

Study of the Day: Attempting to Focus Can Lead to Distorted Images

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The Atlantic:

PROBLEM: It's a contradiction that we've all experienced. Sometimes, the more we focus on certain objects, the more we misperceive where they are in relation to other objects.

METHODOLOGY: Yale University cognitive psychologists Brandon Liverence and Brian Scholl tested this phenomenon across three experiments, where 10 people each completed simple visual tasks. In one trial, participants watched four circles on a computer screen as they moved around on a computer monitor while rapidly changing colors. Before the movement began, two of the circles, the targets, flashed several times. During the ensuing motion, the participants were tasked to press a key whenever either of those targets turned red or blue. Then, after several seconds of motion, all of the circles disappeared. The participants then had to pinpoint the locations they'd last seen the circles.

Read the whole story: [The Atlantic](#)