



# seeing is deceiving

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You can find a recording of this poem on YouTube: [https://youtu.be/SJI4X\\_qYL8U](https://youtu.be/SJI4X_qYL8U)



A poet's reflections on the scientific imagination  
*Written by Alondra Bobadilla (2021)*

*imagination* – the faculty or action of forming new ideas, or images or concepts of external objects not present to the senses.

*science* – the intellectual and practical activity encompassing the systematic study of the structure and behavior of the physical and natural world through observation and experiment.

### **“seeing is deceiving”**

i always wondered about the certainty of scientific discovery  
of how pillars hidden from the naked eye hold up tons of metals, brick, pipes, people  
how they test the capacity of elevators  
how they know gravity exists and knew to name it this way and not something different  
how they figured the earth must rotate and if it rotates, we must call it an axis  
how the human race has come to understand that the universe is infinite and we all believe it without seeing it,  
without truly knowing if some light years away we fall into oblivion

in my science classes the process of discovery was never properly taught  
we all simply accepted the information verbatim and never expressed the wondering of the origin  
and if we ever did,  
teachers told us it was rude to ask why to why worthy responses  
yet that's all that the scientists they teach us about ever do  
in quiet, we wondered,  
why the geniuses chose to study the once unstudyable,  
for it didn't exist until it was named, and it wasn't named until it was discovered  
we were told that science was the study only of the seen  
that things just are and we should accept them that way

imagination was linked to art class  
the class for the students who were lazy or less intelligent, or so it was made to seem  
that imagination was for children and storytellers, and these were the same thing  
that to imagine was to fantasize, a waste of time  
an activity restricted for a mere 15 minutes on the playground

we speak of the high capability of the brain and deny a fundamental aspect of its power,  
the power to picture the unseen,  
to plan the otherwise unpatterned,  
to create possibility out of a blank slate,  
to take apart and put together.  
we have built technology to aide in the process of imagination  
cameras that help us place engineering projects in the physical world before the building is ever constructed  
models that help us plan the fetal phase of bridges

the very breakdown of every exhibit in this museum is the essence of STEAM  
art and science are not opposing forces  
like magnets, they attract  
and their fuel is the same source; the imagination.  
every exhibit and diagram equipped with lights, wiring, written explanation, models  
a partnership between aesthetic and education,  
finding a way to deliver information to all kinds of learners  
the visual and the hearers,  
people who don't have access to all the senses  
and people who simply prefer to do than to read,  
to touch than to see



when we limit the mind, we limit the growth of the community  
our mind has two settings  
survival and creative mode  
when a community is left in poverty, they stay on survival mode  
when a child is told to think between the lines, they are stagnant, there is no innovation of the character, the personality, the purpose of this individual is extinguished  
God has given abundance but it's human greed that is stingy  
like with all our resources, the balance beam is tipped in who has the luxury to drink from the fountain of life that is our imagination

and who must live to work in the factories of the imaginings of others  
to simplify this complex reality a little more:  
there are people making billions off their ideas  
and other people put in the 12 hour shifts to bring them to life, never given a break  
to feed their own dreams

in our neighborhoods, some children are told that only one way of life is theirs to inherit  
that they are not equipped to be world changers, not in the small and never the big  
but when we reinvent the way we educate,  
when we encourage thinkers to think  
and give dreamers a place to explore and create  
we unlock a place in the mind of the child that tells them they are equipped to be great

all things before proven are insane,  
and we have conditioned society to believe that  
imagination is a word for the infantile.  
they believe they limit the great with this word,  
when really it is the imagination that ignites and empowers the vision.  
why do we call people who discover and create visionaries, if not for their ability to see the unseen  
and act upon their imaginings?

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[Alondra Bobadilla](#) served as an Eye Opener Volunteer at the Museum of Science, Boston from 2019-2020. In 2020, the City of Boston recognized Alondra as Boston's first Youth Poet Laureate.



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