

## Color Theory: Color Stories on Campus



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### Overview

For this in-class activity, you will capture an image that tells a color story, write a brief ethnography of the sensations evoked by the color, and use Pantone color-matching to extract colors from our environment.

**Time:** 60 minutes total

### Learning Goals

- Get us to notice the *unconscious influence* of color around us (like we did with sound)
- To learn that color has a *cultural history*; it is born from *systems of representation* (As we discussed in class, Stuart Hall defines representation as a link between a concept and its meaning; i.e. red and vibrancy, purple and royalty)
- Question *why* companies like Pantone qualify and quantify color and what the commercialization of color can enable us to do

## STEPS

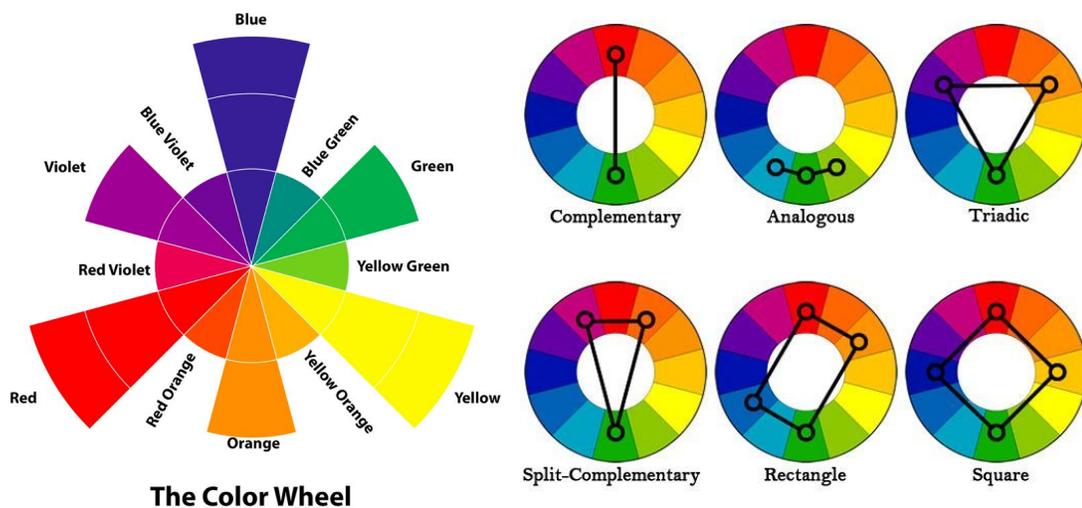
### Step 0: Watch Me Walk You Through It (5 MINUTES)

### Step 1: Capture a Color Story (30 MIN)

1. First, capture a color story you want to analyze with your phone on campus. The image can be of a tiny object, a part of a building, clothing, the sky or the ground, a flyer, a bug or bird, a plant or a tree, a small section of a leaf, a forgotten lost object, a landscape, a window, etc.

Slow down to register colors you might not have noticed before.

Consider the six color compositions we went over in class: analogous, complementary, triad, split complementary, tetradic, square.



2. Second, in your field notebook, write a brief ethnographic account of the color story you are trying to capture. Some questions you might consider:
  - What **sensations** do the colors evoke? On which **bodies**? Yours and/or others?
  - How do the colors work **harmoniously or discordantly**? Do they **complement** one another?
  - What **meaning** do you derive from the colors? What **cultural significance** do they have?
3. Return to class.

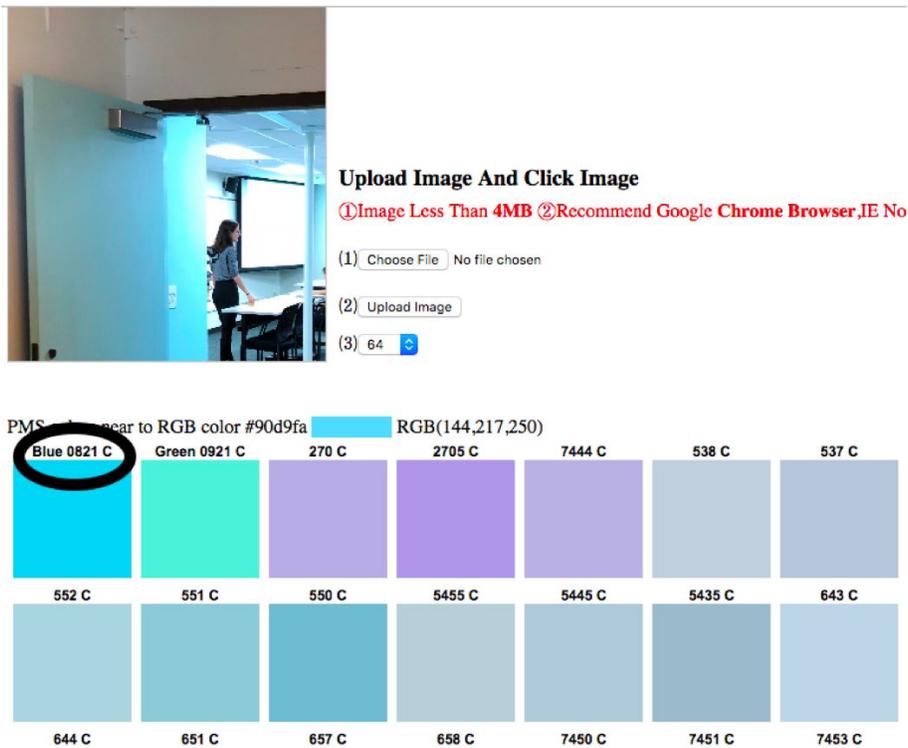
## Step 2: Upload the Image to a Computer (2 MIN)

Send it to yourself over email.

## Step 3. Isolate Three Pantone Colors within the Image (5 MIN)

1. Go to color extractor website:  
[http://www.kmhpromo.com/find\\_pantone\\_color\\_from\\_image/](http://www.kmhpromo.com/find_pantone_color_from_image/)
2. Upload your image. Click “Choose File” > choose the file. Then click “Upload Image.”  
Click 64 on the dropdown menu.
3. Click on the image with your cursor to generate a list of color swatches below the image.  
Isolate three colors that you feel most tell your color story.

Example of one isolated color:



The screenshot shows the website interface for color extraction. On the left is a thumbnail of a classroom with a blue pillar. To the right, the text reads "Upload Image And Click Image" followed by instructions: "①Image Less Than 4MB ②Recommend Google Chrome Browser,IE No". Below this are three steps: (1) "Choose File" (No file chosen), (2) "Upload Image", and (3) a dropdown menu set to "64".

Below the interface is a grid of color swatches. The text above the grid reads "PMS color near to RGB color #90d9fa" and "RGB(144,217,250)". The first swatch, a bright cyan, is circled in black and labeled "Blue 0821 C". Other swatches include "Green 0921 C", "270 C", "2705 C", "7444 C", "538 C", "537 C", "552 C", "551 C", "550 C", "5455 C", "5445 C", "5435 C", "643 C", "644 C", "651 C", "657 C", "658 C", "7450 C", "7451 C", and "7453 C".

**Step 4. Get Three Images of Exact Swatches from Pantone (5 MIN)**

1. Copy and paste your three color names (the numbers and letter above the colors on the extractor website) into the Pantone Color Finder to get an image of the exact swatches. You must input them separately. Pantone Color Finder:  
<https://www.pantone.com/color-finder>
2. Save the three swatches as separate files.

**Step 5. Upload Four Images to Class Twitter (10 MIN)**

1. Create a tweet on our class account with four images: the original image and the three swatches. *It should be all in ONE Tweet.*
2. Add a caption (140 characters or less) that describes the *meaning* of the color story. Include your first name in the Tweet. Pull from your ethnography here!