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*Probing Well Beyond the Bounds of Conventional Wisdom**

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Theory: Ordinary measurement techniques are bound by time and space, but Courtney Brown claims that scientific remote viewing can overcome these problems.

Hypotheses: Brown hypothesizes that extraterrestrials inhabit the Earth and can be contacted through scientific remote viewing.

Methods: Brown employs scientific remote viewing to establish contact with extraterrestrials as well as deceased humans.

Results: Brown documents dangers to the Earth's ecosystem by learning of the problems faced by extraterrestrials.

For the past several decades, political science has developed incrementally and has been segmented into separate and growingly specialized subfields (Almond 1990). Most political scientists are engaged in what Thomas S. Kuhn (1970) called normal science and methodological advances have been incremental (see Aldrich and Cnudde 1975). There have been few attempts to synthesize political science into a unified discipline, although Gary King and his colleagues (King, Keohane, and Verba 1994) make important suggestions to integrate qualitative and quantitative approaches to the study of politics (for discussions, see the symposium in the June 1995 *APSR*). Great strides have been made in developing discourse theory (Apter and Saich 1994), although political scientists are more likely to be influenced by developments in quantitative time series analyses (Simmons 1994).

Seldom has a political scientist advanced a truly original methodology for studying politics. Courtney Brown is an exception. His recent book, *Cosmic Voyage* (1996), introduces political scientists to a novel research methodology—scientific remote viewing. Clearly, Brown goes beyond normal science. Although it seems unlikely that scientific remote viewing will become the dominant research paradigm in political science, open-minded scholars should assess the potential of this methodology. This essay will have three goals. First, I will summarize Brown's research methods and his reported findings. Second, I will discuss the implications of scientific

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remote viewing for replicability in political science research. Last, I will briefly comment on the implications of scientific remote viewing for major subfields of the discipline.

Scientific Remote Viewing

As Brown explains, scientific remote viewing is a procedure originally developed by the United States military as a highly classified spy system. Brown describes these procedures (see Chapter 2) and notes they are based upon protocols developed by Ingo Swann (1991). By applying these techniques Brown reports that he was able to communicate with alien life forms, and also, given the nonlinear nature of time, to communicate with humans who have died. Brown communicates directly with two groups of extraterrestrials, the Martians and the Greys. The Martians are far less developed than the Greys, but the Martians destroyed their own ecosystem. The Greys are far more developed, but they too have destroyed their environment. Although it is not clear exactly where the Greys come from, they appear to come from our Galaxy. Although some Martians and Greys live on the Earth, they are difficult to locate, but they can be contacted through scientific remote viewing.

Communicating with the Greys and the Martians provides a clear warning of the dangers posed to our own environment. Brown has discussed these dangers before (Brown 1994, 1995), making use of nonlinear statistics, but without relying upon information provided by extraterrestrials.

In addition, scientific remote viewing enabled Brown to communicate with two great humans who died some time ago: Jesus and Buddha. Brown reports three contacts with Jesus. Jesus counsels us to be kind to both the Greys and the Martians and to value all life forms. Buddha may be even more important since, according to Brown, he sits on the Federation Council, which helps to monitor human affairs, and is greatly concerned with the survival of the human species.¹

Problems of Reliability, Validity, and Replicability

Brown is well aware that scientific findings must be valid and reliable, and that for scientific findings to be verified they must be replicable. As he writes, “Replicability is the primary criterion of all *science*” (1996, 6). But he warns: “*No criticisms of the initial claims are valid in the absence of attempts to duplicate the original experiments.*”

¹As Brown (1996, 89) reports, “The extant UFO literature based on abductee reports often refers to an extraterrestrial organization called the ‘Galactic Federation.’” Brown describes the Federation in Chapter 10.

I have neither attempted nor intend to replicate Brown's methods. Therefore, I will not challenge Brown's claims. It does seem fair to point out, however, that Brown's assurances of replicability may not satisfy all political scientists.

The September 1995 issue of *PS* included 18 articles on appropriate policies for assuring replicability. For example, Gary King, who has championed the need to replicate results, raises questions that he hopes scholars will answer (1995, 444). He asks that they explain how respondents were selected, who conducted the interviews, the question order of the items employed, how research sites were chosen, and the language in which interviews were conducted. Brown does provide the target coordinates and the dates of his scientific remote viewings, although these coordinates are difficult to interpret without proper training.² Brown neglects to report the language in which he communicated with Jesus and Buddha, although any scholar familiar with the Star Trek literature recognizes that problems of translation can be overcome.

In many respects Kenneth J. Meier raises the greatest barriers to scholars who employ scientific remote viewing. As editor of the *AJPS*, Meier requires that "all manuscripts containing analysis of quantitative data contain an initial footnote that states how individuals can obtain the data and the documentation of the statistical analysis necessary to replicate the paper" (1995, 457). Brown's data are essentially qualitative, however, so it may not be reasonable to impose such rigid standards.

Students of scientific remote viewing might fare best under the guidelines advanced by Paul M. Sniderman. Sniderman acknowledges the importance of "accuracy, meticulousness, and exactness," but believes that these "are minor virtues and should not be worshiped as the soul of science." Instead, Sniderman writes, "Imagination, originality, creativity, seeing what others not only failed to see but did not even suspect—that is the heart of science of the first order" (1995, 465). Scholars who employ scientific remote viewing are likely to meet Sniderman's standards.

In any event, Brown is quite willing to teach others his methods. His "Farsight Institute," based in Atlanta, offers the following courses:³

- (1) Farsight Voyager, which costs \$3,000, and includes room, board, and tuition.

²For example, Brown (1996, 203) reports that his interview with Buddha was conducted on July 30, 1994, at Ann Arbor, Michigan, at target coordinates 1842/3355. Although I have several maps of Ann Arbor, I was unable to locate these coordinates.

³The information about these courses was obtained from the home page of The Farsight Institute of Scientific Remote Viewing.

- (2) Farsight Seer, which costs \$1,000, and is based upon a \$20 pay-as-you-go for each session.
- (3) Farsight Professional Certification, which costs \$200.
- (4) Farsight Teacher, which has no established cost, except for room and board.
- (5) Farsight Medical, which costs \$1,700, including room, board, and tuition.
- (6) Farsight Annual Professional Certification Renewal, which costs only \$50.

Despite my decision not to take the courses offered by the Farsight Institute, other scholars may choose to take the training that may allow them to replicate Brown's findings.

Scientific Remote Viewing Techniques and Major Subfields of Political Science

If political scientists were to employ scientific remote viewing, most major subfields of the discipline would be profoundly affected.

American Politics

Most students of American politics are conducting case studies.⁴ Granted, the United States is an interesting case, for it provides an example of a long-standing political democracy. It allows us to study an early transition from colonial rule to democracy (Lipset 1963). As the United States has a federal system, and as each state has a relatively high level of autonomy, the United States provides a chance to make within-country comparisons (Sharkansky 1968). Regional differences have led to outstanding studies, especially of the American South (Key 1949), and the United States has provided the setting for important contextual analyses (Finifter 1974; Huckfeldt and Sprague 1995). Moreover, the United States system of separation of powers has led to outstanding research on the presidency (Greenstein 1982; Neustadt 1991), Congress (Fenno 1978; Mayhew 1974; Rohde 1991), and the Supreme Court (Segal and Spaeth 1993).

Despite a great deal of high quality research on American politics, Brown's book effectively underscores the parochial nature of American politics as a subfield. Even so, the United States is important for students of public policy, since with only about 5% of the planet's human population, it consumes 25% of its hydrocarbons. Brown's book should lead Americans

⁴Of course, case studies can make important theoretical contributions. For a discussion, see Eckstein (1975).

to question their high levels of energy consumption and the dangers this poses to our ecosystem.

Comparative Politics

Students of comparative politics will also need to broaden their horizons. In fact, most comparativists conduct case studies, and in this sense differ little from most Americanists. But there are exceptions. For example, Paul R. Abramson and Ronald Inglehart (1995) study values in 40 societies representing 70% of the human population; Robert W. Jackman (1993) studies the political capacity of 134 states; and Henry S. Bienen and Nicolas van de Walle (1991) study leadership transitions in 167 countries. These authors doubtless thought of their efforts as comparative, but Brown's book sheds new light on their limitations: in all three cases the authors were studying a single species on a single planet. The limited vision of these authors has been exposed by the far broader range of comparison that Brown makes using his scientific remote viewing techniques.

International Relations

The study of international relations would be transformed most dramatically by employing scientific remote viewing. International relations studies conflict and cooperation among nation states. Students of international relations who shun quantitative techniques (e.g. Kissinger 1994), as well as those with substantial quantitative skills (e.g. Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman 1992), study nation states. The vast majority of students of international relations confine their study to the relationship among nations on a single planet. Interplanetary relationships have been largely left to writers of science fiction (Asimov 1963; Herbert 1965). The study of international relations can expand its boundaries by learning of the failures of diplomacy of earlier civilizations on other planets, including planets rotating around unnamed stars. Moreover, the ability to communicate with early students of international relations, and especially with Thucydides, would shed light on current controversies about the relationship between democracy and peace (Doyle 1986).

Political Theory

Students of political philosophy have much to learn from scientific remote viewing techniques. Political theorists are interested in questions of interpretation and of authorship. For example, in recent years scholars have turned their attention to Aristotle, and probed the meaning of his work. Unfortunately, many of his writings were destroyed when the Library of Alexandria was torched. And many of his remaining writings are ambiguous. Take for example, his well-known statement that "man is by nature

a political animal'' (*Politics* 1253a1–5).⁵ Was Aristotle denying the possibility that other life forms were political? Did he consider the gods political? Despite his disdain for non-Greeks, did he view them capable of becoming political animals? Did he regret having tutored Alexander the Great? Did he leave Athens after Alexander's death merely to prevent another crime against philosophy or because he feared for his life? Given the nonlinear nature of time, these are all questions that could best be answered by Aristotle himself.

We might also gain insights by interviewing Hobbes. In the last year, there has been considerable controversy over whether several early manuscripts were actually written by Hobbes, and if Hobbes had read Machiavelli. Noel B. Reynolds and Arlene W. Saxonhouse have achieved considerable fame by convincing scholars that several manuscripts were written by the young Hobbes (Hobbes 1995), and that they shed light on the importance of Machiavelli as a political theorist. Personally, I am persuaded by their arguments. All the same, it would be useful to interview Hobbes.

Conclusions

Although I have touched briefly only upon some of the implications of scientific remote viewing for transforming our discipline, it is clear that a far more extensive discussion is possible. I will not discuss the implications for advances in research methodology, for I assume that scientific remote viewing will continue to compete with more established methodologies. But scientific remote viewing has an obvious advantage over most alternative techniques, especially in an era of declining resources to support social scientific research: scientific remote viewing is relatively inexpensive to conduct. Data collection is often an expensive enterprise and conventional field work demands expensive and time-consuming travel. Once one makes the necessary investment in the appropriate training, research employing scientific remote viewing costs relatively little.

As in most other transactions, buyers should be wary. Generally speaking, one gets what one pays for. As of today, however, it seems likely that many political scientists will remain skeptical about its utility as an instrument of scientific research. This does not mean that Brown's warnings about environmental dangers should be ignored. All the same, Brown has reached similar insights without relying upon information provided by extraterrestrials. Until students of scientific remote viewing can develop crucial tests between their methodological techniques and those that are employed by more conventional political scientists, political scientists should

⁵Based upon Benjamin Jowett's translation. Ernest Barker's translation is as follows: "Man is by nature an animal intended to live in a polis."

be cautious about relying upon scientific remote viewing as a research strategy.

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