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FUJI TV SHOW EXPOSES ESP HOAX

After a brief lull, the ESP craze has shown signs of a comeback. Recently, a Fuji TV camera crew shooting a special documentary on ESP succeeded in recording several questionable demonstrations.

The demonstrations involved two college students, highly regarded by TV viewers. One is KIYOTA Masuaki, age 21, a third-year student at Senshu University, whose repertoire includes twisting and bending spoons and psychic photography using Polaroid film. "Sunday Mainichi," which has covered KIYOTA's career in great detail since last fall, says he is adept at twisting spoons and "seeing through" mirrors. The other is YAMASHITA Hiroto, age 19, a second-year student at Tokyo Agricultural University, a clairvoyant who reads cards and figures while blindfolded.

Fuji TV planned a two-hour documentary for airing during its Friday "Family Wide Show" on 3 Feb. Shooting took place at a hotel in SHINJUKU, TOKYO, from 26 Dec for ten days. All the demonstrations were observed by a panel comprising commentator TACHIBANA Takashi, SUZUKI Matsumi, director of the Japan Acoustic Institute (Nippon Onkyo Kenkyujo) and OTANI Soji, professor of psychology at the Defense Academy.

No matter how many times the TV crew tried, they were unable to record the much publicized spoon twisting demonstration by KIYOTA in complete sequence. KIYOTA would show the spoon to the panel but always after it has been twisted, never before. It was speculated that KIYOTA twisted the spoon with his hands when nobody was looking.

While the cameras were trying to record the spoon sequence, a strange thing happened. The first person to notice that something was wrong was producer URUTA Toshio. On 29 Dec, writer HATA Masanori observed that KIYOTA, grasping the handle of the already deformed spoon in his left hand, rotated the spoon slowly as if he were twisting it. Then, on the 30th, two hours after the demonstration started and nothing happened, KIYOTA started pacing the floor. While the panel followed his movements on the TV monitor, TACHIBANA saw KIYOTA bend the spoon with his hands.

On 6 Jan, KIYOTA appeared on Nippon Television's "Noon Wide Show." Fuji TV cameras were set up in the studio, one facing the guest, another hidden in the coordinator's booth. The hidden camera recorded a sequence where KIYOTA was seen bending the spoon with his hands before he went on the show.

During the psychic photography demonstration, KIYOTA pulled another serious blunder. Four cameras were used for this demonstration, an overhead stationary camera, one set up in the exhaust duct, another on a shelf, and the last set up behind a see-through mirror. KIYOTA, finding himself alone, slipped a Polaroid film into his pocket before retiring to the restroom. Five minutes later, he emerged, transferred the film to a holder, then appeared to make a psychic photograph. Flashing a V sign to the panel, he jested "Friday the 13th must be my lucky day for I see my psychic powers have not deserted me."

Producer URUTA speculates, "After he went to the restroom, a lady who was in the area said she heard what sounded like somebody breaking open a wrapper. Probably, that's when he developed the film."

YAMASHITA's demonstration was equally suspect. The blindfold he used was his own, a black cloth filled with cotton padding. Blindfolded, he was able to read cards and dice with total accuracy. Complex figures he was able to reproduce using a pencil. However, during the demonstrations, the panel noted that his clairvoyant powers were restricted to a narrow field of vision. As is shown in the diagram on P. 160, he was able to see clairvoyantly within a specific field located directly below his blindfold. SUZUKI observes that his field of vision was about what one would expect if a blindfolded person were looking out through a narrow opening.

CLAIRVOYANT SEES ONLY OBJECTS CLOSE AT HAND

Incidentally, YAMASHITA was unable to read objects placed behind a curtain made of the same material as the blindfold. SUZUKI observes, "Even an opening as small as 0.1mm under the blindfold could make a world of difference. You must remember he has sharp features, including a prominent nose. We suggested sealing his eyes completely, but he said the pressure on his eyes would restrict his psychic powers."

So it was not until the ninth day that YAMASHITA finally agreed to have his eyes sealed completely. Needless to say, his clairvoyant powers deserted him at that point. Magicians are able to read cards while blindfolded for the same reason.

When SUZUKI demonstrated this trick for YAMASHITA, the latter complained, "The important difference here is I keep my eyes shut when blindfolded but you don't."

If YAMASHITA is telling the truth, I can only say that ESP is beyond my comprehension. TACHIBANA says, "Whether we can call this ESP is very questionable."

On 14 Jan, the last day of the shooting, the panel confronted KIYOTA with all the evidence it had gathered. Overwhelmed, KIYOTA admitted the demonstrations were fraudulent. His confession was recorded by a hidden camera and shown later to TV viewers. In that sequence, KIYOTA demonstrated how he bent the spoon with his hands. That sequence is shown in photos at right. First, he cradles the spoon in his right hand, grasping the handle with his left hand. Placing his thumbs at the narrowest part of the spoon, he bends it 1-2 times, twisting it by moving his hands back and forth. This takes one second if done slowly, 0.5 seconds if done quickly. A demonstration can last up to eight hours, so anybody who can divert the attention of the audience for 0.5 seconds, can qualify as a psychic.

Panelist SUZUKI put on his own demonstration, adding, "Even a grandmother of 84 years can learn this trick. Once you become fairly good at it, the spoon bends easily and you almost begin to wonder if you are not indeed psychic."

KIYOTA, after being exposed as a fraud, said, "The pressure to perform within a limited time frame became so great I just had to use physical force. But I must say this is the first time it has happened."

TACHIBANA is skeptical, "Since we caught them cheating this time, we have to suspect this isn't the first time."

SUZUKI, who appeared on a Nippon Television show on ESP before, once measured the 34.5 megahertz radio waves emitted by KIYOTA's brain. KIYOTA showed me a

videotape of that program. SUZUKI says, "That's not unusual since we all give off these emissions." On the show, KIYOTA made a fluorescent lamp glow with his brain emissions. SUZUKI explains, "We boosted the emissions a million times just to impress our TV audience."

Needless to say, the disgraced psychics offered a rebuttal. TV officials say the Yamashita family has asked that all his scenes be cut from the show.

Producer URUTA says, "Now that KIYOTA's hoax has been uncovered, the Yamashita family fears that viewers will identify him with KIYOTA and has asked us to restructure the show."

KYOCERA PRESIDENT A STAUNCH SUPPORTER

YAMASHITA says, "I have no comment to make. If you think ESP is not on the level, you are free to do so."

KIYOTA's father, Yoshinori, who operates a sushi shop in downtown TOKYO says, "When our son confessed, we considered closing our shop and moving. But we have decided to stick it out. We are told that NHK might do a program on Masuaki, if he's lucky."

A well-known Liberal Democratic Party Diet member wondered what all the fuss was about. It is rumored that Dentsu Inc, an advertising giant, is also interested.

YAMASHITA's father, Takemasa, is a director of Daiwa Securities Co, Inc and a former manager of its Kyoto Branch. He has many friends in the Kansai financial world who are familiar with his son's psychic powers. While the TV show was being recorded, YAMASHITA put on clairvoyant demonstrations for executives of Daiwa Securities and Sumitomo Bank.

Commenting on the recent TV show, Kyocera president INAMORI Kazuo says, "It is nonsense to try to provide scientific evidence of ESP. These demonstrations are influenced greatly by the spiritual atmosphere. If I had been in the audience, perhaps things would have gone differently..."

KIYOTA has received invitations from colleges in the US and has conducted a demonstration for NAKAYAMA Taro of the Prime Minister's Office. Both KIYOTA and YAMASHITA experienced an awakening of their psychic powers after Yuri GELLER visited JA ten years ago. After this magazine exposed GELLER's spoon trick and the boom collapsed, KIYOTA continued to visit researchers at the Electric Communications University and Defense Academy.

Some years back, this magazine published an interesting observation by YAMAMOTO Shichihei, writer, "ESP is ESP because we are unable to believe in its existence. These demonstrations should be conducted before an audience of skeptics. Otherwise, they are meaningless."

Perhaps we can say the demonstrations failed because a skeptical TV crew possessed super-psychic powers which nullified the psychic powers of KIYOTA and YAMASHITA.

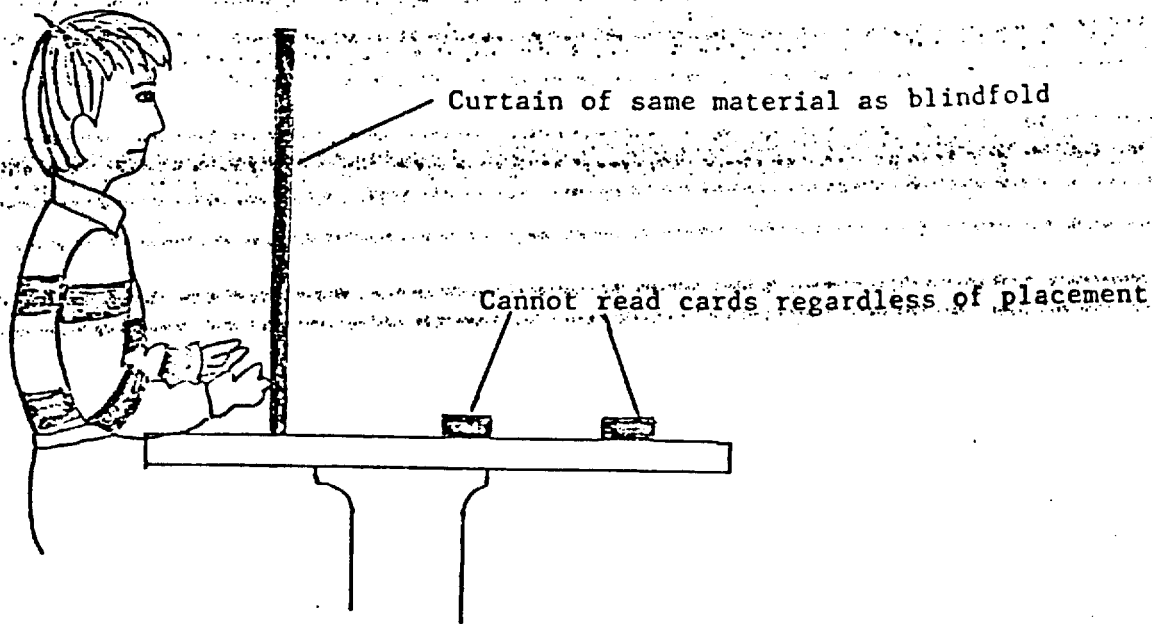
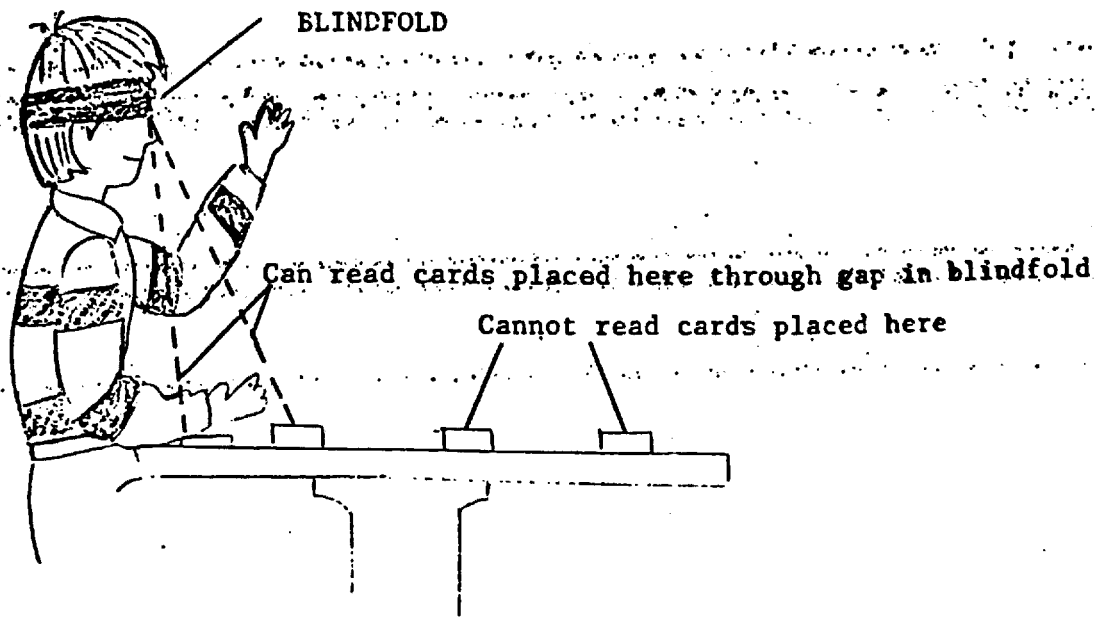
Kiyota confessed his ultimate dream was to appear in "Shukan Asahi" which has been critical of the ESP boom. Still suffering from shock, he is undergoing hypnotherapy.

Photo captions:

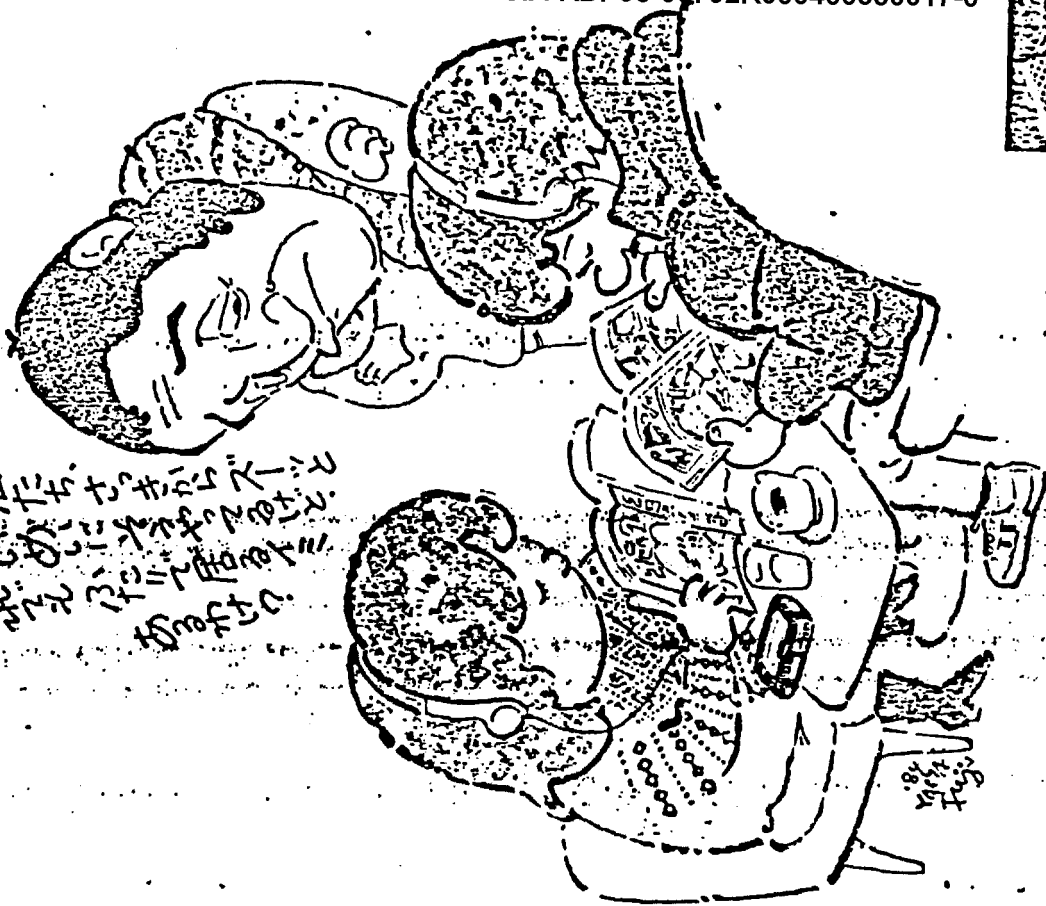
Page 158 Buoyant KIYOTA (left) and YAMASHITA at start of shooting

Page 159 KIYOTA demonstrates how he bent spoon with hands after hoax was exposed.

- 1) Stroking the spoon
- 2) Bending the spoon with both hands
- 3) Restoring the spoon to its original shape
- 4) End of demonstration



君は、おかしな人だ
めいめい、おかしな人だ
おかしな人だ、おかしな人だ

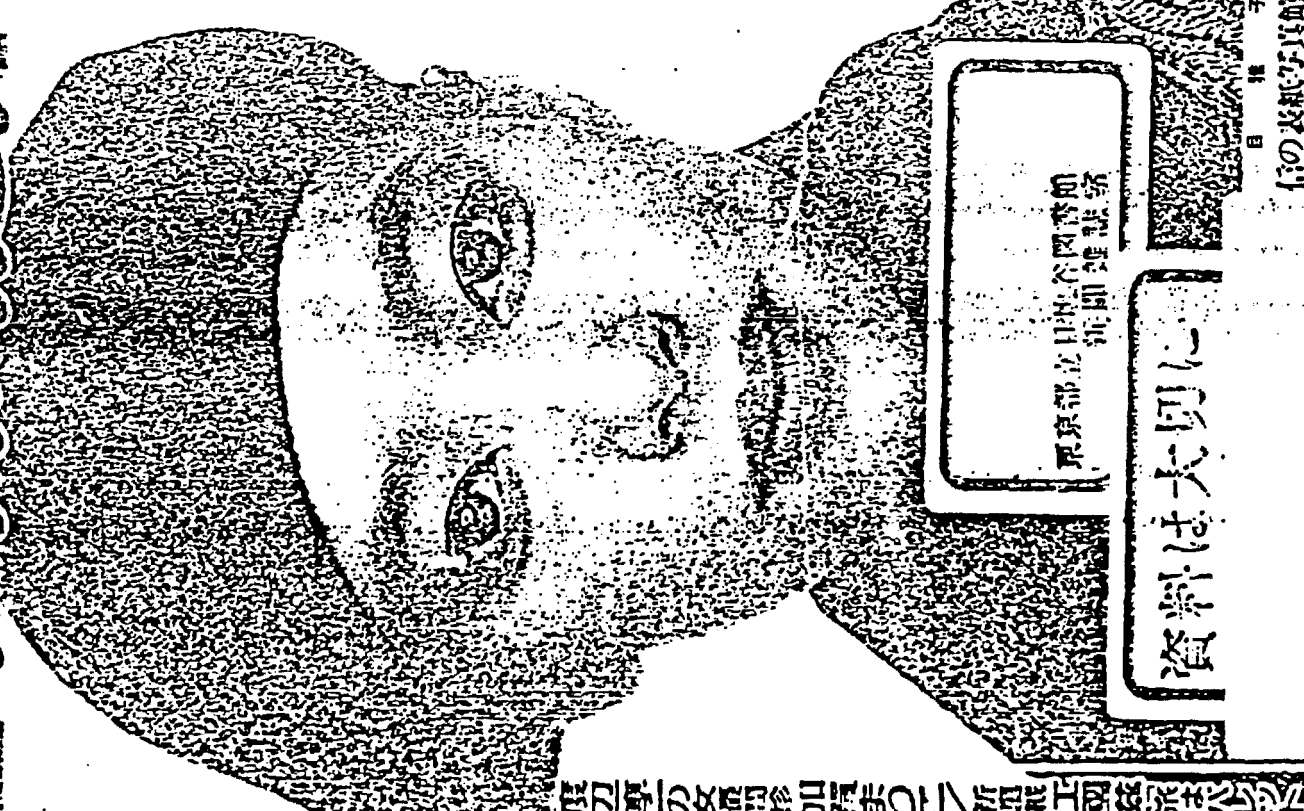


ほとましよう、心とからだ、
生業の...

口母...

昭和二十一年七月二十一日 東京朝日新聞

1984
昭和二十一年七月二十一日



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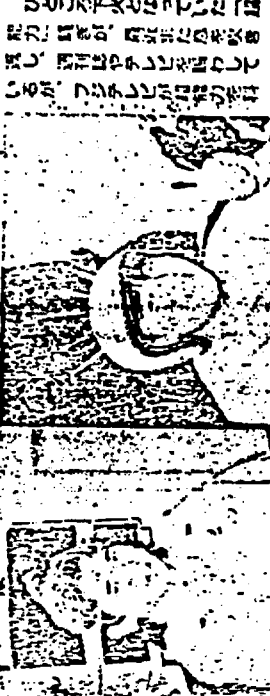
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「スーパースター」超能力学生の手記

放映までのてんやわねんや騒動



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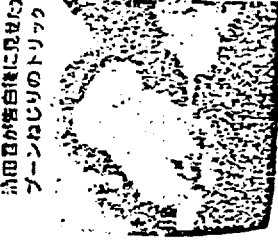
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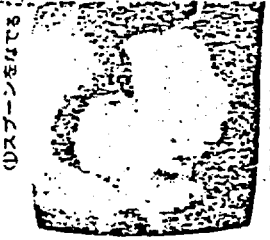
「超能力者としての活躍が、ついに超能力者として活躍する。」

野次馬最前線

週刊朝日 74.2.10



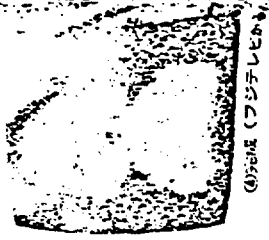
① 野次馬が白旗に降参する。ブーンは自らのトリック



② スーパーマンを倒す



③ 野次馬で倒って倒れる



④ 野次馬（フジテレビ）

「超能力者としての活躍が、ついに超能力者として活躍する。」

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