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Report: 90% Of Waking Hours Spent Staring At Glowing Rectangles

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PALO ALTO, CA—A new report published this week by researchers at Stanford University suggests that Americans spend the vast majority of each day staring at, interacting with, and deriving satisfaction from glowing rectangles.

ENLARGE IMAGE



Robert Horton spends a quiet night at home with his favorite entertainment rectangles.

"From the moment they wake up in the morning, to the moment they lose consciousness at night, Americans are in near-constant visual contact with bright, pulsating rectangles," said Dr. Richard Menken, lead author of the report, looking up briefly from the gleaming quadrangle that sits on his desk. "In fact, it's hard to find a single minute during which the American public is not completely captivated by these shining...these dazzling...."

"I'm sorry," Menken continued. "What were we discussing again?"

According to the report, staring blankly at luminescent rectangles is an increasingly central part of modern life. At work, special information rectangles help men and women silently complete any number of business-related tasks, while entertainment rectangles—larger and louder and often placed inside the home—allow Americans to enter a relaxing trance-like state after a long day of rectangle-gazing.

ENLARGE IMAGE



People travel hundreds of miles to gape unblinkingly at the rectangles of the big city.

Researchers were able to identify nearly 30 varieties of glowing rectangles that play some role throughout the course of each day. Among them: handheld rectangles, music-playing rectangles, mobile communication rectangles, personal work rectangles, and bright alarm cubes, which emit a high-pitched reminder that it's time to rise from one's bed and move toward the rectangles in one's kitchen.

"We discovered in almost all cases that Americans find it enjoyable and rewarding to put their faces in front of glowing rectangles for hours on end," said Howard West, a prominent sociologist on the Stanford team. "Furthermore, when citizens are

not staring slack-jawed at these mesmerizing shapes, many appear to become lost, confused, and unsure of what they should be doing to occupy themselves."

Added West, "Some even become irritated and angry when these rectangles are not around."

While a majority of the iridescent shapes are employed for recreation, thought-relief, and during the late hours of the night, sexual gratification, others are used to effectively impart orders and commands to the American populace. According to researchers, these rectangles help to notify citizens about which brand of domestic detergent to buy, what direction to drive their vehicles in, and how many more seconds a food item must remain inside its revolving radiation chamber before it can be hurriedly consumed.

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The rectangles even help Americans to successfully emote, often by using a combination of visual and aural signals to indicate when laughter or tears should be produced.

"Life would be very different if it weren't for these magical squares of light," cultural studies professor and social critic David Ostroff typed to reporters using one of his wireless messaging rectangles. "Sry. Have 2 go. Movie about 2 strt."

On average, Americans interact with anywhere from 53 to 107 pulsating rectangles every week. For many, however, this is simply not enough. Despite having a leisure rectangle in every bedroom, along with multiple work rectangles, a rectangle just for the children, and one or two rectangles that can do the work of several rectangles in one, many citizens admit to being dissatisfied.

"I wish ours was bigger," said Susan Miller, an Iowa homemaker who feels a deep sense of emptiness and fear when not in front of a luminous two-dimensional object. "Our neighbors across the street have one twice the size of ours. Harold, why can't our rectangle be more like their rectangle? Harold, are you listening to me? They seem happier than we are. Why can't we be happy like them? Honey? Are you even home?"

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