

Aperture

The Official Publication of the International Remote Viewing Association

A Message from The President

This is my first formal message as IRVA's new president to the members of the Association. I send you on IRVA's behalf our best wishes for the new year, and a hope that the next twelve months sees much progress for you in advancing your understanding of this remarkable mental skill we know as remote viewing.



I realize it has been a long time since you have received a new issue of *Aperture*. This distresses us probably more than it does you. I will not enumerate the various complications, both personal and operational, that have so slowed our publication schedule. Rest assured that you will get four issues for every year that you belong to IRVA, no matter how long that "year" may be!

Among the pages of this issue you will find many things of interest, from a review and photos of our most recent successful conference, to news about IRVA, to reviews of visual and print media with content relevant to people like yourselves who are interested in remote viewing. IRVA's news includes some early details about our next conference, which is now in the preliminary stages of planning. While we originally thought we would schedule the conference for this coming April—it had even reached the contract stage—I discovered that I would need to have major foot surgery. While not life-threatening, my operation, followed by an extended recovery curve, promised to make organizing the next conference within that time-frame difficult. For that and other reasons, and with the support of the directors, the Conference Committee decided to move the conference to the fall. The upside of my surgery is that, during my enforced period of "rest," I have been able to make considerable progress toward accomplishing those of IRVA's goals that have been

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Aperture

Ap - er - ture (ap'ĕr-chĕr) n.
1. A hole, cleft, gap, or space through which something, such as light, may pass. 2. A term of art in certain remote viewing methodologies, signifying the point or portal through which information transitions from the subconscious into conscious awareness.

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APERTURE

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IRVA is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization devoted to the encouragement of research, education, and public information in the field of Remote Viewing.

A General Membership in IRVA is \$35 per year (\$45 outside the US and Canada), which includes a subscription to *Aperture* and discounts on major conferences.

Letters and contributions to *Aperture* are invited. All manuscripts, review copies, reprints, and information items should be addressed to the Editor. Submission of material does not guarantee its publication.

Web—<http://www.irva.org>

Rv News

New Remote Viewing Practice Targets—Targets of the Week

For those who want ongoing practice of their remote viewing skills, there are now approximately 50 well selected practice targets online at the website of IRVA director Lyn Buchanan's RV training company, Problems > Solutions > Innovations. To get to the Targets of the Week, viewers should go to www.crviewer.com and click on the "TOOLS" tab. The first option is "Target of the Week." Viewers should click on "(click for more)", and they will be taken to a list of the available targets.

The earliest posted targets are at the bottom of the list (the latest targets are added to the top each week), and many people choose to start at the bottom of the list and work their way up. Targets can be picked at random or can be worked in any order.

Each target entry on the list has columns for: (1) coordinates (there is an explanation for how to personalize them for your own use); (2) tasking—telling what general aspects of the target the viewer should focus on to have a good session; (3) a map, if applicable, for dowsing to find the target's location; (4) after a session is done: viewers should write up a summary of what they found, then call up

the webpage again and go to the fourth column for their feedback. Viewers should always refrain from looking at the feedback until after a summary has been written. Once written, viewers should then compare their summaries to the feedback information to see how well they did.

There is no requirement to log on or give one's name or any personal information. Absolutely no information about anyone using the site is captured or recorded. The targets are there for everyone to try, and nobody will be there to judge, criticize, or laugh. When viewers do poorly, it is a learning experience for them alone. However, when viewers do well, they can brag all they want. As the old saying goes, "The hen that lays the golden egg has earned the right to cackle."

These are good remote-viewing targets that have been carefully selected to provide something for every level of expertise. Many of them have easy tasking provided for beginners, up through very difficult tasking for advanced viewers. The target pool includes no violent, gory, or emotionally disturbing targets. So, Happy Viewing for All! ☺

Feature Article

2006 Remote Viewing Conference Review

by Adam White

This is one instance in which I sincerely hope the promotional slogan isn't true. This time, what happened in Vegas simply cannot stay in Vegas. I had the privilege of attending the 2006 IRVA Remote Viewing Conference, a convergence of great minds held in May of last year in the unlikely location of Sin City. Over



The Alexis Park Resort Hotel, venue for the 2006 Remote Viewing Conference.

a three-day period, attendees were inundated with vast amounts of information from over a dozen guest lecturers and speakers, including visionaries and world-renowned authorities on not only remote viewing but also many other related fields of study.

My personal interest in remote viewing grew from a series of circumstances within my private and professional life. I am a writer, mostly creative and mostly of screenplays, specifically in the science-fiction genre. My educational background is in conventional journalism, before which I served out an enlistment in the U.S. Army. These latter two factors have shaped me into somewhat of a skeptic, particularly in regards to parapsychological concepts. Yet the fact that the U.S. military had allocated so many of its resources to an RV program fascinated me, if for no other reason than that this seemed like such an odd marriage. Despite

the fact that the Army “wastes” so much money on exploratory programs, I knew from experience that a program such as this could not have existed for so long if it had not yielded tangible results. And if those results involved an effective new means of gathering information, especially of a sensory nature, then this technique could prove invaluable to my skill set as a writer. I decided to attend the conference and at least explore what RV is about.

The first speaker, Jeffrey Mishlove, gave a fascinating lecture on the problems of defining remote viewing using an “information transmission model.” Dr. Mishlove cited no less than six examples from the works of various philosophers, scientists, and artists to illustrate alternative models through which to better understand RV. Of particular interest was his examination of the nonlocal-mind theory through Jorge Luis Borges’s short story,

“The Aleph.” Standing at the story’s namesake point of omnivision, Borges’s narrator catches a glimpse into the infinite pool of shared knowledge from which all stories arise.

The second speaker, Dr. Angela Thompson Smith, shed some light on the advancement of RV around the world. Dr. Smith’s presentation gave rise to an interesting duality regarding remote viewing’s ability to transcend socioeconomic boundaries. First, she elabo-



Dr. Jeffrey Mishlove makes a point during his presentation on Friday afternoon.



Dr. Angela Thompson Smith discusses remote-viewing work being done around the world.

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rated on the Chinese government's various programs to screen for and recruit individuals with natural psychic ability from its public schools, at both the elementary and secondary levels. This concept struck me as equally invigorating and depressing—the former because it signals an acceptance of highly evolved concepts by a governing body, and the latter because our own government is seemingly light years away from reaching such a point.

Dr. Smith's lecture then turned to the use of RV and related practices by the indigenous peoples of less-developed countries, including the South Pacific islanders who had the foresight to seek refuge from the December 2004 tsunami well before it hit. Dr. Smith also noted that Tibetan monks have used similar forms of "vision" to see the future, and have predicted a massive nuclear war in the year 2012—which left this writer hoping that their RV skills are somewhat less than totally reliable.

Perhaps the most entertaining speaker of the conference took the stage next: Psychic detective Noreen Renier. Ms. Renier proved to be a natural public speaker, with an animated demeanor that rendered her already interesting subject matter absolute-



Noreen Renier kept the audience spellbound, recounting her psychic detective work.

ly fascinating. I was struck by an intriguing contrast within her description of her work as a police psychic: She is obviously a highly sensitive person (her abilities would be useless were she not a natural receptor for information), yet she works extensively with individuals whose very occupation teaches them to be skeptical of practically everyone and everything. I couldn't help but wonder whether her natural psychic abilities are strained under the constant weight of having to prove herself and the value of her skills to law enforcement personnel.

The presentation by former Army remote viewer and unit historian Paul H. Smith proved as riveting as I had expected. I had already devoured Smith's book, *Reading the Enemy's Mind*, and had been espe-

cially interested in the various sketches and other materials from actual Army RV sessions that were included in the text. You can imagine, then, how excited I was to find out that his presentation would deal almost exclusively with these materials! Despite the fact I consider myself a natural skeptic when it comes to phenomena such as psychic ability, I am also a trained journalist. Hence, I try not to formulate any concrete conclusions without first considering all of the available evidence. That is where Smith's lecture proved one of the most important of the conference for me.

Here was a conference full of individuals all singing the praises of a technique for information acquisition that I had still never actually seen work. So, to see evidence of RV's effectiveness, especially in such controlled applications as were utilized in the Army's program, went a long way toward helping me gain acceptance of not only RV but this group of people as well. Smith's presentation helped immensely with that.

Two of the conference speakers I had most anticipated were Ingo Swann and Elias Merhige, the former widely recognized as the "father of remote viewing" and the latter as the man who had brought RV to Hollywood. Part of what was intriguing about Swann was his status as a New York artist, a hat that is hard to imagine fitting in with both the scientific community in which RV was developed and the military programs in which it grew for many years. The moments leading up to Swann's keynote address were alive with a sort of crackling energy of anticipation; this was who many of the conference's attendees had come to see.



With lots of original material from the military RV program, Paul H. Smith gave conference attendees a first-time look at some of the legendary successes of remote-viewing greats such as Joe McMoneagle and Mel Riley.



Dean of the remote-viewing community, Ingo Swann, held the audience entranced as he discussed the great potential of human supersensitivities.

Swann's presentation was equal parts intriguing, amusing, and thoroughly unexpected. His demeanor as a teacher is well documented in books such as Smith's, and many of us attending felt almost immediately like prospective students trying to impress this wizened master of RV. Swann posed a number of questions to the group, and the tentative answers he received back were almost uniformly rejected. Our introduction to Ingo Swann was thus both terrifying and wonderful.

His lecture dealt with the importance of future events and developments, in contrast to the insignificance of dwelling on the past. He criticized several facets of science as being guilty of the latter, and of allowing experimental precedent to become a hindrance to future knowledge and growth. This led to an amusing exchange between Swann and Dr. William Tiller, which appeared to us outsiders as a sort of classical rivalry between the scientist and the artist. This



Director E. Elias Merhige fielding questions from the audience about his movie, "Suspect Zero," starring Ben Kingsley.

reinforced my prior notion that experts from several vastly different disciplines had been forced over time to "get along," so that a multidisciplinary concept such as RV could benefit from study from a number of different viewpoints. Elias Merhige gave both a presentation and an in-depth question-and-answer period following the screening of one of his feature films, *Suspect Zero*. I had seen this film and had wondered how its story had been formulated, as it explored two vastly different ideas, remote viewing and serial killers, without any seemingly "natural" connection between them. This idea was verified by Merhige, who revealed that he had been working on rewrites of a more straightforward "serial killer movie" when he encountered writer's block and turned to meditation for help. The idea that came to him was to somehow incorporate RV, which he had read about separately and been intrigued by, into his current story. This explained the slightly "tacked on" feeling that *Suspect Zero* gave me, especially after I began to explore the actual history of

the Army's RV program.

Merhige himself proved a highly introspective, intelligent man with deep convictions about his art. His discussion of his past and future projects, as well as his understanding of RV's significance and his desire to do his part to get it out into the national consciousness, gave a tremendous feeling of relief. When I first heard about this film, I had worried that "some Hollywood guy" had gotten hold of the RV concept and simply decided to attach it to yet another run-of-the-mill film in an attempt to cash in. But Merhige seemed to possess some real integrity as a storyteller and filmmaker, and so my concerns on this score were put to rest.

The next presenter, Dr. Jessica Utts, furthered my gradual acceptance of RV in that her lecture centered on the application of statistical study to remote viewing. If an expert in such a "real" discipline had invested so much of her time and expertise in the study of such an "unreal" concept, that certainly went far in my mind to validate RV as being both "real" and useful. Of course, two more heavyweights of the scientific community were also on hand to reinforce this connection later on in the conference.

The first of those scientists was Dr. Dean Radin, whom I recognized from the extra features on the *Suspect Zero* DVD. Dr. Radin's presentation on the "Entangled Mind" was



Dean Radin, one of the world's leading parapsychologists and chief scientist at the Institute of Noetic Studies, outlines core principles from his latest book, "Entangled Minds."



Newly elected IRVA director Jessica Utts presents some fine points on remote-viewing science at her heavily attended lecture.

expansive and really stretched my understanding. From his lecture, I gleaned the novel idea that psi experiences are actually expected within the entangled-mind model. Radin's research, em-

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bodied in his new book of the same name, is obviously worthy of some in-depth study.

Russell Targ spoke next. His book, *Limitless Mind*, had been one of the first books I read on the subject of remote viewing, and his status as a co-developer and visionary of the discipline had me eager to meet him. Targ's presentation centered largely on his



Russell Targ brings insights gained over nearly a half-century to his discussion on practical application of psychic abilities.

latest book, *The End of Suffering*, and on the implementation of Buddhist teachings and philosophies to achieve a heightened state of mindfulness and bring more meaning to life. He described “chatter,” the noise that disrupts our consciousness and prevents us from achieving real clarity. He spoke of “giving up your story” and of “not being your business card”—modes of living that many people have been saddled with for much of their lives. Listening to Targ's presentation was at once enlightening and saddening. But I left with a renewed sense of hope, in that the recognition of such conditions allows for them to be finally addressed and for positive changes to be made. His lecture may have had the most impact on many of the people in attendance.

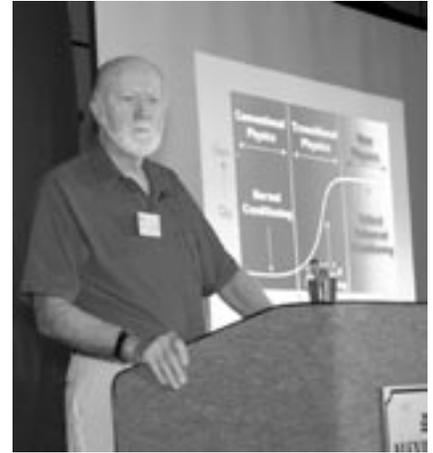


The emcee, Bill Ray, freshly returned from a tour with the U.S. government in Kuwait, made sure the trains ran on time.

his lecture, about the latent energy or “spirit” that resides in old homesteads and other archaeological sites. He has made a living for decades studying and documenting these phenomena as the world's foremost

“psychic archaeologist.” He is a very warm and personable individual to boot.

Dr. William Tiller delivered a fascinating lecture on the concept of human consciousness affecting physical reality. He presented so much compelling evidence to support his ideas—in particular his discussion



Dr. William Tiller, professor emeritus at Stanford University, entertains a response to a question he posed to the audience during his keynote presentation Sunday morning.

of levels of energy manipulation being remarkably long-lasting as an explanation for the “holy ground” phenomenon—that I knew I would have no problem explaining the significance of many of his concepts to even my most skeptical acquaintances. My only disappointment was when, through a series of misunderstandings, Dr. Tiller's talk was cut short by IRVA's then-president, Stephan Schwartz. Many in the audience were dismayed at the abrupt ending to Dr. Tiller's



A sizable crowd gathers to hear Hollywood film director E. Elias Merhige discuss “Suspect Zero,” the first-ever feature film to include remote viewing as a major theme.

presentation, and it unfortunately provided the only sour note of the entire conference.

Perhaps the single most significant part of the Remote Viewing Conference was the “Outbounder RV Experiment” that took place before Dr. Tiller's talk—a chance for all attendees to finally experience RV for themselves. Despite all the reading and research I had

done on the subject, I had yet to see with my own eyes a successful remote-viewing experiment. At first, the experiment smacked of disappointment for this writer. Paul Smith and Russell Targ's wife, Pamela, had driven



(Left to right) *Legendary remote viewer Mel Riley with conference photographer Bruce Miller and Lyn Buchanan during a break in the conference proceedings.*

to an unknown target location somewhere in Las Vegas, and as I concentrated, I began to see shapes, which I sketched out. After a few minutes, they started coming together to form more elaborate shapes.

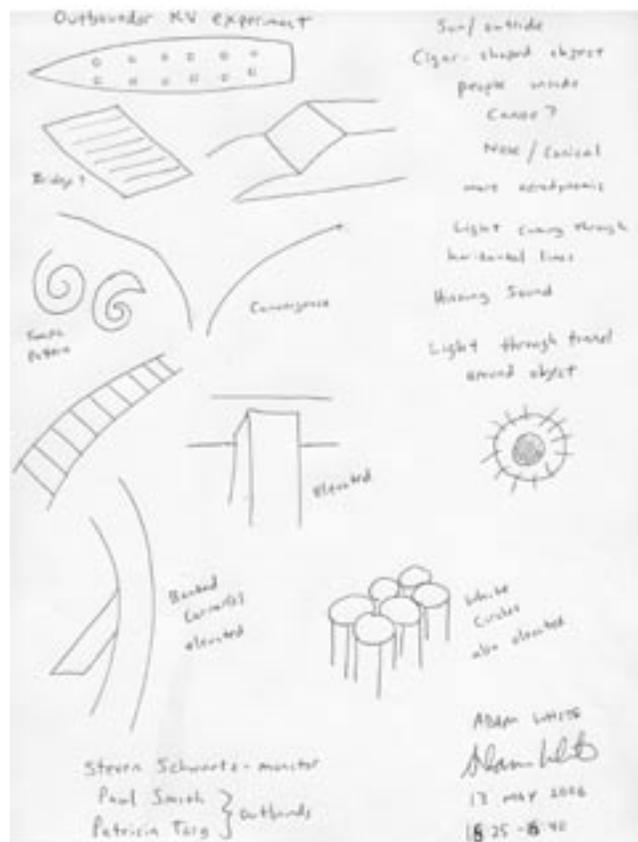
I saw a long, cigar-shaped object. Then I saw a view from above of people sitting inside the object, almost like a canoe. Then I saw a track. An elevated track. With banked corners. Then I saw the front of the object, with a distinctive cone-shaped nose. I saw a logo of some sort, a swirl shape, on the side. I heard a hissing sound, like air brakes.



Adam White

I even saw the shape of the concrete forms at the base of the pillars holding up the track. I put down my pen in frustration, convinced that every bit of information I was receiving was the dreaded “analytical overlay” or noise from my conscious mind.

You see, I had spent my free time the day before exploring “The Strip” down the block from my hotel, and had been drawn to the “New York, New York” casino by a certain structure I could see from the window of my room—the roller coaster. I love roller coasters, and at my very first chance I went and took several rides on this Coney Island Cyclone replica in order to at least satisfy my curiosity. Now I was getting a fairly clear picture, once I started putting the pieces together, of what my conscious mind guessed must be a roller



coaster. I knew that could not be the target; it would be far too big a coincidence.

Then Smith and Mrs. Targ returned and put on a video of the target location. As the images came onto the screen, I nearly fell out of my chair. It was the Las Vegas monorail train! I had read about the “beginner’s luck” associated with RV, but this was beyond even my wildest expectations. Nearly every shape I had drawn I could pinpoint to some part of the monorail. Whatever skepticism I may have still harbored regard-

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ing RV evaporated in the hiss of air brakes. All aboard, indeed.

IRVA President Stephan Schwartz concluded the conference with a discussion of factors that affect RV



Standing (L to R): unidentified conference attendee, Stephan Schwartz, Mel Riley, Lyn Buchanan. Seated: Dean Radin and Jessica Utts.

performance, a topic that took on a whole new interest for me in light of my first actual remote-viewing experience. It had suddenly opened up my mind to a whole new realm of possibility, of tapping into psychic potential I had never even imagined. The 2006 Remote Viewing Conference had introduced me to many fascinating people with intriguing ideas, but my own experience with RV was something that resonated deeply within myself. For that reason alone, I am beyond grateful that I discovered this exciting concept, began studying it, and attended this conference. ☯

Adam White is a newspaper editor and screenwriter (and IRVA member) who lives in the Berkshires of Massachusetts. A veteran of the U.S. Army's 101st Airborne Division, he is a graduate of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. But most importantly, he is NOT his bio.



IRVA Director and P>S>I> Executive Director Lyn Buchanan was one of the audience's favorites, as he talked about the future of remote viewing.

IRVA News

New Director Added to Board

We are pleased to announce that IRVA has added a new face to our board of directors. Dr. **Jessica Utts** is Professor of Statistics at the University of California, Davis. She has spent the better part of two decades involved in the scientific side of the remote-viewing field, having spent a year as Visiting Scientist with the Remote Viewing Program at SRI International in 1988-89 and as a consultant to SRI and SAIC for the duration of those programs. She was a member of the blue-ribbon panel chosen to evaluate the government remote-viewing program when it was declassified in 1995 (see the AIR report on the IRVA website), standing up for the strength of the scientific data in spite of the determination by the rest of the evaluators to present the findings as negative. She is the author of several watershed articles related to remote viewing. In addition to expertise in statistics and parapsychology, Professor Utts is the author of three statistics textbooks and is well known for her work in reforming statistics education.

IRVA Elects New Officers

In recent Board action, IRVA has elected new officers for 2006-2007. For the first time, long-term IRVA Vice President **Paul H. Smith** has been elected president of the Association. Paul has served as the Association's vice president since officers were first chosen after the organization's founding. He has also been the regular chair for the annual remote-viewing conferences. His remote-viewing background dates back to 1983, when he was recruited into the military remote-viewing program. A retired Army intelligence officer and Desert Storm veteran, he served for seven years as an operational remote viewer and RV trainer, was primary author of the official CRV manual, and is author of the March 2006 Readers Digest's book-bonus selection, *Reading the Enemy's Mind: Inside Star Gate—America's Psychic Espionage Program* (Tor/Forge, 2005). Paul is a resident of Austin, Texas.

Selected as Vice President was **William "Bill" Higgins**, a former FBI agent, retired Navy Reserve Captain (and also, incidentally, another Desert Storm veteran!).



He traces his interest in applied consciousness to 1965 when, while attending the U.S. Naval Academy, he requested to do his thesis on extrasensory perception (ESP). (His request was turned down, but he was allowed to write on hypnosis instead). An interesting bit of trivia: While at the Academy, he played in the 1963 Cotton Bowl with teammate Roger Staubach. Bill met Ingo Swann in 1989, who gave him more books on ESP to read. While deployed during Desert Storm, he read Jahn and Dunne's book *Margins of Reality*, which led him to a long research and professional relationship with the PEAR lab. After returning from the Middle East, he was an early sponsor of operational remote-viewing projects, and has studied remote viewing with both Ed Dames and Lyn Buchanan. Bill has been a member of the IRVA Board of Directors since 2004, and is responsible for financial oversight of the Association. He serves also as vice president of the Rhine Research Center, and manages a Little League baseball team. He lives with his family in New Jersey.



William "Bill" Higgins

Cynthia Tompkins, a resident of Colorado, was chosen by the Board to replace the outgoing William "Bill" Eagles as the Association secretary. She and her husband, Bill, run an information-technology consulting business in Colorado Springs. She has an enduring interest in consciousness, ESP, and the paranormal, and has studied CRV with both Paul H. Smith and with Angela Thompson Smith.



Cynthia Tompkins with clay model and feedback from a remote-viewing session.

Sandy Ray, who continues as our Treasurer, a position she has served diligently in for several years, lives in New Mexico with her husband, Bill, who was a remote viewer and former commander of the military RV unit. Sandy was a drug and alcohol counselor for the U.S. military while her husband was stationed in Europe. With a son and daughter-in-law deployed in

Baghdad, and a husband just returned from a tour in Iraq, she has become a leader in support organizations helping family members of deployed soldiers cope with their absences.

2007 Conference Dates

We are happy to announce the dates and location for this year's IRVA Remote Viewing Conference. The 2007 Remote Viewing Conference will be held October 19th through 21st at the Alexis Park Resort Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada. Conference proceedings will start about noon on Friday, the 19th, and wrap up early afternoon on Sunday, the 21st. As before, we will hold a speakers' reception and dessert bar on Saturday evening, before the featured speaker. ☯



IRVA Board members meeting at the home of Director John Alexander the evening before the 2006 Remote Viewing Conference. Courtesy Paul H. Smith



IRVA Conference Chair Paul H. Smith (r) with Glenn Wheaton of the Hawaii Remote Viewing Guild (l) and conference attendee Jason Bacera from HRVG.

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on the back burner for several months.

Also, as a further bit of pleasant news, we'd like to welcome Professor Jessica Utts to IRVA as our newest member of the Board of Directors. Jessica has a long and distinguished connection to the field of parapsychology in general and remote viewing in particular. You can read more about her and her accomplishments elsewhere in this issue.

I have one unfortunate duty to perform here as well, which is to apologize to our esteemed keynote speaker at our last conference, Dr. William "Bill" Tiller. As many of you in attendance at our conference already know, what had been a very enjoyable and successful event overall was marred on its final day by an unfortunate comedy-of-errors that was anything but funny. Because of a quickly unfolding series of misunderstandings, Dr. Tiller was cut short in his address, just as he was about to bring the points he was making to their logical conclusion. I personally very much regret that this took place and, as Conference Chair, I accept full responsibility for the mishap. I deeply apologize on behalf of the International Remote Viewing Association to Dr. Tiller and to all in attendance who were disappointed at not being able to hear his final conclusions.

IRVA has sponsored several fine conferences since our first official one in 2001, and we strive to make every conference better than the last. Each time we learn something new and different about the process. Sometimes those lessons are hard, but we do our best to grow from them.

Finally, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to all of those who make the IRVA conferences work so well. No one in IRVA is paid, whether officers, directors, or conference committee members, yet many of these good folks continue to dedicate much of their discretionary time to creating quality results on a very modest budget. Please praise and adore them for their efforts!

Happy Viewing,
Paul H. Smith



PEAR, R.I.P.

by Robert Durant

*Editors' note: This is a version of a post that Robert Durant made to the IRVAmembers e-mail discussion group. We thought it both timely and insightful, and so we asked him to edit the piece for publication in **Aperture** so that all of our members could have access to it. In upcoming issues we may have more to say about the PEAR lab and its demise.*

This morning I picked up the *New York Times* in my driveway, stripped away the plastic wrapper, and glanced at the front page to see what the "nation's newspaper of record" had to say about the world. There on the front page was the exultant headline:

After 28 Years, Princeton Loses ESP Lab, to the Relief of Some.

Thus was the consensus reality of America informed of the demise of PEAR, the Princeton Engineering Anomalies Research laboratory, and thus the unwashed and the women and children were, at last, free of this long-standing affront to all that is rational and good.

For the entire article, which includes a wonderful color photo of Robert Jahn and Brenda Dunne, go to the following site: www.nytimes.com/2007/02/10/science/10princeton.html?hp&ex=1171170000&en=456384765f9d0568&ei=5094partner=homepage

Many years ago I met Angela Thompson while she was working at PEAR, and had the pleasure of a few minutes with Dunne and Jahn, and a tour of the tiny rooms that formed the laboratory.

Simply finding the lab was not easy. I went to the Princeton University engineering building and asked around, getting blank stares in reply. One fellow in coat and tie, almost certainly a faculty member, told me he was embarrassed to say that the lab was certainly in the building, but he did not know where. His embarrassment, he added, was because PEAR was "by far the most controversial activity in this building," but he could not tell me where it sat.

Eventually, someone was able to direct me. "Ask for the boiler room. It is right down there, next to the

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Taskings & Responses

Does an individual's right- or left-hand preference have anything to do with success in remote viewing and other psi activities?

The human brain is a wonderful thing. It can mentally calculate and balance a checkbook or it can compose a symphony, and it can process a whole repertoire of emotions. While we think of ourselves as having one brain and therefore one mind, we in fact have at least two brains and multiple minds!

In right-handed males, the left and right sides of the brain (the hemispheres) are wired for specific functions. The left side of the brain is thought of as the center for language and mathematics, and the right side as the location of our ability to appreciate color, music, emotion, and spatial awareness. This differentiation is called lateralization of function. Lateralization is not so clear-cut in women or left-handers, however. Also, one hemisphere alone is never totally dominant, with both hemispheres doing a balancing act as they carry out their functions.

Left- and right-handedness in general is not so clear-cut, as "handedness" may occur on a continuum of functioning rather than being an either/or definition. Between the hemispheres of the brain is a broad band of nerve fibers called the corpus callosum, which carries messages between the hemispheres. This bridge of fibers is larger in women's brains and in left-handers. Left-handers, and those who consider themselves ambidextrous, are considered to be less strongly lateralized. This means that the centers for language and emotion may be present in both hemispheres! It has been found that individuals who are less strongly lateralized, as represented by ambidexterity or left-handedness, may show more intuitive abilities.

In 1987 I participated as a volunteer at the Psychophysical Research Laboratory (PRL) in Princeton Junction, NJ. PRL was directed by famous psi researcher Charles Honorton. A pilot project was conducted of 150 individuals who had participated for the first time in PRL's Ganzfeld studies. (The Ganzfeld is a state of semi-sensory deprivation that facilitates psi

abilities.) Participants were asked to report on their hand-preference by returning a postcard, rating themselves as right-handed, left-handed, or mixed-handed. An analysis of the 80 percent of postcards returned showed 91 participants reporting a right-hand preference, 11 a left-hand preference, and 19 a mixed-hand preference.

These handedness groupings were then correlated with first-place Ganzfeld hits. Among the 91 right-handers, only 32 percent had direct Ganzfeld hits. Of the left-handers, an even smaller 18 percent had direct hits. However, of the mixed-handed participants, 53 percent had direct hits, which is a statistically significant number.

Are mixed-handers different from strong right- or left-handers? The distribution of mixed-handedness ranges between 24-34 percent in the general population, with more males than females being mixed-handed. Mixed-handedness may thus be a normal variant. One researcher (Bakan) found a family bias: Mixed-handers reported far more left-handed and mixed-handed relatives than right-handers. Mixed-handedness may also be a product of environmental pressures, such as when a left-hander is forced to write with their right hand. On the whole, adults with mixed-hand preference are cognitively and neurologically normal and may represent a normal, genetic variation. Mixed-handers may have a unique perspective on the world and may behave according to this different perspective, including doing well on psi tasks. ☯

Angela Thompson Smith, Ph.D., a decided mixed-hander, is head of the Nevada Remote Viewing Group (www.remoterviewingnv.com) and teaches remote viewing skills in Boulder City, Nevada.



(Photo courtesy of Maryanne Bilham-Knight)

ReView by Skye Turell

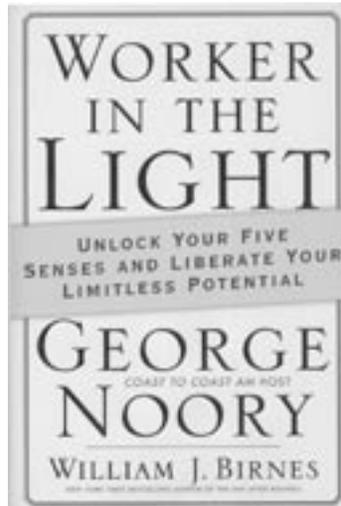
Worker in the Light: Unlock Your Five Senses and Liberate Your Limitless Potential

by George Noory and William J. Birnes,
Forge/Tom Doherty Associates, 2006.
319 pp. ISBN 0-7653-1087-2

During a remote-viewing session, it is all right to “connect the dots,” but it must be done with some understanding of relationships in physical space, of causality or what happens before and after, of shared purpose of target individuals, and the psychological motivations that are driving events. Viewers must know what they mean and mean what they say. This requires extreme discipline.

George Noory’s *Worker in the Light* suffers horribly from a lack of discipline. Religious and fear-based ideas, and New Age and scientific concepts, are tossed together with just the slightest apparent connection. The reader is supposed to gloss over this and accept the premises put forth. All these phenomena are “just like” the others and even “prove” the others. The subject of remote viewing is used as an umbrella from which all of these other topics are suspended, with the result that RV becomes hopelessly lost in the shuffle. Readers are left with much less of an understanding than they would have acquired from listening to Noory’s *Coast to Coast AM* radio program over the years, if that’s possible.

Noory became weeknight host of *Coast to Coast AM*, the internationally syndicated late-night talk-radio show, after Art Bell retired for the third time. (I believe it was the third, I may have lost count.). Art Bell has said that Noory has been an excellent replacement because he “gets it.” Which means what? That Noory has a bead on the psychological profile of *Coast* listeners? That he knows how to hit all the right buttons, achieving just the right dramatic beats? I had hoped to discern this as I read through Noory’s book.



William J. Birnes, the co-author, is publisher of *UFO Magazine* and also co-authored the somewhat ill-fated *The Day After Roswell* with Col. Philip J. Corso. In that book, Corso described his role, while at the Pentagon, in passing alien technology to U.S. companies for further development, encouraging them to believe that it was “foreign” technology obtained from China, Russia, or other nations. Given Corso’s military credentials, this should have been a landmark book. In some ways it was, but while the book sold well, it was not very well received by some within the UFO community because of some obvious factual errors. It was never quite clear if the problem was Corso’s advanced age—he did pass away shortly after publication—or whether it was Birnes’s lack of attention to detail. The same sort of issue arises with *Worker in the Light*.

One would think, for example, that the publisher of *UFO Magazine* would recognize that the gray aliens do not make echo-location clicking sounds like dolphins. In the hundreds of alien-encounter books that this writer has read, and the many hours of actual personal “face time” with the “Grays,” not one single click is recalled. But because *Cosmic Voyage* author Dr. Courtney Brown apparently reported the clicks based on some psi work he had performed, I suppose Birnes thought, by all means, let’s throw it in.

Despite the fact that nearly one-third of *Worker in the Light* deals with remote viewing, it appears that the authors have only read one book on the subject, IRVA President Paul H. Smith’s *Reading the Enemy’s Mind*. Given that Smith’s book deals with both the history and conceptual underpinnings of the field, this would not have been a bad choice, but the authors apparently felt free to cherry-pick whatever ideas served them, discarding the others and even misrepresenting some of what Smith had reported.

For example, Dr. Hal Puthoff is said to have “written a report about his observations to the CIA” regarding the famous magnetometer experiment at Stanford Research Institute (SRI) with Ingo Swann. This claim is never made in Smith’s book, or anywhere else that this writer is aware of. The CIA obtained a copy of the report, but that does not mean that Puthoff had

connections inside the CIA prior to his accepting a research contract from them. To make matters worse, the CIA connection is threaded into the story later on, reinforcing this misconception.

Noory references Ingo Swann's book *Penetration*, which has its share of shadowy governmental intrigue, as a way to segue into the subject of his own relative, Dr. Shafica Karagulla (who plays a small part in Swann's book). Karagulla was a neuropsychiatrist who had worked for "clandestine services," according to Swann. She had a personal interest in the paranormal and started the Higher Sense Perception Institute. In Noory's book, much is made of her visit to the Canadian lab of famed neurosurgeon Dr. Wilder Penfield. Penfield is often associated with the CIA's dark mind-control program (known as "MK ULTRA"), deservedly or not, and conspiracy buffs will latch onto these two supposed CIA connections and assume that the SRI and Ft. Meade remote-viewing programs were part of the same negative scenario.

Penfield was especially well known for a series of experiments where he stimulated various areas of the brain, resulting in extremely lifelike recall of past memories for the test subject. To Noory, this is just like remote viewing—even proves it—despite the fact that we have no idea whether these memories were identical to the original experience, and that these experiments could not possibly have indicated *why* stimulation produced that effect. Real scientists do not make assumptions and engage in conjecture. These experiments demonstrate no obvious relationship to the concept of the Akashic Records or remote viewing's theoretical "matrix." No one knows where memories are stored, if indeed they are stored anywhere. Noory threads this experiment throughout the book, however, as if it sheds light on anything or shores up any of his arguments.

There are many ideas that are "just like" RV. Just throw together some Stephen Hawking ideas, the concept of nonlocality, Jung's collective unconscious, and lucid dreaming, and remote viewing has somehow been "proven" with a rigorous scientific explanation and framework. According to the authors, the notion of nonlocality and its rebirth as the concept of remote viewing's matrix was necessary to persuade government-contract handlers and congressional oversight committees that RV had a legitimate foundation in science. This theory may have been a bone thrown to

the skeptics, but the real meat of the scientific-legitimacy argument would have to be the extreme controls put on the remote-viewing experiments themselves. However, these protocols are not even mentioned in Noory's book.

This "concept soup" results in statements like, "Ingo Swann's experiences also suggest that he managed to traverse whatever junction exists among universes on many different occasions... Thus, if only one or two people can accomplish the feat of transmultiverse travel, then transmultiverse travel is a reality." Just what is "transmultiverse travel?" If you are traversing a single timeline, does that not involve just one universe? And in what sense is the remote viewer traveling? Even if we tidy up the definitions, all of this is far from proven in physics, and the relationship to remote viewing is even more hypothetical. It is all quasi-scientific mumbo jumbo at best.

What is the reader told about actual RV sessions? Nothing, really. There is a chapter called "The Practice: Learning How to Remote View." This section begins with a recap of the career of Art Bell and especially mentions the sighting of a large black triangular craft near his home in Nevada—odd placement within the book given a total lack of any connection to remote viewing and how to do it. Noory then cuts to on-air questions from the audience in which a caller is asking how to remote view without putting oneself in danger from evil forces. Demons, possession, psychic attacks and "The Dark Side" are a constant theme of *Worker in the Light*. In fact, the first chapter recounts the young Noory having a negative experience with a Ouija board and his seemingly successful attempts at psychically causing harm to some men who were "hitting on" a girl that he fancied (for which he later felt sorry later).

The "How To" chapter focuses on "purification rituals." We are constantly warned to surround ourselves with white light throughout the book. We are also told that we will need to build up our physical endurance because "remote viewing and out-of-body adventures can be physically draining." According to Noory, step one in remote viewing involves choosing a mantra and learning how to meditate. We are also told how to breathe. A few intuition experiments are described. The closest he comes to describing actual remote viewing is where he suggests we get a partner to serve as what RVers would call an "outbender," but there are

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ReView, Worker in the Light, continued from page 13

no actual details given about how to do this.

In addition to demonic interference, Noory says that there were “specific remote viewers from the Army program, who ran into emotional difficulties...maybe there are gateways to the dark side that can be opened up just as easily by those exploring limitless power.... Perhaps the realization of the unity of all creation is something that can help to keep psychic venturers away from the temptations of the dark side.”

This writer never did figure out what George Noory “gets” about *Coast to Coast*. By the time I finished the book, I had lost interest in that question. I was too busy grinding my teeth.

What will readers come away with regarding the subject of remote viewing? Well, one might get the idea that the concept can mean whatever you want it to mean. Or, that it has something to do with any and all concepts dealing with the mind and dimensions. How to actually conduct a session is a big secret (so you have to pay someone a lot of money to teach you). And finally, if the CIA or the demons don’t get you, you’ll probably go crazy anyway.

For the record, this writer has never been “tempted by the dark side.” Indeed, I’m not even sure what it is. ☉

Skye Turell is ReView Editor for Aperture and a talented long-time practitioner of remote viewing. She works in the advertising industry in California.

Guidelines for Submitting Original Articles to Aperture

The Editors would like to extend an invitation to all readers to submit timely, relevant, and well written articles about remote viewing for possible publication in future issues of **Aperture**. Please send your submission(s) in MS Word to *William.Eigles@irva.org*, mentioning **Aperture** in the subject line. Article length is negotiable depending on the importance, and interest level to the readership, of the topic and the quality of the presentation. Submissions should generally be between 500-1500 words, but longer pieces will also be considered based on the merit of the topic and how it is treated. All submissions should include a short (2 sentence) “bio-blurb” about the author(s) and must pertain to remote-viewing research, applications, protocols, skills, viewer performance, or experimentation. If there is any doubt about the suitability of a topic, feel free to communicate with us at the above e-address, and we will provide you with guidance. Thanks for your interest in **Aperture**, IRVA’s flagship publication!

Cordially,
William P. Eigles
Managing Editor



Taskings & Responses (Q & A)

Have you been burning to ask a question of some remote-viewing expert? Are you wanting to know something about remote viewing, but didn’t know where to turn for an answer? As we regularly print questions and answers in the Taskings & Responses column of **Aperture**, please forward your questions to:

Janet@irva.org (with T&R Editor in the subject line), or mail to:
T&R Editor, **Aperture**
P.O. Box 381
E. Windsor Hill, CT 06028

PEAR, R.I.P., continued from page 10

boilers.” And it was. A tiny space, literally the least accessible and farthest from the sanctioned offices, laboratories, and classrooms. In sum, the place Princeton University thought appropriate for the thoroughly offensive PEAR.

Robert Jahn’s immense prestige in engineering and education, plus the immense prestige of some of his backers from industry, were enough to keep PEAR barely alive, although as thoroughly marginalized as the mainstream found possible.

No orthodox journal would publish or even accept for peer review the 60 papers produced at PEAR over nearly three decades. The *Times* reports that one journal editor famously told Dr. Jahn that he would consider a paper “if you can telepathically communicate it to me.”

Over the years, PEAR accomplished much careful research demonstrating the existence of what we call

remote viewing. Many of these experiments were replicated—and confirmed—at other laboratories.

At around the time I stopped by, a friend of mine had visited with a potential financial backer. The backer and my friend went directly to see the president of Princeton University. The backer had his checkbook in hand and offered the university a very large sum to be spent in furtherance of PEAR. The president, who could not afford—in any sense of that word—to refuse an audience with the backer, nevertheless summarily refused the money. Apparently it was beneath the dignity of Princeton University to lend support to PEAR, even when the money was handed to the university!

The news of PEAR’s demise, and the sorry circumstances surrounding its troubled 28 years, should be instructive to those readers of *Aperture* who ponder the near-term future of mainstream acceptance of remote viewing and associated practices and concepts. ☹

“All Those Who Believe In Psychokinesis, Raise My Hand!”

~Unknown

This issue’s Website Quick-Reference Guide

International Remote Viewing Association	www.irva.org
Cleve Backster’s book <i>Primary Perception</i>	www.primaryperception.com/index1.html
Criticisms of Cleve Backster’s experiments	http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plant_perception
Nevada Remote Viewing Group	www.remoteviewingnv.com
Problems>Solutions>Innovations	www.crviewer.com
PEAR - <i>New York Times</i> article	www.nytimes.com/2007/02/10/science/10princeton.html?hp&ex=1171170000&-en=456384765f9d0568&ei=5094partner=homepage



ReView

by Robert J. Durant

Link

by Eugene Alden Lessman,
Publish America, Baltimore, 2006.
75 pp. ISBN 1-4241-2129-9.

Eugene Alden Lessman is a name that rings no bells in the world of remote viewing. And that is by design, because, like scores of other military-intelligence viewers who followed the initial Ingo Swann-trained cadre, he consciously decided to keep that part of his life removed from public view.

Now retired from government service, Lessman spends his time in southern West Virginia, working with wood. But the pivotal, life-changing experience of remote viewing has remained vivid, and when he is not whittling, he writes.

The result is a remarkable book, a novel, or perhaps more accurately a novelette, because it is only 75 pages long. But the theme could not have existed even in rough outline were it not for the author's remote-viewing experience.

Without giving away the plot, this is a love story. And it conveys the same gut-resonance enjoyed by the classic *Tristan and Isolde* romance that reigned for centuries as the premier love story of the Middle Ages. Although there are many versions of the preliminaries, the ending is universal, and occurs when Isolde finds that Tristan has died. She cannot go on living with that knowledge and, as exemplified in the Richard Wagner opera libretto, "She sinks, transfigured in death, upon Tristan's body."

Reading *LINK* fairly continuously reminds one of the *Tristan* theme, and the ending of the book evoked the marvelous "immolation scene" that ends the Wagner opera. But the similarity is strictly in the power of the narrative and the way that the reader is drawn on a deep emotional level into the adventure of the lovers. The plot line, and particularly the very powerful ending, diverge significantly and ingeniously from the traditional *Tristan* theme.

Lessman's story has only two players, a man and a woman, whom he names with the ultimately bare-bones terms "The Man" and "The Woman." The prose is spare throughout, and this is why the book is short but still conveys so much.

As in the original *Tristan*, the co-theme is death, the rival with love in the list of perennial mysteries. The Man and The Woman face death. The nature of death, and how The Man and The Woman deal with it, are in Lessman's hands nearly unique. This is why this book may well find a wide readership, and perhaps a lasting reputation, amongst the so-called New Age crowd (a term not meant dismissively). On nearly every page, the alert remote viewer can find subtle references to our particular skill and craft. And, on occasion, Lessman gets very obvious. For example:

- The Woman could "see" the depths of the great Atlantic Trough and knew it as a wondrous place of color and life never viewed by the human species. The Man saw this also, but he could also "feel" the great pressure at these depths as well as all the extremes in temperatures and light. It was not unpleasant or incapacitating to him as would be expected, but rather a simple matter of acknowledging the presence of these factors. It was as though he could visit a site with his mind but some aspect of his physical body seemed to join him.

- They shared a special universe where colors could be felt, sounds could be tasted and emotions could be heard as loudly or as softly as music; where the distance between points was not a concept since all points were equally accessible in exactly the same period of time.

- How could someone describe Washington, D.C., if the Washington Monument was perceived only as something that was manmade, tall, hard, light-colored and located somewhere near noise in an important city and which attracted many people?

- The Woman, too, had to learn to control her own natural responses and surrender even the most basic of her autonomic control to The Man.

- In the quiet of his hotel room, The Man began the well practiced ritual of total relaxation which would enable the Link to occur. It was important to make the physical body sleep but the mind must remain alert...the special relaxation necessary for the Link to occur came over him easily, as it had a hundred times before, like an old friend...

- This was not possible if he were forced into a mental “soup” in which stray ideas, emotions, and prejudices were allowed to confuse the image he sought.

Thus we find CRV, the autonomic nervous system, ERV, Buchananian Stray Cats, and a multitude of passages masked as appropriate narrative, but which in fact discuss the theory of remote viewing, why numbers and language are hard-to-impossible to view, and the paradox of time. But none of this deflects the reader, simply because it fits so well and almost invisibly against the relentless action played out by The Man and The Woman.

All good remote-viewing soldiers know, because it has been repeated to them so often by august RV authorities, that Remote Influencing (RI) never happened, if in the unlikely event it was even attempted. Alas, author Lessman, supposedly for entirely literary purposes, uses RI continuously in the story. He writes so well about it that the untutored might think he had “been there, done that.”

The cover illustration is riveting, and alone is temptingly worth the price of the book.

Unfortunately, the text is marred by a huge number of typographical errors, which comes perilously close to detracting from the writing. This is Gene Lessman’s first book, and one supposes that nobody cared very much, given the “oddball” nature of the story and the anonymity of the author. This reviewer’s money says there will be a second edition, typo-free, and a third, and that we will hear a great deal more from our colleague, the whittler. ☹

Robert J. Durant is a retired airline pilot of 31 years who has studied anomalies, mainly the UFO enigma, for decades. A recognized authority on the Roswell Incident, he produced a DVD titled “Roswell? Yes!”

ReView

by Ed Morgan

Mythbusters

If you take a couple of would-be debunkers; the emotional states of a couple of large potted plants; an historical connection between a world-class polygrapher, Ingo Swann, and Dr. Hal Puthoff; turn on some studio lights and roll the cameras, what do you get?

Mythbusters. To be more specific, you get a particularly interesting installment of the Discovery Channel TV show by that very name. The show’s basic premise is that a couple of guys, with a lot of skills developed by working for years in the field of special effects, subject assorted urban legends and other “myths” to various experiments each week to see whether there is any truth to them. Sometimes the notions turn out to be correct, but more often the results show them to be false (what the Mythbusters call “busted”). The show’s promoters call it a science-based reality show.

One recent example was the idea that a person can dive under water to escape the dangers of bullets being fired at them. How did the Mythbusters check this one out? They got about a half dozen different types and calibers of handguns and rifles and started shooting them into the water to see how far a bullet could travel and still carry a lethal impact. The results were stunning. The bullets fragmented into harmless scrap just a few feet into the water. In another episode, they examined the “dropping-elevator” myth, where one wonders if a rider could survive the fall of an elevator from several stories by jumping up just before it hit the bottom. The answer to that one is (no,) by the way. No more wondering.

What does all this have to do with RV? With Ingo Swann or Hal Puthoff? In Episode 61, first broadcast in September 2006 and again on Christmas Day, the show included a team of “Junior Mythbusters” (young interns who test “myths” other than the main one for that week) who were looking into something called “Primary Perception” in plants. This experiment involves hooking up electronic monitoring equipment—in this case, a polygraph (lie detector)—to the leaves of a plant, after which the plant is subjected to a variety of stresses, shocks, and/or negative thoughts directed at it by some human. The monitoring equipment is supposed to show

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changes in a specific measure of some aspect of the plant's state as a reaction to the negative stimuli.

Originally, the idea of "Primary Perception" in plants (and later in other organisms) was proposed and tested by nationally renowned polygraph expert Cleve Backster. The remote-viewing connection is that Backster was responsible for putting the father of remote viewing, Ingo Swann, in touch with Dr. Hal Puthoff, its midwife. Backster and Swann had been engaged in a number of successful parapsychology experiments. Puthoff had been designing an experiment himself and sent Backster a letter seeking information about the plant-polygraph work Backster had been doing. Swann read Puthoff's letter and volunteered for the project. If not for Backster acting as go-between and encouraging a meeting between Swann and Puthoff, the history of RV, and many people's lives today, might well have been very different.

The Mythbusters crowd does not appear very open-minded when it comes to what they term "airy-fairy" or "oogie-boogie" myths. In the past, they have taken on a few somewhat related topics, such as so-called mind control, but clearly not seriously. In fact, they seemed quite dismissive of such notions. A similar attitude was apparent when they tackled the Primary Perception issue.

The experiment began by hooking up the polygraph's GSR (Galvanic Skin Response) electrodes to the leaves of the plant, so as to detect changes in the electrical conductivity of the surface and thus possibly the plant's internal reactions to stimuli. The Junior Mythbusters even made sure to use the same model of polygraph that Backster had used in his original experiment. They then subjected the plant to various "negative" actions, such as slapping the leaves with their hands (being careful not to disturb the areas where the GSR leads were attached) and discharging a fire extinguisher at it. Although the Mythbusters remarked that the plant did indeed seem to show some reaction to these attacks, as measured by the polygraph, they gave no specifics.

Next, the team tested the real essence of this "myth." Without actually touching the plant, one of the Junior Mythbusters mentally directed thoughts of hostility towards it, imagining hurting and burning it, and conjuring other such aggressive and destructive intentions. These were projected towards the plant at random

intervals.

When the results were examined, the giggles faded into a semi-surprised mix of confusion and disbelief. The polygraph trace readings showed that the plant seemed to be registering a reaction about 35 percent of the time that these randomized negative thoughts were being manifested. There were no changes in the trace readings during the times when negative thoughts were not being held.

The wheels soon began turning inside these guys' heads as they tried to explain away the results. Reasonably supposing that they might be affecting the plant in some overlooked physical way, they decided to try the experiment again, but with first isolating the plant by enclosing it inside a large metal box (similar to a cargo container) and placing themselves outside the box.

Then began another round of random-interval negative thoughts directed at the plant. Upon examining the new findings, the team noticed that there was some drop-off in the reactions with the plant isolated—that is, with the plant isolated inside the container, only 28 percent of the negative thought periods appeared to affect the polygraph tracings versus the earlier-observed 35 percent with the plant not so isolated. Nonetheless, the Junior Mythbusters were a bit stunned; they could find no conventional explanation for what they described as these "weird stuff, man" results.

Like the cavalry riding in just in the nick of time, a third Junior Mythbuster came to the rescue. When she asked how it was going with this unworthy experiment in her giggly, dismissive tone, the first two experimenters looked at each other as if they were embarrassed to tell her what their findings had thus far shown. Perhaps their reluctance owed to an earlier episode, when this third team member had referred to the idea that talking nicely to plants might have a beneficial effect on their growth as "hippie, crystal-gripping nonsense."

They quickly overcame their reluctance, and after the results were shared, the three had a brief discussion, deciding appropriately that they would duplicate the experiment and see if they got the same results. But instead of actually redoing the experiment as they should have, they changed the protocol significantly.

Trading in the polygraph, they switched to an EEG (*ElectroEncephaloGraph*, a machine that measures brainwaves), claiming that the EEG was "much more sensitive." They neglected to mention, though, that the EEG measures somewhat different activity. In any

event, they appeared to get a negative result from the EEG after what seemed to be only a single effort at directing negative thoughts at the plant. They then reverted to the polygraph, but inexplicably, instead of duplicating the experiment where they directed negative thoughts at the plant, they rigged a device that dropped eggs into boiling water at random intervals. The purpose was to see if “shocking” eggs in this fashion would register on the polygraph connected to the plant. This had something to do with testing whether there is some presumed “connection between all life.” It was similar to one of Backster’s own experiments, which had produced results using live brine shrimp, but the Mythbusters failed to explain why they thought inert eggs would elicit the same result as living creatures.

The team added a further experiment, attempting to torture live yogurt cultures, and yet another that tried to measure a reaction in one of the experimenter’s leukocytes (white blood cells). With a sample of one Mythbuster’s oral cells, they contrived to hook up the electrodes from the EEG and monitored it as the sample’s owner was hit with a stun gun. It was good theater, but questionable science. Once again, although it was similar to one of Backster’s own successful experiments, the way the Mythbusters hooked up their apparatus would have been ineffective regardless of whether a result might actually have been achieved.

While superficially similar to the earlier research, the Mythbusters’ efforts were much less refined and significantly less scientific than any of Backster’s work. More immediately relevant, they failed not only to duplicate the Primary Perception experiment but sidestepped duplicating even their first, results-producing effort that made them so uncomfortable.

All of these non-replicating experiments reportedly produced no positive results. Consequently, the Junior Mythbusters decided that the whole myth was “busted,” rejecting as false the idea of Primary Perception in plants. In fact, they went on to say (regarding the results of their initial experiments), “We weren’t able to repeat it, and if you can’t repeat it, it ain’t science.” But, as already noted, the remark is disingenuous—they were not able to repeat it because they didn’t try. Instead, they changed equipment and the nature of the experiment, and violated a number of points of scientific protocol. More comfort was clearly found in avoiding the original results than in acknowledging that there was something about those experiments that had not been successfully explained.

The myths explored on episodes of this program generate loads of email to the show, commenting—and often complaining about—all sorts of things. The Mythbusters are under great scrutiny by many scientists and engineers who love the show, resulting in lots of what one might call peer pressure of a sort. The Mythbusters would seem to be a microcosm of the scientific community, in reflecting its reluctance to fairly consider unconventional concepts, its evident concern about possible ridicule from peers, and its seeming willingness with very little or no reason to dismiss evidence or experimental results that do not conform to the worldview with which they are most comfortable.

Some concerns have been expressed about Backster’s experiments, and these concerns may warrant serious consideration. But still, somewhere in the back of their minds, maybe the two Junior Mythbusters are starting to wonder whether there is really something to some of these “oogie-boogie” ideas, after all. They certainly ought to.

More about Cleve Backster’s work can be found in his book *Primary Perception* and on his website at <http://www.primaryperception.com/index1.html>. Criticisms of his experiments can be found at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plant_perception. ☹

Ed Morgan is a Los Angeles-area Private Investigator. He has been a student of remote viewing, focusing on controlled remote viewing, since 1997.

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About The International Remote Viewing Association

The International Remote Viewing Association (IRVA) was organized on March 18, 1999 in Alamosordo, New Mexico, by scientists and academicians involved in remote viewing since its beginnings, together with veterans of the military remote-viewing program who are now active as trainers and practitioners in the field. IRVA was formed in response to widespread confusion and conflicting claims about the remote-viewing phenomenon.

One primary goal of the organization is to encourage the dissemination of accurate information about remote viewing. This goal is accomplished through a robust website, regular conferences, and speaking and educational outreach by its directors. Other IRVA goals are to assist in forming objective testing standards and materials for evaluating remote viewers, serve as a clearinghouse for accurate information about the phenomenon, promote rigorous theoretical research and applications development in the remote-viewing field, and propose ethical standards as appropriate. IRVA has made progress on some of these goals, but others will take more time to realize. We encourage all who are interested in bringing them about to join us in our efforts.

IRVA neither endorses nor promotes any specific method or approach to remote viewing, but aims to become a responsible voice in the future development of all aspects of the discipline.

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