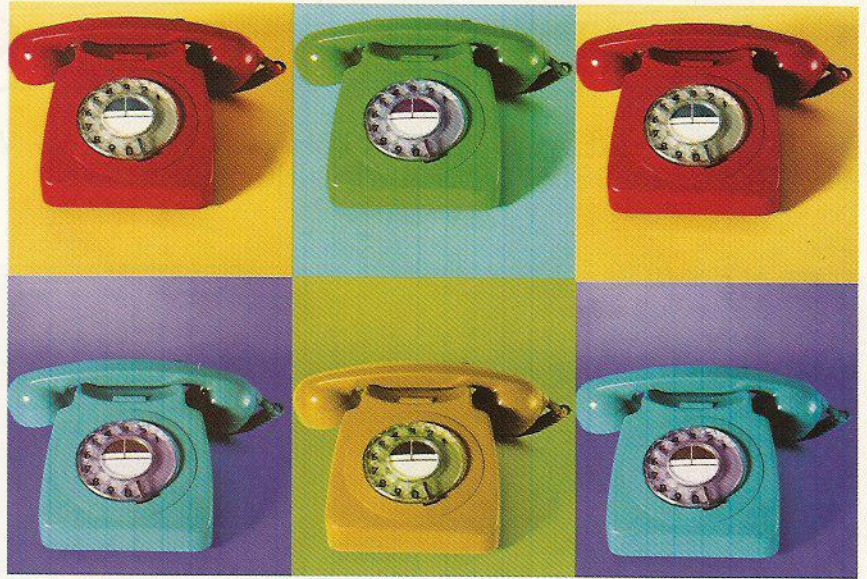


A FRIEND OF MINE prides himself on being able to assess a person's personality just by peaking at the contents of their bookcases. He tells me that people who can't cook have loads of cookery books. That armchair gardeners own copious quantities of books on plants and horticulture. He assures me that it's all a compensation mechanism – after all, those who can actually do it don't need to read about it. He also insists that what a person drinks is a giveaway to their inner depths. He assures me that a person who drinks lager is generally confident, while those who favour bitter are more reserved. That sherry drinkers are more sensitive, while G&T lovers are laid back. He tells me knowingly that those who always go for ice and lemon are frightened they're missing out on something, hence the need to grab everything that's going. It's interesting stuff isn't it? And it made me think about other information we impart about ourselves, unwittingly, and if there's anything in this pseudo-psychology of 'life-style analysis'.

For many of us February heralds the start of DIY season. Decorating the hall, painting the kitchen or moving the lounge around climbs up the list of priorities as we prepare to nest build for spring. It's now that the choices we make about the type of furniture we keep and the colour schemes we pick come to the fore to reveal considerably more about our make-up than we think. For these choices aren't accidental. Take a look around your home now and ask yourself why you bought that piece or furniture, or why you painted that wall white (with a hint of peach). You see, it not just because you like it. Choices are made under a guise of conscious, rational and logical thinking, but are based on something far more

CHOICES ARE MADE UNDER A GUISE OF CONSCIOUS, RATIONAL AND LOGICAL THINKING



Hue are you?

The colour schemes and decor in your home reveals more about you than you think, says David Moxon

nebulous and deeper. After all, an interior designer is rather like an artist and inputs something of themselves into each of their creations – and us amateurs are no different. Research has shown that our décor says a lot about our underlying emotions. Red,

for example, is an intense, energetic and forceful primary colour. Blue, on the other hand, is placid, tranquil and calming. Yellow is associated with wisdom and logic whereas orange is linked with confusion and uncertainty. And what if your penchant is violet? Well brace yourselves, because this is a sure-fire sign of insecurity, immaturity and irresponsibility. The order that one arranges a room is just as revealing. Eminent psychologist, Sigmund Freud, suggested that an obsessive need for tidiness in later adult life stemmed from early childhood difficulties with toilet training. If

Freud is right, the fanatical way I insist on wiping down the work surfaces after washing up, before folding the dishcloth over the mixer tap, then neatly hanging up the tea-towel, isn't my fault, it's down to the way I was taught go to the toilet. All is clear.

Ablutionary conjecture aside, I personally believe that happy memories provide one of the powerful motivators in the decisions we make on home décor. Nostalgia is a very powerful thing. Colours, items of furniture and ornaments are all dynamic mental triggers. So, they may seem garish, tasteless or strangely unfashionable, but the household objects and décor with which we each adorn our home, aren't just about taste, they're about what makes us tick.



David Moxon is a British health psychologist and specialist in pre and post retirement health and behavioural issues.