

# Mind Control Illusions

By Jim Kleefeld

## Gold Silver Copper Bronze

You show on your large display banner (or on a tabloid sized poster) four bars with symbols. The bars are colored gold, silver, copper and bronze. Each one has a panel partially covering the symbols.

You ask the participants to decode the symbols on the bars.

They tell you that the bars read “gold, silver, copper and bronze.”

You remove the covering panels and show that the symbols are actually combinations of mixed letters and numbers that show 681R, GT1Y5P, SQRD5B and DP9M7F.

## Banner Version

If you have the Banner 1 image, these bars and symbols are printed on it in large metallic rectangles. You will need to make the covering panels.

Print the two files from the Opt Illusion Sign folder titled CoverLgGoldCopper and CoverLgSilverBronze. These files are jpeg and are tabloid size (11x17). Any Kinkos or OfficeMax should be able to print them for you on card stock.

After you have the two files printed, cut out the four rectangles. Turn them face down and use clear packing tape to attach two round flat neodymium magnets to the back at either end. Half-Inch diameter by 1/16th or 1/8 inch thick will work. You will need 16 in all, two for each panel and two for each of the metallic signs on the banner.

Cut out four rectangles the same size as the cover panels out of plain white card stock. Glue one to the back of each cover panel to make it stiffer and seal in the magnets.

Set up your banner. Have someone hold the gold cover panel in place over the lower half of the gold sign. Place two matching magnets on the back of the vinyl banner. They should grip the magnets in the panel and hold it in place. Check the front to make sure that the panel is in exactly the right position, then use clear package tape to seal the magnets to the back of the banner. You should be able to remove and replace the cover panel over the gold sign easily.

Now repeat the magnet placement on the remaining three cover panels and the matching positions on the back of the banner. You will use 2 magnets on the back of each cover panel and two matching magnets on the back of the banner behind each

sign. Now all four cover panels will stay neatly in place, covering the lower half of each printed sign.

Carry the panels in your show case. At the show, pull up the banner. The small magnets on the back will not detract or hinder the roll-up mechanism in any way. Simply attach the panels to the front of the banner before your presentation begins. Remove the four panels during your talk as you explain the illusion.

## Poster Version

If you choose not to have a printed retractable banner made, you can still use the same optical illusion in your performance. Just have the smaller signs printed, and display them on a folding easel. The Opt Illus Folder has a tabloid sized version of each optical illusion. These can be easily printed on card stock and used as is or mounted onto foam core.

Mounting the tabloid sized posters (11x17) on foam core makes them much sturdier and easier to handle, as card stock tends to curl and will not stand well on an easel.

If you want larger posters of the illusions, many online printers will take a file and print it at a larger size. Online posters that are 24x36 can be ordered for around \$7. Although usually printed well on heavy paper, these larger posters will still have to be mounted in some manner for display. You can have them printed and then buy a poster frame at a craft store like Michaels, or use spray adhesive to attach them to foam core.

For a standard 11x17 version, use the file as is and have it printed and mounted. Also have the file titled CoversSmGldSlvCprBrz printed. Card stock will last much longer than paper. Glue the cover panel file to a second layer of card stock, then cut out the four rectangles. Use magician's wax or blu-tak to fasten the panels to the front of the sign, covering the lower half of each metallic plate

## Checkerboard Can

This display shows a checkerboard of light grey and dark grey numbered squares. There is a soda can resting on the board casting a shadow. Ask the participants to concentrate on the two squares on the board numbered 2 and 13. Ask them to decide which one is darker. They will probably answer that 13 is much darker than 2. Cover the board with the Comparison Frame to show that square 2 and square 13 are exactly the same shade.

## Banner Version

This illusion is printed on Banner 1. You will need a Comparison Frame to hold over the banner. This can be printed from the ComparisonFrameLg file in the Opts Illus folder. This Lg version is for the banner, the similar Sm version is sized for a smaller poster version of the illusion.

Have the Frame printed at Kinkos or OfficeMax on tabloid sized card stock. Reinforce it by gluing it to a second (and third, if you like) piece of blank card stock. Use a razor knife to cut out the two white rhombus figures, leaving the rest of the card intact.

At the show, hold the card over the banner with squares 2 and 13 showing through.

## Poster Version

The CheckerboardCan file in the Opt Illus Folder contains a tabloid size version of this illusion. Have it printed on card stock and mounted in a poster frame or on foam core. Also have the ComparisonFrameSm file printed. This should be printed on card stock and glued to a second (and possibly third) piece of card stock to make it stiffer. Do not glue it to foam core as this will make it too thick and cause a shadow inside the cutouts.

After you have the file printed and glued to a double- (or triple-) thickness of card stock, use a razor knife to cut out the two small rhombus shapes in the center. Discard the pieces leaving two holes.

At the show, display the banner and point out the illusion. After some discussion, hold the Comparison Frame card in place, covering the checkerboard all except squares 2 and 13. Allow participants to compare the two square with no surrounding optical interference.

## Can Illusions

A soda can rests on the checkerboard to cast a shadow that created the dark/light illusion. But the can provides more than just a shadow. Ask the participants to read the title on the can. Most likely they will say that it says "Refreshing Mountain Spring Water." In fact, there are three substituted letters, and it reads "Refreshung Movntain Springq Water." How many people in the audience spotted the incorrect letters?

Next, ask them to read the slogan in the triangle. Most will claim it says "The best water in all the world." In fact, there is a duplicate "the." The slogan actually says "The best water in all the the world."

## An Important Message

This illusion is basically self-explanatory. Although this version is new and was written exclusively for Mind Control: Fact of Fiction, similar ones have been around for some time. There are two versions, one printed on Banner 2 and the other configured as a tabloid size poster.

Just in case there is any confusion, the message reads:

“An important Message. Did you know that most people can read and understand confused and jumbled words? Even if the letters in the middle of the word are mixed and scrambled, the brain can still make sense of the message as long as the first and last letters are in the right place.”

## Stroop Test

Identifying colors is simple; child’s play, really. So is the reading of basic color words. But combining the two makes the task much more difficult, as the brain is trying to absorb and complete two different functions at the same time, using two different neurological pathways in two different hemispheres.

This test has been set up so as to be even more confusing than the original. Note that there are nine rows of words, each in five colors. In the first two rows, each word is printed in its own color: that is, “Red” is red, “Yellow” is yellow, etc. From the third line on, each color word is in a different color than what it says. When a person tries to pronounce the color of each word without reading the word, they get used to reading the first two lines because it is easy and correct. By the third line, they have a great deal of difficulty tracking the colors without reading the words.

A slight wave helps confuse the brain further by requiring it to keep track of up and down eye movement as well as left to right.

Note that there is a version printed on Banner 2 and also a stand-alone version that can be printed on tabloid sized card stock and used as a poster.

## How Many Fs?

This final printed illusion asks the user to find and count the total number of times the letter F appears in a short paragraph. Ask the participants to look at the box and count how many times the letter F appears. Many people answer 4 because they count the immediately obvious ones in Fact, Fiction, four and Scientific. But there are also 3 Fs in the three instances of the word “of.” That makes a total of seven, which some astute

observers might find. If you have asked them to count what is in the box, however, then they will likely also miss the black F in the title, making a total of eight altogether.