Operation Mind Control (Bowart, 1978)

Description

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Interview with James Martinez: vimeo.com/7952557
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title = {Operation Mind Control},
author = {Walter Bowart},
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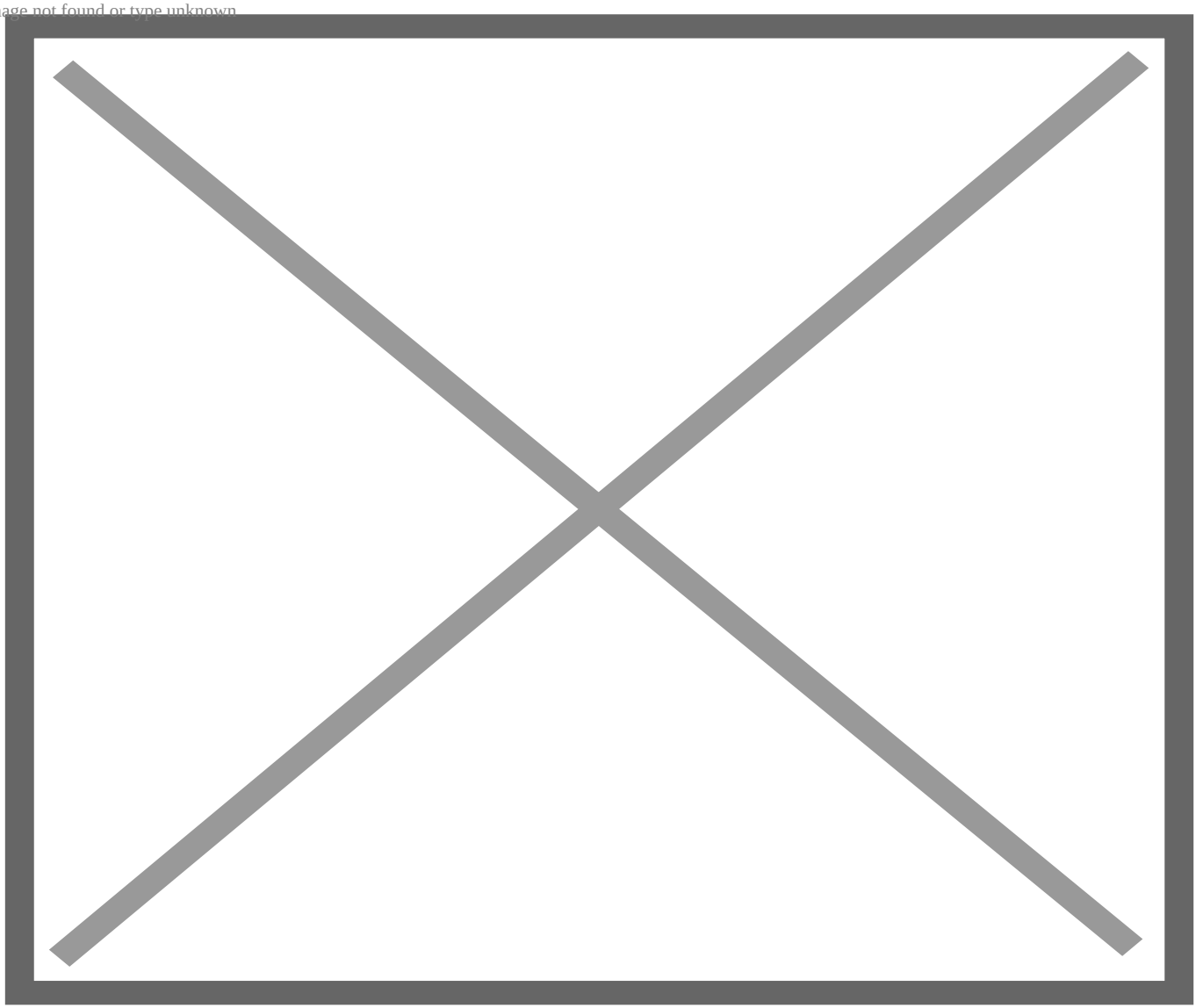

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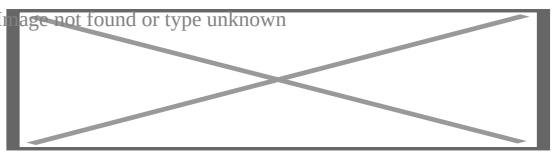

This text is an excerpt from a chapter of Bärtås and Ekman's collection of essays O**rienterarsjukan och andra berättelser**.

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The letter from Professor Delgado carries two insignias. One is made of Hebrew letters on what looks like a Torah scroll. Under the scroll it says “lux et veritas”—light and truth. The other insignia reads “Investigacion Ramon y Cajal.” In our letter to him, we have explained that we are two artists who have been studying his “astonishing research,” and that we are interested in his views on the relationship between humans and machines. José M.R. Delgado has written that he will be most happy to receive us at his home in Madrid.

Delgado’s name is a constant on various conspiracy websites dedicated to the topic of mind control; those with names like The Government Psychiatric Torture Site, Mind Control Forum, and Parascope. The Internet has in fact become the medium of conspiracy theorists. The network functions as an endless library where the very web structure lends itself to a conspiratorial frame of mind. The idea that every phenomenon and person can be connected to another phenomenon and person is the seed of the conspiracy theorist’s claim to “make the connections between things,” track the flow of power, and show how everything hangs together within some larger murky context.

Before traveling to Madrid, we get a hold of Physical Control of the Mind: Toward a Psychocivilized Society, the 1969 Delgado book most often cited on the Net. The book has has been gathering dust for 30 years at the university’s psychology library: it has never been cracked open. It is a disturbing book, less because of its photographs of animal experiments than because of the triumphal tone of the writing. Delgado discusses how we have managed to tame and civilize our surrounding nature. Now it is time to civilize our inner being. The scientist sees himself on the verge of a new era where humans will undergo “psycho-civilization” by linking their brains directly to machines.

“Ramon y Cajal”—the name on one of the two insignia—is referred to in Delgado’s book. Cajal was a famous histologist who became the young Delgado’s mentor and inspiration. In his acknowledgements, Delgado cites Cajal’s telling claim that “knowledge of the physicochemical basis of memory, feelings, and reason would make man the true master of creation, that his most transcendental accomplishment would be the conquering of his own brain.”1

Professor Delgado is now 85 and lives in a suburb of Madrid. Madrid is also the home of an anonymous group of people who call themselves Nosman, and are dedicated to gathering information about Delgado and his career. We e-mail Nosman and receive some awkwardly written responses that oscillate between warnings about the Spanish security agencies and suspicious questions about us and our interest in Delgado. For some reason, they refuse to meet with us but give us Delgado’s email address anyway. Delgado, on the other hand, responds immediately when we get to Madrid. He is very eager to invite us to lunch.

It was at Madrid University that Delgado began his research on pain and pleasure as the means of behavior control. After World War II, he became the head of the Department of neuropsychiatry at Yale’s medical school. In 1966, he became a professor in physiology. By that time, he had further developed the research of the Swiss physiologist and Nobel Prize winner Walter Rudolph Hess who had used electric stimulation to chart how different parts of the brain control different motor functions.

After a series of spectacular experiments on animals in Bermuda, Delgado wrote: “If you insert electrodes directly into the brains of cats and apes, they will behave like electronic toys. A whole series of motor functions can be triggered based on which button the experimenter pushes. This applies to all

body parts: front and back paws, the tail, the hind parts, the head, and the ears."

Using electrostimulation in a group of gibbon apes, Delgado succeeded in dismantling the usual power structure within the group. He gave a female ape with a low ranking a control box connected to electrodes that were implanted in the group's alpha male, and the female learned to use the box to turn the alpha male on and off at will.

The electrodes were inserted into the ape's brain and connected to an instrument that Delgado called the stimoceiver. The stimoceiver was an ideal instrument for two-way communication. Researchers could affect and at the same time register activity in the brain. From earlier prototypes where the lab animals were connected with wires, a remote control model was later developed that could send and receive signals over FM waves. The device was developed from the telemetric equipment used to send signals to and from astronauts in space. "We have already established radio contact with space; it is now time to establish contact with the human brain,"—a recurring refrain in Delgado's articles.

The taxi lets us out in an upscale suburb of Madrid where a light rain is falling on the brick houses. A church service has just finished and people in Burberry clothes are streaming out of a strange concrete church. At the entrance of the apartment building where Delgado lives, we are met by a fashionable and exuberant American woman of indeterminable age. The woman, who is Delgado's wife, talks nonstop in the elevator that opens directly into the apartment. The apartment is decorated in a fussy, bourgeois style. If it were not such a bleak day, the view would extend all the way to the Pardo Mountains. Delgado gives us a very cordial welcome. He is a proper old gentleman with sharp, intelligent eyes.

Delgado says that he has had a nightmare about our visit and woke up crying in the middle of the night. In the dream, we had showed up barefoot and in short sleeve shirts and had proceeded to gulp down all of his meringues. An hour later, we are seated at the marble table in his dining room and are served meringues and strawberry tarts after a large meal. We do not want to have more than one meringue each.

In a CNN special from 1985 called "Electro-magnetic Weapons and Mind Control," the reporter claims that Delgado's experiments were limited to animals. Nor is there anything in the texts on the various websites that indicates how far Delgado went in his research. His experiments on humans seem to have fallen into a strange collective amnesia. But anyone can walk into any well-stocked American medical library and take out Delgado's own reports and articles on the subject. There we can find his own candid, open descriptions of how he moved on from experimenting on animals to humans. In an article called "Radio Control Behavior" in the February 1969 issue of The Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease, Delgado, Dr. Mark, and several other colleagues describe what was the first clinical use of Intracerebral Radio Stimulation (IRS) on a human being. The stimoceiver itself only weighed 70 grams and was held fast by a bandage. One of the patients hid her stimoceiver with a wig because the experiments lasted days or weeks. The patients were scrutinized thoroughly. Everything they said was taped, their EEG was recorded, and they were photographed at regular intervals in order to document changes in their facial expressions.

In one of the article's photographs, we see two of the subjects engaged in "spontaneous activity." They are both girls with bandages over their heads. The girl in the background is holding something to her mouth, perhaps a harmonica. The other girl is bent over a guitar. Delgado's colleague, Dr. Mark, is smiling at them. Mark had already achieved some notoriety at this time by claiming that all anti-social

behavior is caused by brain damage. His recommendation had been the mass scanning of the American population in order to detect such damage in time and “correct” it.

Delgado and Mark’s article offers short descriptions of the patients who have had the device affixed to their brain. A black fourteen-year-old girl on the border of developmental disability who grew up in a foster home suddenly goes into a fury that leads to the death of her two stepsisters. A thirty-five-year old white industrial designer who ends up killing his wife and children flies into a rage when other motorists try to overtake him and he chases them and tries to run them off the road. Their aggressive behavior is supposed to be registered by the stimoceiver in the way a seismograph registers the earth’s tremors and the same stimoceiver is then to “turn them off” via the FM transmitter.

Delgado bombards us with a steady stream of anecdotes, scientific comments, and provocative rhetorical questions that are only interrupted by occasional tender comments directed to his wife. He tells of his work at the Ramon y Cajal Institute in the 1930s. In order to save a few paltry pennies, he would take a short cut through the zoo on his way to and from work. He would wander through the zoo alone at dawn and dusk and would hear lions and tigers roaring in this jungle in the city. After the War, he came to conquer nature in his own way in Bermuda. Even his wife was delighted to see the alpha male gibbon collapse when the underlings pushed the control lever. “Do you remember how we thought of Franco?” says his wife. “Imagine being able to turn off the Generalisimo.” Delgado responds “But who could have put the electrodes into the dictator? With electromagnetic radiation we could have controlled the dictator from a distance. We did some experiments at Yale where we influenced the brain from up to 30 meters away.”

One of the most important reasons why we wanted to meet Delgado is that we imagined him and his activities as belonging to a borderland between fiction and reality, between science and madness. People in psychotic states of mind often feel themselves controlled by foreign voices or spend their lives trying to prove that they have had a transmitter implanted inside their skulls that dictates their actions and thoughts all day and night. We ask Delgado what he thinks of the fact that his research provides a realistic edge to such fantasies.

He answers that he has on several occasions been contacted by strangers who say they want to have their implants removed and also that he has been sued by people he has never seen. Delgado is silent about the article that appeared in the Spanish monthly magazine Tiempo last year, where he was interviewed about exactly such accusations. The Tiempo reporter claimed that Delgado has ties with the Spanish secret police.

Delgado stretches out after the strawberry tarts. He has come to think of a case in Pittsburg in the 1950s where a robber was offered a milder sentence in exchange for being lobotomized. “I was operating electrodes into people’s brains at that time together with my good friend David Koskoff.” It was Koskoff who carried out the lobotomy on the robber. The patient was quiet for a while after the operation but then reverted to carrying out robberies again. In despair over his own unreliability, he decided to take his own life. He wrote a suicide note addressed to Dr. Koskoff: “Doctor, all your work has been in vain. I am an incompetent man and a criminal. I am taking my life but I am shooting myself in the heart and not the head. I donate my brain to you for research.”

Delgado’s wife puts her arm on his shoulder and says “And very little has happened since then, dear. There are still lots of bums running around.” The comment makes us both look away.

A moment later, we are sitting on the sofa. Delgado admits that not one useful application of the

stimoceiver has come out of his research. “We knew too little about the brain. It is much too complicated to be controlled. We never knew which parts of the brain we were stimulating with the stimoceiver. We didn’t even manage to prevent epileptic attacks, which we thought would be the simplest of things. We never found the area where epilepsy attacks originate.” He says all of this without a trace of bitterness, as if in passing.

We are surprised by his casual attitude toward the stimoceiver, which in the 1960s and 70s was heralded as a great contribution to science. To demonstrate the power of their invention, Delgado and his colleagues orchestrated violent scenes in the lab. In her book, The Brain Changers: Scientists and the New Mind Control, Maya Pine describes a film where Dr. Mark attaches a stimoceiver to an electrode in a woman’s brain:

As the film opens, the patient, a rather attractive young woman, is seen playing the guitar and singing “Puff, the Magic Dragon.” A psychiatrist sits a few feet away. She seems undisturbed by the bandages that cover her head like a tight hood, from her forehead to the back of her neck. Then a mild electric current is sent from another room, stimulating one of the electrodes in her right amygdala. Immediately, she stops singing, the brainwave tracings from her amygdala begin to show spikes, a sign of seizure activity. She stares blankly ahead. Suddenly she grabs her guitar and smashes it against the wall, narrowly missing the psychiatrist’s head.2

The same incident was described in one of Delgado’s own articles. This experiment was repeated three days in a row.

If there were any problems with the experiments for Delgado, these were not ethical in nature but technical. How do you replicate the lab situation in society? How do you cut off the electricity to the stimoceiver? How do you avoid scarring and inflammation where the stimoceiver enters the brain? But the problems did not provoke any doubts about the supposed success of the stimoceiver. In the long run, the technique could be used to make people happy from a distance.

“When did you stop the stimoceiver experiments?” we ask him. To our surprise, he responds indignantly that he has yet to do so. “After Yale, I have continued my experiments here in Spain, both on animals and on humans.” Delgado’s pragmatism does another pirouette and we are beginning to have trouble following him.

Delgado pours coffee with his trembling hands. Spanish guitar music from the stereo fills the silence. We look together through the three recent collection of essays that Delgado has placed in front of us. Their publication dates range from 1979 up to this year. There is no emphasis on neurophysiology in any of them. Instead, they address questions of learning and upbringing from a more general psychological point of view.

Until the end of the 70s, Delgado and his colleagues were considered conquerors of an unknown territory, a wild and expansive jungle, the landscape of the brain and the soul. Apparently Delgado never got very far into the jungle, which proved to be much too thick and impenetrable. He has apparently retired without any regrets. He has instead started to cultivate his own garden. “My new book is going to be called The Education of My Grandchildren and Myself.”

We ask if it is possible to learn to interpret the electrical language of the brain and mention the Swedish science journalist Göran Frankel’s interview with Delgado back in 1977.3 In the interview Delgado claims that it is only a question of time before we connect the brain directly into computers that can

communicate with the brain's electrical language.

Delgado makes a dismissive gesture and looks at us as if we are numskulls. "It is impossible to decode the brain's language. We can obviously manipulate different forms of electrical activity but what does that prove?" When we ask him about his colleague, Dr. Robert G. Heath, who claimed to be able to cure schizophrenic patients with electrostimulation, Delgado breaks into a patronizing smile and says, "Yes, yes, you're supposed to have a box on your stomach with cables coming out of it that attach to electrodes in your brain and you stimulate yourself. It never worked."

We lead him to a discussion of his own patients. Delgado interrupts us: "I have never done experiments on people." For a moment, we wonder if we'll have to take out one of his own scientific articles and hold it in front of him as evidence. We start to look for our file with hundreds of medical reports and articles. "You have to understand," he says. "There are incredibly stringent rules around experimenting on humans. All the experiments I was involved in had a therapeutic goal. They were for the patients' best."

In one of the Yale reports in our file, there is a description of an experiment on an epileptic mental patient. The report states that the woman has been in asylums for a long time, she is worried about her daughter, and suffers from economic hardship. Electrodes measuring 12 centimeters have been stuck into her brain, 5 centimeters of them inside the brain tissue. She is interviewed while being given periodic electrical stimulation. The woman is tossed between various emotional states and finds that strange words are coming to her mind. She experiences pain and sexual desire. At the end of the interview, she becomes flirty and her language becomes coarse, only to be ashamed later and ask to be excused for words that she felt had come to her from outside. The woman has been transformed into a speaking doll that unwillingly gives voice to her brain's every whim.

Delgado, who had previously been so flattered by two artists being interested in his work, now seems to be looking at us with new eyes. Who are we? And what do we want? His tone is short and sharp. The temperature in the apartment has dropped a few degrees.

In Physical Control of the Mind, Delgado proudly sums up how he has "used electrodes implanted for days or months to block thought, speech, and movement, or to trigger joy, laughter, friendliness, verbal activity, generosity, fear, hallucinations, and memory." With this in mind, we ask him what therapeutic results came from these experiments. "As a whole, they didn't result in any methods, except in the case of patients with chronic pain."
Delgado in his apartment in Madrid. Video still courtesy of Magnus Bärtås.

He looks at the clock and says that we only have five minutes left. But we do not want to abandon our questions about the patients. What happened to them? How long were the implants in their brains? Delgado now becomes somewhat vague. He says that it was other researchers that left the implants in for a long time, not him or Dr. Heath, and he does not recall which patients it was. The electrodes were taken out of his own patients after a couple of days and did not cause any injuries. "We killed maybe a few hundred neurons when we inserted the electrodes. But the brain has millions of neurons."

When Delgado spoke in the 60s of "the precise interface between brain and machine," it gave rise to a number of far-fetched military visions. His research was also mainly funded by military institutions such as the Office of Naval Research and the Air Force AeroMedical Research Laboratory.

In the US, the CIA and government research in (and use of) different means of behavior control was

made public in a series of congressional hearings in 1974 as well as in a Senate investigation three years later. Witnesses offered a glimpse of the CIA's astonishing experiments in the so-called MK-Ultra program. The list of MK-Ultra experiments is like a group photo of the extended family of behavioral technologies: hypnosis, drugs, psychological testing, sleep research, brain research, electromagnetism, lie detection. The specific operations had very imaginative names: Sleeping Beauty, Project Pandora, Woodpecker, Artichoke, Operation Midnight Climax.

One of MK-Ultra's fields of interest was electromagnetic fields and their effect on human beings. In 1962 it was discovered that the Russians had directed microwave radiation at the American embassy in Moscow with the hope of penetrating through to the ambassador's office. The CIA immediately mounted an investigation under the codename Project Pandora. Concurrently with his research on the stimoceiver, Delgado had begun research on electro-magnetic radiation and its capacity for influencing people's consciousness, and there is speculation that Delgado may have been involved in Project Pandora.

The CIA arranged for apes to be brought to the embassy. When the apes were examined after a period of being radiated, it was discovered that they had undergone changes in their chromosomes and blood. The personnel at the embassy was later reported to have increased white blood cell counts of up to 40 percent. The Boston Globe reported that the ambassador himself suffered not only from bloody eyes and chronic headaches but also from a blood disease resembling leukemia.

We take up Delgado's research on electromagnetic fields and their effect on people. "I could later do with electro-magnetic radiation what I did with the stimoceiver. It's much better because there's no need for surgery," he explains. "I could make apes go to sleep. But I stopped that line of research fifteen years ago. But I'm sure they've done a lot more research on this in both the US and Russia."

We understand now that Delgado thinks the meeting ought to come to an end. We ask him about Project Pandora and he confirms the story of the Moscow Signal without any hesitation but he denies being involved in the operation.

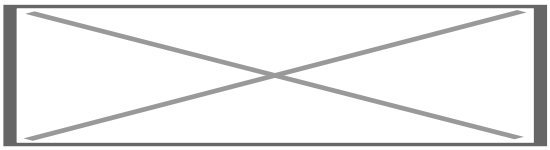
In 1972, an article citing Delgado's views was presented at Congress's MK-Ultra hearings:

We need a program of psychosurgery for political control of our society. The purpose is physical control of the mind. Everyone who deviates from the given norm can be surgically manipulated. The individual may think that the most important reality is his own existence, but this is only his personal point of view. This lacks historical perspective Man does not have the right to develop his own mind. This kind of liberal orientation has great appeal. We must electrically control the brain. Some day armies and generals will be controlled by electric stimulation of the brain.4

When we confront him with this statement, he falls silent for a second. His crystal-clear memory of a moment ago suddenly evaporates. A fog sweeps in, the words become hard to get out. He does not recall ever being called to Congress. And he has no desire to acknowledge the kinds of statements we have just mentioned. For a second, Delgado becomes a very old and fragile man. But in the next moment, he is standing up straight again and has shaken off all these unpleasantries. Now he is in a hurry. He has to meet his sick sister-in-law. We try to secure a second meeting but he is evasive and talks about the vagaries of the weather and trips to his country house. Out the door in a cloud of cigar smoke, the taxi takes us back to Madrid.

Translated by Sina Najafi

This article was corrected on 29 November 2014. Since publishing this article in Cabinet no. 2 (Spring 2001), several errors have come to our attention. Together, these support Delgado's claim that he never appeared before Congress or made the statement that the authors attributed to him. Delgado never testified before Congress during the MK-Ultra hearings, which in fact took place not in 1974 but in 1977. Neither is his name present in any of the transcripts of the hearings. Additionally, as far as we have been able to determine, the cited statement does not exist in this form in any of Delgado's publications, though some of the phrases do occur in his book Physical Control of the Mind. The sole reference to Delgado in the Congressional Record that we have been able to locate appears in Dr. Peter Breggin's "The Return of Lobotomy and Psychosurgery." This article, which was critical of Delgado's methods, was entered into the Congressional Record on 24 February 1972. We regret the errors.



Schleim, S.. (2021). Neurorights in History: A Contemporary Review of José M. R. Delgado's "Physical Control of the Mind" (1969) and Elliot S. Valenstein's "Brain Control" (1973). Frontiers in Human Neuroscience, 15

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"Scholars from various disciplines discuss the ethical, legal, and social implications of neurotechnology. some have proposed four concrete 'neurorights'. this review presents the research of two pioneers in brain stimulation from the 1950s to 1970s, josé m. r. delgado and elliot s. valenstein, who also reflected upon the ethical, legal, and social aspects of their and other scientists' related research. delgado even formulated the vision 'toward a psychocivilized society' where brain stimulation is used to control, in particular, citizens' aggressive and violent behavior. valenstein, by contrast, believed that the brain is not organized in such a way to allow the control or even removal of only negative processes without at the same time diminishing desirable ones. the paper also describes how animal and human experimentation on brain stimulation was carried out in that time period. it concludes with a contemporary perspective on the relevance of neurotechnology for neuroethics, neurolaw, and neurorights, including two recent examples for brain-computer interfaces."
Vera, J. A., & Martínez-Sánchez, F.. (2016). Ethics, science and mind control: J. M. Rodríguez-Delgado's legacy. Spanish Journal of Psychology

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“This work analyses the evolution of the scientific visibility of the neurophysiologist josé manuel rodríguez delgado. it examines the longitudinal evolution from 1955 to 2013 of an article (delgado, roberts, & miller, 1954) studying the neurological basis of learning and motivation and compares it with a coetaneous article (olds & milner, 1954) with a similar subject and methodology. both studies have been essential in psychology. this work analyses the number of times each article has been cited between 1955-1984 and 1985-2013. the results show that the visibility of james olds and peter milner’s article (expressed in number of citations between 1955-1984 and 1985-2013) has longitudinally increased (p <.001), whereas the number of citations received by josé manuel rodríguez delgado et al.’s article has significantly reduced (p <.001). the results are discussed and the low visibility of delgado’s article is explained through historical and social factors, including the growing concern about compliance with bioethical and research guidelines and the controversial media projection of the spanish scientist, not by the intrinsic value or the scientific repercussion of the compared articles.”
Sultanov, M.. (2019). Brain-Computer Interfaces: From Past to Future. American Journal of Biomedical Science & Research

Plain numerical DOI: 10.34297/ajbsr.2019.04.000799
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“More than 100 years ago, scientists were interested in the capabilities of the brain and tried to understand whether it is possible to somehow influence it. in 1875, english doctor richard caton managed to register a weak electric field on the surface of the brain of rabbits and monkeys. then there was a lot of discovery and research, but only in 1950, josé manuel rodríguez delgado, a professor of physiology at yale university, invented the device, which could be implanted in the brain and controlled by radio signals. ”
Wilder, J.. (1971). Physical Control of the Mind. Toward a Psychocivilized Society. American Journal of Psychotherapy

Plain numerical DOI: 10.1176/appi.psychotherapy.1971.25.3.485
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“Http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/jos%c3%a9_manuel_rodriguez_delgado josé manuel rodriguez delgado from wikipedia, the free encyclopedia jump to: navigation, search ‘jose delgado’ redirects here. for the comic book character, see gangbuster. text document with red question mark.svg tthis article includes a list of references, related reading or external links, but its sources remain unclear because it lacks inline citations. please improve this article by introducing more precise citations where appropriate. (may 2010) dr. josé manuel rodriguez delgado (born august 8, 1915) is a spanish professor of physiology at yale university, famed for his research into mind control through electrical stimulation of regions in the brain. contents [hide] * 1 biography * 2 research * 3 references * 4 further reading * 5

external links [edit] biography delgado was born in ronda, spain in 1915. he received a doctor of medicine degree from the university of madrid just before the outbreak of the spanish civil war, in which he served as a medical corpsman on the republican side. after the war he had to repeat his m.d. degree, and then took a ph.d. at the cajal institute in madrid. ”
Blackwell, B.. (2012). Jose Manuel Rodriguez Delgado. Neuropsychopharmacology

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“Presents an obituary of jose manuel rodriguez delgado (1915-2011). jose enrolled in madrid medical school in 1933 to study both medicine and physiology. in 1936, the spanish civil war erupted, his mentor juan negri fled the country and jose joined the republican side as a medical corpsman. from 1942 to 1950, he began research in neurophysiology on selective brain ablation and electrical stimulation in animals, published 14 articles and won several prizes. in 1950, delgado won a scholarship to the yale university in the department of physiology under the direction of john fulton whose pioneer work on pre-frontal lobotomy in chimpanzees encouraged the portuguese psychiatrist egas moniz to perform the operation in schizophrenic patients, for which he received the noble prize in 1949. delgado positioned himself between growing disapproval of mutilating brain surgery and his own belief that electrical stimulation of specific brain areas was scientifically superior to oral administration of drugs whose effects were mitigated by liver metabolism, the blood-brain barrier, and uncertain distribution. in the last years of his life, jose and his wife returned to america and lived in san diego where he died unheralded. unjustly treated and harshly judged by segments of the public and his profession, jose delgado’s ground breaking research, benevolent philosophy, and memory deserve better recognition. his career trajectory may provide budding scientists with a cautionary note about the pitfalls of mingling science with philosophy. (psycinfo database record (c) 2016 apa, all rights reserved)”
Faria, M.. (2013). Violence, mental illness, and the brain – A brief history of psychosurgery: Part 3 – From deep brain stimulation to amygdalotomy for violent behavior, seizures, and pathological aggression in humans. Surgical Neurology International

Plain numerical DOI: 10.4103/2152-7806.115162
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“In the final installment to this three-part, essay-editorial on psychosurgery, we relate the history of deep brain stimulation (dbs) in humans and glimpse the phenomenal body of work conducted by dr. jose delgado at yale university from the 1950s to the 1970s. the inception of the national commission for the protection of human subjects of biomedical and behavioral research (1974-1978) is briefly discussed as it pertains to the ‘determination of the secretary of health, education and welfare regarding the recommendations and guidelines on psychosurgery.’ the controversial work – namely recording of brain activity, dbs, and amygdalotomy for intractable psychomotor seizures in patients with uncontrolled violence – conducted by drs. vernon h. mark and frank ervin is recounted. this final chapter recapitulates advances in neuroscience and neuroradiology in the evaluation of violent

individuals and ends with a brief discussion of the problem of uncontrolled rage and ‘pathologic aggression’ in today’s modern society – as violence persists, and in response, we move toward authoritarianism, with less freedom and even less dignity.”
Marzullo, T. C.. (2017). The Missing Manuscript of Dr. Jose Delgado’s Radio Controlled Bulls.. Journal of Undergraduate Neuroscience Education : JUNE : A Publication of FUN, Faculty for Undergraduate Neuroscience

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“Neuroscience systems level courses teach: 1) the role of neuroanatomical structures of the brain for perception, movement, and cognition; 2) methods to manipulate and study the brain including lesions, electrophysiological recordings, microstimulation, optogenetics, and pharmacology; 3) proper interpretation of behavioral data to deduce brain circuit operation; and 4) the similarities, differences, and ethics of animal models and their relation to human physiology. these four topics come together quite dramatically in dr. jose delgado’s 1960s famous experiments on the neural correlates of aggression in which he stopped bulls in mid-charge by electrically stimulating basal ganglia and thalamic structures. technical documentation on these experiments is famously difficult to find. here i translate and discuss a spanish language article written by dr. delgado in 1981 for an encyclopedia on bull fighting published in madrid. here dr. delgado appears to give the most complete explanation of his experiments on microstimulation of bovine brains. dr. delgado’s motivations, methods, and his interpretation of the bull experiments are summarized, as well as some accompanying information from his 1970 english language book: ‘physical control of the mind.’ this review of dr. delgado’s written work on the bull experiments can provide a resource to educators and students who desire to learn more about and interpret the attention-calling experiments that dr. delgado did on a ranch in andalucía over 50 years ago.”
Zemelman, B. V.. (2017). Uncovering key neurons for manipulation in mammals. In Optogenetics: From Neuronal Function to Mapping and Disease Biology

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“Introduction in one guise or another, directed manipulation of brain function can be traced back decades. while much has been made of francis crick’s musings in the 1990s on the potential power of selective neuronal stimulation (crick, 1999), remarkably effective – albeit controversial – in vivo experiments had been conducted by jose delgado nearly 30 years earlier. working with large mammals and primates, delgado demonstrated that many properties attributed to the primitive brain (maclean, 1990; panksepp, 2004) – sleep, nurture, hunger and aggression – could be modified by stimulating narrowly circumscribed groups of neurons, including by ‘remote control’ (delgado, 1964; delgado, 1969). these studies motivated ever more troubling attempts at psychosurgery in the form of localized electrical stimulation in order to diagnose, condition and treat human subjects suffering from behavioral and psychiatric disorders (heath, monroe and mickle, 1955; king, 1961; sweet, ervin and mark, 1969). current selective activation techniques, however, stem from efforts to image, rather than perturb, brain function. the advent of fluorescent protein-based cellular markers and reporters in the late 1990s represented a critical advance in combining the convenience of light with the precision of genetic

encoding. such sensors helped catalyze our plan to design a method for stimulating neurons, as opposed to passively monitoring them. our 2001 overview of optical sensors ends with this prescient hypothesis: '… schemes [that] localize the response to illumination could [feed] patterns of distributed activity … directly into a genetically circumscribed population of neurons, irrespective of the anatomical location of its members or their connection to sensory input. perhaps the ability to probe defined groups of neurons with [light] will hold the key to an understanding of neural systems' (zemelman and miesenböck, 2001). these sentences succinctly frame the revolution that would take place in experimental neuroscience over the following 15 years. while the tools for selective photoactivation of neurons have benefitted from numerous much-needed refinements, chief among them the cloning of channelrhodopsin (nagel et al., 2003), the prediction that light and a heterologous light receptor could be used to dissect neuronal mechanisms in vivo has been exhaustively validated across numerous systems and species."

Category

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Tags

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