

ASSOCIATIVE REMOTE VIEWING

by
Jack Houck

REMOTE VIEWING is a term coined by Harold Puthoff and Russell Targ to describe a form of psychic functioning historically known as clairvoyance.¹ Dr. Puthoff and Mr. Targ, both formerly with Stanford Research Institute (SRI) International, have researched this phenomenon since the early 1970s, and their results are published in several books.² Their research was concentrated on training selected individuals to "see" or "view" a scene or event that was occurring at a distant location. In addition, the ability to "view" the scene at different times -- past, present and future -- was established.

One particularly significant outcome of this research was the discovery that viewers could reliably access remote information when they were asked to describe a scene, but that they were not as reliable when the target was a number or a letter. This discovery led to the development of associative remote viewing (ARV) in which a scene is associated with a particular message. A group of scenes is chosen, each scene having a different message associated with it. When the viewer's perception corresponds to one of the scenes, the message corresponding to that scene is accepted.

A natural extension of this idea is to use ARV to determine information that will be known only in the future. Scenes can be associated with possible outcomes of future events (such as stock market advances or declines, or contracts won or lost). A remote viewer is asked to look forward in time to the moment when the outcome of the future event is revealed and to describe the scene he is viewing precognitively. The description given by the viewer is compared with a set of possible scenes. Then, the outcome associated with the scene that most closely corresponds to the viewer's description is chosen as the predicted outcome for that future event. An example of this process is shown in Figure 1, in which remote viewing is used to predict whether the stock market will go up or down in some selected period of time. The details of Figure 1 will be discussed later in this paper.

In 1983, Russell Targ and Keith Harary decided to apply the ARV technique to predicting the prices of silver futures. The idea was to generate capital for their research on paranormal phenomena. Since funding for this sort of research is very hard to obtain, they reasoned, why not generate their own? They also felt that if this technique could be shown to work, then others would apply it and more understanding would result. Their first attempt was very successful.³ Their second attempt, however, was not.⁴

At least two other teams of researchers decided to apply the ARV technique to fund-raising after the initial success of the Targ/Harary team. Harold Puthoff ran a very successful experiment to raise money for a children's school.⁵ Stephan Schwartz and Rand De Mattei of the Mobius Society also ran an experiment with the intention of raising money for their research on paranormal phenomena.⁶ Their efforts were not financially successful.

These pioneers have found, through trial and error, what does and does not work when one is conducting an ARV experiment. I have had the privilege of studying these experiments, as well as participating directly in the Schwartz/De Mattei experiment. My conceptual model of paranormal phenomena⁷ provided me with some ideas about how to improve the ARV process, and in January 1985, I decided to implement these improvements in the form of a computer program and improved ARV protocol and to run my own ARV experiment. This paper documents those ideas and the ARV protocol and gives the results of the ARV experiment to date.

In my conceptual model of how the human brain/mind functions, the brain is constantly transmitting information into and receiving information from a central storage system, which I have called the STU (Space Time Unit). The STU may be thought of as being a multidimensional information repository completely encompassing our normal three-dimensional world. The "mind" provides channels for all sensory information to be transferred between the human brain and the STU. All information on events that have occurred is stored in the STU. It is constantly receiving information from the present. It also contains the information about possible future events. Associated with the stored data is information related to the emotion surrounding the event. The greater the emotion related to the event, the more likely it is that the mind will lock onto the time of the emotional event, either a past, a present, or a future event. The original idea behind the PK Party was to create a peak emotional event at the current time so as to achieve a paranormal result: metal-bending.⁸ For an ARV experiment, the greater the emotion generated at the time of the "feedback" (when the correct target scene associated with the outcome of the event is shown to the remote viewer), the more likely it is that the viewer's mind will go forward in time, from the time when he does the viewing, and lock onto the time of the feedback event. The viewer will then be able to "see" the target scene being displayed at that time -- the scene associated with the actual outcome of the event for which the outcome is to be predicted. (Two target scenes are always chosen; the one associated with the wrong outcome is never shown.)

According to my model, memory is stored in the STU and it forms a complete record of the space-time history of the individual, his "world line." Most people easily access information along their own world line; they do it all the time. It is easier for a person to "see" events along his own world line than to access information along someone else's world line. Events in a person's future can also be observed, especially if the person makes a deliberate attempt to have them occur. In the ARV procedure, one or more remote viewers agree on the specific place where they will meet to be shown the correct scene, and all agree to create a peak emotional event at that feedback place and time. The only thing that is not known about that feedback event is which target scene will be displayed. This procedure makes it relatively easy for the viewers to visualize the feedback event, and once "tuned into" (observing) that event, to look at the target scene being shown. The feedback event is never held at the same place. This precludes the possibility of some future feedback event having greater emotional impact and thereby causing the viewers' minds to be diverted to the wrong time and to view the wrong target scene.

In applying the ARV technique to predicting the behavior of the stock market, it is very important that no one at the feedback event know what target scene has been associated with the possible outcome (e.g., the market could go up or it could go down). It is speculated that if anyone is at the feedback event who has seen both possible targets, a remote viewer's mind can go to the feedback event and travel back along the world line of that individual, accessing information about both target scenes, then reporting on the wrong one. For the same reason, someone whose world line has crossed or come in contact with that of anyone who has seen both targets should not be at the feedback event. (A husband who has selected the targets should not have his wife orchestrate the feedback event.)

IT IS IMPORTANT that all the participants in an ARV experiment limit their emotional experiences during the period between viewing the feedback event and taking part in it so that their minds do not become diverted to the wrong time and event. (Since it is unlikely that a bedroom scene is one of the possible target scenes, having a sexual peak experience is permissible) On one occasion, some researchers in one of the early ARV experiments were judging the data provided by the viewers and they saw that it all pointed clearly toward one of the target scenes. The judges all became very excited because they were sure that they would be successful in their investment based on this information. When the report came back from the market the next day, however, they found that they were wrong. This phenomenon has been called "displacement." It was probably caused by the diversion of the viewers' minds to the time of judging rather than to the time of the feedback event. The excitement at the time of judging was probably much greater than the emotion felt at the feedback event. This problem was compounded by the fact that the judging occurred at the same place as the feedback location and

that one of the judges provided the feedback to the remote viewers. When a computer is used to perform the target selection and to carry out the judging functions, and it provides information only about the correct target scene, many of the potential problems in ARV experiments that could lead to displacement are eliminated.

The targets to be viewed can be real objects (as used by Targ and Puthoff), real physical places (as I originally proposed), or pictures (slides and photographs of scenes, as used by Schwartz). The difficulty of generating a target pool of real places and the logistical problems of getting the remote viewers to those places at the time of the feedback event, in all weather conditions, made the use of real places impractical. The Mobius Society had been using 72 pictures of scenes as targets for a number of experiments, and they agreed to sell sets of these pictures to participants in my ARV experiment. They also helped encode the answers to their 31-question questionnaire for each of the 72 target scenes. (After a remote viewer looks at the feedback event and describes the target scene, he fills out this questionnaire answering all 31 questions, yes or no, about the target scene he has viewed. These include questions like: "Are agricultural features prominent in the scene, e.g., farmlands?" "Is any significant part of the scene notably complex, hectic, chaotic or cluttered?" "Does any significant part of the scene involve perception of height or depth, e.g., looking up at a tall structure, mountain, unusually tall trees, etc., or looking down from any elevated position?").

This data is typed into a computer. The computer randomly selects a target pair (two target scenes out of the pool of 72 scenes which are guaranteed to be quite different from one another).⁹ The computer then compares the answers to the questions provided by the viewers with the target encodings provided as the masters for both the target scenes. The computer also randomly assigns one of the selected targets to an up market outcome and one to a down market outcome. It then uses some discrimination logic to select which predicted outcome it recommends. The details of the computer program, the logic rationale, and the questionnaire are provided in the program documentation¹⁰

Once the predicted market outcome is known, someone involved in the ARV experiment calls his (emotionally detached) stockbroker and invests in whatever market this group was planning to use for their investment. The choice of the market depends on many factors such as volatility, volume, simplicity of transaction, duration of investment, and insensitivity to a single investor. In my ARV experiment we have used both the Standard & Pore (S&P) 100 Index and the S&P 500 Index.

NO "CONVENTIONAL" KNOWLEDGE about the stock market was used in these investments. For my experiment I wanted to be able to get in and out of the market in a single day and have the market be very volatile with much volume so that it would appear to the small investor to behave randomly. The investment would go in at the beginning of the day. The market would go either up or down, and at the end of the day the money would be taken out of the market. Money would have been either made or lost, depending on whether or not the prediction of the day's market movement was correct. At the end of the day the stockbroker would call and indicate the results. In such an experiment, once the results are known, the information about the market transaction is put into the computer that then indicates the correct target scene. It does not divulge the incorrect target scene, so that no one at the feedback event will know the scene associated with the other target which one of the remote viewers' minds might pick up. The computer displays only the number of the correct target scene, not the name of the place in the scene. This is to keep the person using the computer from having an emotional experience when at the computer terminal. That person then retrieves the correct picture from the stack of 72 pictures and takes it to the place designated for the feedback event without looking at the picture. Then when all the participating viewers arrive at the feedback place, they all look at the correct picture and attempt to create a peak emotional event. This can be difficult if money has been lost. In an event, the group, which is presumably celebrating, should display the picture prominently so that they could "see" it better when they were viewing it and mentally send the information about the target scene about the target scene back in time to themselves when they were doing the remote viewing.

Figures 1 and 2 attempt to illustrate and summarize the ARV process. Figure 1 emphasizes the management of the participants' world lines and illustrates thinking in emotional space-time, using the peak emotional event at the feedback time to help lock the viewers' minds onto that time. Along the emotional intensity axis there can be many different emotions (joy, anger, love, fear). From my experience with the PK Parties, I have learned that it does not seem to matter which type of emotion a person calls up, as long as it is intense. The ARV experiment has shown me that when the feedback events have been very exciting, they are associated with a successful outcome.

The ARV procedure is summarized in Figure 2, which shows three viewers submitting their questionnaires to the computer. Figure 3 illustrates the steps taken before the ARV experiment and during a typical ARV experimental trial.

One of the benefits of having the computer "manage" each of the ARV experimental trials is that a permanent record is kept on the computer disk. All the ARV groups participating in my experiment have agreed to send their data files back to me for analysis. This has provided a large data base for analysis of this process, which will lead to additional improvements.

There are 15 groups of people doing the ARV experiment according to my protocol and using my ARV computer program,* with a total of 72 different remote viewers participating. Because the experiment is ongoing and the analysis of the results to date is incomplete, only general comments will be made at this time. Each group consists of from one to twelve viewers. It was learned very early in the experiment that the groups with large numbers of viewers were having trouble getting everyone to the feedback event (because of scheduling conflicts, sickness, or other imponderables). Originally, I had suggested that a group should have six viewers, thinking that the probability of group success would be improved if one could treat the success of individual viewers as an independent statistic. It now appears that this is not true, and -- what with the problem of getting these large groups together at the feedback event -- it was decided to reduce the group size to about three viewers per group. The groups with only one viewer, with no one else around to make the feedback event exciting, simply could not generate enough excitement to cause the necessary tuning-in of the mind to the feedback event. Groups with two and three viewers seem to have the best success to date. Overall, the groups have a 50 percent success rate out of 687 ARV trials as of March 1986. Some of their ARV trials have been done without an actual investment (for example, when they were waiting for their account to open). It is noteworthy that there has not been any difference in their success rate whether or not money was being invested during that trial. There did seem to be a pattern developing in that most groups were successful in their early attempts, and that this success rate fell off as they continued. This is a familiar phenomenon noted in parapsychology laboratories. In my experiment, however, most of the groups began in November and December 1985. I have not yet correlated the individual group "slump" with an overall slump, shared by all the groups, that occurred during December 1985 and January 1986. The good news is that those continuing the experiment are no longer in a slump. In summary, the success rate of this ARV experiment has not been as high as I would have liked it to be. I am convinced that the ARV process works, however, and that the computer program plays an important role in the process.

THE MOST IMMEDIATE AREAS for improvement are the questionnaire and the target scenes. People simply do not answer the questions about the same scene in the same way. Either we will have to tailor the questionnaire to the type of individual doing the perceiving, or we will have to make the questionnaire/target scene combination less sensitive to individual interpretation. Furthermore, many people are getting a good remote perception of the form or shape of objects in the target scene, but their interpretation may ascribe incorrect meanings or images to the forms, thus describing an incorrect scene. Someday the computer equipment to do pattern recognition from the remote viewer's drawings may become available to the home

personal computer user. That technology will probably make a dramatic improvement in successful ARV applications.

Much is being learned and can be learned in the future by continued experimentation and application of the ARV process. The future of these experiments is very promising. Having the data computerized will allow us to analyze it very thoroughly. The learning that results from that analysis, plus the ideas for improvement already being formulated, will provide the direction for future improvements. ARV is more difficult than it may seem, and those groups continuing to participate in this experiment are very dedicated. It is unlikely that everyone will begin to apply the ARV technique to the stock market, even if it is vastly improved, so those using conventional techniques for investment need not worry. However, I will continue to improve the ARV experimental process and to find remote viewers who enjoy participating.

* The computer program is available for Macintosh and IBM personal computers. I have changed the software to use the 30 question questionnaire developed by Robert Jahn and Brenda Dunn.

NOTES

1. Harold E. Puthoff and Russell Targ, "A Perceptual Channel for Information Transfer Over Kilometer Distances: Historical Perspective and Recent Research," Proceedings of IEEE 64 (March 1976).
2. Targ and Puthoff, Mind-Reach: Scientists Look at Psychic Ability (New York: Delacorte Press, 1977), Puthoff and Targ, Mind at Large, ed. Charles T. Tart (New York: Praeger, 1979); and Targ and Keith Harary, The Mind Race: Understanding and Using Psychic Abilities (New York: Villard Books, 1984).
3. Erik Arson, "Did Psychic Powers Give Firm a Killing in the Silver Market?" The Wall Street Journal, October 22, 1984.
4. From personal communication with Targ and Harary.
5. Puthoff, "Associative Remote Viewing Experiment," Proceedings, 1984 Parapsychology Association Conference, Dallas, Texas.
6. Stephan Schwartz, "Associative Remote Viewing Experiment," loc. cit.
7. Jack Houck, "Conceptual Model of Paranormal Phenomena," ARCHAEUS 1, 1 (Winter 1983).
8. See Houck, "PK Party History," Psi Research 3, 1 (March 1984).
9. Technique developed by James Spottiswoode and Rand De Mattei and documented in No. 10.
10. Houck, "Use of the Associative Remote Viewing Computer Program" (December 1985). To obtain a copy of this paper, write: Jack Houck 5821 Woodboro Dr., Huntington Beach, CA 92649.

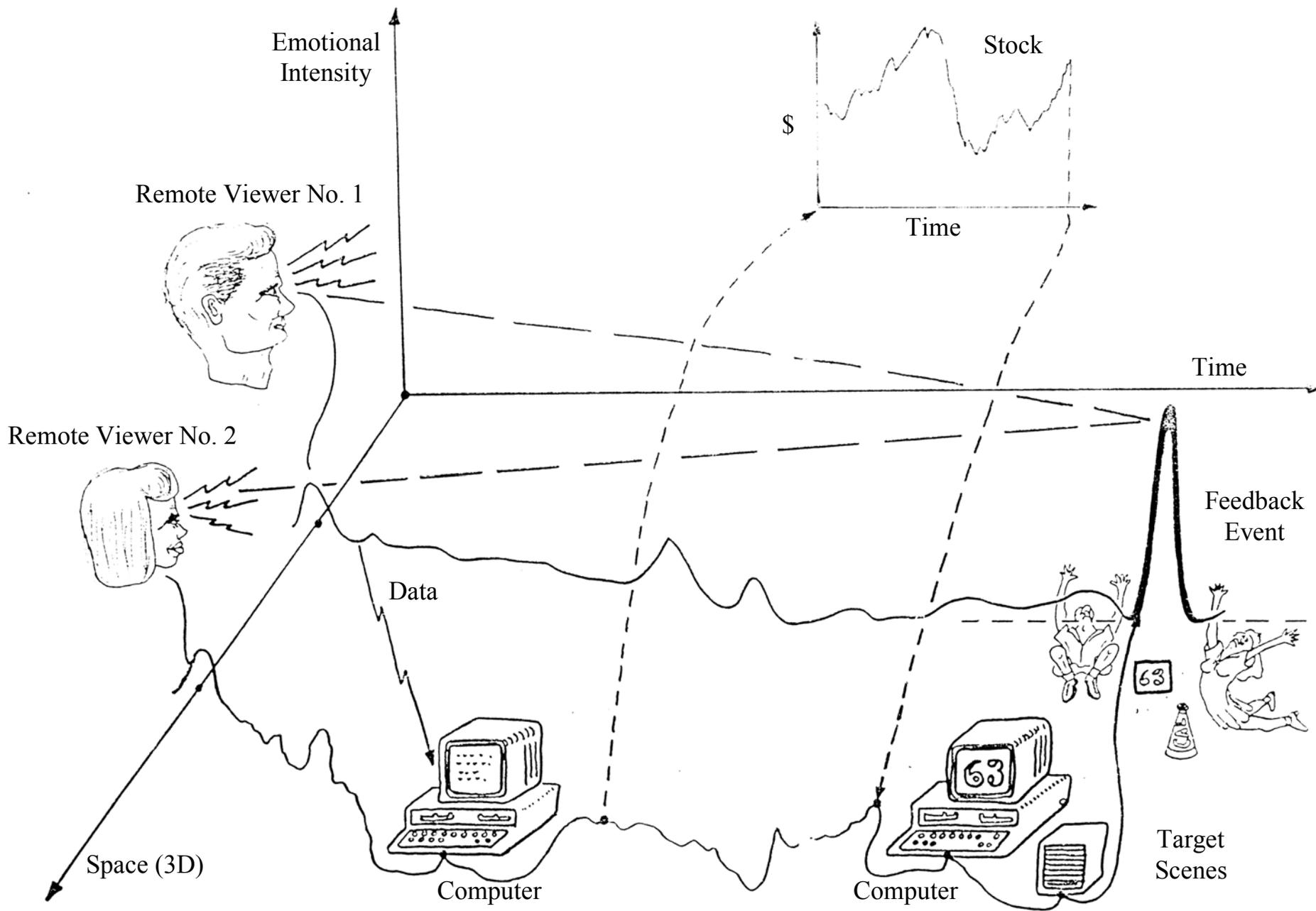


Figure 1. Associative Remote Viewing Process

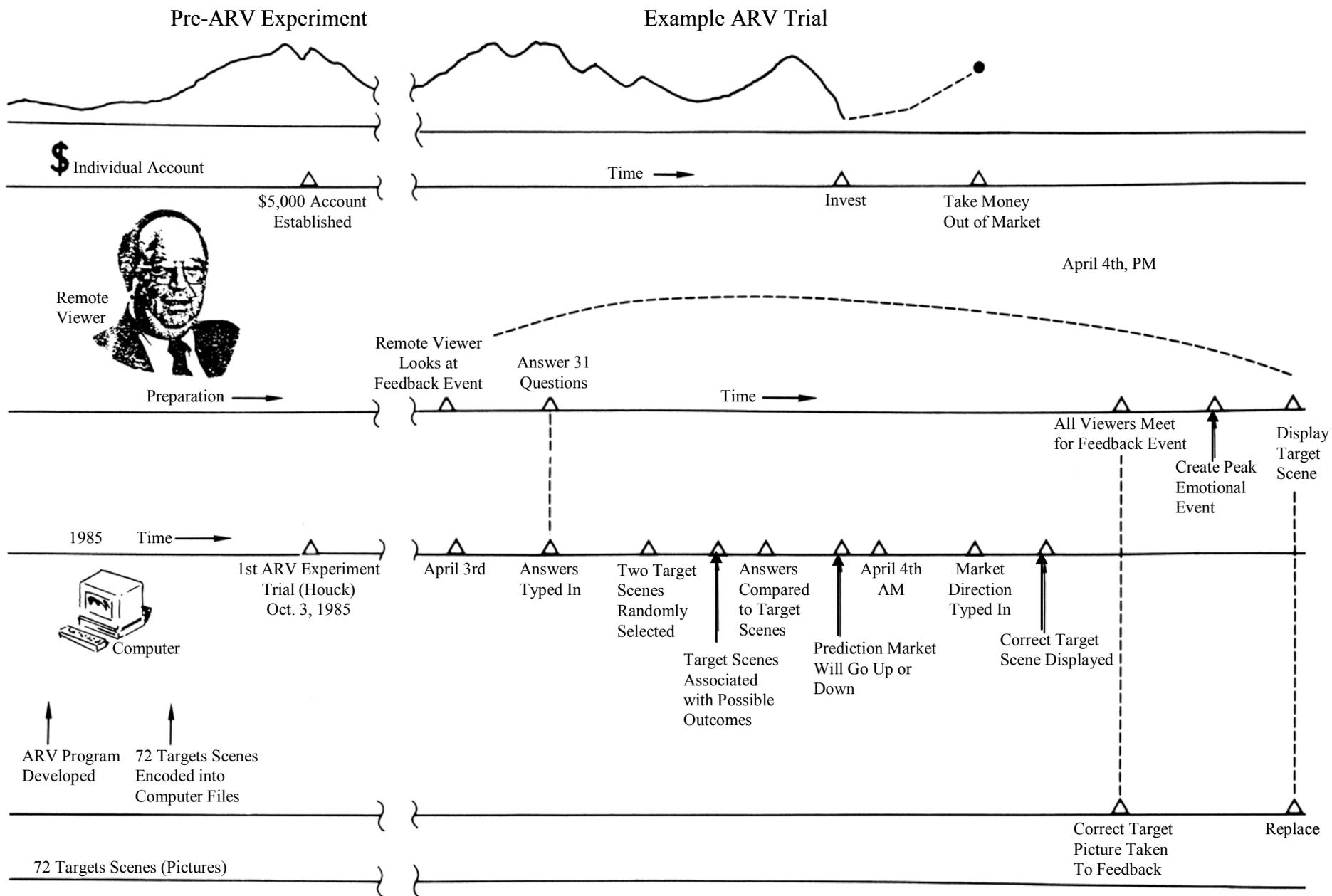


Figure 3. ARV Example