

Keith Barry: Brain Magic

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Keith Barry: : Brain magic. What's brain magic all about? Brain magic to me indicates that area of magic dealing with psychological and mind reading effects. So unlike traditional magic, it uses the power of words, linguistic deception, non-verbal communication and various other techniques to create the illusion of a sixth sense.

Now, I'm going to show you all how easy it is to manipulate the human mind once you know how. And I want everybody downstairs also to join in with me and everybody here. I want everybody to put out your hands like this for me, first of all. OK, clap them together, once. OK, reverse your hands. Now follow my actions exactly. Now about half the audience has their left hand up. Why is that? OK, swap them around, put your right hand up. OK, now, cross your hands over, so your right hand goes over, interlace your fingers like this, then make sure your right thumb is outside your left thumb – that's very important. Yours is the other way around, so swap it around. Excellent, OK. Extend your fingers like this for me. All right. Tap them together once. OK, now, if you did not allow me to deceive your minds, you would all be able to do this. (Laughter) So, now you can see how easy it is for me to manipulate the human mind, once you know how. (Laughter)

Now, I remember when I was about 15, I read a copy of Life magazine, which detailed a story about a 75-year-old blind Russian woman who could sense printed letters – there’s still people trying to do it here – (Laughter) – who could sense printed letters and even sense colors, just by touch. And she was completely blind. She could also read the serial numbers on bills when they were placed, face down, on a hard surface. Now, I was fascinated, but at the same time, skeptical. How could somebody read using their fingertips? You know, if you actually think about it, if somebody is totally blind – a guy yesterday did a demonstration in one of the rooms where people had to close their eyes, and they could just hear things. And it’s just a really weird thing to try and figure out, how could somebody read using their fingertips? Now earlier on, as part of a TV show that I have coming up on MTV, I attempted to give a similar demonstration of what is now known as second sight. So let’s take a look.

(Video) Man: There we go. I’ll guide you into the car.

Kathryn: (Laughter)

Man: You’re OK, keep on going.

Kathryn: How are you?

Keith Barry: Kathryn, it’s Keith here, I’m going to take you to a secret location, OK?

KB: Now, Kathryn, there was no way you could see through that blindfold, at all.

Kathryn: OK, but don’t say my name like that.

KB: No, but you’re OK, yes?

Kathryn: Yes.

KB: There’s no way you could have seen through it, agreed?

Kathryn: No.

KB: OK, I'm just going to take it off, you're OK, you're OK. Do you want to take off the other part of it? Go ahead and take it off, you're OK. We'll just stop for a second.

Kathryn: I'm so afraid of what I'm going to see.

KB: No, no, you're fine, you're fine, take it off. You're OK, you're safe. Have you ever heard of second sight?

Kathryn: No.

KB: Second sight is whereby a mind-control expert can see through somebody else's eyes. And I'm going to try that right now.

Kathryn: God.

KB: Are you ready? Where is it? There's no way ...

Kathryn: (Beep) Oh, my God!

KB: Shh. Don't say anything, I'm trying to see through your eyes. I can't see.

Kathryn: There's a wall, there's a wall.

KB: Look at the road, look at the road.

Kathryn: OK, OK, OK. Oh, my God!

KB: Now, anything coming at all?

Kathryn: No, no, no, no.

KB: Sure there's not?

Kathryn: No, no, I'm just still looking at the road. I'm looking at the road, all the time, I'm not taking my eyes off the road. (Beep) (Beep) (Beep) Oh, my God!

KB: Where are we? Where are we? We're going uphill, are we going uphill?

Kathryn: Look at the road – (Beep) Still got that goddamn blindfold on.

KB: What?

Kathryn: How are you doing this?

KB: Just don't break my concentration. KB: We're OK, though?

Kathryn: Yes. That's so weird. We're nearly there. Oh, my God! Oh, my God!

KB: And I've stopped.

Kathryn: That is weird. You're like a freak-ass of nature. That was the most scary thing I've ever done in my life.

(Applause)

Thank you. By the way, two days ago, we were going to film this down there, at the race course, and we got a guy into a car, and we got a camera man in the back, but halfway through the drive, he told me he had a – I think it was a nine-millimeter or something, stuck to his leg. So I stopped pretty quick, and that was it.

So, do you believe it's possible to see through somebody else's eyes? That's the question. Now, most people here would automatically say no. OK, but I want you to realize some facts. I couldn't see through the blindfold. The car was not gimmicked or tricked in any way, the girl – I'd never met before, all right. So I want you to just think about it for a moment. A lot of people try to come up with a logical solution to what just happened, all right. But because your brains are not trained in the art of deception, the solutions you come up with will 99 percent of the time be way off the mark.

This is because magic is all about directing attention. If, for instance, I didn't want you to look at my right hand, well, then, I don't look at it. But if I wanted you to look at my right hand, then I look at it, too, you see. It's very, very simple, once you know how, but very complicated in other ways.

Now, I'm going to give you some demonstrations up here, live, right now. I need two people to help me out real quick. Can you come up? And let's see, down at the end, here, can you also come up, real quick? Do you mind? Yes, at the end. OK, give them a round of applause as they come up. You might want to use the stairs, there. (Applause) Now, it's very important for everybody here to realize I haven't set anything up with you guys. You don't know what's about to happen. Is that agreed? OK, would you mind just standing over here for a moment? Your name is?

Nicole: Nicole.

KB: Nicole, and? (Telephone ringing)

KB: OK, oh. Tell them, actually here's the thing, answer it, answer it, answer it. (Laughter)

KB: Is it a girl?

Man: They've already gone.

KB: Oh, they're gone, OK. I'll tell you what, swap over positions. Can you stand over here, this will just make it a little bit easier. OK, that was a pity, I would have told them it was the ace of spades. OK, a little bit closer. (Laughter) A little bit closer. (Laughter) OK, a little bit closer, come over – they look really nervous up here. Come in a little bit closer.

OK, now, do you believe in witchcraft at all?

Nicole: No.

KB: Voodoo?

Nicole: No.

KB: Things that go bump in the night?

Nicole: No.

KB: Besides, who's next, no, OK. I want you to just stand exactly like this for me, pull up your sleeves, if you don't mind. OK, now, I want you to be aware of all the different sensations around you, because we're going to try a voodoo experiment right now. I want you to be aware of the sensations, but don't say anything until I ask you, and don't open your eyes until I ask you. From this point onwards, close your eyes, do not say anything, do not open them, be aware of the sensations.

Yes or no, did you feel anything?

Nicole: Yes.

KB: You did feel that? What did you feel?

Nicole: A touch on my back.

KB: How many times did you feel it?

Nicole: Twice.

KB: Twice. OK, extend your left arm out in front of you. Extend your left arm, OK. OK, keep it there. Be aware of the sensations, don't say anything, don't open your eyes, OK. Did you feel anything, there?

Nicole: Yes.

KB: What did you feel?

Nicole: Three –

KB: Like a tickling sensation?

Nicole: Yes.

KB: Can you show us where? OK, excellent. Open your eyes. I never touched you. I just touched his back, and I just touched his arm. A voodoo experiment. (Laughter) Yeah, I walk around nightclubs all night like this. (Laughter) You just take a seat over here for a second. I'm going to use you again, in a moment. And can you take a seat right over here for me, if you don't mind. Sit right here.

Man: OK.

KB: OK, take a seat. Excellent, OK. Now, what I want you to do is look directly at me, OK, just take a deep breath in through your nose, letting it out through your mouth, and relax. Allow your eyes to close, on five, four, three, two, one – close your eyes right now. OK, now, I'm not hypnotizing you, I'm merely placing you in a heightened state of synchronicity, so our minds are along the same lines. And as you sink and drift and float into this relaxed state of mind, I'm going to take your left hand, and just place it up here.

And I want you to hold it there, just for a moment, and I only want you to allow your hand to sink and drift and float back to the tabletop at the same rate and speed as you drift and float into this relaxed state of awareness, and allow it to go all the way down to the tabletop. That's it, all the way down, all the way down, all the way down, and further, and further, and further, and further, and further, and further. Excellent. I want you to allow your hand to stick firmly to the tabletop. OK, now, allow it to stay there. OK, now, in a moment, you'll feel a certain pressure, OK, and I want you to be aware of the pressure. Just be aware of the pressure. And I only want you to allow your hand to float slowly back up from the tabletop as you feel the pressure release, but only when you feel the pressure release. Do you understand? Just answer yes or no. Do you understand?

Man: Yes.

KB: Hold it right there. OK, and only when you feel the pressure go back, I want you to allow your hand to slowly drift back to the table top, but only when you feel the pressure. (Laughter) OK, that was wonderfully done, let's try it again.

Excellent. Now that you've got the idea, let's try something even more interesting. Allow it to stick firmly to the table top, keep your eyes closed. Can you stand up? OK, just stand, stage forward. I want you to point directly at his forehead, OK. Imagine a connection between you and him, only when you want the pressure to be released, make an upward gesture, like this, but only when you want the pressure to be released. You can wait as long as you want, but only when you want the pressure released. OK, let's try it again. OK, now, imagine the connection, OK. Point directly at his forehead, only when you want the pressure released, we'll try it again. OK, it worked that time, excellent. And hold it there, hold it there, both of you, hold it there, only when you want the pressure to go back, make a downward gesture. You can wait as long as you want. You did it pretty quickly, but it went down, OK.

Now, I want you to be aware that in a moment, when I snap my fingers, your eyes will open, again. It's OK to remember to forget, or forget to remember what happened. Most people ask you what the hell just happened up here? But it's OK that even though you're not hypnotized, you will forget everything that happened. (Laughter) On five, four, three, two one – open your eyes, wide awake. Give them a round of applause, as they go back to their seats. (Applause) OK, you can go back.

I once saw a film called "The Gods Are Crazy." Has anybody here seen that film? Yeah, yeah, yeah. (Applause) Do you remember when they threw the Coke bottle out of the airplane, and it landed on the ground and it didn't break? Now, see, that's because Coke bottles are solid. It's nearly impossible

to break a Coke bottle. Do you want to try it? Good job. (Laughter) She's not taking any chances.

You see, psychokinesis is the paranormal influence of the mind on physical events and processes. For some magicians or mentalists sometimes the spoon will bend or melt, sometimes it will not. Sometimes the object will slide across the table, sometimes it will not. It depends on how much energy you have that day, so on, and so forth. We're going to try an experiment in psychokinesis, right now. Come right over here, next to me. Excellent.

Now, have a look at the Coke bottle. Make sure it is solid, there's only one hole, and it's a normal Coke bottle. And you can whack it against the table, if you want. Be careful. Even though it's solid, I'm standing away. OK, I want you to pinch right here with two fingers and your thumb. Excellent. Now, I've got a shard of glass here, OK. I want you to examine the shard of glass. Be careful, because it is sharp. Just hold on to it for a moment. Now, hold it out here.

I want you to imagine, right now, a broken relationship from many years ago. I want you to imagine all the negative energy from that broken relationship, from that guy, being imparted into the broken piece of glass, which will represent him, OK. But I want you to take this very seriously. Stare at the glass, ignore everybody right here. In a moment you'll feel a certain sensation, OK, and when you feel that sensation, I want you to drop the piece of glass into the bottle. Think of that guy, that ba – that guy, (Laughter) I'm trying to be good here. OK, and when you feel the sensation – it might take a while – drop it into the glass. OK, drop it in.

Now, imagine all that negative energy in there. Imagine his name, and imagine him, inside the glass. And I want you to release that negative energy by shaking it from side to side. (Laughter) That was a lot of negative energy, built up in there. (Laughter) (Applause) I also want you to think of his

name. Look at me and think of his name. Have you got his name? OK, think of how many letters in the title of his name. Think about how many letters in the title. There's five letters in the title. You didn't react to that, so it's four letters in the title. Think of one of the letters in the title. Think of one of the letters. There's a K in his name, there is a K. See the way I knew that, because my name starts with a K also, but his name doesn't start with a K, it starts with an M. Tell Mike I said hello, the next time you see him. Was that his name?

Nicole: Mm-hmm. KB: OK, give her a round of applause. (Applause) Thank you. (Applause) I've got one more thing to share with you right now. Actually, Chris, I was going to pick you for this, but instead of picking you, can you hop up here and pick a victim for this next experiment? And it should be a male victim, that's the only thing.

Chris Anderson: Oh, OK.

KB: I was going to use you for this, but I decided I might want to come back another year. (Laughter)

CA: Well, to reward him for saying "eureka," and for selecting Michael Mercil to come and talk to us – Steve Jurvetson.

KB: OK, Steve, come on up here. (Applause)

CA: You knew!

KB: OK, Steve, I want you to take a seat, right behind here. Excellent. Now, Steve – oh, you can check underneath. Go ahead, I've no fancy assistants underneath there. They just, they insist that because I was a magician, put a nice black tablecloth on. There you are, OK. (Laughter) I've got four wooden plinths here, Steve. One, two, three and four. Now, they're all the exact same except this one obviously has a stainless steel spike sticking out of it. I want you to examine it, and make sure it's solid. Happy?

Steve Jurvetson: Mmm, yes.

KB: OK. Now, Steve, I'm going to stand in front of the table, OK, when I stand in front of the table, I want you to put the cups on the plinths, like this, in any order you want, and then mix them all up, so nobody has any idea where the spike is, all right? SJ: No one in the audience?

KB: No one in the audience, and just to help you out, I'll block them from view, so nobody can see what you're doing. I'll also look away, so, go ahead and mix them up, now. OK, and tell me when you're done. (Laughter) You done?

SJ: Mmm, almost.

KB: Almost, oh. OK, you're making sure that's well hidden. Now – oh, we've got one here, we've got one here. (Applause) So, all right, we'll leave them like that. (Laughter) I'm going to have the last laugh, though. (Laughter) Now, Steve, you know where the spike is, but nobody else, does? Correct? But I don't want you to know either, so swivel around on your chair. They'll keep an eye on me to make sure I don't do anything funny, No, stay around, OK. Now, Steve, look back. So, now you don't know where the spike is, and I don't know where it is, either, OK. Now, is there any way to see through this blindfold?

SJ: Put this on?

KB: No, just is there any way to see through it?

SJ: Um-umm.

KB: No?

SJ: No, I can't see through it.

KB: You can't see through it. Excellent, OK. Now, I'm going to put on the blindfold. Don't stack them up, OK. Give them an extra mix up. Don't move the cups, because I don't want

anybody to see where the spike is, but give the plinths an extra mix up, and then line them up, like this, all right? I'll put the blindfold on. Give them an extra mix up. No messing around this time. OK, go ahead, mix them up. My hand is at life, here, so – at risk. (Laughter) Tell me when you're done.

SJ: Done.

KB: OK, where are you? Put out your hand. Your right hand. Is that – no, OK. Tell me when I'm over a cup.

SJ: You're over a cup.

KB: I'm over a cup, right now?

SJ: Mm-hmm.

KB: Now, Steve, do you think it's here? Yes or no?

SJ: Oh! (Laughter)

KB: I told you I'd have the last laugh. (Laughter)

SJ: I don't think it's there.

KB: No? Good decision. (Laughter) (Applause) Now, if I go this way, is there another cup over here? SJ: Can we do the left hand?

KB: Oh, no, no, no. He asked me could he do the left hand. Absolutely not. (Laughter)

KB: Now, if I go this way, is there another cup?

SJ: There's a cup that way, yes.

KB: OK, tell me when to stop.

SJ: OK.

KB: There?

SJ: Yes, there's one.

KB: OK. Do you think it's here, yes or no? This is your decision, not mine. (Laughter)

SJ: I'm going to say no.

KB: Good decision. (Laughter) OK, give me both hands. Now, put them on both cups. Do you think the spike is under your left hand, or under your right hand?

SJ: Uh, neither.

KB: Neither, oh, OK. But if you were to guess. (Laughter)

SJ: I think it's under my right hand. KB: You think it's under your right hand? Now remember, you made all the decisions all along. Psychologists, figure this out. Have a look.

SJ: Oh! (Applause) Thank you.

Thank you. If anybody wants to see some sleight of hand later on, I'll be outside. Thank you. (Applause) Thank you.

Thank you. (Applause)