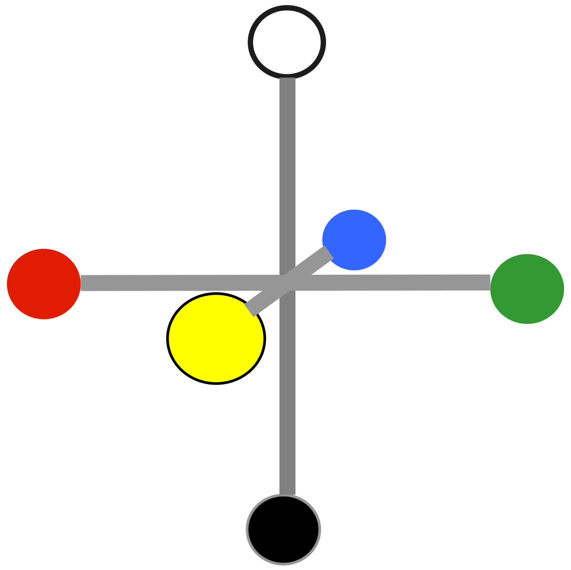
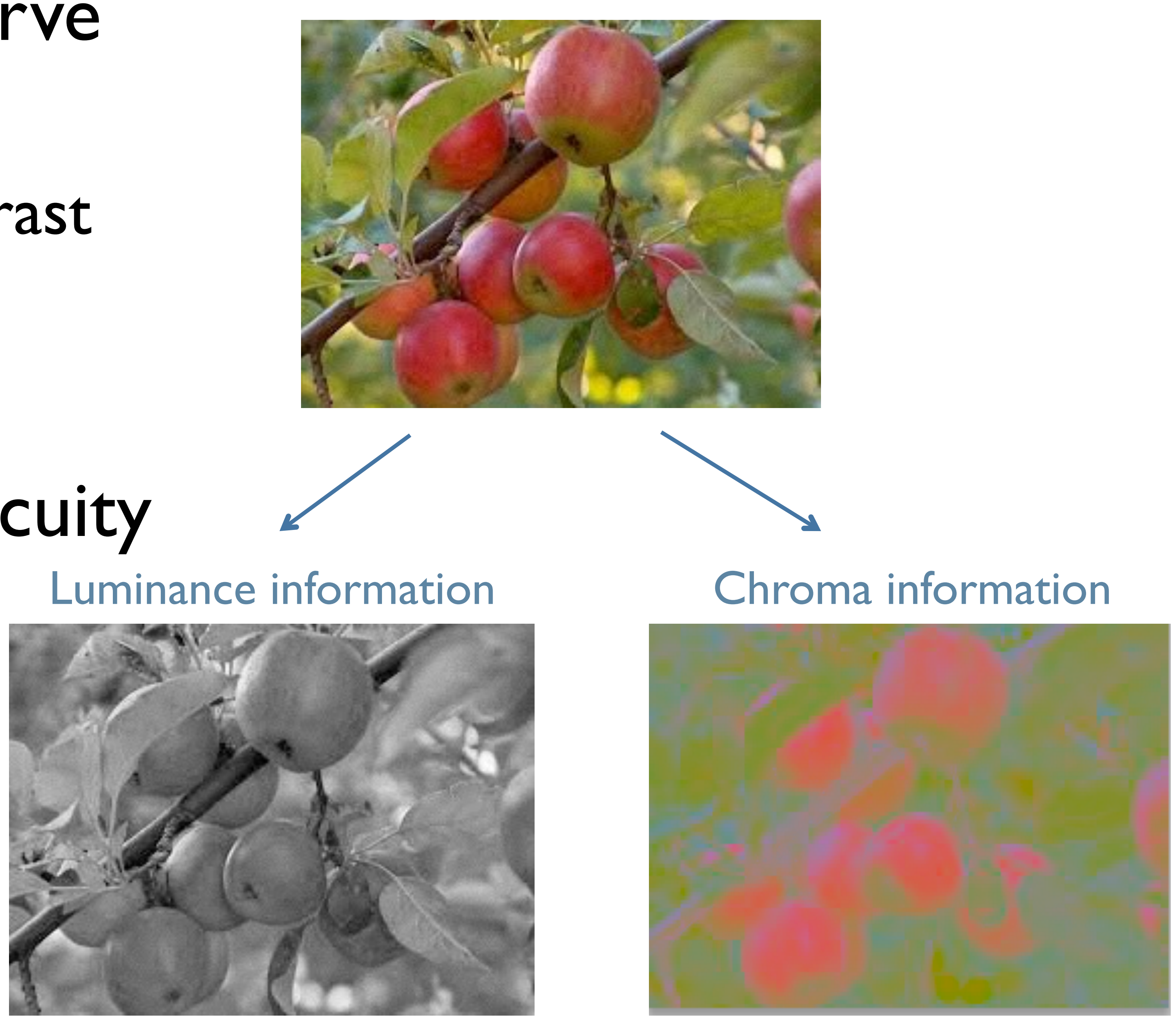
Opponent color and color deficiency

- perceptual processing before optic nerve
  - one achromatic luminance channel (L*)
    - edge detection through luminance contrast
  - 2 chroma channels
    - red-green (a*) & yellow-blue axis (b*)
- "color blind": one axis has degraded acuity
  - 8% of men are red/green color deficient
  - blue/yellow is rare





[*Seriously Colorful: Advanced Color Principles & Practices.* *Stone. Tableau Customer Conference 2014.*]

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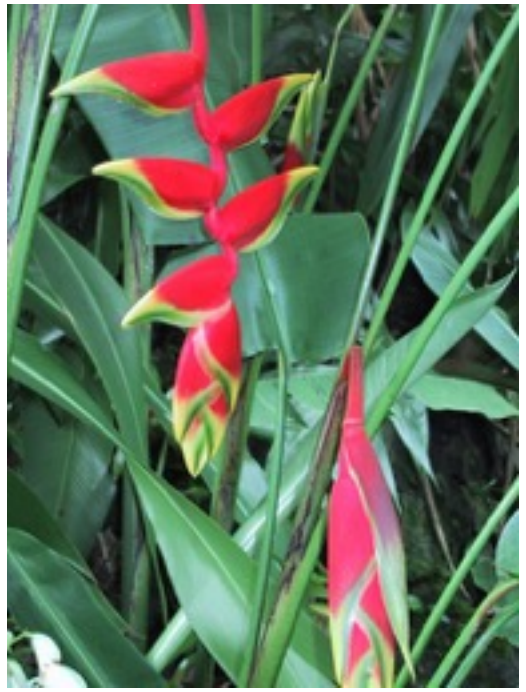
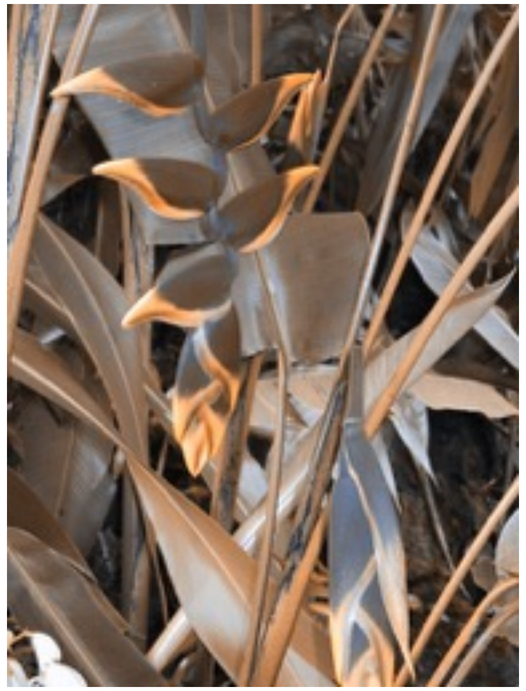
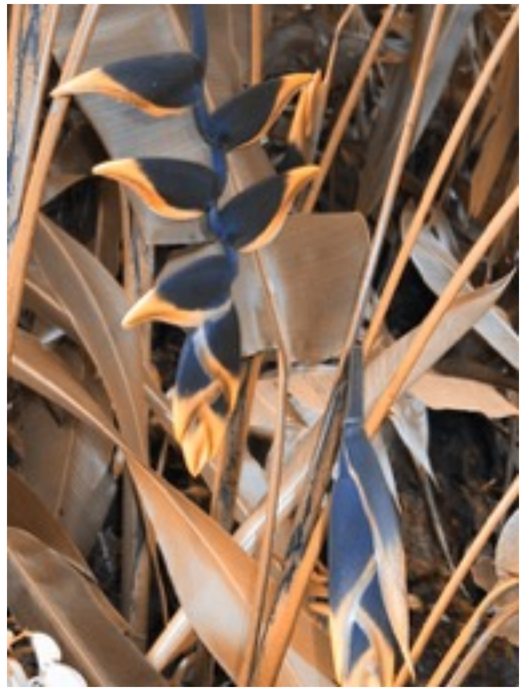
Designing for color deficiency: Check with simulator



Normal vision



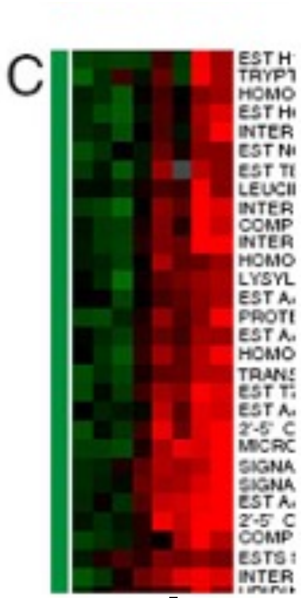
Deuteranope



Protanope

Tritanope

http://rehue.net



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Color spaces

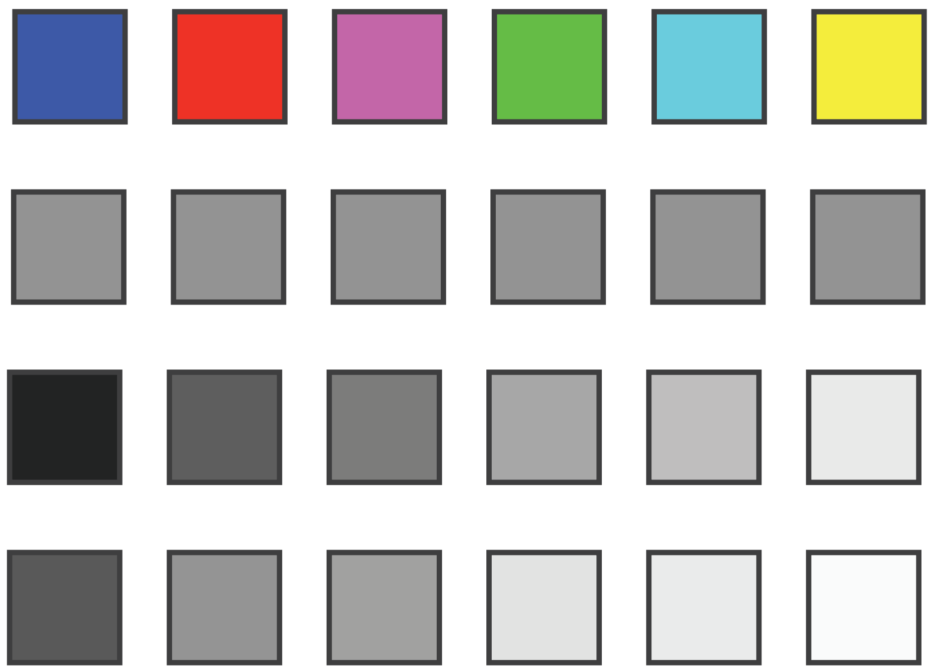
- CIE L*a*b*: good for computation
  - L* intuitive: perceptually linear luminance
  - a*b* axes: perceptually linear but nonintuitive
- RGB: good for display hardware
  - poor for encoding
- HSL/HSV: somewhat better for encoding
  - hue/saturation wheel intuitive
  - beware: only pseudo-perceptual!
  - lightness (L) or value (V) ≠ luminance or L*
- Luminance, hue, saturation
  - good for encoding
  - but not standard graphics/tools colorspace

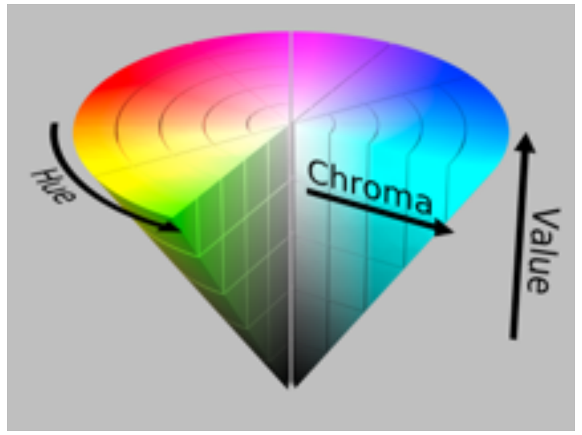
Corners of the RGB color cube

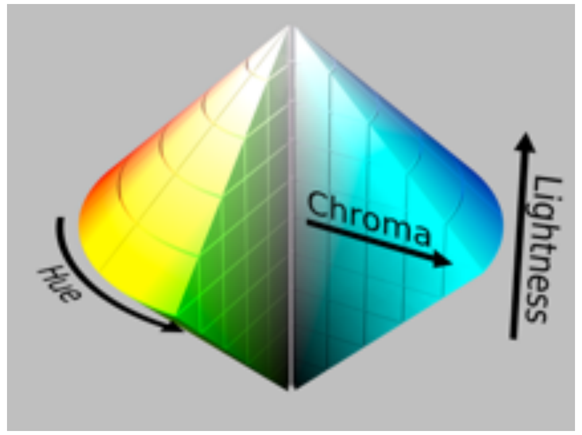
L from HLS
All the same

Luminance values

L* values







[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HSL_and_HSV]

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Color/Lightness constancy: Illumination conditions

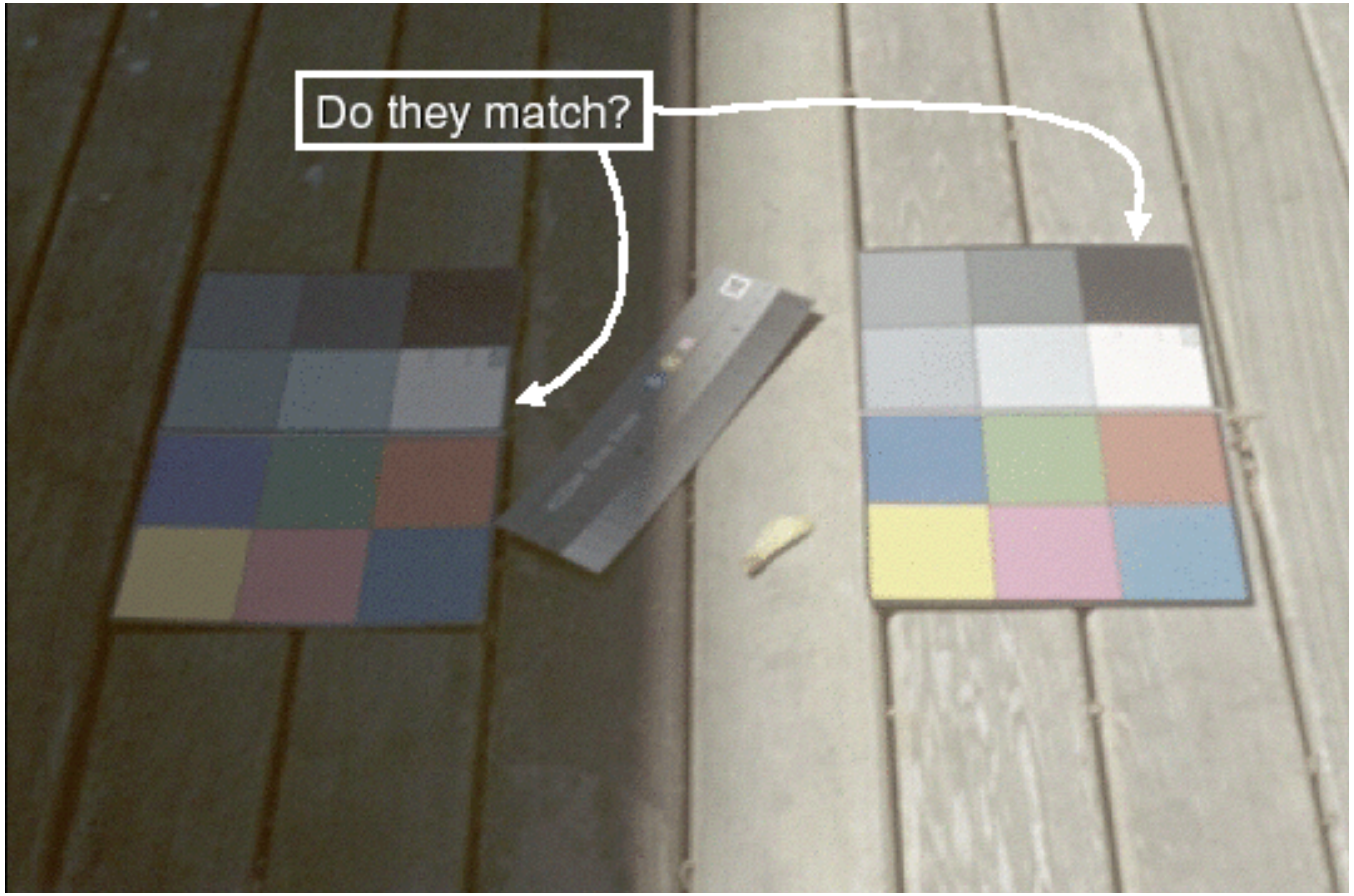

Image courtesy of John McCann

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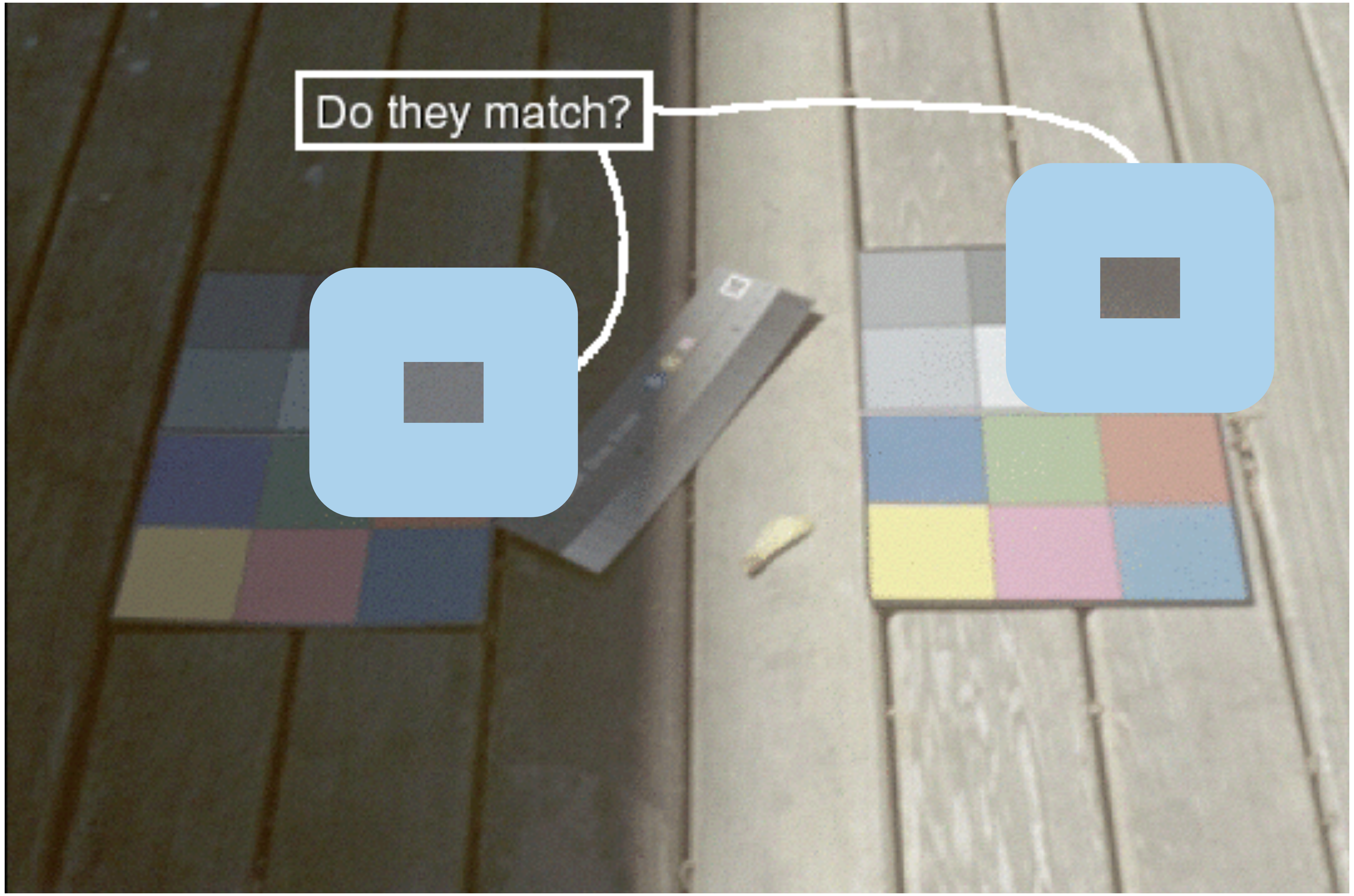

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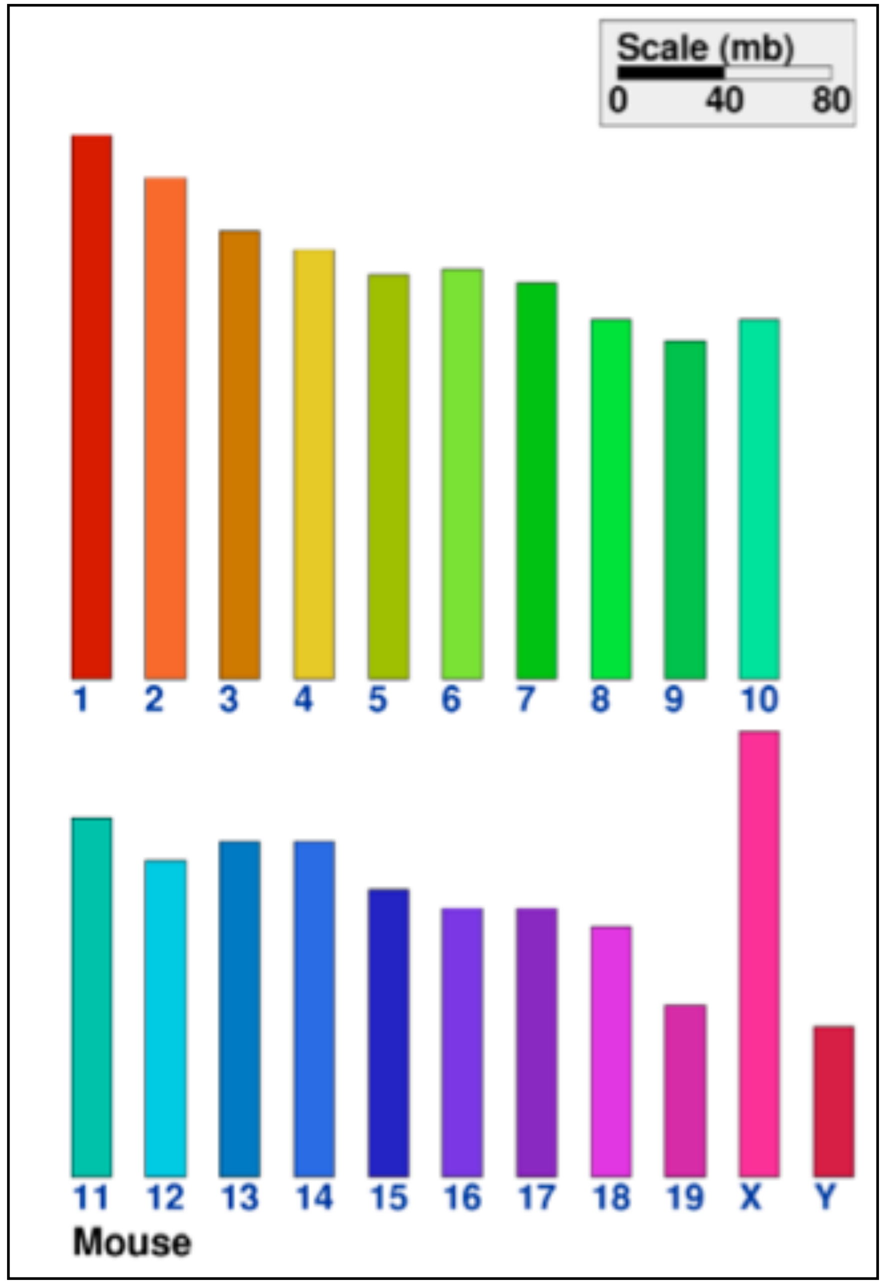
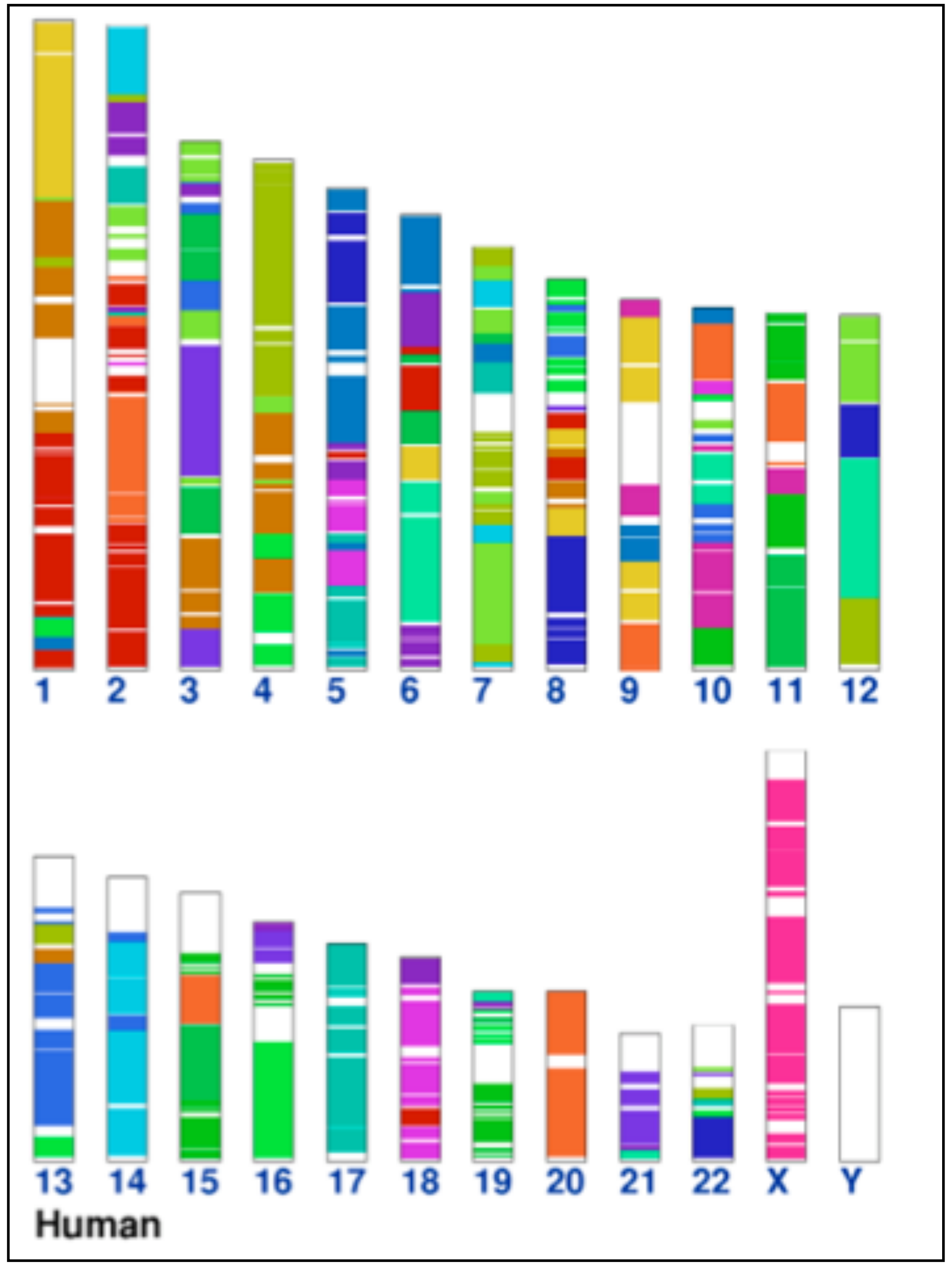
Categorical color: limited number of discriminable bins

- human perception built on relative comparisons
  - great if color contiguous
  - surprisingly bad for absolute comparisons
- noncontiguous small regions of color
  - fewer bins than you want
  - rule of thumb: 6-12 bins, including background and highlights
  - alternatives? other talks!





[Cinteny: flexible analysis and visualization of synteny and genome rearrangements in multiple organisms. Sinha and Meller. BMC Bioinformatics, 8:82, 2007.]

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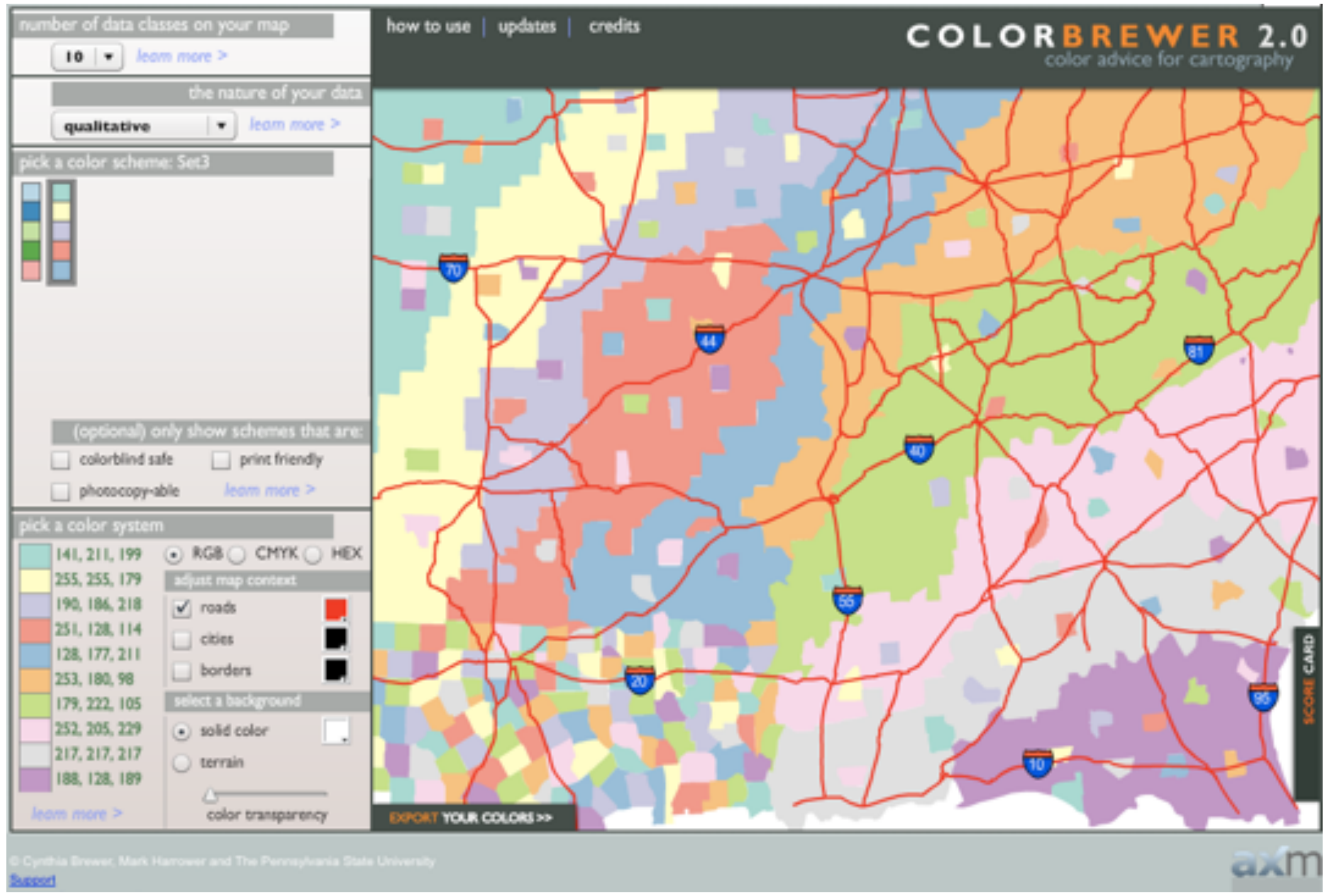
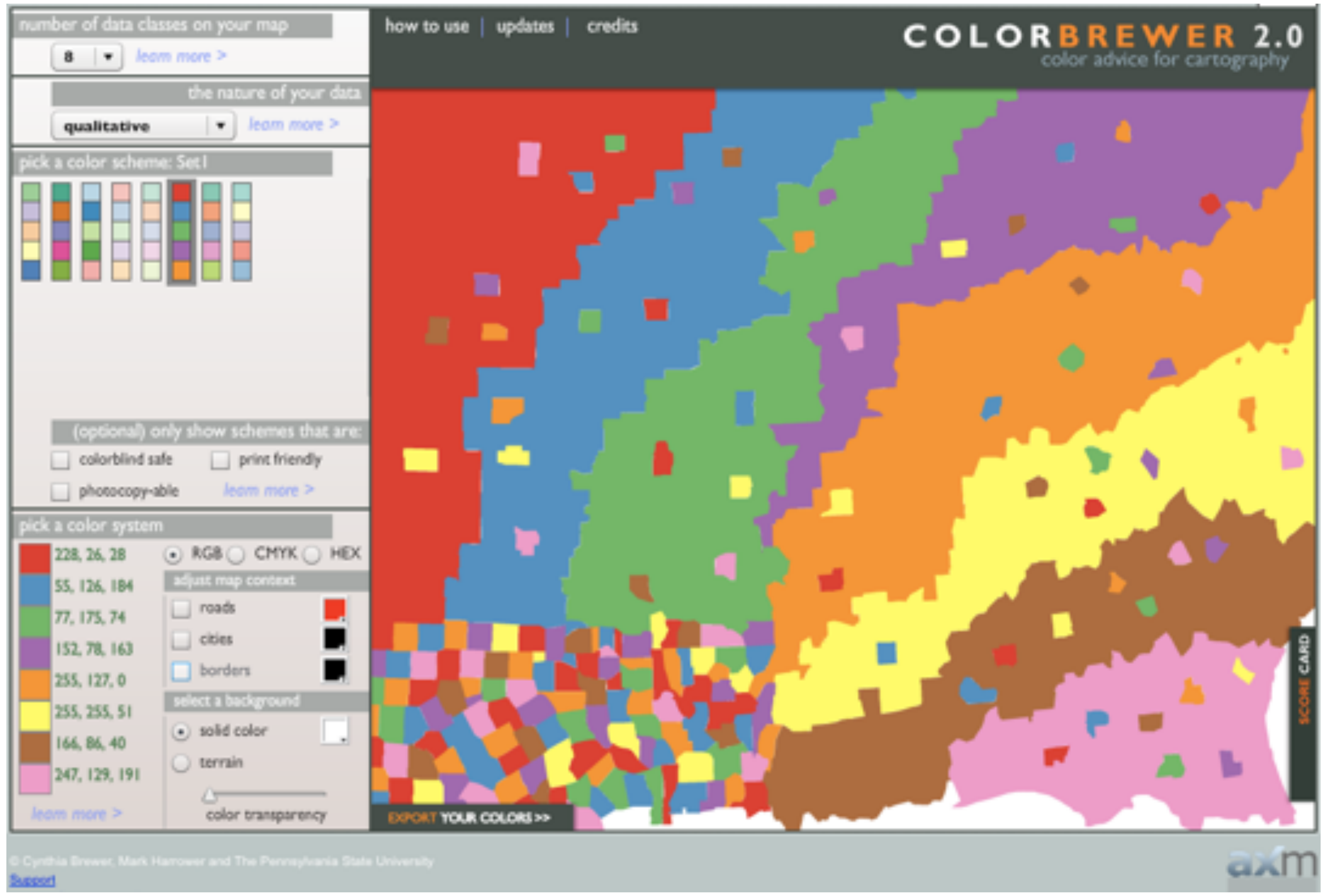
ColorBrewer

- http://www.colorbrewer2.org
- saturation and area example: size affects salience!





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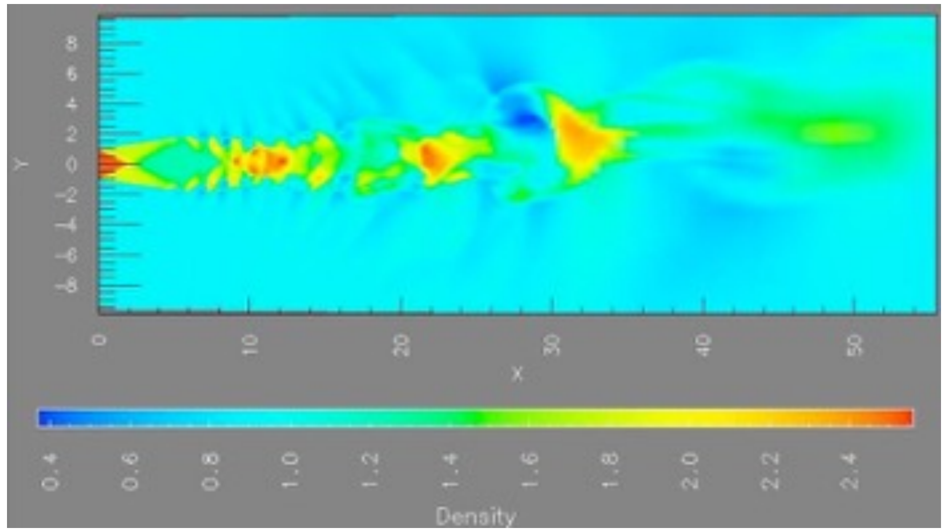
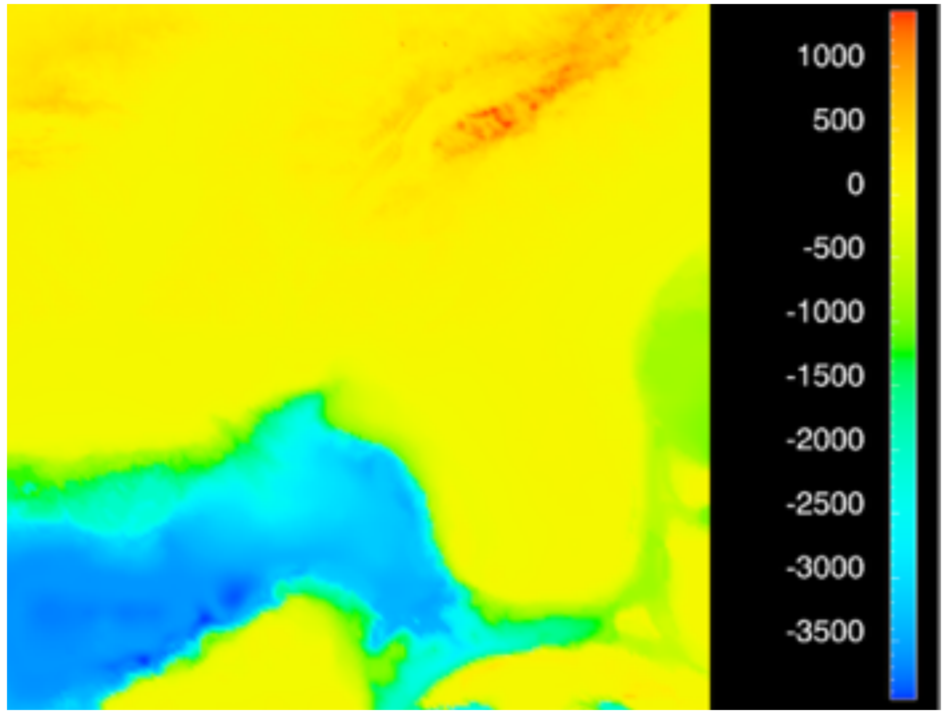
Ordered color: Rainbow is poor default

- problems
  - perceptually unordered
  - perceptually nonlinear
- benefits
  - fine-grained structure visible and nameable



[A Rule-based Tool for Assisting Colormap Selection. Bergman,. Rogowitz, and. Treinish. Proc. IEEE Visualization (Vis), pp. 118–125, 1995.]



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[Transfer Functions in Direct Volume Rendering: Design, Interface, Interaction. Kindlmann. SIGGRAPH 2002 Course Notes]

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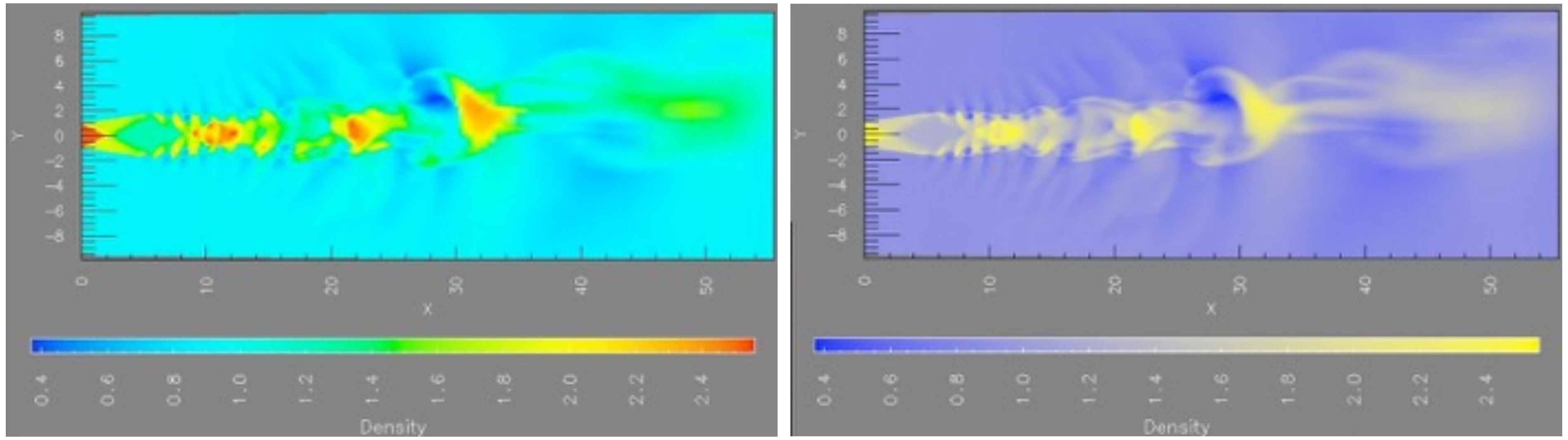
  - large-scale structure: fewer hues



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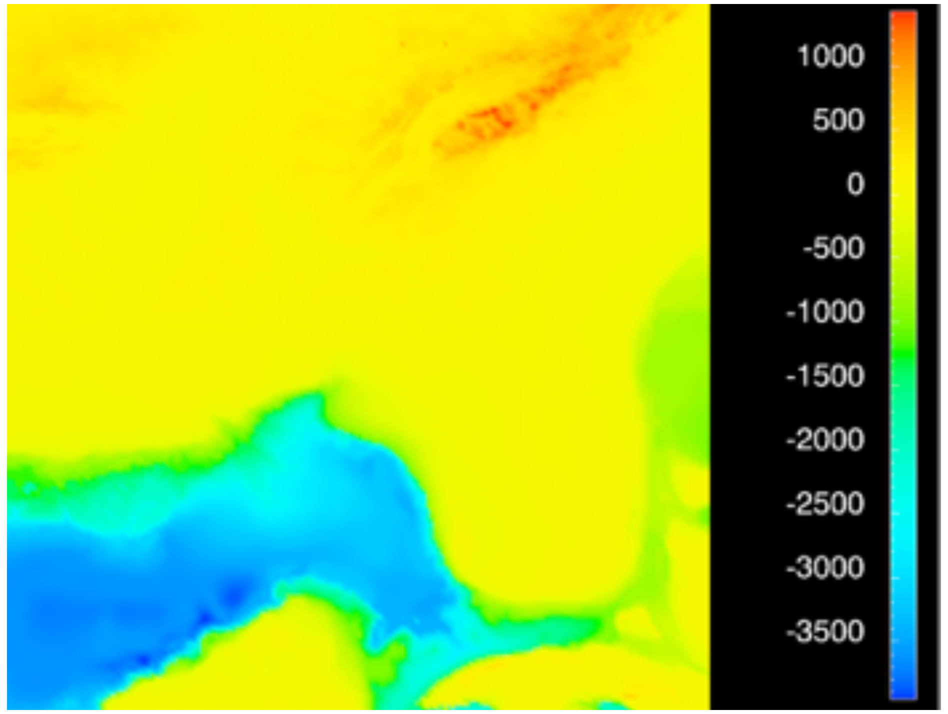

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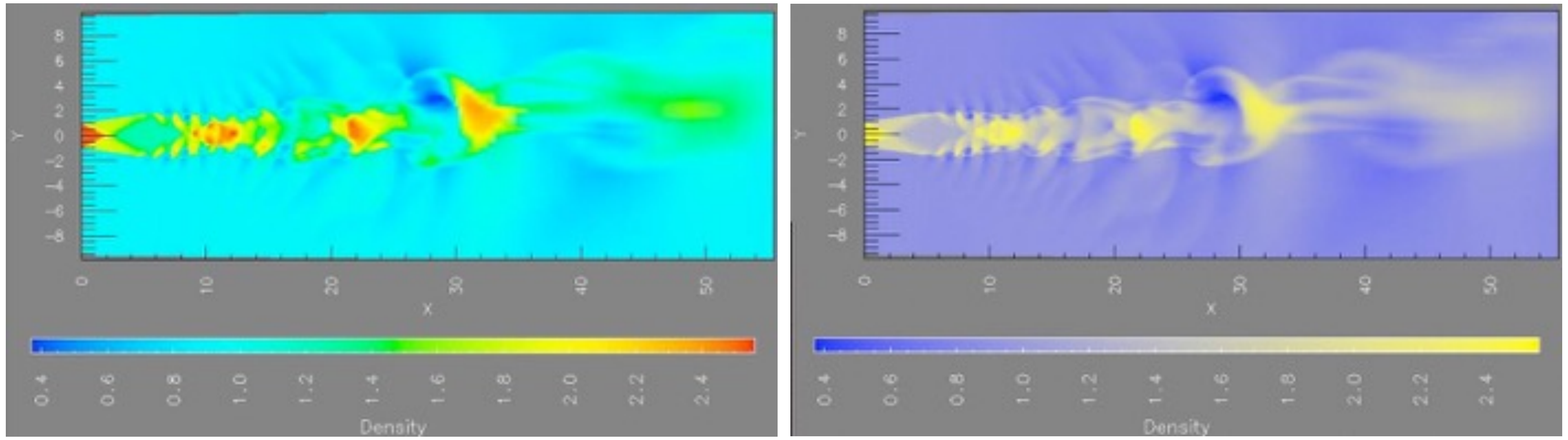
- alternatives
  - large-scale structure: fewer hues
  - fine structure: multiple hues with monotonically increasing luminance [eg viridis R/python]



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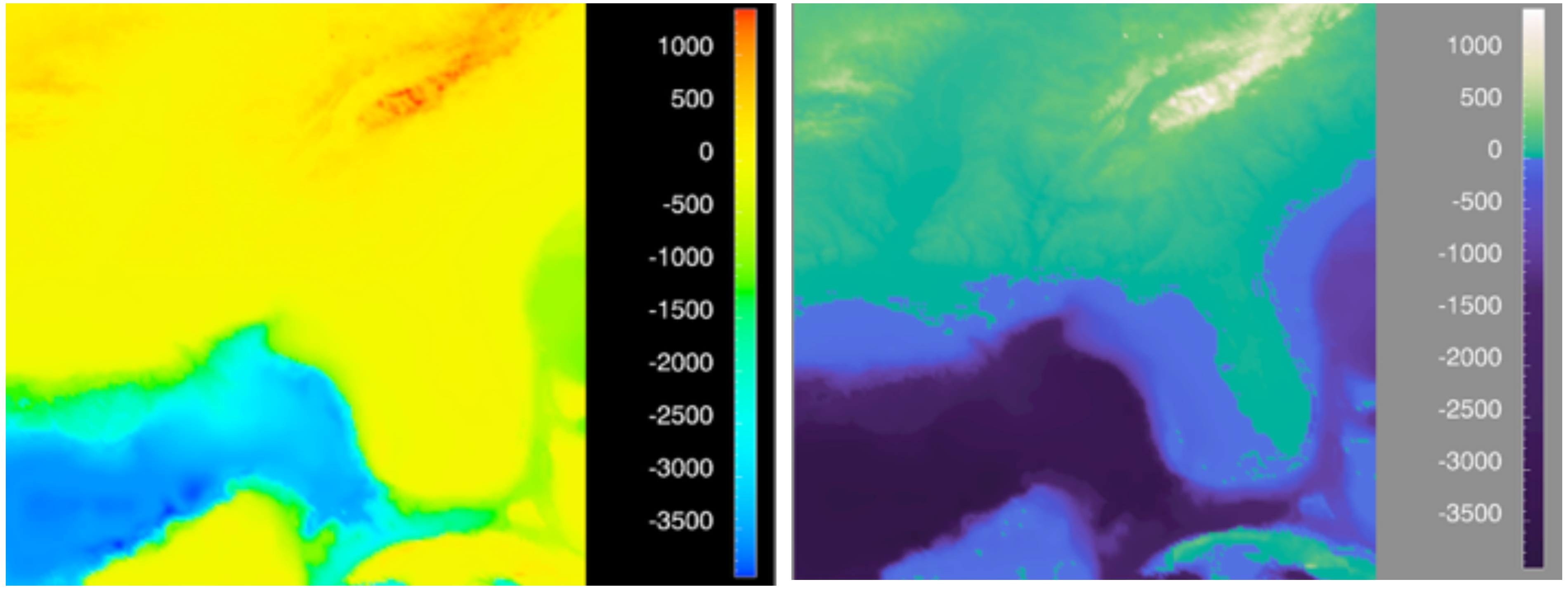

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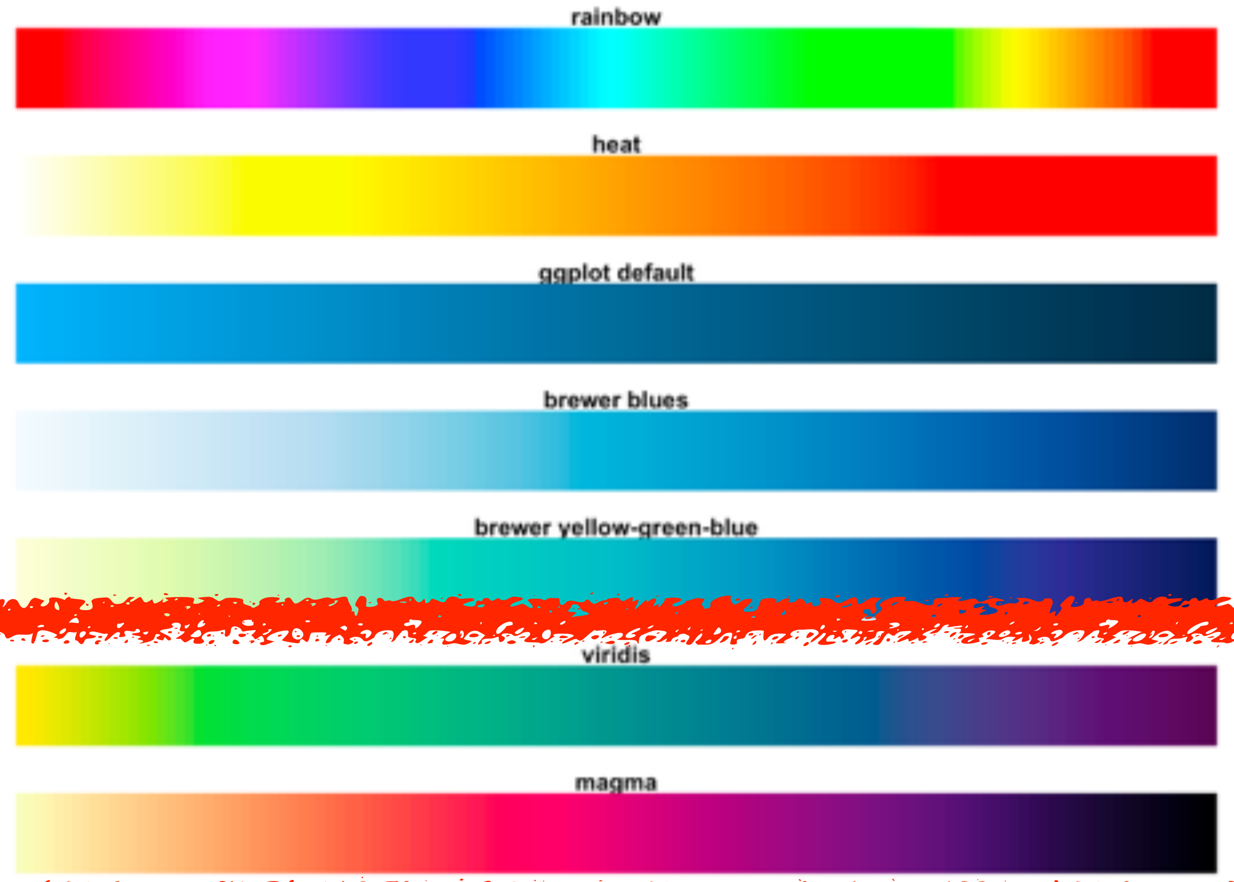
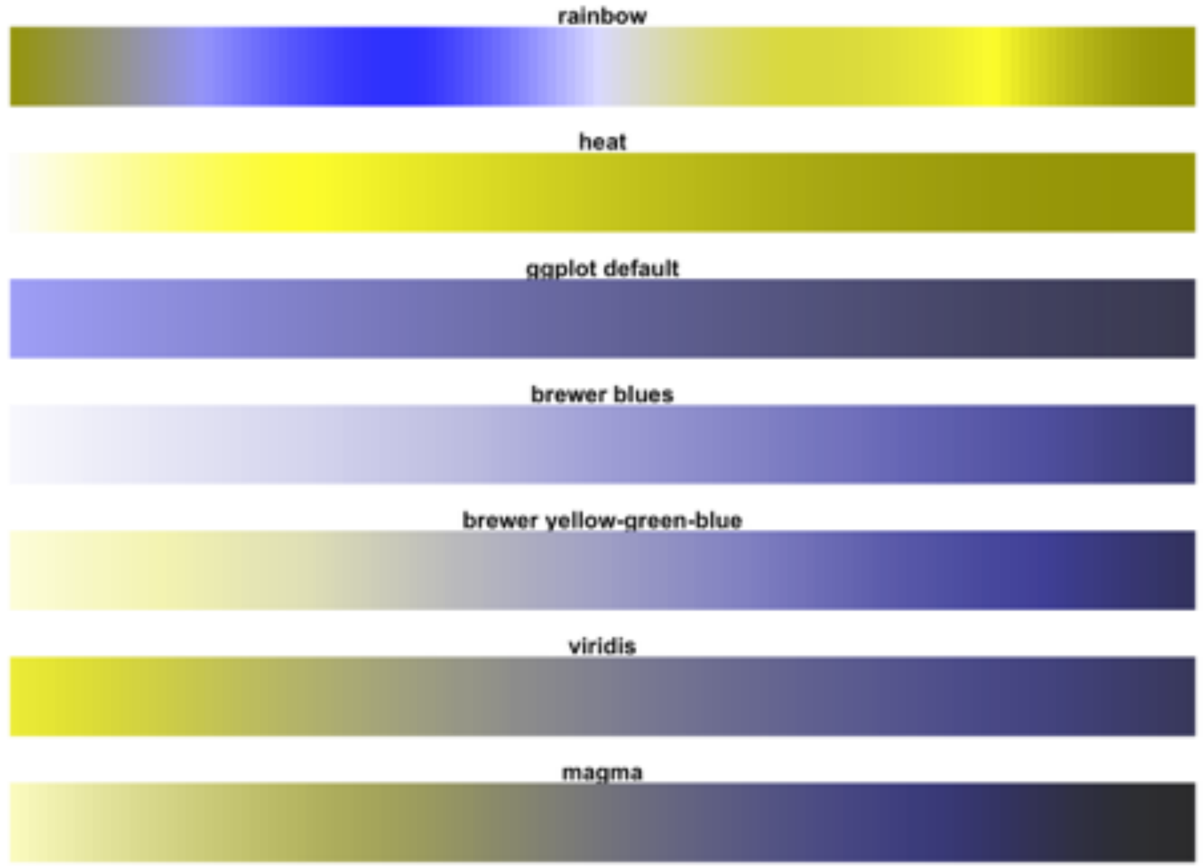
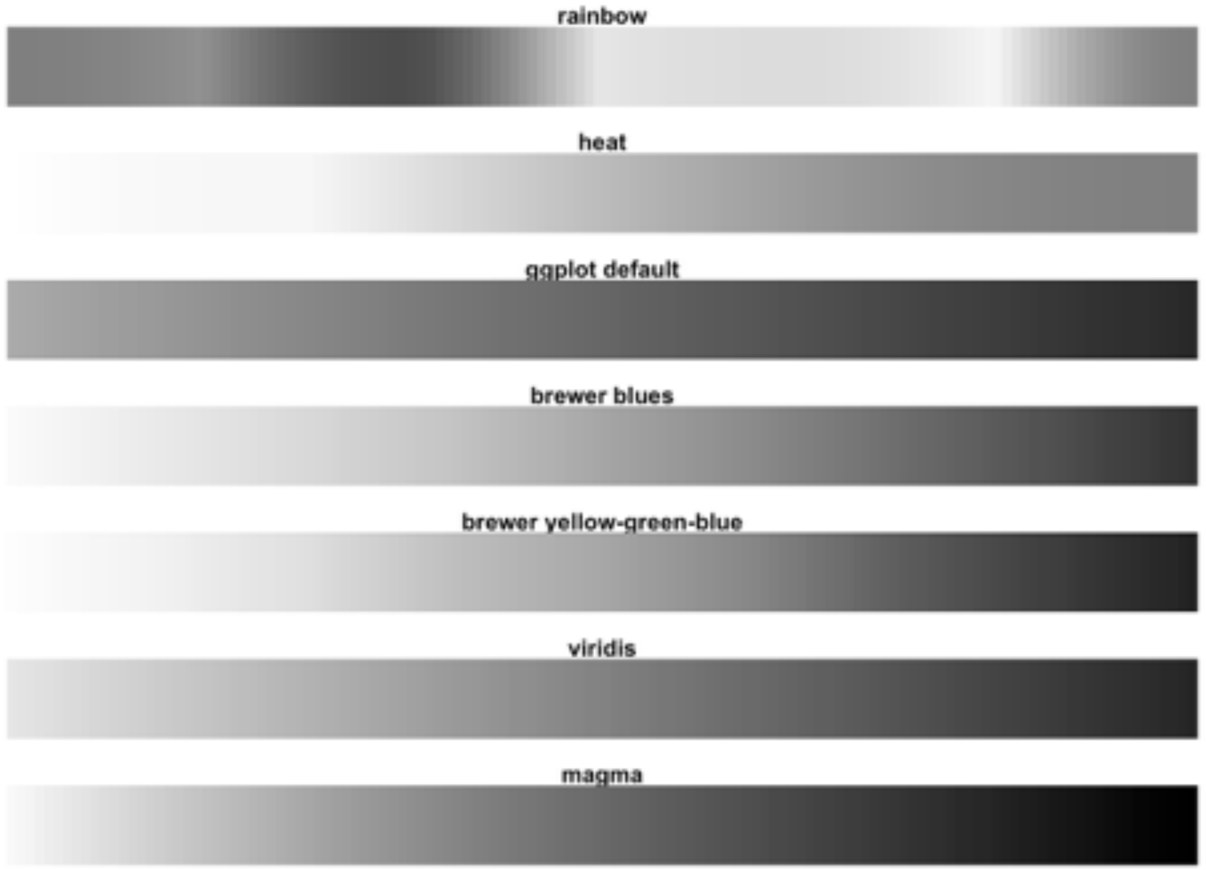
Viridis

- colorful, perceptually uniform, colorblind-safe, monotonically increasing luminance



https://cran.r-project.org/web/packages/viridis/vignettes/intro-to-viridis.html





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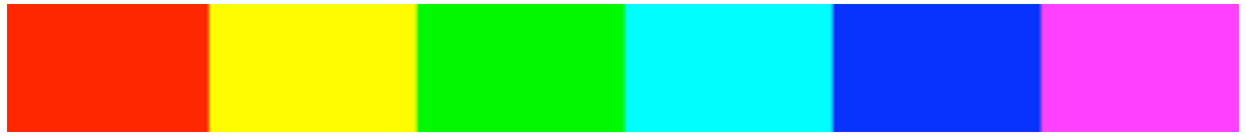
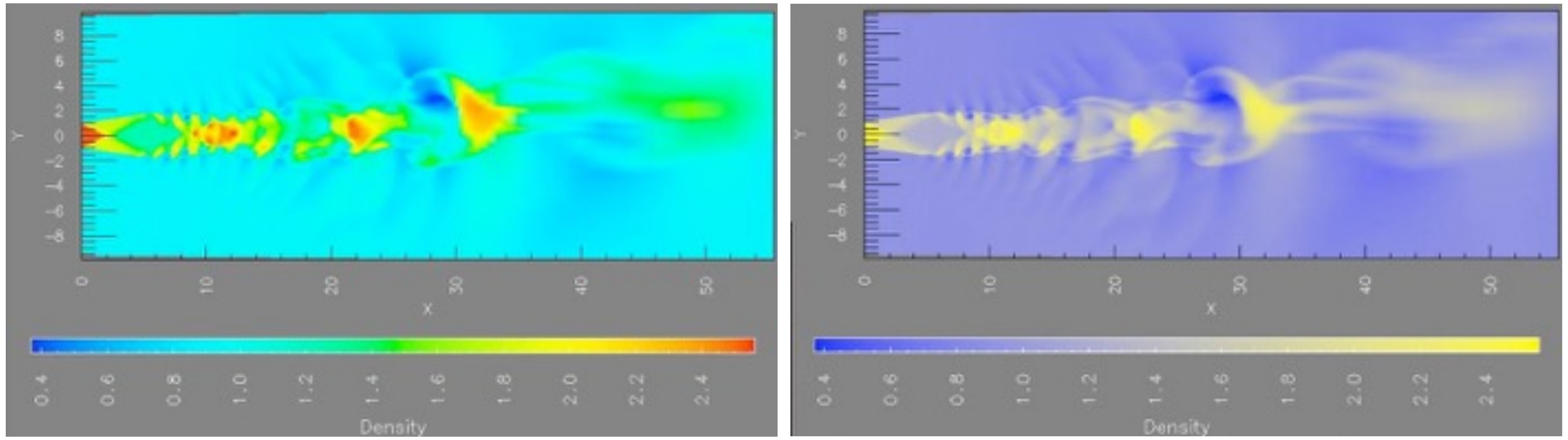
  - fine structure: multiple hues with monotonically increasing luminance [eg viridis R/python]
  - segmented rainbows for binned or categorical





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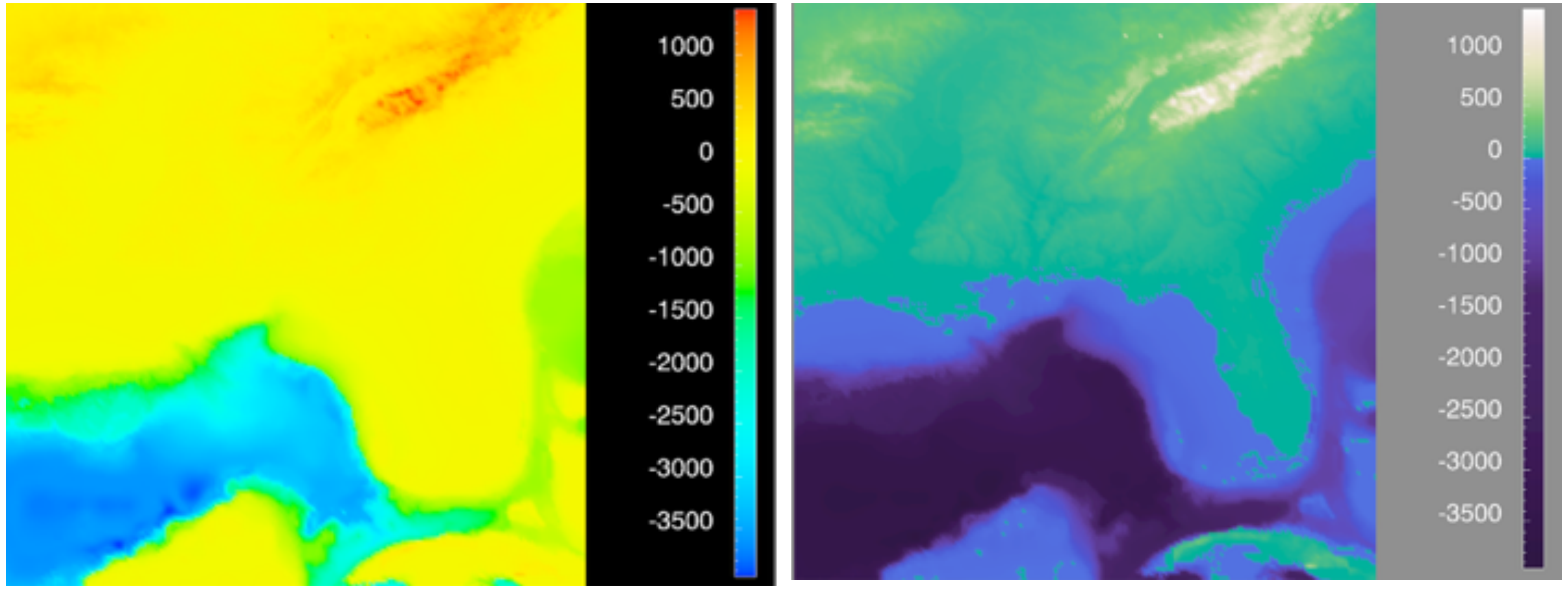

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[Transfer Functions in Direct Volume Rendering: Design, Interface, Interaction. Kindlmann. SIGGRAPH 2002 Course Notes]

Further reading

- Visualization Analysis and Design. Munzner. AK Peters Visualization Series, CRC Press, 2014
  - *Chap 10: Map Color and Other Channels*
- ColorBrewer, Brewer.
  - http://www.colorbrewer2.org
- *Color In Information Display*. Stone. IEEE Vis Course Notes, 2006.
  - http://www.stonesc.com/Vis06
- A Field Guide to Digital Color. Stone. AK Peters, 2003.
- *Rainbow Color Map (Still) Considered Harmful.* Borland and Taylor. IEEE Computer Graphics and Applications 27:2 (2007), 14–17.
- Visual Thinking for Design. Ware. Morgan Kaufmann, 2008.
- Information Visualization: Perception for Design, 3rd edition. Ware. Morgan Kaufmann / Academic Press, 2004.
- https://cran.r-project.org/web/packages/viridis/vignettes/intro-to-viridis.html

How?

Encode

Arrange
- Express
- Separate
- Order
- Align
- Use

Map
from categorical and ordered attributes

- Color
  - Hue
  - Saturation
  - Luminance
- Size, Angle, Curvature, ...
- Shape
- Motion
  - *Direction, Rate, Frequency, ...*

Manipulate
- Change
- Select
- Navigate

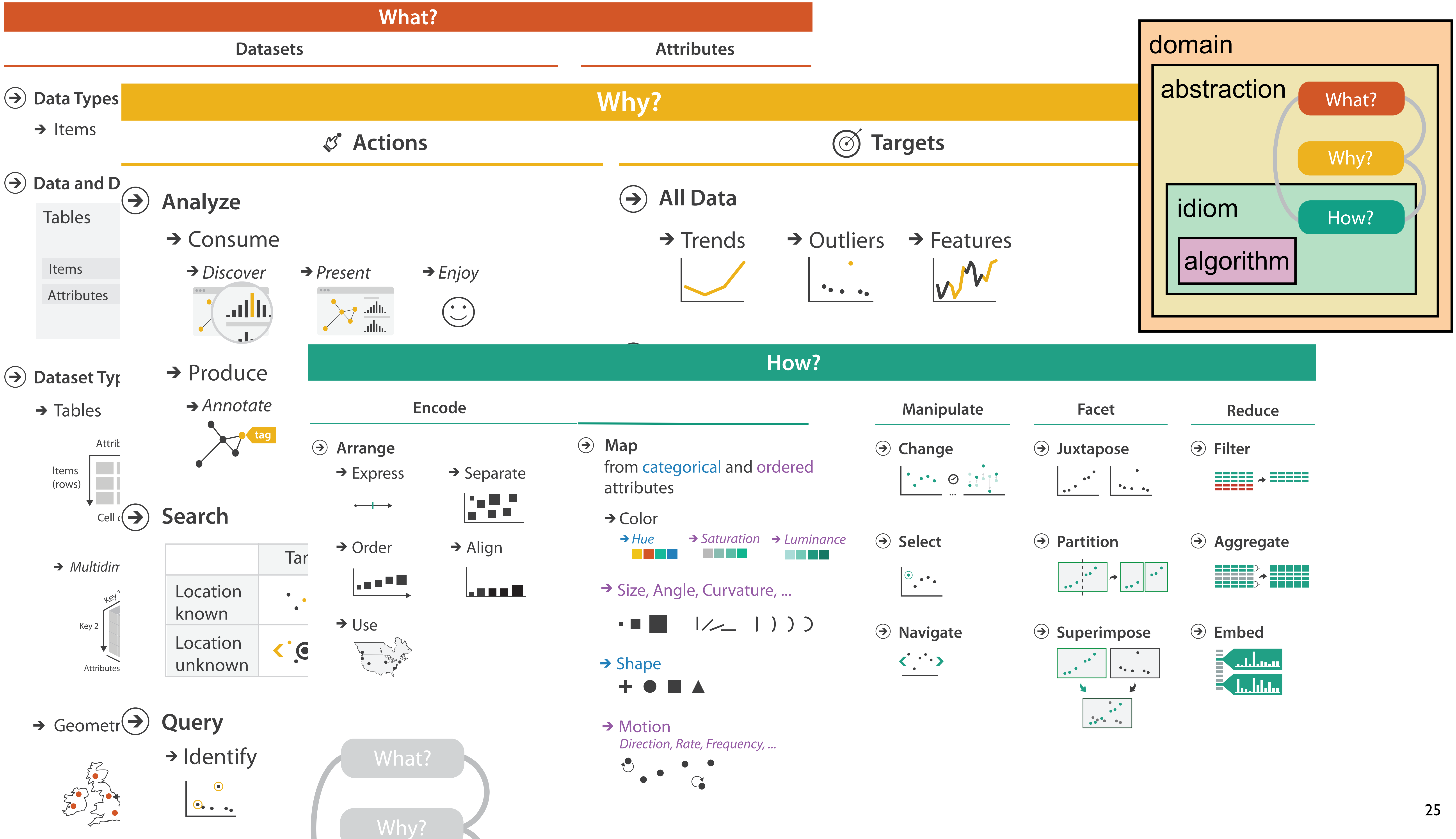
Facet
- Juxtapose
- Partition
- Superimpose

Reduce
- Filter
- Aggregate
- Embed

What?

Why?

How?


What?
Datasets
Attributes
Data Types
Items
Data and D
Tables
Items
Attributes
Dataset Typ
Tables
Attrib
Items (rows)
Cell
Multidim
Key 2
Attributes
Geometr
Why?
Actions
Targets
Analyze
Consume
Discover
Present
Enjoy
Produce
Annotate
tag
Search
Tar
Location known
Location unknown
Query
Identify
All Data
Trends
Outliers
Features
How?
Encode
Arrange
Express
Separate
Order
Align
Use
Map
from categorical and ordered attributes
Color
Hue
Saturation
Luminance
Size, Angle, Curvature, ...
Shape
Motion
Direction, Rate, Frequency, ...
Manipulate
Change
Select
Navigate
Facet
Juxtapose
Partition
Superimpose
Reduce
Filter
Aggregate
Embed
What?
Why?
domain
abstraction
What?
Why?
idiom
How?
algorithm

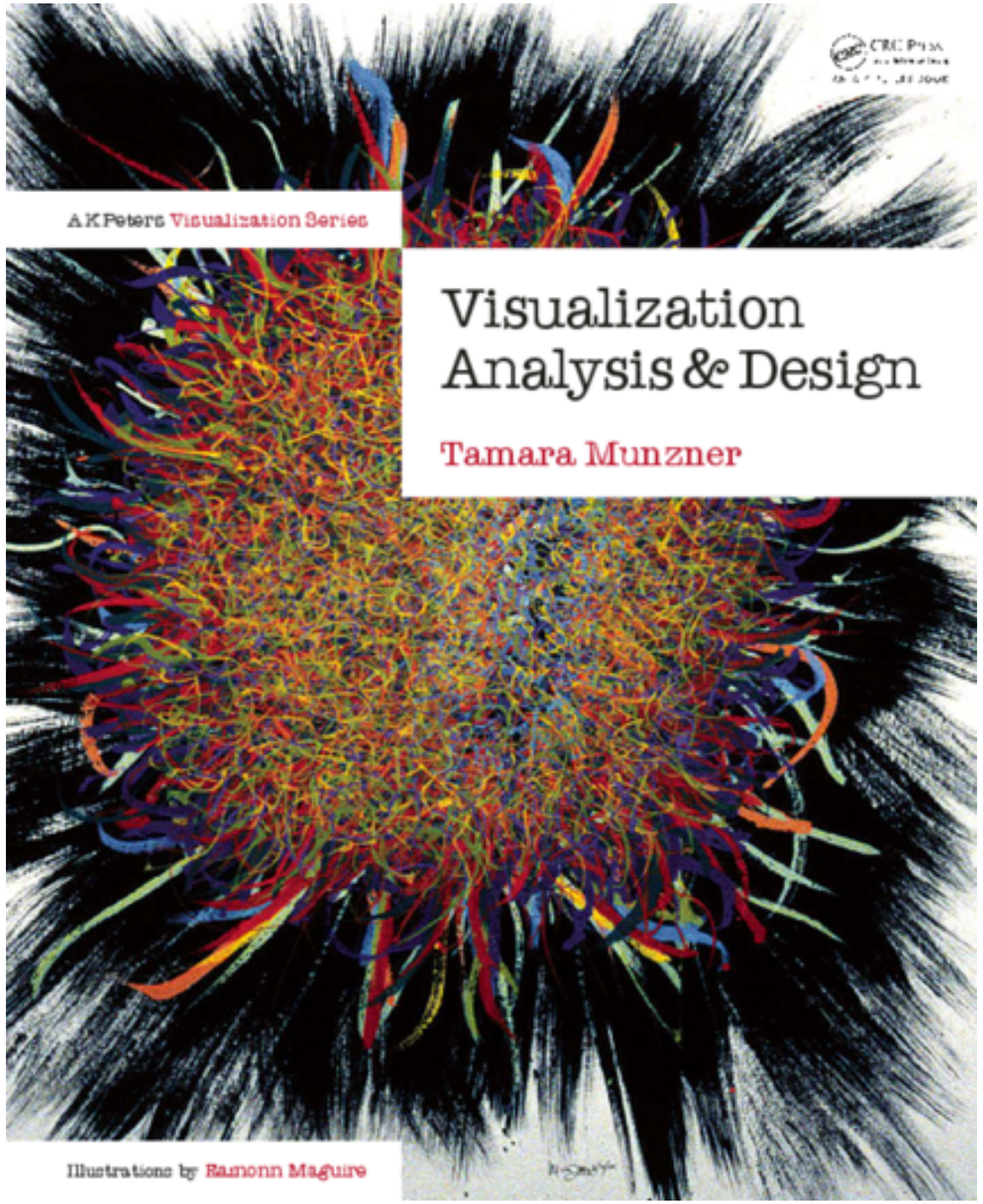
More Information

@tamaramunzner

- this talk
  http://www.cs.ubc.ca/~tmm/talks.html#vad17color-short

- book page (including tutorial lecture slides)
  http://www.cs.ubc.ca/~tmm/vadbook
  - 20% promo code for book+ebook combo: HVN17
  - http://www.crcpress.com/product/isbn/9781466508910
  - illustrations: Eamonn Maguire

- papers, videos, software, talks, courses
  http://www.cs.ubc.ca/group/infovis
  http://www.cs.ubc.ca/~tmm



Visualization Analysis and Design.
Munzner. A K Peters Visualization Series, CRC Press, Visualization Series, 2014.