

Reasons for the Development and Continued Popularity of Minimalism

1. A changing culture with less time to read and less interest in reading because of:

- a broader array of leisure time activities due to the growth of such things as malls, multiplex theatres, social groups/organizations, etc.
- increased mobility with the rise of two- and three-car families.
- the impact of new technologies (i.e., computers, videos, cell phones, cable television, etc.) and the activities they offer.
- the increased number of women in the workforce.

2. A decline in the general reading ability of Americans.

3. A desire for the truth, the “tell it like it is” attitude that is the trademark of minimalist writing:

- The rise of the popularity of minimalism is often connected to the disillusionment Americans felt in the face of the 1960s assassinations, the Vietnam War, the Watergate scandal, etc., leading to a desire for “cold, hard truth.” (This continues with events through the past few decades with such things as the Iran-Contra affair, the Clinton-Lewinsky scandal, the Iraq War, etc.)
- A reaction against the hyperbole of American advertising that began in the 1970s and continues today

** An interesting (if somewhat improbable) theory connects the gas shortage of the 1970s and the desire to conserve energy by making cars, homes, and other items small to the birth of very “small” stories and novels!