

FRAGRANCE AND SELF-IMAGE

**Measuring fragrance performance
in relation with women's self-image**

**ESOMAR Fragrance Conference
Paris, November, 16th**

« Wearing perfume is weaving a dialogue between others and myself, between myself and myself. »

Fragrance Language Dictionary
(Maurin, Blayn, Leyris, Editions Quarante Huit; 1992)



Content

Introduction

1. Self-Image and offer fragmentation
2. Main types of projected self-image
3. Drivers structuring the self-image

Conclusion


INTRODUCTION




These results are based on :

- recent quali-quantitative U&A surveys,
 - conducted in Europe,
 - on the woman fragrance market,
 - in selective outlets.
- 

This presentation highlights the importance :

- of the self-image that women wish to project through their fragrance,
 - and the impact of this self-image desire, with a specific focus on how it affects the perceived performance of a scent.
- 

Question : does a woman expect from a fragrance...

- to smell something?
 - to feel something?
 - or to feel like being somebody (someone she could not really be without her fragrance)?
- 

➤ A canonical cluster analysis was conducted based on 4 indicators:

1. Fragrances worn
2. Types of scents liked
3. Motivations associated to fragrance
4. Personality features

➤ A multivariate analysis on the most discriminant indicators,

➤ defining a multi-dimensional space where the clusters were projected.



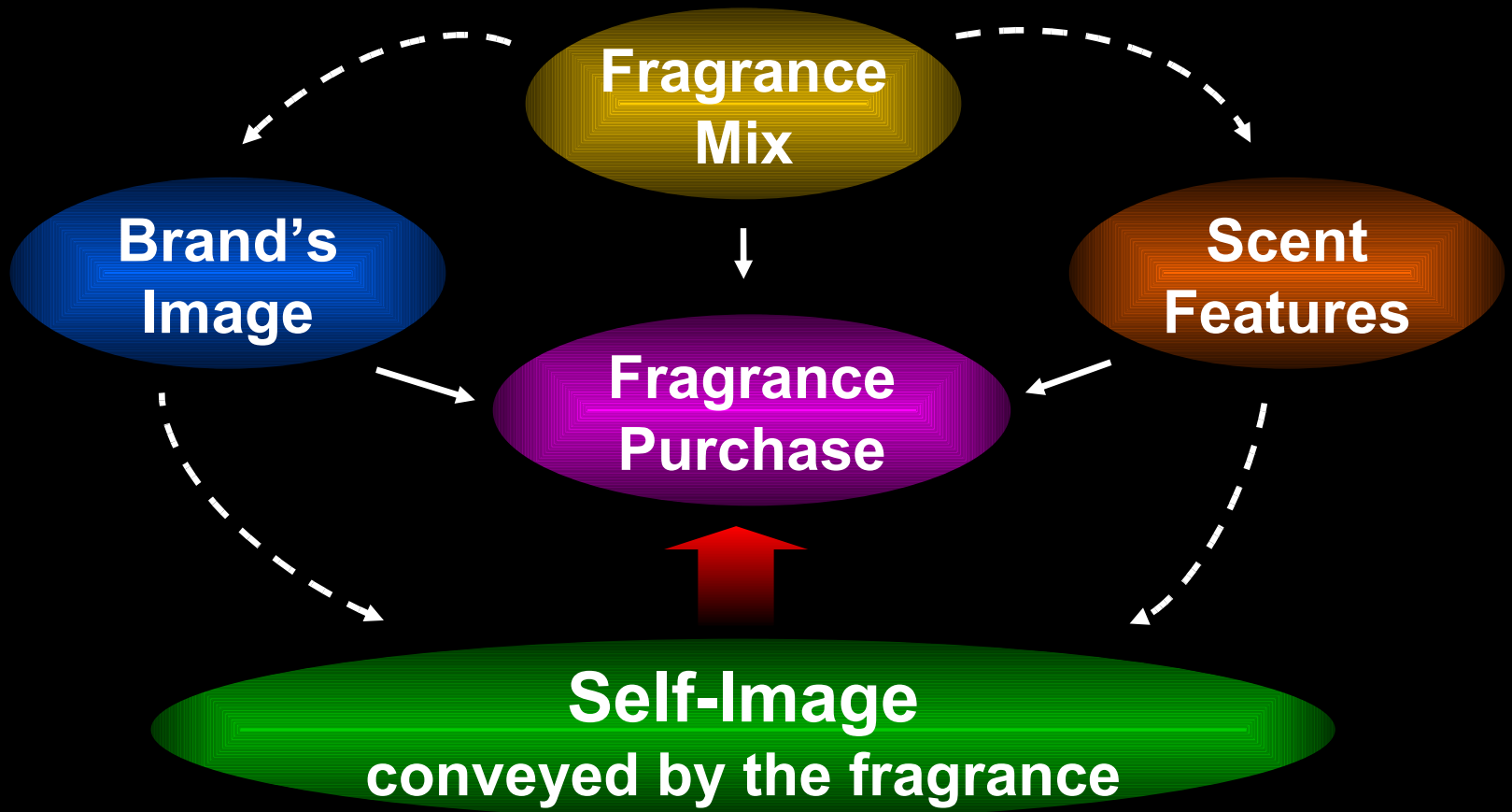
This subject has often been discussed by qualitative people, but here we have been able :

- not only to qualify it,
- but also to evaluate it quantitatively.

The main result shown in the latest waves of qualitative U&A is the following:

- The self-image a woman wishes to project is the most structuring factor in terms of fragrance preferences and choices.
 - As a whole, it is the driver gathering the most crucial motivations in this field.
-

Self-image is **the most discriminant and differentiating factor**



2. Self-Image and offer fragmentation



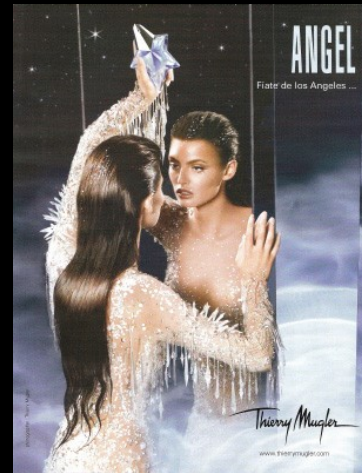
A growing offer fragmentation



A growing diversification and assertion of desires and expectations



- **New players** : disrespectful explosive, codes breaking and iconoclast ones.
- **Strange angels** like Thierry Mugler and their little sisters.



2. Main types of self-image



➤ 4 main types of self-image

Extroverted

➔ 3 contrasted types

- Expressive, « avant-garde »,
- and / or mischievous, perverse, falsely ingenuous,
- and / or nature / sport / body first

Warrior

- Leather and accessories,
- Conqueror silhouette, armored,
- Going against the traditional feminine codes.

Cocoon



- Wise, simple, discreet,
- Woman-child, virginal, pure,
- Flower-woman._

Power

- Glamour / fatale
- Executive woman
- Assertion / kidnapping of the symbols of elegance, social power, glitter...

➤ 4 main symbolic functions

Amplifier

- ✓ A whiplash
 - ✓ For active / young women
 - ✓ To reboot the system
- ➔ **A doping fragrance**

Self-Assertion

- ✓ A feeling of uniqueness
 - ✓ An original personality
 - ✓ A real density
- ➔ **A screenwriter fragrance**

Amulet

- ✓ An invisible armor
 - ✓ Preserving their integrity
 - ✓ Protecting their perimeter
- ➔ **A reassuring fragrance**

Social Marker

- ✓ Displaying a social status
 - ✓ A prestige symbol
 - ✓ To belong to a cast
- ➔ **To feel like someone else**

3. Drivers of the self-Image



Our shopper surveys have confirmed that the scent plays a prominent role when women are buying a fragrance.

Witness the clear importance of 2 triggering factors :

- fragrance samples,
- and store sniffings.

Amplifier

Looking for
Axis 1 :
the scent's image

Uniqueness

Psychological
dimension

60%

Self-Assertion

Sensory
dimension

Fresh /
light

30%

Powerful /
warm

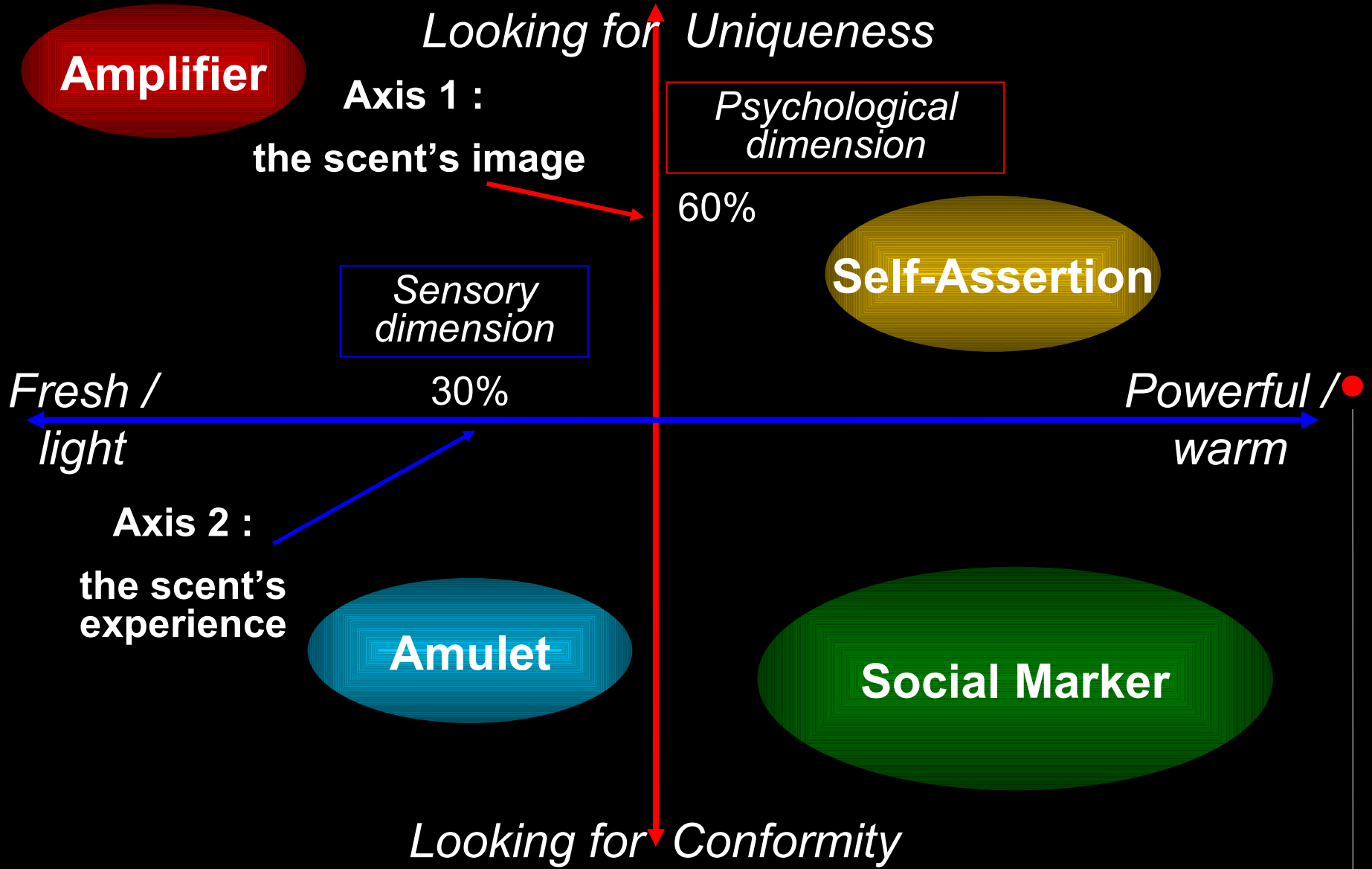
Axis 2 :

the scent's
experience

Amulet

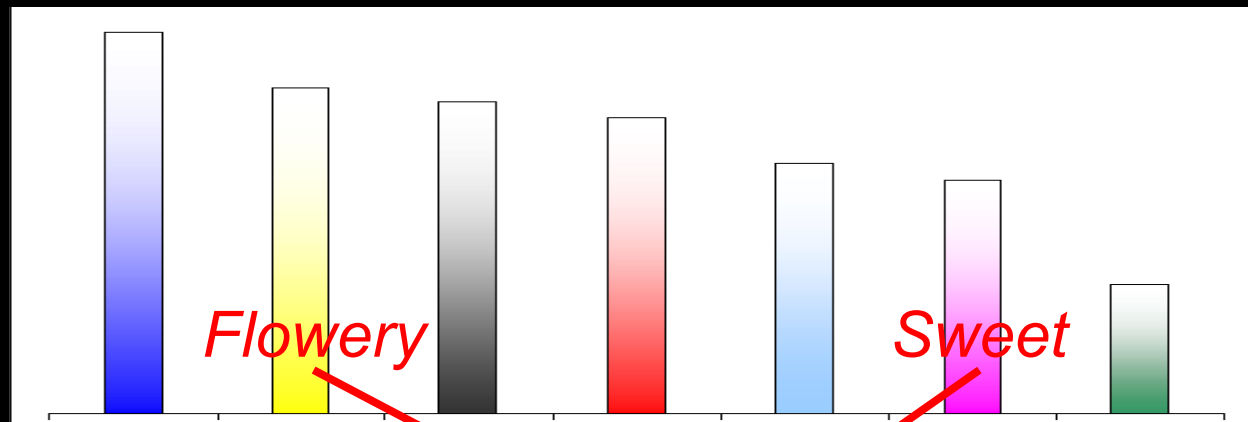
Social Marker

Looking for
Conformity

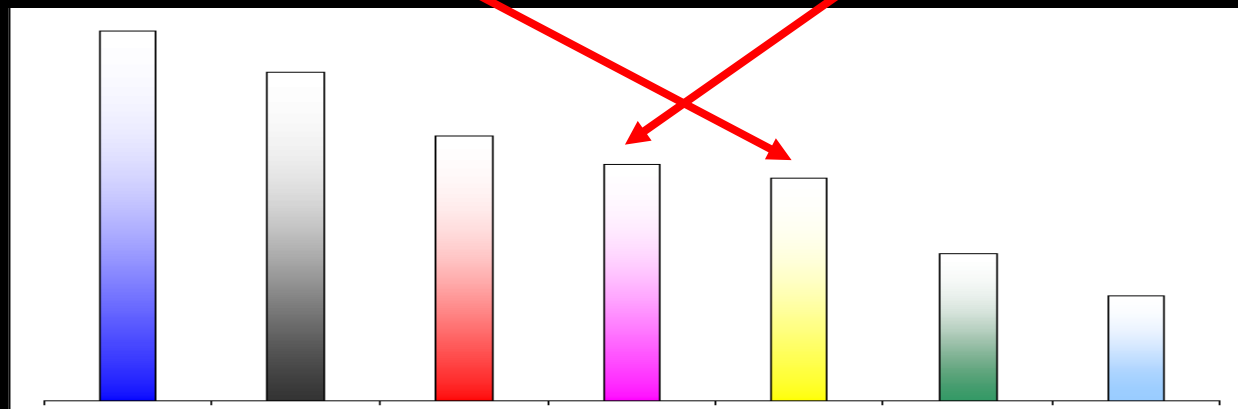


-
- The hierarchy of sensory features varies from one self-image to the other.

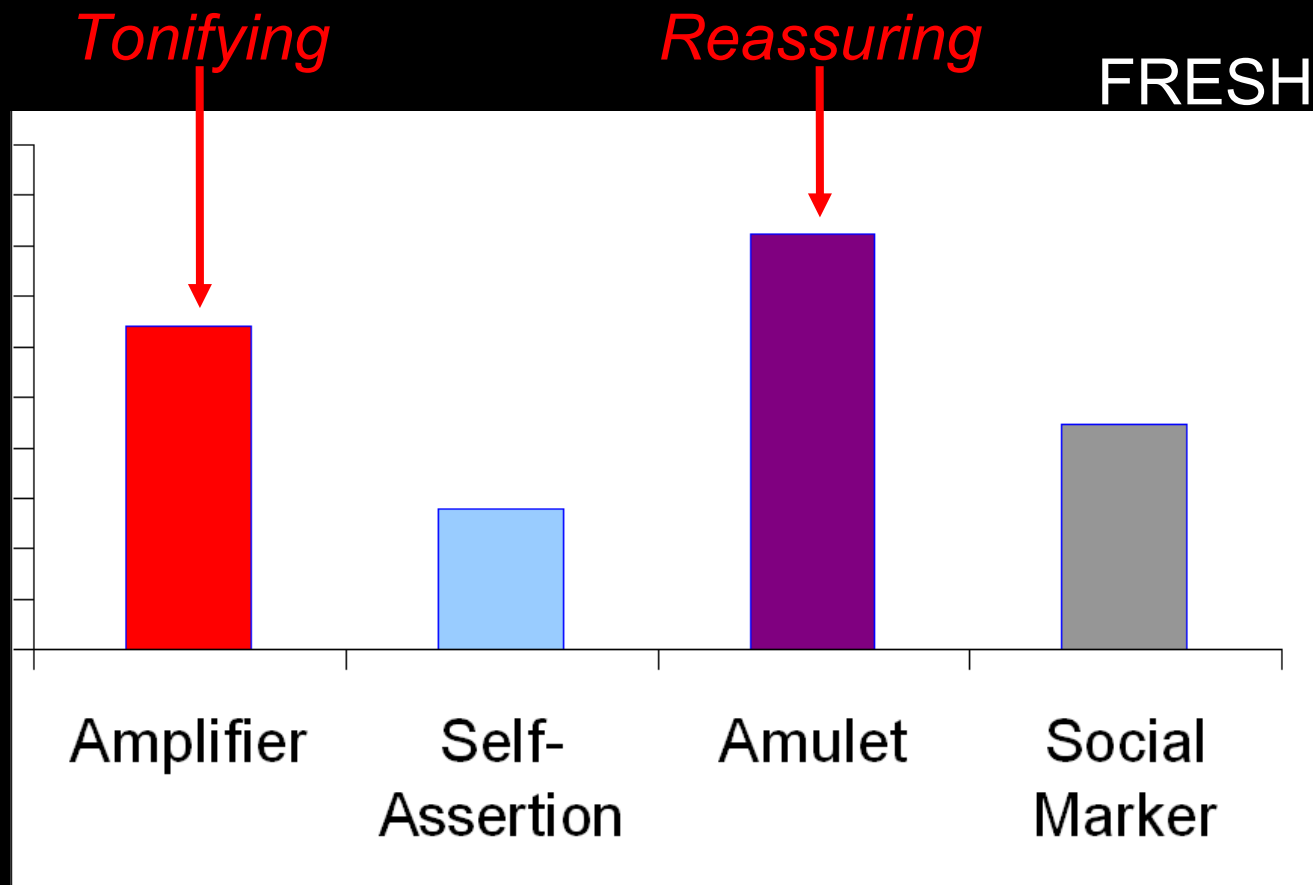
Social
Marker



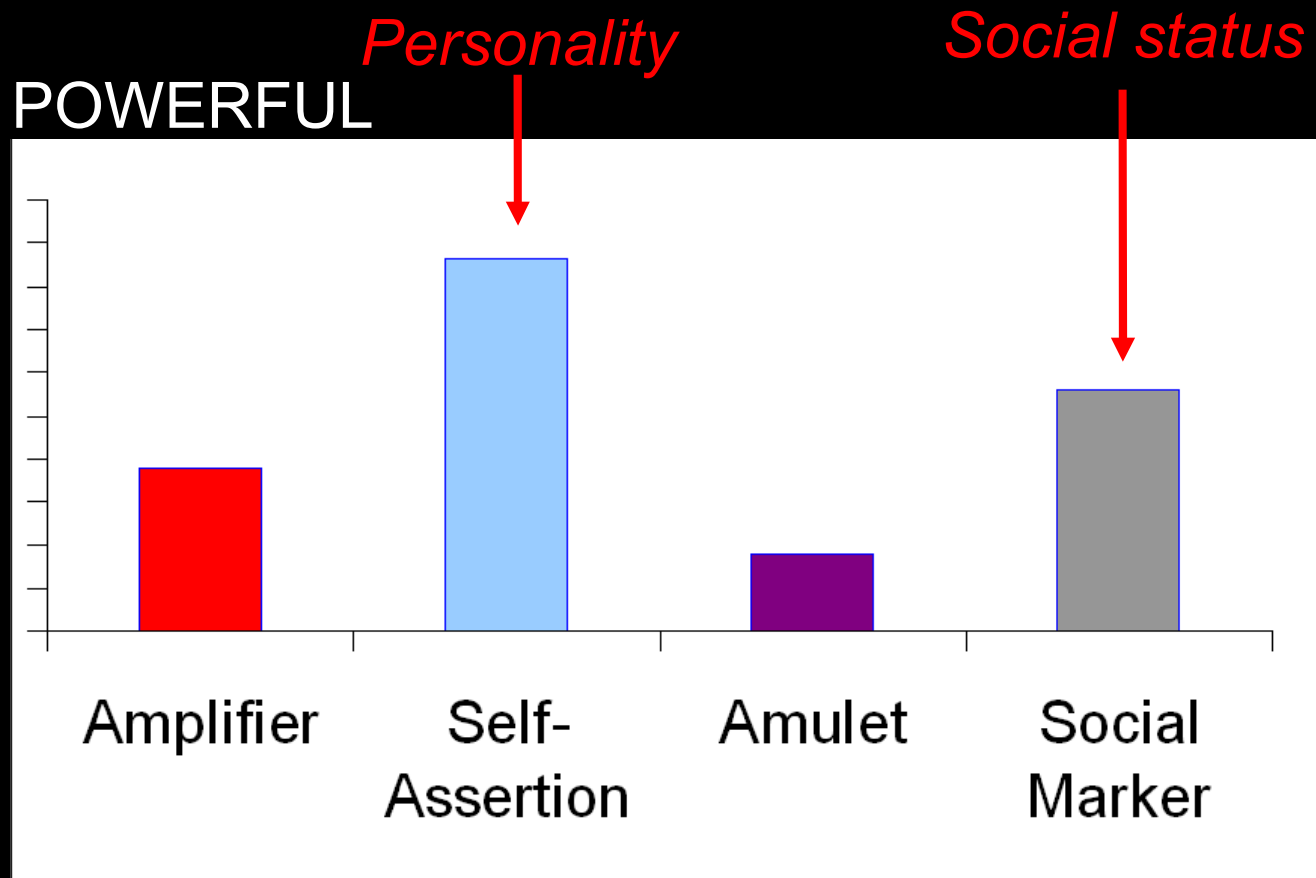
Self-
Assertion



- Freshness is very important for 2 of these 4 types of self-image....
- ...but it has a different meanings.



- The powerful feature can either be a “personality screenwriter” ...
- ...or a “social status symbol”.



CONCLUSION



This close relationship between:

- ✓ scent image,
 - ✓ sensory features,
 - ✓ and self-image.
- shows us that the performance of a scent is not a question of attractiveness nor of likeability.

Consequently, to evaluate a scent, the main question is :

- what kind of self-image a scent conveys towards what kind of women?

One major learning :

- The scent cannot be considered as an ingredient, which should be evaluated for itself – in abstracto - :
 - ✓ more or less attractive,
 - ✓ more or less fresh,
 - ✓ more or less powerful...

- But it should also and maybe primarily be evaluated in relation with its contribution to such or such self-image that is developed :

- the image that the targeted woman wishes to project.

