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Scientists 'turn to magic for brain research'



Healthcare News

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Magicians may be able to teach brain scientists a thing or two, it is reported.

Two US scientists hoping to discover new treatment techniques for conditions like Alzheimer's disease are turning to magicians for advice, it has emerged.

By using humour and various methods of misdirection, magicians are able to almost trick the brains of the audience into overlooking their slight of hand, the researchers from Barrow Neurological Institute at St Joseph's Hospital and Medical Centre said.

In investigating the methods used by magicians, the scientists believe they can gain insights into the mechanisms of the brain in the areas of attention and awareness.

Dr Susana Martinez-Conde, who is one of the researchers, commented: "Magicians have developed powerful cognitive principles and intuitions about attention and awareness that are not understood scientifically."

She continued: "We've been able to learn more about cognition from magicians who have developed illusions that trick audiences."

Meanwhile, the Times has reported that a leading British neuroscientist has said her number one goal is to see the development of an early detection method and a fully-effective treatment for Alzheimer's disease.

However, the news provider stated that Baroness Greenfield told the Edinburgh International Book Festival her work was still a long way off clinical trials and it could take a number of years to achieve success.

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