

Journal of the Society for Psychical Research

Volume 55 Number 814, January 1989

A FORCED-CHOICE REMOTE-VIEWING EXPERIMENT

by

Keith M. T. Hearne BSc MSc PhD

Hearne, K. M. T. (1989) A forced-choice remote-viewing experiment.
J.Soc.psych.Res., 55 (814): 275 - 278.

NOTES

A FORCED-CHOICE REMOTE-VIEWING EXPERIMENT

by KEITH M. T. HEARNE

ABSTRACT

A woman who reported that she thought she could often locate a friend at a distance by paranormal means, was tested in a force-choice remote viewing experiment. The woman attempted, at 12 specific times, to locate her friend, who was positioned at one of two randomly selected places—familiar to both participants. The results at face value provided no evidence to support her claim, although a post-hoc inspection showed that 9 out of 10 of the target/guess pairs were correct, 2 trials ahead (displacement). Unfortunately, relationship problems between the woman and her friend prevented a further investigation.

INTRODUCTION

The author met a woman who felt that she might have clairvoyant powers, in that she could frequently 'locate' a friend at a distance. It was decided to conduct what was, in effect, a simple remote-viewing experiment in order to test this possibility.

Remote-viewing is a term coined by Targ and Puthoff (1) to describe the situation when a psychic 'viewer' attempts to observe the environment around a sender or 'beacon' who has been sent to a randomly-chosen geographical location. After each trial, the viewer visited the site so as to obtain sensory feedback. After several trials, a judge went to each location and rated the agreement between the viewer's descriptions and the actual target-place. Problems with that design have been stated. (2)

The woman agreed to take the part of the viewer and her friend consented to being the beacon. In this study, only two locations—known well to both participants—would be used. The viewer would decide which randomly selected location was correct for each trial. Twelve trials would be completed and a simple binomial probability computation applied to the results.

METHOD

Subjects

The 'viewer' was a 35 year old female who had for several years, until recently, worked as a psychiatric nurse. Her Eysenck Personality Inventory (3) scores were: E; 20; N; 6; L; 2. The woman's 16PF (4) STEN scores were: A,3; B,6; C,5; E,7; F,6; G,5; H,7; I,6; L,6; M,6; N,3; O,3; Q1,3; Q2,8; Q3,6; Q4,4. Motivational distortion: 3. The woman has hypo-thyroidism. One diagnosis suggested Hashimoto's disease. The woman had been amenorrhoeic for several years.

The 'beacon' was a 38 year old male friend of the viewer.

Locations

The two locations, familiar to both viewer and beacon, were:

1. Indoors at a local club.
2. Outdoors at Hull pier.

Procedure

The viewer's bag was unexpectedly searched, and a tactile-search of her body performed, by the female assistant before the experiment—should any electronic devices be present, and the experimenter and assistant synchronized watches. The viewer then remained with the experimenter, in his home, throughout the experiment.

The assistant¹ collected the 12 numbered envelopes from the randomizer² and opened the appropriate one before each trial. Each trial occurred at a pre-set time, noted on each envelope, every 15 minutes. The car was driven to the appropriate location stated in the envelope on each trial. The viewer started concentrating on guessing the correct location of the beacon at each pre-set time and the experimenter noted down her choice, after 3 minutes.

Feedback

Five minutes after each trial at which the club was the target-location, the assistant telephoned the experimenter to inform him. If no phone call was received 5 minutes after each trial-time, it was deduced that the pier was the target-location. The experimenter then informed the viewer of the target-location for the trial just completed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Target sequence:	P	C	P	P	C	P	P	C	C	C	P	P
Viewer's guesses:	P	P	C	P	P	C	C	C	C	P	C	P

(P = Pier, C = Club.)

Only five out of the twelve guesses made by the viewer were correct. Clearly, under the circumstance of this experiment, the viewer was no able to confirm her belief that she could locate her friend by paranormal means—in real time. However, a post-hoc inspection of the target/guess pairs shows that 9 out of 10 of the +2 sequences were correct. This of course cannot now be claimed to be statistically significant, but is of potential interest. Unfortunately in this case, relationship problems between the woman and her friend do not permit any further investigation.

The conviction of being able to locate a friend is quite often anecdotally reported by 'psychic' people. The method described here may be of value to researchers testing such an alleged ability.

52 Newland Avenue
Hull HU5 3AE

REFERENCES

1. Targ, R. and Puthoff, H. E. (1977). *Mind reach*. Delacorte, N.Y.
2. Hyman, R. (1979). Psychics and scientists: A review of Targ, R. and Puthoff, H. 'Mind reach.' *The Humanist*, 37: 16–20.

¹ The assistant was Margriet Cousins.

² The randomizer was Pamela Green.

3. Eysenck, H. J. and Eysenck, S. B. G. (1964). *Eysenck personality inventory*. University of London Press.
4. Cattell, R. B. and Eber, H. W. (1967). *Sixteen personality factor questionnaire*. Institute for personality and ability testing. Illinois, U.S.A.

APPENDIX

Instructions to experimenter:

'Synchronize watches with the assistant before the experiment. Stay with the viewer and ensure that at the precise trial-times (noted on sheet), the viewer starts to concentrate on guessing the beacon's location. Allow her a maximum of 3 minutes for this task, and note down her choice. The assistant will phone 5 minutes after those trials where the target-location was the club. If no call comes in 5 minutes after the trial-time, the target was the pier. Inform the viewer of the target for the trial just completed. Let the assistant check you list of recorded targets with those given in the envelopes, on her return'.

Instructions to assistant:

'Search the "viewer" carefully before the experiment for signs of any electronic devices. Synchronize watches with the experimenter. Collect the 12 numbered envelopes from the randomizer. Each envelope will state which of the 2 locations is the target for that trial. Do not speak to the randomizer. Open the envelopes in sequence—one before each trial. Ensure that the beacon is positioned at the location time. Instruct him then to try to "send" his location to the viewer. precisely 5 minutes after each trial-time at the club (but not at the pier), telephone the experimenter and inform him of your location. Do not open the envelope giving the target-location for the next trial, until after phoning the experimenter. After the experiment, go to the experimenter, take from him his list of locations, and check that they correspond with the targets given in the envelopes'.

Instructions to randomizer:

'Throw the die 4 times, for each trial, and note down each number in the columns 1-4. In the Tables ("Tables of random sampling numbers", M. G. Kendall & B. Babington Smith, C.U.P., 1960) use the "Thousandth" block for each trial corresponding to the first 2 column numbers. Look down that block for the row corresponding to the 3rd column number. Look across that row for the column corresponding to the 4th column number. Write down the random digit thus selected in column 5, and write alongside the location corresponding to that number Club = 0, 2, 4, 6, 8; Pier = 1, 3, 5, 7, 9.

Write the location for each trial on each of the 10 numbered sheets of paper, and place each in that envelope having the same number. Fold the paper several times. Seal each envelope. Give the 10 envelopes to the assistant when she calls round. Do not speak to her at all'.

Instructions to 'viewer':

'There will be 12 occasions, each 15 minutes apart, when you have to concentrate and try to "see" at which of the two locations your friend is situated. You will

have a maximum of 3 minutes to decide, each time. When you have decided, inform the experimenter who will note down your choice. Bear in mind that the order will be completely random, so you may get the same location coming up twice or more in a row. The experimenter will receive a phone call 5 minutes after the start of those trials where the target-location was the club. No call will come through 5 minutes after the start of a trial where the target-location was the pier. The experimenter will thus tell you after each trial which was the actual target-location'.

Instructions to 'beacon':

'You will be taken to one of two locations in a random order. There will be 12 occasions, each 15 minutes apart, when your task is to attempt to "send" information to the "viewer" as to your current location'.