



Cool diseases!

Inequality of health attention in a social marketing perspective

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World Social Marketing Conference, Toronto, April 21-23, 2013

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Overview

1. Cool diseases
2. Inequality of health attention
3. Health attention and symbolic capital
4. Health branding and health attention



[1]

COOL DISEASES



Research funding

- Which of the following diseases do you think receive the most research funding in the UK?

Stroke

Cancer

Dementia

Heart disease



Costs to the UK economy

- Which of the following diseases do you think cost the UK society the most?

Stroke

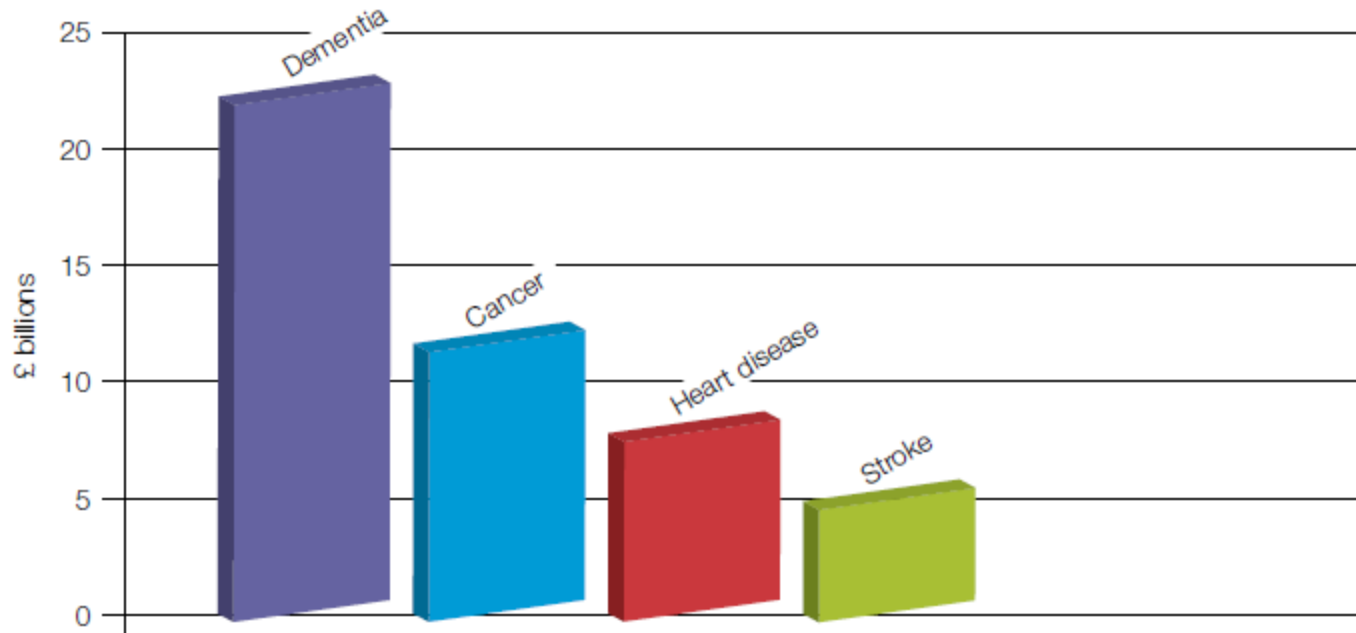
Cancer

Dementia

Heart disease



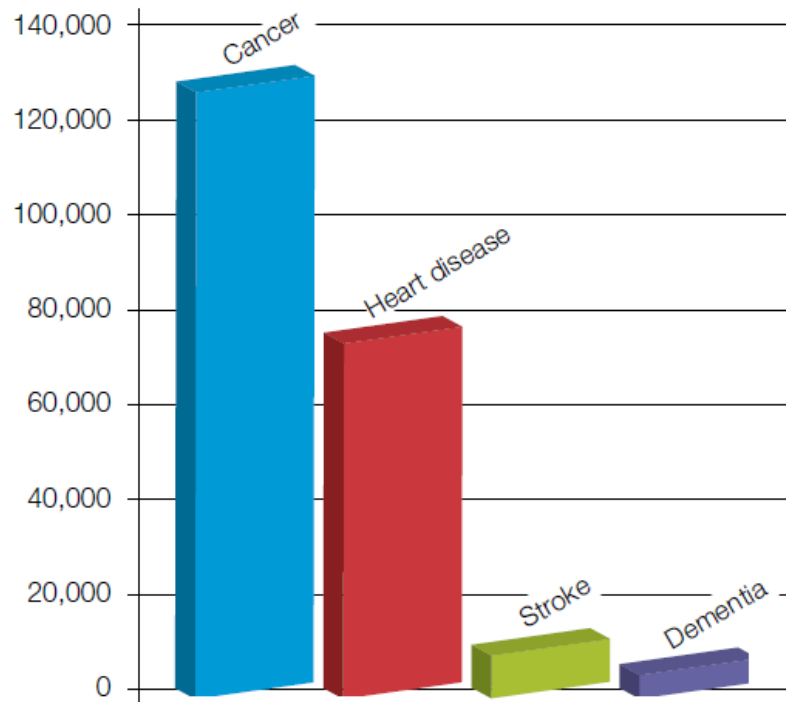
Costs in billions to the UK economy



Dementia 2010: The economic burden of dementia and associated research funding in the United Kingdom, report produced by Health Economics Research Centre and University of Oxford for the Alzheimer's Research Trust



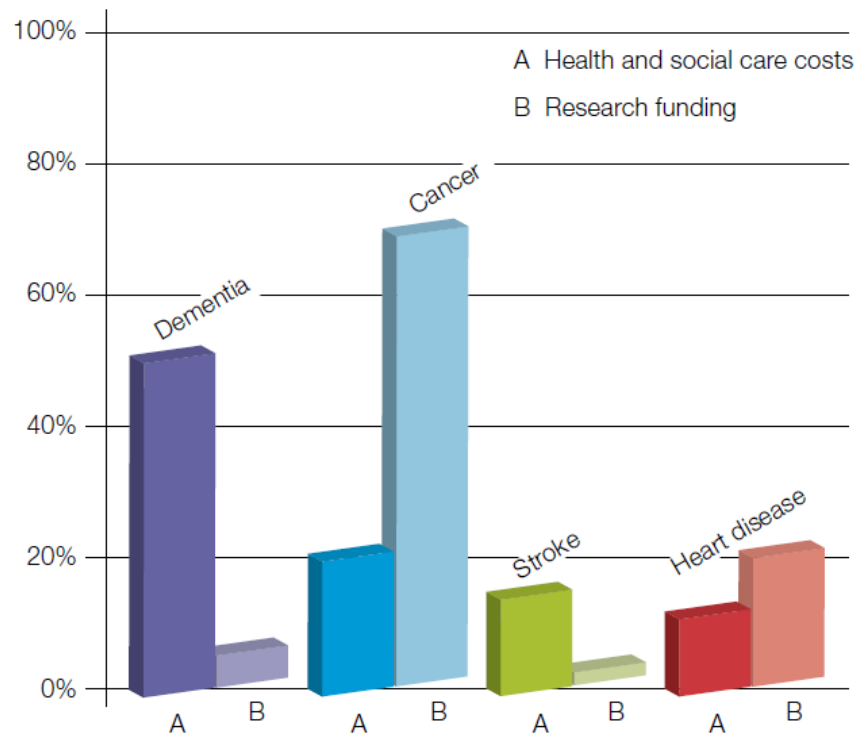
Investment (£) in research for every £1 million in social and health care costs



Dementia 2010: The economic burden of dementia and associated research funding in the United Kingdom, report produced by Health Economics Research Centre and University of Oxford for the Alzheimer's Research Trust



Costs and research funding by disease in the UK



Dementia 2010: The economic burden of dementia and associated research funding in the United Kingdom, report produced by Health Economics Research Centre and University of Oxford for the Alzheimer's Research Trust



Cool diseases

- Evidence suggests that some diseases – like dementia – are out of fashion!
- Academically speaking, they are subject to inequality of health attention



[2]

INEQUALITY OF HEALTH ATTENTION



Health attention

- Health attention is the ability to attract resources, awareness, and recognition for a given health issue
 - Agent based health attention
 - Topologic health attention



Agent based health attention

- Agent based health attention is the ability of a social group to attract resources and recognition of a specific health issue, which affects the group





Topologic health attention

- Topologic health attention is the ability of organizations to attract resources, awareness, and recognition of a specific health issue



Dementia UK
Improving quality of life



Inequality of health attention

- Some diseases – e.g., dementia – are subject to inequality of topologic health attention because organizations fail to attract resources, awareness, and recognition adequate to their severity, compared with other major diseases



[3]

HEALTH ATTENTION AND SYMBOLIC CAPITAL



How to explain inequality of health attention?

- Cost-benefit and rational choice theory cannot explain the funding mismatch
- In contrast, Bourdieu's notion of symbolic capital provides a convincing explanation

3 key concepts in Bourdieu

FIELD, HABITUS, CAPITAL



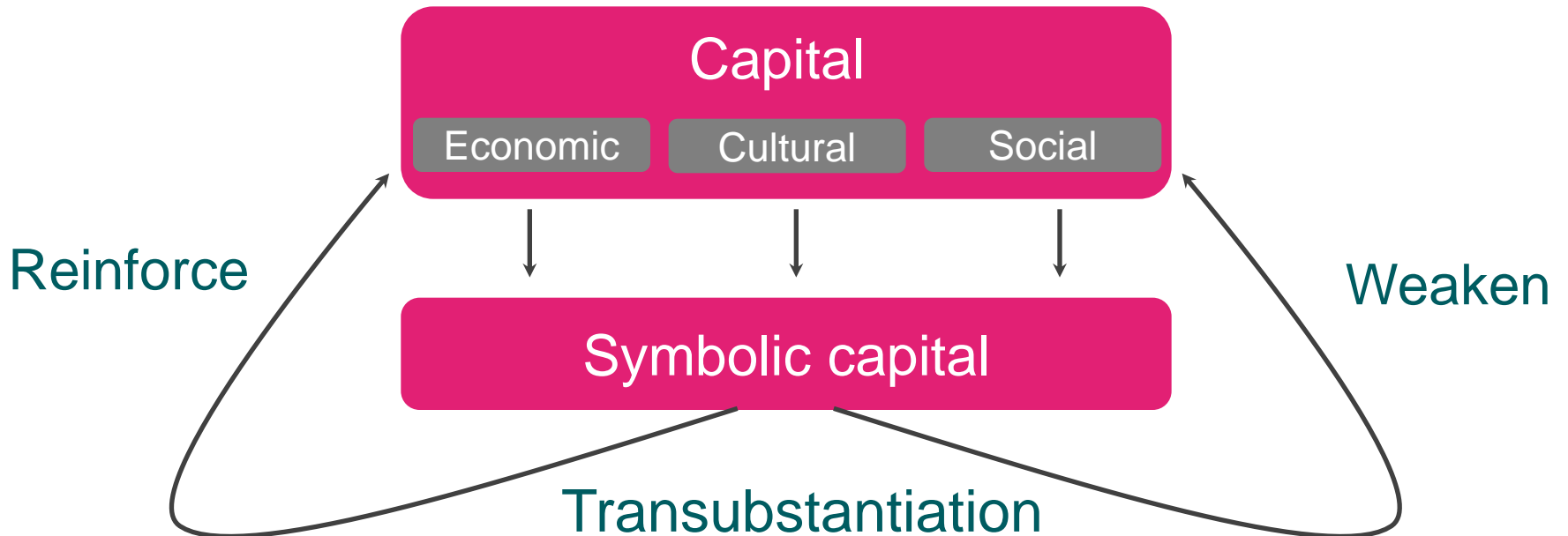
Bourdieu's notion of capital

- Capital
 - The courses of actions open to an agent based on her actual position in a given social context (field)
 - **Economic** (ability for monetary exchanges)
 - **Social** (aggregate of individual resources linked to social recognition and social networks)
 - **Cultural** (beliefs, assumptions, behavioural patterns shaped by domestic and institutional education)

 - **Symbolic** (value attached to agents or social groups based on a perception of their capital total)

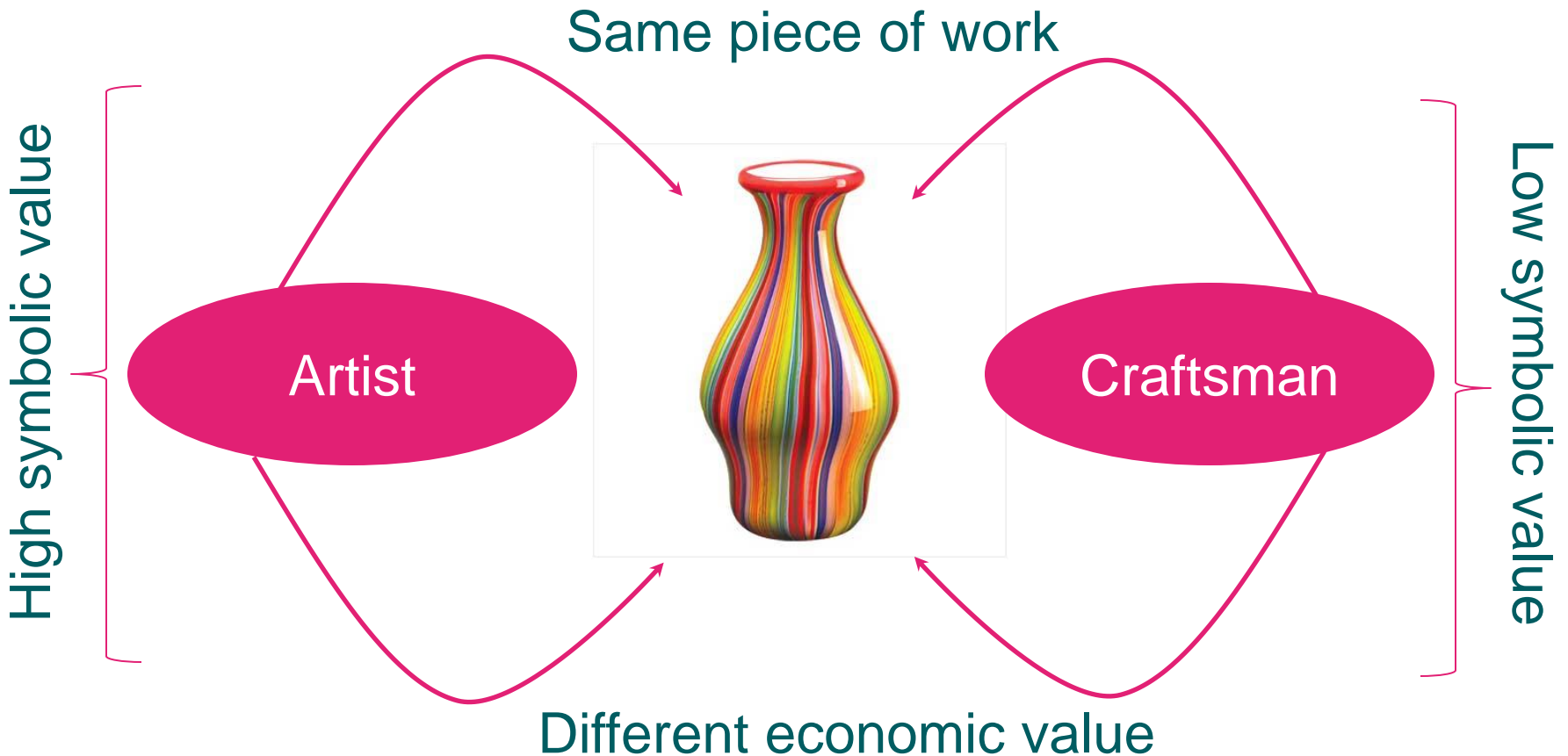


Bourdieu's notion of capital





Bourdieu's notion of capital





“Each field of symbolic capital reproduces the system of unequal relations in the economic field ... and, in doing so, reproduces the fundamental structure of social inequality”

- » Rob Moore (2012) ‘Capital’, in *Pierre Bourdieu: Key Concepts*, Acumen, pp. 98-113.



Health attention and symbolic capital

- Based on Bourdieu's framework of capital forms, it is reasonable to assume that the notion of symbolic capital partly explains inequality of health attention



Key question

- How can social marketers reinforce the symbolic capital of diseases subject to inequality of health attention?

Health branding



[4]

HEALTH BRANDING AND HEALTH ATTENTION



What is a brand?





What is a brand?

- A brand is a mental representation
 - **Creating a brand is to create a set of positive associations in the customer mindset**
 - **Branding is association management**





Health branding

- Health branding aims at influencing a target group to associate a given entity (a health behavior, disease, or attitude) with a set of powerful benefits

- Anker, T. et al. (2011): Health Branding Ethics, *Journal of Business Ethics*, 104:1, 33-45.
- Evans, W. D. & Hastings, G. (2008): *Public Health Branding*, Oxford University Press.



Health branding and the case of dementia

- Social marketers can improve the symbolic capital of dementia through reinforcement of **perceived brand relevance** and **believability**



Perceived brand relevance

- Objective relevance
 - **Extreme economic impact of dementia can effectively ground objective relevance**
- Subjective relevance
 - **The fact that dementia affects everyone (i.e., a cross section of the entire population) can ground subjective relevance**

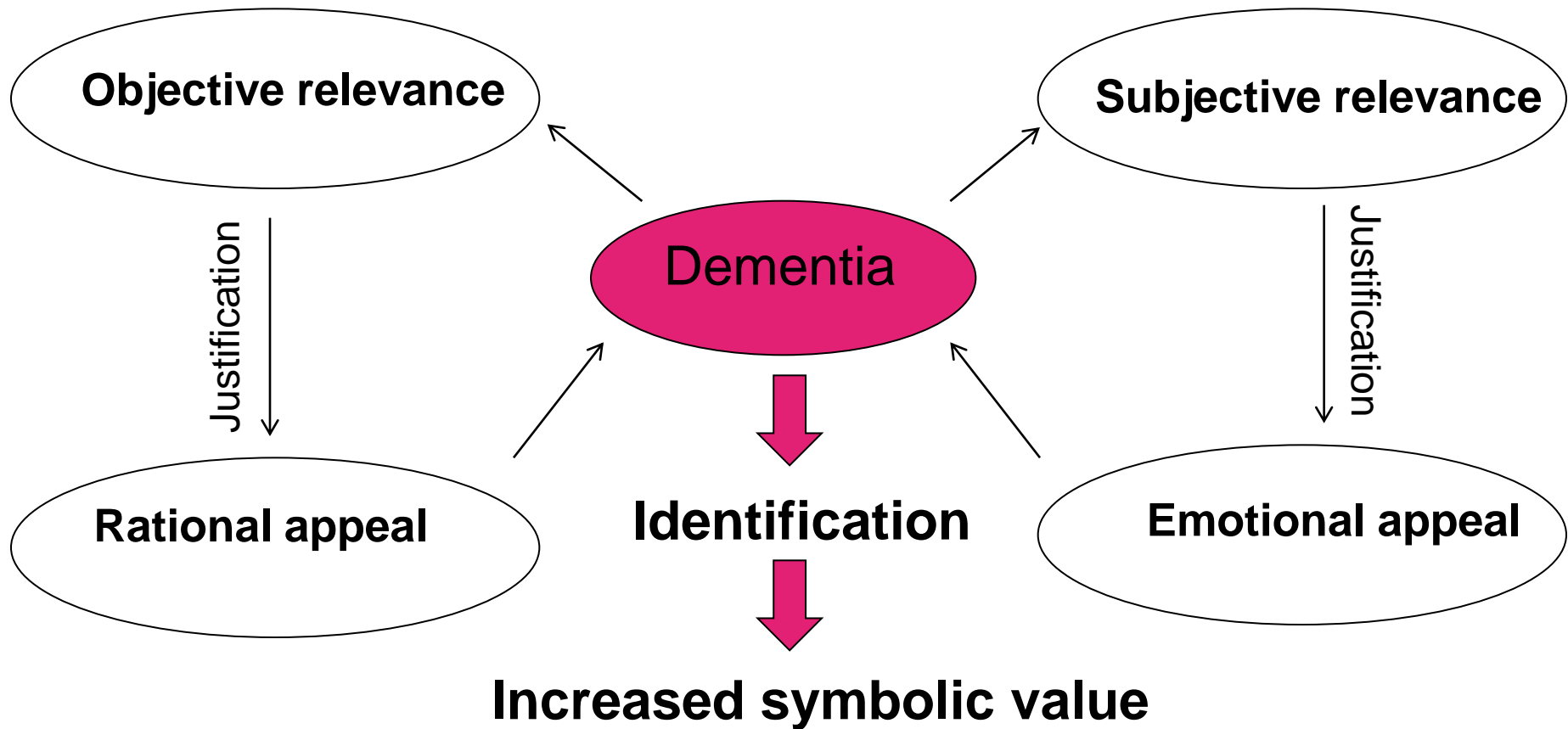


Brand believability (justification of relevance)

- Emotional appeal
 - **Subjective stimulus gained from increasing quality of life for millions of people**
- Rational appeal
 - **Stats on underfunding and socio-economic impact**



Dementia health brand positioning





Q&A