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*p. 19. "Information does not come in simple neutral boxes and its distribution is a more complex matter altogether. We need a more capacious conception of human communication, one that can accommodate the full range of human purpose."*

What, according to Lanham, is an "attention economy"? How does he explain the distinction between of "stuff" and "fluff," (or, better, "stuff and non stuff") How is an attention economy different from an information economy, in his thinking? What is the place of "design" in the attention economy? How, finally, does the screen (as opposed to the page) work or fit in this new economy?

Please provide page number citations for all quotes from Lanham. You are not required to provide a Works Cited at the end.

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According to Lanham, an "attention economy" is one that is primarily ruled by the attention span of humans. The new scarcity is "the human attention needed to make sense of information" (p.7). In this kind of economy, "stuff" and "fluff" essentially swap places, and more attention results in a more enjoyable life with both more stuff and more fluff. Lanham elaborates on the differences between "stuff" and "fluff" a few separate times, but what sat best with me was when he compared it to designers and what they create. "Stuff" is essentially when "designers make patterns for the physical world, templates for stuff", and "fluff" or "nonstuff" is the templates for "how to think about the world, how to act in it" (p.16). Lanham makes the point that fluff is, more or less, the idea of a particular thing, and stuff is that actual thing. The fluff is more valuable than the stuff in an attention economy.

The term "information economy" implies that information is the thing that is in short supply and needs to be distributed equally, but that's not necessarily the case in our society. We are overwhelmed with information and are essentially "drowning in it" (p.7). He instead brought about the point that the thing that is really in short supply is our attention spans, not the amount of information available to us.

Design is a very important part of an attention economy. It's "as important as the engineering" of products (p.14). The design is what grabs our attention and encourages us to buy or engage with an object or activity. For example, according to Lanham, the "launch of a movie is just as important as the movie itself" (p.14) meaning that you can't just throw a movie into theaters without talking it up and advertising for it first. People need to be interested in it. I would much rather see a movie that I've seen multiple trailers for over one that I know nothing about, but if the trailers don't catch my attention, I wouldn't be inclined to see it at all. Catching peoples' attention is the way to sell and communicate with them.

With the screen, words and images don't "stay put" and color and sound are everywhere. This surplus of stimulation is a "market attention economy" and there is a constant battle between words, images, and sounds (p.20). This type of communication allows for users to jump from one stimuli to the next, satisfying our need to be constantly entertained by something new, or our lack of attention. Because of this, the screen (as opposed to the page) both helps and harms the existing attention economy, encourages short attention spans, but also caters to them because that's the way the world works now.