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## *Playing Those Mind Games*

**M**ake all the Dionne Warwick jokes you like. The U.S. government takes this psychic stuff seriously, and as late as June 1995 was lavishing your tax dollars—almost \$21 million of them—on those nutty 900 numbers.

Well, not *literally* on 900-number psychic hot lines. But it's the same idea. According to a Reuter's report on November 30, 1995, "for at least twenty-three years...U.S. spy agencies funded people supposedly capable of 'remote viewing' to visualize hidden or distant objects without actually seeing them." The Skeptics Society must have had seizures.

The skeptics' unease was presumably allayed by the media's chuckling in reporting the story—which started in a Jack Anderson column on October 29. Anderson had first reported the existence of the program in 1984—it was run for a while out of the Stanford Research Institute. But when the rest of the media picked up the revelations after Anderson's 1995 follow-up, the approach was one of general amusement mingled with

the usual pontificating about the government's predilection to toss money down the drain.

Ted Koppel featured the psychic spook research on the November 28, 1995 edition of *Nightline*. While one guest—a CIA technical adviser—revealed that some of the research yielded “eight martini” results (in other words, results so startling that it took the researchers eight martinis to regain their composure or, perhaps, to cast themselves into paroxysms of vomiting), in general Koppel and his guests scoffed at the research. Most panelists stuck to the official figure of a “15 percent” success rate in the psychic experiments. One assumes that ratio could be achieved by luck alone.

According to journalist Daniel Brandt, however, “not for the first time, there’s more to this story than Ted Koppel acknowledges.” Brandt cites the colorfully named Ingo Swann, who worked on the ESP project at Stanford and says that the government (the military and intelligence agencies) actually hit its target of not 15 but 65 percent success.

The point of the story is not to vouch for the reality of psychic powers—though if Swann’s claim is correct, the secret scientists may have been on to something—but to show that the U.S. intelligence community is open to almost anything when it comes to the battlefield of the mind. The CIA’s MK-ULTRA program, with its efforts to use LSD and other drugs to create the perfect mind-controlled agent, are well documented (see chapter 1). Did the effort end with the publicly funded trip-fest?

Oklahoma bombing suspect Timothy McVeigh was subject to much derision for supposedly claiming that he returned from his military service with a microchip implanted in his butt. But McVeigh was only the most-publicized self-proclaimed implant victim. Dozens of “support groups” exist for people claiming to be subjects of microchip mind control and for “wavies,” those who believe that their thoughts are being tampered with via microwave transmissions from some mysterious source.

Hearing voices in one’s head is, of course, a prominent symptom of certain kinds of mental illness. Aha! What better

cover for covert mind-control experiments! It’s certainly easy to ridicule the wavies and their ilk. It should, however, be noted that “respectable” researchers have dabbled in this area. Sometimes more than dabbled.

The most famous of those was Dr. Jose Delgado, inventor of the “stimoeceiver” implant and author of the 1969 book (from mainstream publisher Harper & Row) *Physical Control of the Mind: Toward a Psychocivilized Society*. In this watershed work, Delgado—who once stopped a charging bull in its tracks in a daring demonstration of his wacky gadget—advocates using technology to keep the dangerous, antisocial impulses of the public-at-large under control. “The technology for nonsensory communication between brain and computers through the intact skin is already at our fingertips,” he wrote. Delgado admitted, however, that with present knowledge “it is highly improbable that electrical correlates of thoughts or emotions could be picked up.”

Of course, Delgado was writing almost three decades ago, and, as he noted then, “we are advancing rapidly in the pattern recognition of electrical correlates of behavior.” The technology was not without its encumbrances, however.

“One of the limiting factors in these studies was the existence of wires leading from the brain to the stimoeceiver outside of the scalp,” wrote Delgado. “The wires represented possible portal of entry for infection and could be a hindrance to hair grooming.”

It would hardly be worth creating a society of perfectly behaved citizens if they weren’t well groomed. To solve this problem, Delgado developed “a small three-channel stimulator which can be placed subcutaneously... The instrument is solid state, has no batteries and can work indefinitely.” In other words, a brain implant. \*

Psychosurgery and brain manipulation—whether by lobotomy, electroshock, or drugs—has long been an accepted way to control behavior. The stimoeceiver is really just a high-tech twist on the old theme. The difference is, Delgado lobbied for

its use as a means of social management, not merely individual therapy.

\* Has Dr. Delgado's wondrous creation and its descendants (if, in fact, any such devices exist) found an array of unwilling customers? Ed Light hosts a site on the Internet called "Mind Control Forum" in which he chronicles dozens of cases of people who claim to be victims of remote control. Light also claims to be a victim himself, which probably wouldn't do much for his credibility with Ted Koppel.

Others, however, are at least open-minded. Tom Porter, a software engineer who runs a Web site devoted to research into government mind-control experiments (and who does not claim victimization), says he has spoken to "several purported survivors of trauma-based mind-control who had significant, although not conclusive corroborating evidence," and that "I am inclined to give these people the benefit of the doubt."

\* Light's Internet site contains a section devoted to Brian Bard, who not only says that he has been the subject of implant mind-control experiments but also posts MRI scans of his head on the site. According to his own readings of these pictures, they show a couple of tiny devices in his skull, one shaped like a tuning fork.

To accept the stories of the self-proclaimed "victims" requires accepting not only an incredible level of ruthlessness on the part of the controllers but also perhaps more of a leap of faith, that the technology could actually work. As the closest thing to a smoking gun in that area, Light offers a 1961 article by Cornell University researcher Allen Frey titled "Human Auditory Response to Modulated Electromagnetic Energy" from the *Journal of Applied Psychology* (vol. 17, no. 4, pp. 689-692).

The thesis of this highly technical article was that "using extremely low average power densities of electromagnetic energy, the perception of sounds was induced in normal and deaf humans."

There is a long way between "the perception of sounds" and controllable, intrusive voices. Julianne McKinney of the Asso-

ciation of National Security Alumni (a group that opposes covert operations) wrote a controversial 1992 article in the Association journal *Unclassified*. In that piece, she said, "typically, persons who complain of being 'zapped by radio waves' and of 'hearing voices' are stigmatized as psychotic, delusional, or schizophrenic....Based on our preliminary investigation, including interviews with the affected individuals, we conclude that the matter is serious and should be pursued further."

The paper was entitled "Microwave Harassment and Mind-Control Experimentation," which pretty much summed it up. However, in a supplement to the piece, McKinney noted that one major objection to her thesis was that "no substantive proof has been furnished in this document which confirms that directed-energy technologies exist."


She goes on to note that "in these past ten months, directed-energy-based surveillance and anti-personnel systems suddenly leaped off of physicists' drawing boards into the world of reality, thus obviating the criticism...."


McKinney's "project" catalogs complaints from "experimentees," which skyrocketed, predictably, after she published her paper. The complaints came in from people saying that they were survivors of Satanic cults (supposedly connected to the military), "programmed assassins" from the Vietnam war, and UFO abductees, among others.

"It has been suggested that the long-term objective of all this experimentation," McKinney wrote, "is to develop a system by which all (surviving) citizens of this country can be monitored and tracked by a sophisticated, perhaps satellite-based cybernetics system." \*

In his booklet "The Controllers," circulated widely on the Internet, writer Martin Cannon argues that the UFO abductee phenomenon is a massive cover for a massive mind-control project. Through hypnosis, Cannon argues, mind-control guinea pigs are persuaded that their very-human captors and tormentors hail not from Washington but from Sirius. Or somewhere out there. Cannon points to a Delgado-style im-

plant as the possible (heavy emphasis on "possible") means by which the UFO hallucinations are induced.

"Once an abductee has been implanted—and if we are to trust hypnotic regression accounts of abductees at all, the first implanting session may occur in childhood—the chip-in-the-brain would act as an intensifier of the signal. Such an individual could have any number of 'UFO' experiences while his or her bed partner dozes comfortably." 

The UFO abduction scenario would indeed provide perfect cover, because not only would it hide the true source of the victim's trauma, it also discredits the victim's story. 

As Cannon points out, when it comes to mind-control experiments, "victims elicit sympathy only insofar as they remain anonymous. Intellectually, we realize that MK-ULTRA and its allied projects must have affected hundreds, probably thousands of individuals. Yet we react with deep suspicion whenever one of these individuals steps forward and identifies himself, or whenever an independent investigator argues that mind control has directed some newsworthy person's otherwise inexplicable actions."

The situation is, as Cannon says, a catch-22. "if you say that you are a manufactured madman, you were probably mad to begin with." As crazy as all of these claims sound, however, it's worth keeping an open mind—so to speak.

"A mind is a terrible thing to waste," quips Cannon, "and a worse thing to commandeer."