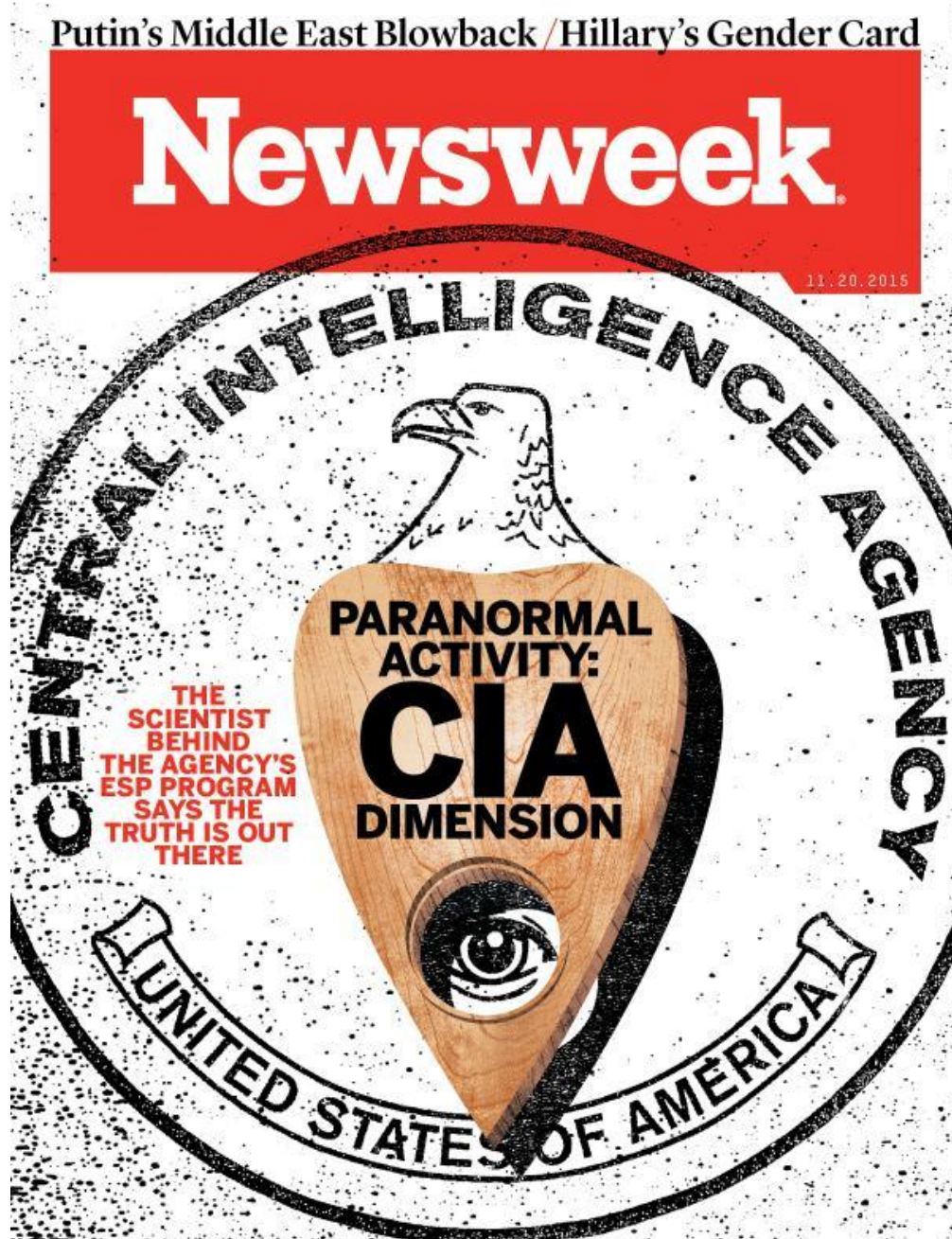


# Meet the Former Pentagon Scientist Who Says Psychics Can Help American Spies

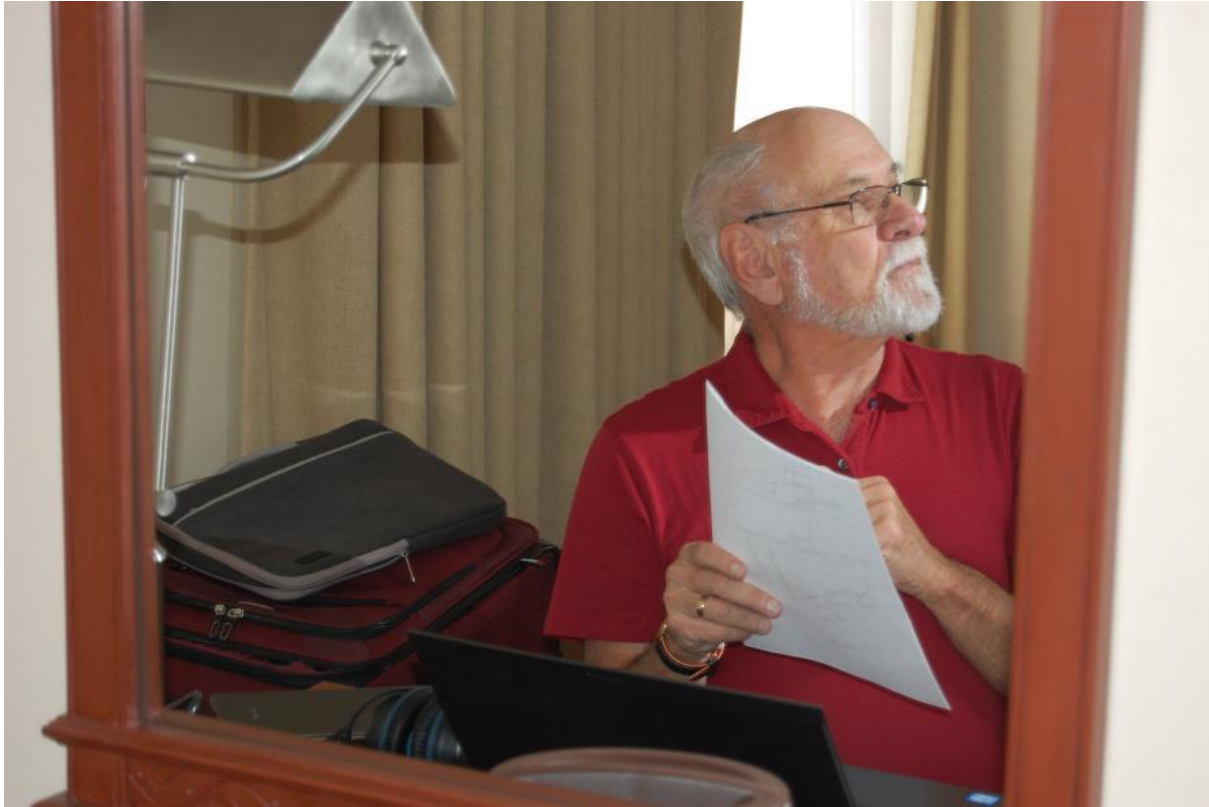
BY [JIM POPKIN](#) / NOVEMBER 12, 2015 6:58 AM EST



Steps from the Hayward Executive Airport in Northern California, a brunette in jeans and hiking boots scans her surroundings for police. She's carrying a 13-pound canister of liquid nitrogen in her hand. She unclasps the lid and dumps the colorless, minus-320-degree liquid into a beer cooler packed with 2,000 tiny aluminum balls. A thick white cloud erupts below the airport's control tower, a witch's brew that crackles and pops. Undetected, she darts back to her SUV and is gone.

Over the past two years, the same intruder has performed this clandestine ritual three dozen times across the San Francisco Bay Area. Without warning or permission, she's released nitrogen gas clouds in front of a fire station, a busy Catholic church, a water tower and a government center. She's smoke-bombed her way from Palo Alto to Alameda, spewing her cryogenic concoction in popular city parks and near lakes, highways and Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) subway lines.

She's not a Satanic cultist or an incompetent terrorist. Arguably, her mission is even more improbable. It's all part of an experiment run by a former Pentagon scientist to prove the existence of extrasensory perception, or ESP.



Dr. Edwin May tests a participant for remote viewing. Two decades after the CIA denounced the government's top-secret ESP program, May is trying to bring it back to life. JIM POPKIN FOR NEWSWEEK

### **Washington's Most Expensive Psychics**

Twenty years ago this month, the CIA released a report with the unassuming title, ["An Evaluation of Remote Viewing: Research and Applications."](#) The 183-page white paper was more like a white flag—it was the CIA's public admission, after years of speculation, that U.S. government agencies had been using a type of ESP called "remote viewing" for more than two decades to help collect military and intelligence secrets. At a cost of about \$20 million, the program had employed psychics to visualize hidden extremist training sites in Libya, describe new Soviet submarine designs and pinpoint the locations of U.S. hostages held by foreign kidnappers.

But the report, conducted for the CIA by the independent American Institutes for Research, did much more than confirm the existence of the highly classified program. It declared that the psychic-spy operation, code-named Star Gate, had been a bust. Yes, the CIA researchers had validated some Star Gate trials, finding that "hits occur more often than chance" and that "something beyond

odd statistical hiccups is taking place.” But the report declared that ESP was next to worthless for military use because the tips provided are too “vague and ambiguous” to produce actionable intelligence.

Like a Ouija board, the resulting news headlines seemed to write themselves. “End of Aura for CIA Mystics,” *The Guardian* quipped. “Spooks See No Future for Pentagon Psychics,” a Scottish paper reported. “Putting the ‘ESP’ Back Into Espionage,” *BusinessWeek* added.

ABC News’s *Nightline* also joined the fray, [hosting a face-off](#) between Robert Gates, the former CIA director, and Edwin May, the scientist who had been running the government’s ESP research program. Gates struck first. “I don’t know of a single instance where it is documented that this kind of activity contributed in any significant way to a policy decision, or even to informing policy makers about important information,” he said. May fought back, citing “dramatic cases in the laboratory” in which Pentagon psychics had accurately sketched a target thousands of miles away that they had never actually seen. That wasn’t good enough, however. Already embarrassed and under pressure for the disclosure that one of their own, Aldrich Ames, had been spying for the Russians for a decade, the CIA officially shut down the psychic spies program. Star Gate had fizzled out.

It was November 1995, and May was out of a job. His life’s work had been discredited by the CIA, and he had been humbled on national television. At 55, the trained scientist might have retreated to academia or simply walked away. Instead, he doubled down on ESP.

### **A Jewish Hungarian Cowboy**

As a boy, May always seemed to stand out. Born in Boston, the Navy brat moved frequently, finally settling with his family after World War II on a ranch outside Tucson. “I grew up as a Jewish Hungarian cowboy in Arizona,” he says, while digging into a plate of country ham at a tavern in Virginia. Fascinated with the Russian language, he taught himself the Cyrillic alphabet. He fell in love with physics at a local private boarding school and headed to college in

New York. “I had a letter sweater in calf roping,” he says. “The only guy at the University of Rochester with that.”

May graduated in 1962 and began pursuing a doctoral degree. It didn’t last long. “I flunked out of my first graduate school,” he says. “Fell in with a bunch of fast nurses and learned to play a bagpipe.”

His timing was unfortunate. The Vietnam War was ramping up, and the U.S. Army came calling. “It was more than a wakeup call. It straightened out my life,” May says of nearly getting drafted. He enrolled at the University of Pittsburgh and buckled down, earning a Ph.D. in nuclear physics in four years. By 1968, with the counterculture movement raging, May had gone legit, authoring a thesis titled, “Nuclear Reaction Studies via the (Proton, Proton Neutron) Reaction on Light Nuclei and the (Deuteron, Proton Neutron) Reaction on Medium to Heavy Nuclei.”

May found post-doc work at the University of California, Davis, conducting tests with cyclotrons, but life outside the physics lab began exerting its own magnetic pull. “I moved to San Francisco,” he recalls proudly. “As a professional hippie.” In the Bay Area, May dropped out, attending trippy lectures on parapsychological research and experimenting with drugs. With the standard-issue beard and ponytail in place, he took off for India in search of the miraculous. May expected to “make Nobel Prize–winning discoveries of mind over matter,” but he came home empty-handed. “I was unable to find a single psychic, whether street fakir or holy guru, who was able or willing to fit into my scientific framework,” he wrote in *Psychic* magazine upon his return.





An exterior view of the SRI International Building in Menlo Park, California, where May would conduct psychokinesis experiments. SRI International was founded as the Stanford Research Institute in 1970. Unknown to May at the time,

many of the projects were top secret and funded by the CIA. MICHEL DELLUC/XPN-REA/REDUX

In 1975, May's career found him. A friend recommended him for a job at the prestigious Stanford Research Institute, now called SRI International, in Menlo Park. May would be conducting psychokinesis experiments. Unknown to him at the time, many of the projects were top secret and funded by the CIA.

Three years earlier, spooked by the Soviet Union's growing interest in parapsychology, the CIA had embraced ESP. At first, the Cold War-era tests were low-key, with CIA officials clumsily hiding objects in a box and asking a psychic to describe the contents. Soon the CIA got serious and ordered a \$50,000 pilot study at the SRI, determined to see if psychics could use their remote-viewing skills to visualize and sketch large target sites in and around San Francisco.

Harold Puthoff, a laser physicist with a Ph.D. from Stanford University, was the program's first director. The CIA, he wrote, "watchful for possible chicanery,

participated as remote viewers themselves in order to critique the protocols.” The CIA officials drew seven sketches “of striking quality,” Puthoff recalled, and “performed well under controlled laboratory conditions.” Later, a psychic sitting in California visualized inside a secret National Security Agency listening post in West Virginia, right down to the words on file folders, according to Puthoff and a CIA official.

The CIA project director described the NSA-visualization results as “mixed” because the psychic nailed the code name for the site and its physical layout but botched the names of people working at the site. Nonetheless, interest from the U.S. intelligence community spiked. And when that same remote viewer—provided with only map coordinates and an atlas—described new buildings and a massive construction crane hidden at a secret Soviet nuclear weapons facility (but got most other details wrong), multiple U.S. agencies began signing up for ESP studies.

A few years later, two psychologists at a New Zealand university had a premonition about Puthoff: They called him a bit of a rube. Writing in the journal *Nature*, the psychologists revealed that they had obtained transcripts of the original CIA experiments. The psychic who had seen deep inside the NSA outpost and the Soviet nuclear site had been fed “a large number of cues” from the judges over the years, they reported, and it was impossible to duplicate the uncanny results of his ESP testing. “Our own experiments on remote viewing under cue-free conditions have consistently failed to replicate the effect,” the psychologists concluded. Puthoff, who would also famously declare that spoon-bender and magician Uri Geller possessed psychic powers, disputed the psychologists’ findings and kept running the ESP program until 1985. Although the CIA stopped funding ESP research in 1977, the Air Force, Army and Defense Intelligence Agency kept writing checks. The Army’s Fort Meade base in Maryland became the program’s secret operational home. In 1995, when Congress directed the CIA to evaluate remote viewing and either take over the program or cancel it for good, the DIA was at the helm. Congress bankrolled and protected the program for years. Well-known defenders included Rhode

Island Senator Claiborne Pell and North Carolina Representative Charlie Rose, who once told an interviewer that "if the Russians have remote viewing, and we don't, we're in trouble."

A lesser-known supporter: Maine Senator William Cohen, who would later become the Secretary of Defense under President Bill Clinton. "I was impressed with the concept of remote viewing," he tells *Newsweek* in an email. "The results may not have been consistent enough to constitute 'actionable intelligence,' but exploration of the power of the mind was and remains an important endeavor."

To May, that's an understatement.



Former Secretary of Defense William Cohen is pictured during his appearance before the 9/11 commission on Capitol Hill on March 23, 2004. 'I was impressed with the concept of remote viewing,' Cohen tells 'Newsweek' in an email. DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES/REDUX

### **'I believed it then, and I believe it now'**

To his admirers, May is a legitimate parapsychologist. To his critics, that phrase is the ultimate oxymoron. From 1985 to 1995, May served as the California-based research director of the Pentagon's ESP program. A proton-probing scientist by training and a paranormal prophet by choosing, May was that rare



specimen—a full-time ESP researcher with a salary and 401(k) plan courtesy of the U.S. government.

Thick of waist now with a shiny pate and white beard, he could pass for aging folk star Peter Yarrow. May has never met an aside he didn't like.

Conversations come loaded with amusing chestnuts (“We’d answer the phone, ‘Hello, Division of Parapsychology. May we tell you who’s calling?’”), Washington gossip (“You know the Energy Department is run by Mormons?”) and TMI (“I hung out with the Wicca community for a while”). But when the talk turns to nonbelievers who dismiss remote viewing as voodoo without examining the evidence, May is short-tempered. “I’m not going to deal with a skeptic who has no fucking idea about what he’s talking about. Because he’s just making it up. That’s bad science. I’m a scientist.” And May has even less time for all the former Star Gate psychics who peddle mood-ring junk science online, some warning paying customers about flying saucers and the coming apocalypse. “They are ripping people off, and I have to undo that when I try to sell this to mainstream scientists,” he says.

So what is his scientific evidence? In 1995, when the CIA began preparing its program review, May provided the review team with results of 10 experiments he felt provided “the strongest evidence” to support “the remote-viewing phenomenon.” The tests, with names like “AC lucid dream, pilot” and “ERD EEG investigation” detail the success rate of each experiment. One of the CIA reviewers, while clearly in the minority, was sold. “It is clear to this author that [ESP] is possible and has been demonstrated,” she wrote in the agency’s report. “This conclusion is not based on belief, but rather on commonly accepted scientific criteria.”



The CIA spent millions trying to develop psychics military spies, finally abandoning the project in the 1990s.LARRY

LILAC/ALAMY

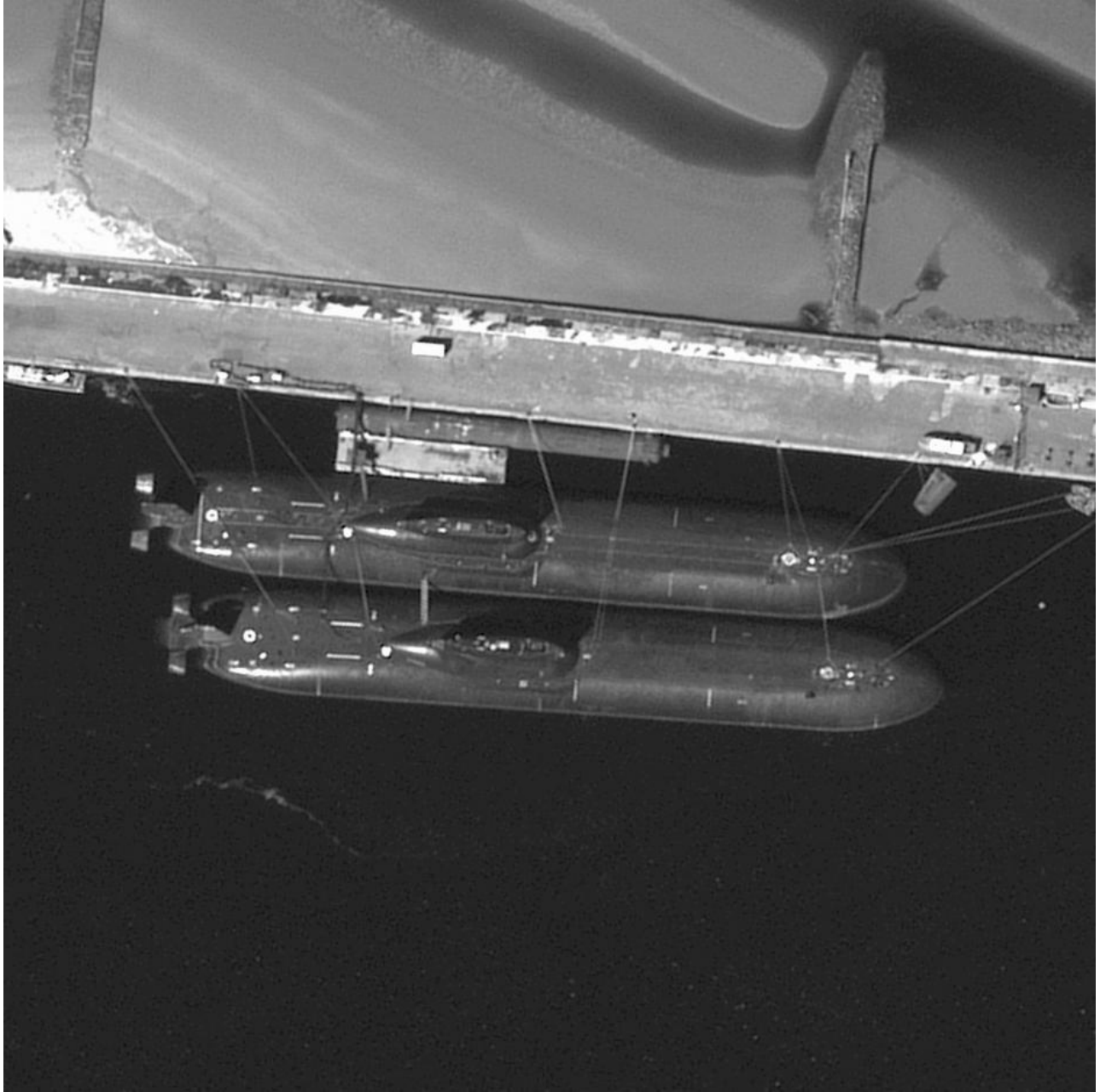
Today, May says ESP has “already been proved,” and defends it like an impatient school teacher explaining gravity. He quickly offers a barrage of evidence and anecdotes to make his case. In a recent interview, May references an obscure presentation that the military’s own remote-viewing project manager wrote in 1984 for his Army superiors. According to the now-declassified “secret” briefing, [available online](#), the Army’s Intelligence and Security Command had conducted “100 collection projects” using ESP since 1979 for a slew of government agencies including the CIA, NSA, FBI and Secret Service. Several of the projects involved the use of Army psychics to help locate Americans taken hostage by Iran in 1979. “Over 85% of our operational missions have produced accurate target information,” states the briefing. “Even more significant, approximately 50% of the 760 missions produced usable intelligence.”

May sees the Army report as confirmation that Gates was protecting the CIA when he declared on *Nightline* that remote viewing had never “contributed in

any significant way” to U.S. intelligence efforts. “Gates lied,” he tells *Newsweek*. “What more can I say?”

Gates, now a partner in the RiceHadleyGates consulting firm, wouldn’t comment. But the author of the Army’s 1984 report did. Brian Buzby was an Army lieutenant colonel when he briefly ran the Pentagon’s ESP program in the 1980s. He’s retired in Alabama now and has never spoken to the media before. He stands by his remote-viewing report. “I believed in it then, and I believe in it now,” Buzby says. “It was a real thing, and it worked.” Buzby says the program was just one low-cost tool that provided an additional source of intel for military and civilian analysts to weigh. When he learned the CIA had shut down the program, “I was disappointed that somebody wouldn’t pick up the banner.”

For May, further proof of the program’s many wonders is Star Gate’s legendary “Agent 001.” The first psychic to work directly for the Pentagon, then—Army Chief Warrant Officer Joseph McMoneagle began remote viewing for the government in 1978. As a child, McMoneagle recalls sharing thoughts telepathically with his twin sister, and says he honed his ESP abilities as a soldier avoiding deadly attacks in Vietnam. May says McMoneagle could correctly identify a target “just under 50 percent” of the time when presented with five possible options. Using chance alone, he says the best outcome would be just 20 percent.



A satellite image of two Typhoon SSBN submarines that Russia plans to scrap, pictured in Severodvinsk, Russia on May 28, 2013. DIGITALGLOBE/GETTY

May cites one intriguing example. It was 1979, and the National Security Council wanted help in “seeing” inside an unidentified industrial building near the Arctic Circle in Russia. McMoneagle began imagining himself “drifting down into the building” and had “an overwhelming sense” that he could see a submarine, “a really big one, with twin hulls.” He made detailed drawings of the giant sub for the NSC. Only later, McMoneagle wrote in his 2002 memoir, did

U.S. satellite photographs confirm the existence at the Soviet's secret Severodvinsk shipyard of a massive double-hulled Typhoon submarine, which constituted a new threat to American national security.

Upon retirement from the Army in 1984, McMoneagle was awarded the Legion of Merit. Given for exceptionally meritorious conduct, his award states that he served in a "unique intelligence project that is revolutionizing the intelligence community." It adds that he produced "critical intelligence unavailable from any other source" for the Joint Chiefs of Staff, DIA, NSA, CIA and Secret Service.

### **Meeting a Millionaire**

For years after the government shut down its ESP program, May and McMoneagle tried to bring it back from the dead. They approached friends inside the U.S. agencies that had once funded them, "and they fled from us like you wouldn't believe," May says. He was "getting desperate, out of money," and then he met a millionaire.

The third-generation owner of a pharmaceutical empire, Luís Portela, was in a unique position to help. In 1924, Portela's grandfather opened a modest laboratory above the pharmacy where he worked in Porto, Portugal. Today, that business is called Bial, and it's the largest pharmaceutical manufacturer in Portugal. Its products are sold in more than 50 countries on four continents. From an early age, Portela has been spellbound by the paranormal. In an email, he says he's always tried to understand why humanity and religion "accepted too easily some phenomena, so-called mysteries or miracles," while scientists "denied those phenomena, claiming that they did not exist." So in 1994, Portela set up the nonprofit Bial Foundation to study ESP and "the human being from both the physical and spiritual perspectives."

It's a radical concept for such a conservative industry. Imagine Johnson & Johnson financing crystal healing. The Bial Foundation has funded more than 500 projects in 25 countries, including dozens of ESP studies and even research into ghost sightings and belief in UFOs. May has been a frequent Bial recipient, collecting about \$400,000 in research funds for nine ESP-related projects. In the



process, Portela has become a fanboy, believing the controversial scientist has helped “foster the understanding of the human being.”



Liquid nitrogen disperses into the air after May's assistant poured it out near Hayward Airport in California. May believes the mist acts as a homing beacon for psychics. LORY HAWLEY FOR NEWSWEEK

Funded by the Bial Foundation at a cost of \$45,000, May's latest ESP study "is probably the best experiment in the history of the field," the Star Gate researcher says. The goal: to test whether "changes of thermodynamic entropy at a remote natural site enhance the quality of the anomalous cognition." That's a two-dollar way of asking whether a sudden release of thermal energy, like a rocket launch or a liquid nitrogen eruption in a beer cooler, can improve a psychic's ability to perceive what's happening at the site from thousands of miles away. "This wasn't something that we just pulled out of our rear ends," May explains. "It was really all the spying stuff we did for the government, where we discovered that when targets involve large changes of thermodynamic entropy, like underground nukes, accelerators, electromagnetic pulse devices and so on, they work much better" in signaling remote viewers.

To conduct the ESP-improvement experiment, May reassembled his old A-team. Out of rural Virginia, there's McMoneagle, the former Army intelligence officer who won the Legion of Merit. Then there's Nevin Lantz, a former Star Gate researcher who works today as a Palo Alto psychotherapist and "authentic happiness coach." And finally there's Angela Dellaflora Ford, a former Star Gate psychic and DIA intelligence analyst from Maryland who markets herself as a "medium that can help people connect with their spirit guides as well as communicate with their loved ones on the other side."

Ford was one of only a half-dozen women who worked as psychics for the government's program. Some of her military colleagues derided her because three "spirit guides" would possess her mind during Star Gate remote-viewing sessions and guide her observations. One was a fat cherub, another a boy-like angel and the last a 17th-century British professor who spoke through her, Ford says. In an interview, she also says she once saw a UFO outside her suburban home in 2010. "It reminded me of something like they call the mother ship," she says. "It was not moving. It was hovering...and then it sort of disappeared."



Senate Appropriations Chairman Robert C. Byrd looks over notes on Capitol Hill in Washington on May 15, 2008.

Maine Senator William Cohen, who served as Secretary of Defense under President Bill Clinton, says Senator Byrd was a supporter of the Star Gate program. SCOTT J. FERRELL/CONGRESSIONAL QUARTERLY/GETTY

Regardless of her unorthodox methods and beliefs, Ford also has her admirers. One of them is Cohen, the former senator and secretary of defense. He first got to know Ford when he was on the Senate Select Intelligence Committee, which helped fund Star Gate even when the Defense Department lost interest. Ford conducted psychic readings for Cohen when he was a senator, and he remains a true believer. “I did support the Star Gate program, as did Senator Robert Byrd and other members of the committee,” Cohen says in an email. “There seemed to be a small segment of people who were able to key into a different level of consciousness. Angela Ford was one of them. It doesn't mean that she or any of the others in the Star Gate program possessed psychic powers that could predict the future or peer into the past and retrieve lost information.

But there were a number of remote-viewing tests conducted that I found impressive.”

With Ford, Lantz and McMoneagle back on the job, May began work on his ESP 2.0 experiment. The first step was to design protocols and choose 22 distinct Bay Area outdoor locations near his private Cognitive Sciences Laboratory in Palo Alto. Sites included the Hayward Executive Airport, a BART overpass in Union City, the Palo Alto Duck Pond and the Pulgas Ridge Preserve in Redwood City. Next, May would fire up his Sony Vaio laptop and ask the computer to randomly select one of the target sites. May and the remote viewers would not know the result. The computer would also generate a text message to inform May’s assistant—the mysterious brunette, a former waitress named Lory Hawley—where to drive and whether she would create a mini liquid nitrogen eruption. Again, May and the psychics were not told the result.

May worked with the psychics, one at a time, in a quiet room. He placed a blindfold over each psychic’s eyes and then said: “Please access and describe the first thing you see when we remove the blindfold” in a half-hour or so. After getting into a relaxed or trance-like state, the remote viewer then described exactly what he or she “saw” at the Bay Area location. May then entered the psychic’s descriptions into his laptop, assigning a number value for each water feature, man-made structure and other physical element described. Finally, the computer determined the accuracy of each remote-viewing session.

For these tests in California, May drove the psychics to the site the computer had selected and then told them to remove their blindfolds. But many other times, May conducted the experiment using locations thousands of miles away, in Maryland or Virginia, in hotel rooms or McMoneagle’s den. In those cases, May held up a photo of the correct target site for the psychic to see once they had described their vision.





The duck pond at the Palo Alto Baylands Nature preserve, pictured in 2008. The duck pond was one of 22 locations May selected for his ESP 2.0 experiment. DAN SULLIVAN/ALAMY

The old Star Gate psychics recently completed 72 trials, with May's assistant pouring liquid nitrogen 36 times. In his final report to Bial, May declared victory, finding "a significant effect supporting the study hypothesis ( $z_{diff} = 1.80$ ,  $p = .036$ ,  $ES = 0.425 \pm 0.236$ )." Translation: Liquid nitrogen works. The sudden release of energy acts as a flare in the dark, May believes, helping psychics to see across the country and even into the future. "I think it's very important," he says of this unpublished study. "If it holds up, it will be a breakthrough."

### **You Can't Bullshit a Bullshitter**

Chances are, Ray Hyman won't see it that way. A professor emeritus of psychology at the University of Oregon, Hyman is one of the nation's leading skeptics about the paranormal. Along with his friend James Randi, aka the Amazing Randi, he's a founding member of the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal, now known as the Committee for



Skeptical Inquiry, whose mission is to promote “the use of reason in examining controversial and extraordinary claims.” As a scientist and former magician and mentalist, he’s a living embodiment of the “You can’t bullshit a bullshitter” maxim. Hyman and his skeptic kin are deeply suspicious of parapsychology and other phenomena they can’t prove, including man’s ability to walk through walls, become invisible, stop animal hearts through intense staring or any of the other wacky ideas embraced by Pentagon officials in the ’70s and ’80s and lampooned in the book and movie *The Men Who Stare at Goats* .

Hyman and May first met at the SRI in the 1970s, and originally the skeptic was encouraged. Sent by the Defense Department’s Advanced Research Projects Agency to the institute to observe illusionist Geller—“just a charming con artist” — Hyman grew to respect May’s scientific rigor and ethics. They agreed that the early SRI research was “crap,” Hyman says, providing way too many clues to the psychics and fudging the results.

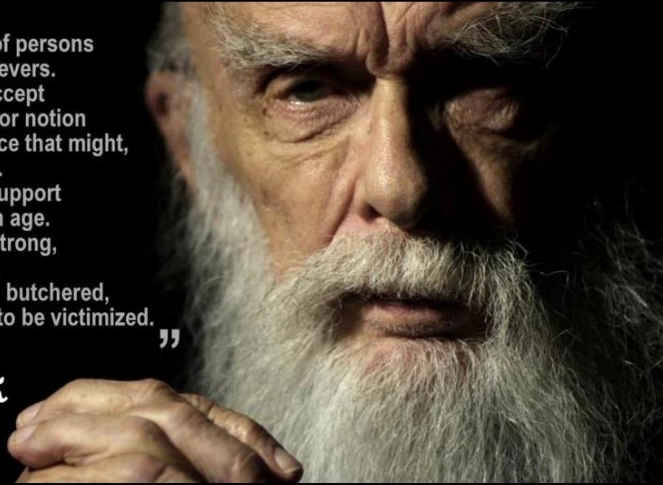


Magician and scientific skeptic James Randi is pictured with Johnny Carson during 'The Amazing Randi' episode of The Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson on November 3, 1987. Randi was a founding member of the Committee

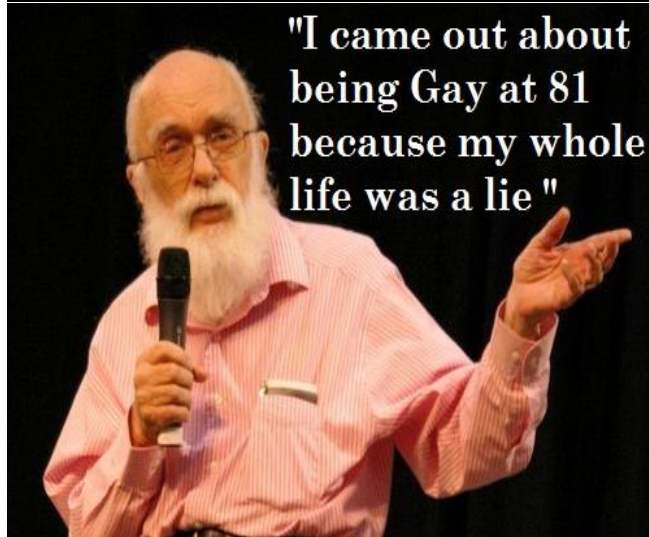
for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal, now known as the Committee for Skeptical Inquiry, whose mission is to promote 'the use of reason in examining controversial and extraordinary claims.' WENDY PERL/NBC/NBCU

“  
There exists in society a very special class of persons  
that I have always referred to as the Believers.  
These are folks who have chosen to accept  
a certain religion, philosophy, theory, idea or notion  
and cling to that belief regardless of any evidence that might,  
for anyone else, bring it into doubt.  
They are the ones who encourage and support  
the fanatics and the frauds of any given age.  
No amount of evidence, no matter how strong,  
will bring them any enlightenment.  
They are the sheep who beg to be fleeced and butchered,  
and who will battle fiercely to preserve their right to be victimized.”

*The Amazing Randi*

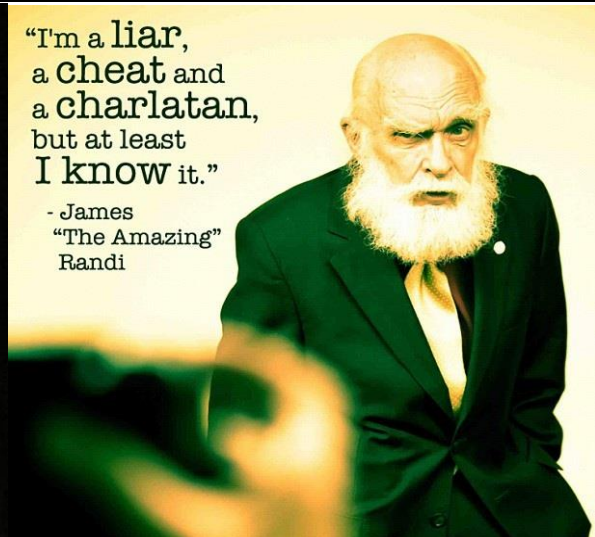


*And Randi - you are the Worst*



"I'm a liar,  
a cheat and  
a charlatan,  
but at least  
I know it."

- James  
"The Amazing"  
Randi



But when May began running the ESP program, Hyman says, he also created protocol problems. May became the only arbiter of whether a psychic had accurately described a target. "The only judge who could make it work was Ed May," Hyman says. "That's a no-no."

So in 1995, when the CIA selected Hyman to help evaluate the Star Gate program, the automatic writing was on the wall. Although the famous debunker was paired with a known ESP proponent, Hyman's views prevailed. The final CIA report chastised May for serving as both judge and jury on virtually all the ESP tests. "The use of the same judge across experiments further compounds the problem of non-independence of the experiments," the report concluded.

Reached recently at his Oregon home, Hyman expresses a begrudging respect for his old adversary. "Smart guy, no question about it—he's talented," he says. The 87-year-old professor says that well-meaning researchers like May are trying to bring respect to a field burdened by strip-mall palm readers, 1-800 psychics and Star Gate alums on the Internet who now charge top dollar to purportedly game the stock market, discover the lost city of Atlantis and uncover the truth behind the Kennedy assassination. Yet Hyman believes even the most sincere and sophisticated efforts to prove the existence of ESP have all failed: "Having the window dressing of statistics, controls, double-blind, all that kind of stuff," he says, "doesn't make it science."

### **An Interview With a Psychic Foot Soldier**

A few months ago at McMoneagle's home near Charlottesville, Virginia, May volunteers to conduct a live remote-viewing test for me, with his ace psychic at his side. "Joe, please access and describe a photograph you will see in about one or two minutes from now," May says.

McMoneagle sits still for 30 seconds and then begins sketching on a pad. From the comfort of his brown recliner, McMoneagle describes his drawing. "These squares are representative of buildings," he says. "And these buildings are kind of just scattered through here. So they're like embedded in a hillside. The roads are not very good roads; they're more like paths."

May asks for more. "Float up in the air a thousand feet—it's safe—whirl around 360 degrees and tell me what the gestalt of the area is like," he says.

“OK, you’ve got a large body of water. This is probably an island of some kind. Mountains up in here because the river goes up into the mountains. You’ve got a couple of bridges. This is a small village,” McMoneagle adds.

Then May’s laptop randomly selects two photographs and labels them Targets A and B. May flips a coin, and it comes up heads, which my teenage daughter had secretly decided beforehand would represent Target A.

May pulls out the Target A photograph for the big reveal...and it’s a close-up of a giant waterfall. There isn’t a building, path, island, mountain, bridge or village in sight. Both men laugh. The test has been a failure. “I’ve never gotten a waterfall in my life,” McMoneagle explains.

But May suggests some alternative theories. “There’s a concept in statistics called nonstationary. What that means is the phenomenon comes and goes in unpredictable ways,” he says. He adds that intention, attention and expectation always affect remote viewing, and “we violated virtually all three things in this particular trial.”

Then Ed May pauses and offers his final explanation: “It was just a demo.”



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