

The American Dream, 1931

the accumulation of commodities
as a key source of life-satisfaction

Yuppie Culture, 1980s

overabundance alludes to a "first world"
philosophy

Marie Kondo, 2014

keep only those things that
speak to your heart



manipulating public opinion

Edward Bernays, 1928

capitalizing on new consumer desires

Exploitation, 1960s

the rise of new markets
centred around "wellness"

Lifestyle Minimalism, 2008

MINIMALISM

01. MASS REACTIONS

Minimalism produces mass reactions in consumers' minds and takes advantage of their existing emotional habits and mental clichés. It aims to create a consumer culture that owns less material possessions that will lead to lasting happiness and overall well-being. The "look of less", characterized by tidy, clean, and fresh design elements, is often associated with feelings of less stress, more time for love and peace, and the absence of other distressing feelings of insecurity that high material consumption holds. This takes advantage of existing human desires with the intent to produce a mass reaction of the public.

02. THE INVISIBLE GOVERNMENT

Minimalism possesses an invisible government that shows consumers which issues are important and which direction is right. The barrier to understanding the minimalist message is one of class as it assumes that any individual can adopt the lifestyle and adapt with ease. The need to have less comes with overabundance and alludes to a "first world" philosophy that is unattainable to consumers with low income and impoverished members of society. It omits common insecurities visible in socio-economic frameworks and alienates a pool of consumers as a result, and marks minimalists as owners of social benefits that are not affordable to everyone.

03. COMMODITIES

The minimalist lifestyle is commodified to attract more business. It has inspired and created new business for other existing industries including architecture and fashion. Accordingly, minimalism endures corporate co-optation in which mainstream culture appropriates the consumption objects identified in a counterculture and markets its ideologies as goods and services, diminishing the original intent of its ideologies. Though originally rejecting a high material consumption lifestyle, minimalism can easily be co-opted and economically mass produced, promoted, and sold.