

**Why I Am Absolutely Convinced of the Reality
of Psychic Abilities, And Why You Should Be, Too**
Russell Targ, 2010, Outstanding Career Award, espresearch.com

In May of 1956, I left my graduate studies in physics at Columbia University and prepared to begin work in plasma physics at the research laboratories of Sperry Gyroscope Co., in Great Neck, NY. After a decade of reading the research literature of ESP and experiencing psi on the stage as a performing magician, I gave myself the summer of my 22nd year to go to Europe to look for psychics and visit ESP research labs. One of my first stops was the Society of Psychical Research in Adam and Eve Muse in London. There, Mrs. Goldney gave me a cup of tea and a copy of the Proceedings of the CIBA Foundation Symposium on Extrasensory Perception which had been held the previous year. I read it with great disappointment. The conclusions of the world's leading researchers, A.S. Parkes and J.F. Nicol, were that, if ESP was ever shown to exist, it would be very important for mankind. ESP was thought to be either a "weak and unrepeatable artifact of a very few subjects, or a defect in our understanding of probability theory." Those words were repeated, almost exactly, by a distinguished US researcher in 1982, at the 100th anniversary celebration of the SPR at Cambridge. Have we made any progress in the 55 years since the CIBA conference?

During my 40 years of association with the PA, I've seen many hopeful speakers ask the attendees for a show of hands, with regard to how many members of the audience were absolutely convinced of the reality of ESP. Neither past president Ed May nor I have seen even a 50% affirmative response. How can we make progress in understanding psi, if we are not even sure that it exists? Philosopher Stephen Braude, also a past president of the PA, discusses the issue of belief in his seminal book on survival of consciousness, *Immortal Remains*. He argues that *superpsi* is not a parsimonious description of the survival data.

He could just as well be arguing for the existence of psi. Braude says in effect, that in order to try and explain away the century of data for psi (or survival) as a combination of "error and fraud" we would have to deal with "a crippling burden of complexity," with which one could argue against the existence of anything. Prof. Jessica Utts makes this point in her 1995 analysis of the ESP database, in the American Institute of Research *Evaluation of Remote Viewing* for the CIA. She says that the reality of psi has been established *as well as any other statistical phenomena*. As a physicist, I can agree that we don't understand the *mechanism* of psi. Among other things, the data for precognition convincingly show that we don't even understand the nature of causality. This is the most seriously misunderstood aspect psi.

The following data which track my career at SRI have convinced me without a doubt, that our awareness is nonlocal, our consciousness is limitless, psi is real, and its accuracy and reliability are independent of distance and time. And I believe that who we are is a reflection of our extraordinary nonlocal (and probably eternal) consciousness. That is why I continue to teach remote viewing internationally. I cannot wait to see what the future holds!

In 1974, we at SRI worked with retired Burbank, CA, police commissioner Pat Price, and carried out 9 double-blind remote viewing trials in which Price was asked to describe Hal Puthoff's randomly chosen locations. From a pool of 60 possible locations, Price had 7 first place matches. $P = 3 \times 10^{-5}$, effect size = 1.3

In 1975, we were asked by the CIA to find an inexperienced "control" subject. I choose my good friend, photographer Hella Hammid. In 9 double-blind trials of outdoor locations she obtained 5 first place matches, and 4 second place matches $P = 2 \times 10^{-6}$, effect size = 1.5 These two experiments were published in March, 1976, *Proceedings of the IEEE*.

In 1972, Dr. Hal Puthoff and I co-founded the SRI remote viewing program. We began the applied SCANATE Program with painter Ingo Swann and Pat Price successfully looking into and describing a NSA secret cryptographic site in Virginia. Pat named the site and *read* code words from the files, confirmed by both NSA and CIA. Reading anything is an exceptional feat in our remote viewing experiments.

1973: Price described and drew to scale, a Soviet Siberian weapons factory at Semipalitinsk, with an enormous eight-wheeled gantry crane and a concealed 60-foot steel sphere under construction. This was all confirmed two years later by satellite photography.

1974: Price identified and *named* the kidnapper of Patricia Hearst from the large loose-leaf mug book with hundreds of photos, at the Berkeley Calif. police department, two days after the kidnapping. He then located, and led police to the kidnap car fifty miles to the north.

1974: Ingo Swann described a failed Chinese atom bomb test for the CIA, from geographic coordinates. He drew it with colored pencils showing a line of trucks and a pyrotechnic display of the failed test, precognized three days in advance of the actual test.

1974: We received a NASA contract called “Techniques to Enhance Man/Machine Communication.” This was based on a four-choice ESP teaching machine that I had developed, and which offered feedback, reinforcement, and the option of a PASS. Users learned to recognize a “unique psychic feeling.” Working with 150 subjects, we found that 11 of the people demonstrated significant learning, several at the 0.01 level. I have now made this four-choice game available as a FREE application for the iPhone. It is called *ESP Trainer*.

In 1978, Hal Puthoff and I were asked by the Army to choose six Army Intelligence officers from a group of thirty, who were to learn remote viewing and set up a program similar to ours, at Fort Meade, MD. Working with these six officers, we carried out 36 trials. We obtained 18 first place matches, in which 4 people were each significant at $P = 0.003$. The probability for the whole experiment = 3×10^{-5} , effect size = 0.67.

In 1982, I organized a precognition experiment with psychologist Keith Harary, to forecast silver commodity futures. We carried out 9 trials to determine the change in the silver market five days in the future. We forecasted up or down, and $>$ or $<$ \$0.25 ($P = 1/4$). We achieved 9 out of 9 first place matches. $P = 4 \times 10^{-6}$, effect size = 1.4. And we earned \$120,000. The following year we were not successful, possibly because we tried to accelerate the trial rate, with the viewer not receiving timely feedback from the previous trial.

In 1996, working with Jane Katra, two mathematicians, and a redundancy coding protocol, we obtained 11 hits of 12 trials for silver futures, with 6 passes. We each had different target pools, and agreement on direction (up or down) was necessary for the trial to go forward.

In 1978, Joe McMoneagle located a downed Soviet Backfire Bomber with code books on board. He psychically pinpointed the African site. President Carter confirmed the success.

1980: Keith Harary described the poor health of US Vice Council Richard Queen when Queen was held hostage in Iran. He told of Queen’s imminent release, in a double blind trial.

1980: Joe McMoneagle described and detailed the unique, secret construction of a surprising 500-foot Soviet Typhoon class submarine being built in a concrete-block building 1/4 mile from the sea, six months before its launch. About 2/3 of our SRI trials looked like this.

These remote viewing successes continued for the 23 Year Program at SRI, 1972 – 1995; with \$25 million funding from CIA, DIA, NASA, Navy, Air Force and Army Intelligence. The scientific findings from this program were published in *Nature*, *Proc. IEEE*, *American Institute of Physics* and the *AAAS* with replications at Princeton, Edinburgh and Utrecht Universities.

I believe this summary shows the importance of working with gifted people, and also that highly improbable “applications,” such as Pat Price decisively putting his finger on the photo of Patricia Hearst’s kidnapper, should not be academically dismissed as anecdotes