

Editors:

This letter to the editor is written, with permission from Dr. Adrienne Brundage:
Forensics Meet the Imagination of the Blind, Getting Positive Media Attention, on "Can the Blind Solve the Crime?" Is there substantial evidence in imagination, "mind's eye"?

Close your eyes and try to remember where you placed your keys. Did you hear that? Stop, I believe the sound is coming from the opposite direction. It is dark, feel around for the light switch. What is that smell? You see, you have unconsciously forced yourself to neglect other senses, so you are proficient in one. In the imagination world, especially of the blind, these sensory techniques are synchronized through internal clues that can leverage the ability to solve a crime. This skill set, however, does not eliminate forensic science certification requirements and effective disciplinary training.

It should be noted that "forensic sciences are in a state of flux" (Brundage). I believe without the blind/visually impaired there's sure to be Forensics confirmation bias. I am pushing for forensic investigations to proportionately happen in a more imaginable way; your article can help make the shift a reality beyond imagination.

I have vague and inaccurate perception with a good deal of distortion, pulsating, and occasional flashes or sweeps of color that have nothing to do with what's before my

eyes. It is completely unreliable; however, the truth comes by knowledge of other means, either through other sensory information or else through the testimony of others' eyes. In my world, every crime scene is an optical illusion and a piece of artwork framed by clues of imagination. There is an old saying, "a picture is worth a thousand words." If so, I am sure my imaginations, which are derived from sensory skills, will use a few hundred of those. A forensic analyst who is blind/visually impaired attempts to form a mental picture in his or her mind. It becomes the "mind's eye". In my mind, I transform the crime scene into a map that is surrounded by prevalent items, terrains, patterns, sounds, and scents that most sighted people are isolated from remembering. These key senses can receive knowledge about the specific time the crime occurred.

Fingerprint evidence is circumstantial and testimony is considered direct evidence. However, a blind imagination or the mind's eye can find and interpret complex facts that are within a standard deviation. As a profound editor, you can help ensure that the blind/visually impaired are judged by their abilities and not their vision. I am not indicating that we can single-handedly solve the cases and lead to a crucial breakthrough. But, I strongly believe we have the ability to help fill in pieces of the jigsaw. The detective featured in the old TV show "Longstreet" carried out his investigations with the help of his smarts, a white German Shepherd, a special cane, his friends, and self-defense. However, Baynard Kendrick, a renowned author of real-life novels and producer of the detective show "Longstreet", developed the blind character and profound narrative from his personal experience of being an instructor and advisor for the first Blind Veterans Association and Chairman of the Board. The novels and detective shows which included the character Captain Duncan McClain were to confront discrimination of the blind, misconceptions, and "remaking into dynamic human beings of men who had always assumed they would rather be dead than blind" (1960 Kendrick). As a result, his work created a trend that enlighten the world about the blind/visually impaired and their ability to innovatively use sensory skills to develop imaginations that are unique for problem-solving and sniffing out vital evidence that may denote a Scooby-Doo way of making a difference in the outcome of a crime.

Blood is one of the most important biological traces that are found on a crime scene. To enhance the vital evidence, sighted forensic investigators use Luminol on surfaces contaminated with blood. However, as a blind/visually impaired investigator I have the power of the nose to detect the presence of fresh blood and blood which may have significantly aged at an old crime scene. Is it fresh blood or degraded blood, you tell me? Different stages of decomposition of blood that may have soaked into a carpet, rug or clothing, can easily be missed by the naked eye. My strong sense of smell paired with my imagination can take investigations to areas where the exact scene of the crime is unknown. Our unique abilities may often eliminate the use of luminol which oftentimes affects other evidence in the same area. The “mind’s eye” can strengthen the probability of what may have been transferred to objects as primary transfer or found on something other than original as a secondary transfer.

Recreating the events of a crime is auspicious to have been impacted by such life vicissitude that interchangeably gives me keen attention to detail, a fixed mindset, and an excellent memory. The blind/visually impaired exceptional imaginations can reshape the progress of science and innovate an approach that can be successfully applied to aid forensic investigation and solving crimes. Your article can become the visibility of a schema that will allow the imagination of the blind to help identify possible truths, and suspects and bring justice for victims and closure for their families, and friends.

Now! “Imagine” that!