

PRECOGNITIVE REMOTE VIEWING IN THE CHICAGO AREA: A REPLICATION OF THE STANFORD EXPERIMENT

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ABSTRACT: The ability of untrained individuals to describe a remote geographical site where an agent will be at a future time, before the target location has been determined, was investigated in eight separate trials using two volunteer percipients who had no claim to extraordinary psychic abilities. The transcripts of their descriptions were matched and ranked against the various target locations by eight independent judges who had no other connection with the experiment. The results of this matching indicated a degree of accuracy at the $p < .008$ (one-tailed) significance level.

The ability of individuals to describe remote geographical locations up to several thousand kilometers distant from their physical presence was labeled "remote viewing" by Puthoff and Targ (1976a) at Stanford Research Institute. In these experiments the percipient was closeted with an experimenter at SRI and, at an agreed-upon time, attempted to describe the site which was then being visited by a target team of experimenters known to the percipient. The target sites were chosen randomly from a pool of over 100 targets within a 30-minute driving distance and were unknown to either the percipient or the experimenters who remained with him. After allowing 30 minutes for travel time, the percipient was asked to attempt to describe aloud into a tape recorder his impressions of the location where he thought the target team was and to draw a sketch of the location he was describing. The "demarcation" team remained at the target site for 15 minutes, the same 15-minute period during which the percipient was recording his impressions.

In the course of experimentation, one participant claimed to have received impressions of the targets before the trials began, and her descriptions turned out to be exceptionally accurate, even though the target locations had not been selected at the time these impressions were received. These spontaneous occurrences moti-

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vated Puthoff and Targ (1976b) to investigate further the precognitive aspects of remote viewing by altering their experimental protocol. The new protocol required the percipient to describe the remote target during a 15-minute period commencing 20 minutes before the target was selected and 35 minutes before the outbound experimenter was to arrive at the target. Four trials of this kind were performed with one experienced subject. The method used to verify the success of these trials was to have three independent judges blind match the percipient's descriptions with the target sites.

The experiment described in the present paper was carried out during a period of one month in the spring of 1976. It was a replication of the precognitive remote-viewing experiment conducted at SRI, with the exception that eight trials were performed with two inexperienced percipients. The results of these trials were originally analyzed by the same method of judging utilized by Puthoff and Targ (Bisaha & Dunne, 1977). However, the possibility of a violation of independence in judging existed under those circumstances (Solfin, Kelly, & Burdick, 1978), and the judging procedure was modified accordingly by having eight separate judges rank only one description apiece against the eight potential targets. This revision provided for the assurance that the rankings for each trial would be independent of the other seven rankings and accounts for the difference in statistical results as given in the earlier report of these trials (Bisaha & Dunne, 1977).

METHOD

Subjects

Two inexperienced female volunteers were selected to be the percipients, the only prerequisite being that they hold a positive attitude toward the phenomenon under investigation. One of them performed two trials; the other performed six, the determination for this division being made strictly by the availability of the participants. The agent in all eight trials was B. Dunne, designated here as E₂. J. Bisaha (E₁) served as coordinator and observer in the laboratory.

Apparatus

Five other individuals who had no association with the experiment were asked to submit lists of various locations in the Chicago area; these were then compared and compiled into a target pool of over 100 locations by a sixth individual, who was the only person

familiar with all the targets and who had no other involvement in the experiment. The targets were printed on index cards, sealed in envelopes, and kept in a locked file cabinet. Other equipment consisted of a tape recorder, pencil (for percipients' and agents' use if they desired to draw sketches of their impressions), and a camera (for the use of the outbound experimenter, or agent, enabling her to take photographs of the target sites at the time of her visit and from the perspective of her observations of the site).

Procedure

The percipients were individually tested. Before the experiment began, they were informed of the nature of the experiment and the experimental protocol. The agent took the time to talk casually with each percipient in an informal, friendly atmosphere, attempting to establish a comfortable rapport. At the time of the trials the percipients were instructed by E_1 to make themselves comfortable, to relax and let their minds become as blank as possible. They were then told to try to imagine or visualize the location where the agent would be 35 to 50 minutes after the trial began and to describe aloud into the tape recorder the images which came to mind during the 15-minute trial period. It was suggested that they also try to make sketches of these images, if possible. (Only two such sketches were obtained from one of the percipients; the other drew one sketch, but did not feel comfortable drawing, so the issue was not pressed.) The percipients were further advised to try not to define or identify what they saw with specificity, but to stick to general impressions, even if these appeared to make no sense or have no continuity. They were allowed as much time as they felt they needed to relax and prepare themselves before each trial.

Although it was preferable to have an observer closeted with the percipient, keeping track of time and asking questions which would elicit more explicit description, one percipient indicated that she had difficulty relaxing or talking out loud with another person present. She was left alone in a closed room with the observer, E_1 , nearby ready to knock on the door and inform her when the allotted time was up.

Once the time schedule was agreed upon (see Table 1 for a sample protocol) the agent left Mundelein College and the percipient began recording her description. The agent had in her possession 10 envelopes which had been selected blindly by E_1 from the target pool. Kept locked in a cabinet by E_1 , the contents of the envelopes

Table 1
SAMPLE EXPERIMENTAL PROTOCOL

- 10:00 The agent (E_2) leaves with 10 envelopes containing target locations and begins 20-minute drive.
The observer (E_1), remaining with subject, elicits description of location where the agent (E_2) will be between 10:35 and 10:50.
- 10:15 Percipient response completed, at which time laboratory part of experiment is over.
- 10:20 Outbound E_2 generates random number between 1 and 10, counts down to associated envelope, opens it, and proceeds to target location indicated.
- 10:35 Outbound E_2 arrives at target location and remains there for 15 minutes, until 10:50.
- 10:50 E_2 returns to laboratory. Experimental trial completed.

were unknown to either E_1 or E_2 . The agent drove continuously with no set direction or goal for 20 minutes, or until five minutes after the percipient had completed her part of the trial, the description of the future target. After 20 minutes the agent blindly selected a number from 1 to 10 from an enclosed container holding 10 numbered and identically folded sheets of paper. She selected the envelope corresponding to the drawn number, opened the envelope, and proceeded to the destination indicated on the enclosed card, arriving at the designated site 35 minutes after the percipient had begun her description and 20 minutes after the description had been completed. She remained at the target site for 15 minutes, photographed the location, and made notes as to her impressions of the site. These photographs and notes were used later as the basis of the judges' comparisons and rankings. When each trial was completed, a typed, unedited transcript was made of the subject's tape-recorded description and was attached to any associated drawings which the subject might have made. When the eight trials were completed there were eight percipient-generated transcripts, and eight agent-generated sets of photographs and accompanying notes which had been prepared by the agent before she had any information about the contents of the subjects' descriptions.

After the eight experimental trials had been carried out, eight persons, not otherwise connected with the experiment, were asked to act as judges. Each judge was given one transcript of a percipient's description to read and was then presented with a set of eight photographs with accompanying agent's notes, one of which was the correct target. The number of photographs for each target varied,

Table 2

RANKS ASSIGNED BY JUDGES IN PRECOGNITIVE REMOTE-VIEWING TRIALS

(P₁ = Percipient #1; P₂ = Percipient #2)

Target	Rank Assigned
Windmill Cemetery (P ₁)	1
Adler Planetarium (P ₂) ^a	1
Playboy Building (P ₁)	3
Marina Towers (P ₁)	2
Lincoln Park Conservatory (P ₁)	1
Elks Headquarters and Memorial (P ₁)	5
Ivanhoe Restaurant (P ₂) ^a	6
Angel Guardian Orphanage Florist (P ₁) ^a	1
Sum of Ranks	20
Statistical Significance	$p < .008$ (one-tailed)

^a In addition to the tape-recording, the percipient drew a sketch.

depending on the agent's judgment of the complexity and size of the target as well as her own observational perspective at the time of the trial. The judges were given these photographs taped to a sheet of paper with the name of the target and the agent's descriptive notes typed below the photographs. The judge was requested to rank order the photographs on a scale of 1 to 8; 1 being the target which best matched the transcript, and 8 being the worst.

RESULTS

The statistical analysis of these experimental trials was based on the rankings given by the eight judges, in accordance with Solfvn, Kelly, and Burdick's (1978) method of analysis for preferential-ranking data. The sum of ranks assigned by the judges was 20 (see Table 2), a figure significant at $p < .008$ (one-tailed). Four of the eight transcripts were ranked as 1, and the other four ranks were 2, 3, 5, and 6.

The judges who evaluated the transcripts were not specifically trained for the task of assessing material of this type, a factor which

could have possibly had a negative effect on the results. However, the untrained judges still saw enough information in the transcripts to match them significantly with the appropriate targets.

A short description of each trial will provide some idea of the degree of accuracy which was reached in the percipients' descriptions. As must be expected, some of the descriptions were more accurate than others, a fact which is reflected in the ranks assigned by the judges. For reasons of space, only select portions of the transcripts are given here. The excerpts presented were chosen on the basis of the judges' opinions, after judging, as to which elements of the transcripts they felt best matched the locations they had just ranked.

Trial 1 (ranked as 1)

The target was the Windmill Cemetery in Franklin Park, Illinois. The primary feature of the target was a large windmill, dark brown with square white windows and white blades of latticed, rectangular pattern. There were two shiny spotlights in front of the windmill, mounted on a nearby building. The cemetery itself was like a park, no headstones or monuments; just lawn, trees, shrubbery, and a small lake. The percipient saw a "contrast of black and white. . . . The white shape was triangular, suspended on something. . . . Has both vertical and horizontal lines. . . . Some shiny things. . . . The impression of being out in the open. . . . A sensation of swing, up and down movements. . . . A design of the horizontal and vertical lines, but in squares. . . . A big thing that it's on, I don't know, like a big building or a big something. . . . Maybe it's windows."

Trial 2 (ranked as 1)

The target was the Adler Planetarium. The predominant features were the large domed building itself, a seated statue of Copernicus on a base of light-colored marble blocks, and a landscaped, tree-lined mall lying between the statue and the building. The percipient's tape recording for this trial was inaudible. Since she had left the building and the agent was still at the target site, E₁ telephoned the percipient and had her repeat her impressions. It was this transcript, together with a drawing made at the time of the original tape recording, that was presented to the judges for matching. The following is what the percipient reported over the telephone:

She had a sensation of motion. The next image was of vertical and parallel lines which began to look like a tunnel. There was a sensation of sunlight flashing through trees, as if of movement; it

would flash and disappear. She had an image of a half-circle which was like a dome. Then parallel lines again which looked like a path or road going into the distance. Again, parallel lines like a path, but this time it seemed to be like little hills, like landscaping, she said, off to the side. The dome again. The next impression was of what appeared to be open arches which seemed to be to the left. It appeared to have something solid on either side; she wasn't sure if they were actually arches, but they were of that general shape. She had difficulty in defining that particular part of it, drew a sketch. Her final impression was of a pattern which seemed to be made of stones, like solid stones set into some kind of a thing. She said it might be a stone floor, she wasn't exactly sure. It was some kind of a hard stone, concrete, marble, some light-colored stone. She did mention having the image of seeing the experimenter's hair blowing in the wind. That was all she could recall.

A sketch which the percipient drew bore a striking resemblance to the features of the dome and statue pedestal, very similar to the photograph taken by the agent at the time of the trial.

Trial 3 (ranked as 3)

The Playboy Building, a large office building in the heart of Chicago, was the target. The front part of the building (the lower part) was mostly glass windows divided vertically by dark columns and horizontally by dark square panels. There was a dark-colored rectangular marquee over the entranceway. The panels and columns divide the front of the building into sections about 10 feet square. The percipient saw "something big, maybe a building. . . . Impression of sections or partitions. . . . Some kind of division, not necessarily fences but something else. Into squares or other shapes. . . . I don't know if it's different sections. . . . These sections aren't too big, 10 x 10 or something like that."

Trial 4 (ranked as 2)

Marina Towers was the target. The location is a distinctive one, though somewhat difficult to describe, and the percipient's description is an excellent example of the nature of remote-viewing imagery. There are two tall circular buildings, often described as resembling corncobs, each divided into two main sections. The top sections consist of rows of semi-circular balconies forming a series of "rings" around the buildings; they are separated from the bottom sections by vertical supporting pillars. The bottom parts of the buildings resemble spirals and are used for parking. There is a large

theatre shaped in a curved design off to one side. The percipient described "horizontal lines. Just going across the whole field. . . . Vertical lines now, but not nearly as many as the horizontal and they're mainly from the lower part. . . . Sort of are sticking out of the bottom. . . . A sense of division. . . . There are curves that run along the lower field. . . . Also the impression of levels. . . . There might be cars parked on the bottom. I'm looking at the area on an angle, like from a corner or something. I get the impression of the whole thing on a slant. . . . Impressions of circles. . . . Not much color. . . . Mostly dark and light contrasts."

Trial 5 (ranked as 1)

The target was the Lincoln Park Conservatory. This is a large open space, a park, with a circular fountain, several large trees, a stone bridge which extends to a stone wall on either side, and, at the time of the trial, large bare flower beds on the lawn. This is the percipient's description: "A small pond. . . . In the middle of grass. . . . Something like a sand trap or something in a golf course. . . . A lot of grass around, very green. Trees too. . . . A sense of openness. A big, wide expanse. . . . There may be a stone wall. . . . Could . . . be some sort of park."

Trial 6 (ranked as 5)

Although the agent was in the correct location, the actual target in this trial was not the one designated in the selected envelope, but an unusual structure in the vicinity. (The designated target was a statue nearby which could not be located at the time of the trial. Once the decision was made to use the Elks National Headquarters and Memorial as the target it was treated as though it had been the designated one, and the designated target, the statue, was dropped from any further consideration. It should be noted that this decision was made at the time of the trial and before the agent had any information about the description generated by the percipient.) The selected target was a large circular building flanked by two smaller square buildings, each housing black metal statues. A large flight of steps led to the Memorial, which was made of white stone and had three distinct layers, the middle section of which was circumscribed by white pillars. There was a large black metal doorway. The transcript reads: "There seems to be a lot of concrete or asphalt or stone of some kind. Grays and gray colors or beiges. . . . Dark metal, steel maybe. . . . Could be steps. . . . Round and square shapes. Maybe poles—like pillars or something."

Trial 7 (ranked as 6)

The target was the Ivanhoe Restaurant, an old English-style pub located at the corner of a busy intersection. A large building with several sections with Tudor-style trim and a rounded brick turret on the corner from which protruded a flag pole with a rigid pennant-shaped sign. Looking down the street along the side of the building was a row of arched street lights. The transcript described "a lot of movement nearby, cars, a lot of traffic. . . . Some kind of a little leaf-like thing. . . . Arches one over the other. . . . Rectangles. . . . A road . . . going off away from me. . . . I see a kind of corner. . . . A roundness. . . a curving kind of side like a bowl. A wavy effect, kind of leaf-like effect."

Trial 8 (ranked as 1)

The final target was a florist shop, the Angel Guardian Orphanage Florist. The shop was a square-shaped building with a pointed roof, distinguished by four blue mosaic tile-covered columns before an almost solid glass front. Behind the glass was a large display of colorful flowers and plants. This description was probably the most accurate in terms of detail of the eight. The percipient saw "a lot of colors, small groups of colors. Lots of reds and yellows, greens, pinks. Probably flowers. They look like they're all bunched together. . . . On display. . . . There's some kind of a building. . . . Windows, poles, glass. . . . Concrete around that she's walking on. . . . A couple of raised round things. . . . A sensation of blue."

DISCUSSION

The most significant finding evidenced by these experimental trials is that it appears possible for an untrained, not previously considered "psychic" subject to give significant descriptive information regarding an unknown location which is spatially and temporally remote from the percipient's physical presence when no apparent source of ordinary communication is possible. This information may be added to Puthoff and Targ's (1976a) findings that the quality of remote-viewing descriptions is not influenced by the amount of distance involved and that electrical shielding does not interfere with the accuracy or quality of remote-viewing descriptions. This successful replication of their experiment, as well as other experiments in this area by the present authors (Dunne & Bisaha, 1978), supports the hypothesis that the remote-viewing design might well be a dependable vehicle for further research in which variables such as

time, the role of the agent, the improvement of subject performance through training and experience and enhanced environmental conditions, the relationship between percipient and agent, and other vital issues in the field of parapsychology can be more fully explored.

Some ideas for future research along these lines were suggested by two instances in the present experiment when exact adherence to the experimental protocol was prevented by unusual circumstances. In Trial 1, because of an error in calculation on the part of the person who prepared the target pool, the target turned out to be much farther away than the prescribed 30-minute drive. Instead of arriving at the target, which was the Windmill Cemetery, 35 minutes after the experiment began, the experimenter arrived 55 minutes later, or 90 minutes after the start of the trial. In spite of this variation in the timing, the percipient's description was still accurate enough to be ranked as 1 by the judge who evaluated this transcript. This seems to indicate that the specific time assignment given to participants may not be a determining factor in their remote-viewing performance. By varying the time element in future experiments, this implication could easily be tested.

In Trial 6, the experimenter was unable to locate the designated target although she was in the correct area, and instead concentrated on a nearby structure in the vicinity, the Elks Memorial Headquarters. Although the judge ranked the description as a 5, the description was still closer to the chosen target than it would have been to the designated one, a bronze statue. In this instance, at least, it could be possible that the percipient's description was more influenced by the agent's attentional direction than by some clairvoyant knowledge of the contents of the envelope or by possible PK influence of the random number selection determining the appropriate envelope. Statistical analysis of the results of this experiment even without these two trials is still significant (sum of ranks = 14 in 6 trials, with $p < .012$, one-tailed).

Since this experiment was completed, three major forms of criticism have been leveled at some of the other remote-viewing experiments:

1. Diaconis (1978) points out that in cases when the subjects have feedback after each trial, they may avoid making responses that match up with the target site of the past trial in a closed-deck situation. The probability of success, of course, will vary trial by trial, resulting in a greater probability of success in the end trials than

would be expected if there were no feedback. This criticism is not valid for the present experiment since, even though the subject had feedback after each trial, it was not a closed-deck situation because the target for each trial was randomly chosen from a fresh pool of ten target sites.

2. Some of the previous analyses of the remote-viewing results used a statistic recommended by Morris (1972) which is appropriate only for those cases when it can be safely assumed that judging is independently done for each trial. An assumption of independence cannot be safely assumed when the same judge matches all percipient transcripts with targets (Burdick & Kelly, 1977). Again, this criticism is inapplicable since no one judge attempted to rank more than one percipient's transcripts against the eight target locations.

3. Stokes (1978, p. 73) pointed out the possibility of sensory cuing where, for example, "weather might be incorporated into both the subject's description and the photograph provided the judge." This could cause an artifactual correct match. In this experiment, the transcripts and photographs were examined before judging for possible sensory cues as to the day, time, change in weather, etc., and the identity of previous targets. None were discovered. In addition the trials were conducted around the same time of day, within the same month, and, serendipitously, with similar weather conditions on each day. In addition, the information provided in a number of transcripts is so relevant to the target that it is unlikely that extraneous factors influenced judging.

In the course of this experiment unsystematic attempts were made to identify factors which may have contributed to the success of these two percipients in precognitive remote viewing. Both reported that they felt they performed best when physically and mentally relaxed and unpressured by time constraints or personal obligations (such as having an exam the next day or needing to be finished by a certain time because of an anticipated appointment). One of the percipients (the one who performed six of the eight trials) said that she found it helpful to spend about ten minutes before the trial putting herself into a mild altered state which she achieved by relaxing physically, breathing deeply, and visualizing herself descending a spiral staircase. It might be of interest to note that in the two trials which she thought were the best (Lincoln Park Conservatory and the Angel Guardian Orphanage Florist) she reported a definite feeling of being "tuned in" and felt confident of success even before the trials were completed. In both cases the

judges concurred; both of these descriptions were ranked as 1.

On the basis of these trials we can suggest that a relaxed and positive state of mind or a mild altered state of consciousness accompanied by a feeling of being "tuned in" to the experience at hand seems to be an accompaniment of good performance in precognitive remote viewing. The facts that nonlinguistic, or nonintellectual, mental activity appeared to be an asset to participants' performances and that the imagery described tended, in general, to be more accurate when relating holistic impressions rather than specific details, confirms other evidence of right cerebral hemispheric dominance during the psi process. The percipients' perceptual mode during descriptive activity tended to be more holistic than linear in nature, with scenes more likely to be perceived in terms of shape, color, or size, or in relationship to other shapes, confirming Puthoff and Targ's theory (1976b). For example, in Trial 7 the percipient described "sprays of water shooting up and falling down, leaning in like a circle—like making arches one over the other." There were no sprays of water at the target site; however, a row of arched street lights receding into the distance could possibly have triggered such imagery.

There is some tendency for descriptions to be metaphorical, rather than specifically accurate. One percipient described a sand trap on a golf course; and from that point on the remainder of her description was inclined to be descriptive of what one would expect to see on a golf course. Fortunately the location was similar enough to a golf course for the judge to be able to identify it successfully. It is to avoid just this type of biasing influence that percipients are urged to refrain from definition and to stick to purely descriptive terms if possible. In the near future the authors anticipate performing a systematic analysis on the contents of these and other precognitive remote-viewing transcripts in the hope of determining more exactly the nature of the impressions received and distinguishing them from the logical inferences percipients may make about these impressions and thus biasing their descriptions. The results of such an analysis would be useful for training judges to distinguish the major or critical elements in the transcripts they are judging from the extraneous detail. For example, a percipient who might perceive a shape which reminded him of an old castle might be tempted to include in his description such features as a drawbridge or turrets when none existed, although the overall impression of the site might be very similar to a castle-like structure. It might be

possible to develop a judging procedure which is less dependent on the judge's subjective determination concerning the relationship between transcript and target and geared more toward matching specific aspects based on an order of transmissibility, thereby enabling us to learn more about the nature of the information transfer occurring in remote viewing.

It is the authors' belief that the attitudinal environment and the initial rapport established between percipients and agent are crucial factors in remote-viewing success. In all the experiments we have conducted, we have attempted to create an atmosphere of congeniality, playfulness, and relaxation in which percipients and agent join in creating a belief system in which psi phenomena are real and natural. Although we have not tested this empirically as yet, we believe that such an environment is a vital part of our procedure and should be taken into consideration in any attempts at future replications.

Although our present knowledge does not enable us to explain adequately the phenomenon being investigated here, the fact that this paper represents a replication of an earlier experiment suggests that remote viewing as an experimental design provides additional evidence substantiating the existence of perceptual and communication channels lying beyond the senses as they are currently defined, and offers itself as a viable vehicle for future research in parapsychology.

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