

It's eerie but I (still) like it?! – Towards a more differentiated view on eeriness in the context of new technologies.

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Abstract

Prior research shows that perceived eeriness is a key concept in consumer experience with new artificial intelligence (AI)-based technologies. To date, research has mainly focused on the negative side of eeriness. Introducing a novel perspective, we propose that eeriness may also encompass a more positive side. Drawing on interdisciplinary literature, we examine and operationalize its dual facets – threatening and fascinating eerie – and examine their impact on consumer responses. Our multi-method approach includes a qualitative online survey (Study 1; n = 150), which supports the presumed duality of eeriness and provides preliminary insights into consumer reactions. Study 2, a quantitative online survey (n = 507), validates our operationalization and shows that eeriness perceptions can indeed drive consumer approach. This research contributes to a comprehensive understanding of eeriness in the context of new technologies and its multifaceted implications for consumer experiences.

Subject Areas: *Consumer Behaviour; Customer Relationship Management and Customer Satisfaction; Retailing; Service Marketing*

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