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Note: The opinions expressed in this column are those of the author, with no implication of agreement by either the editors or the Advisory Board. The question it raises is whether further research into this controversial area as a technological forecasting approach is desirable, or unwarranted as being based on questionable fringe science. It is interesting to note, for example, that experimental research on instinct or intuition by Dr. Gerd Gigerenzer, director of the Max Planck Institute for Human Development in Berlin, indicates that intuitive wisdom often outperforms the calculations of experts (see his book "Gut Feelings: The Intelligence of the Unconscious" (2007); also *New York Times*, August 28, 2007).

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FROM MY PERSPECTIVE

Remote viewing as applied to futures studies

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Abstract

Remote viewing is set of related protocols that allow a viewer to intuitively gather information regarding a specific target that is hidden from physical view and separated from the viewer by either time or distance. Research suggests that the same processes used to gather spatially non-local information can also be used to gather information that is temporally removed from the observer. This paper reviews the most common protocols for remote viewing — including Coordinate Remote Viewing (CRV), Associative Remote Viewing (ARV), and Extended Remote Viewing (ERV). [1]

This remains a controversial field of study. While over 30 years of data has been gathered with statistically significant results frequently occurring under laboratory conditions, skeptics are not convinced that RV is a useful pursuit. In addition to this, some of the output from RV can be vague and subject to personal interpretation.

A number of factors have been shown to improve the success rate for remote viewing, including the use of experienced subjects, individual testing, feedback of results, and a short time-interval between the percipient response and the targeted future event. Finally, there also appears to be a relationship between the effectiveness of

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remote viewing efforts and sidereal time, which may be interpreted as evidence that some aspects of RV are subject to the same physical laws as are other phenomena studied by science.

Remote viewing and related processes merit further exploration and study. While remote viewing may never be completely understood, it has the potential to make a meaningful contribution to the professional futurist′s toolbox.

Keywords: Remote viewing; Precognition; ERV; ARV; CRV

1. Introduction

While "creative" thinking in the form of scenario development has become part of the futurist mainstream, "intuitive" processes have in many ways been misunderstood or underutilized by professional futurists. The profession has long sought to distance methods of futures research from the domain of the mystical or esoteric. In doing so, futurists have managed to create some credibility for the profession, but at the possible cost of inhibiting the development of some promising approaches for understanding the future.

A growing body of literature suggests that anomalous precognition of the future has been widely experienced by the public. In a recent survey conducted at the University of Alabama, over half of the randomly selected participants have experienced a dream-based premonition. Fifty-three percent reported premonitions of future events that later happened. Forty-five-percent have changed travel plans as a result of an intuitive "sense", and subsequently have saved themselves effort or injury [1].[2]

The frequency of these occurrences is too high to simply be ignored or explained away, yet the current level of science is unable to construct a mechanism to explain the anomalous transference of information over time and distance.

Meanwhile, early attempts at proving the existence of precognition in a research setting have been consistently inconsistent. Promising and highly statistically significant results often occur, only to be followed by a string of failures. One researcher describes precognition and other psi effects as being "capricious, unsustainable, and actively evasive". In many ways, psi effects exhibit "a mind of their own" and do not willingly participate in scientific efforts to prove their existence [2].

This produces an interesting dilemma for futurists. Psi effects are widely experienced by the public and often provide clear linkages to the future — yet the stability of these linkages is often in doubt. Is there a scientifically robust means of using psi as an input to forecasting the future? Are there protocols by which futurists can apply intuitive techniques without "going off the deep end?" And finally, how can futurists improve the accuracy of their results using these methods?

These are some of the topics that we will address in this paper.

2. The evolution of remote viewing

One of the most promising developments in psi research over the past few decades has been in the area of "remote viewing". This process was originally pioneered in the early 1970′s by Russell Targ

[2] A potential limitation of this study would be the reliance on self-reporting, which potentially biases results — especially if students were aware of the reason/goal of study (i.e., recall bias).