

“DARK” MAGIC OF TIDYING UP: PHYSICAL ORDERLINESS LEADS TO UNFAVORABLE EVALUATIONS OF PEOPLE

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Abstract

Minimalism, with its emphasis on simplicity and order has been prevalent in marketing images since it emerged in 1960s. We focus on the orderliness aspect of minimalist aesthetics. We ask two managerially relevant questions: How does orderliness (vs. disorderliness) influence inferences that people make about other’s personality traits? And does orderliness (vs. disorderliness) lead to perceiving a person as more likely to engage in unethical behavior? In five experiments, using both pictorial and verbal manipulations of orderliness, we show that orderly (vs. disorderly) people are perceived as more likely to engage in unethical behavior. Further, mechanism behind this effect is that orderly (vs. disorderly) people are perceived as more competent than warm, and consequently they are seen as more likely to have dark triad personality traits. Considering the prevalence of orderliness in office designs and marketing images, our findings have important managerial implications.

Subject Areas: *Attitude, Consumer Behaviour*

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