

Does anyone care anymore?

This was in the Denny & Lee Newsletter yesterday. I think many of us know the answer and it's ugly. For your consideration:

We just started our lecture schedule up again for the fall and I must say, I am very disappointed at the interest in lecturers. Below is a list of great lectures and it just seems that no one seems to care anymore. It is getting more and more difficult to get magicians away from their computers, plasma screens, DVD players, and instant magic downloads from unethical websites. Magic events are poorly attended, magic shops get no more visitors, and live lectures seem to be a thing of the past.

If you look at the magic on TV today and the magic that is being performed, it all seems to be highly edited, almost "unreal" and definitely not able to be performed in "real life" situations. I wonder where the young magicians of today will be in the next few years.

I go through a great effort (in both time and money) to bring these fine lecturers to our studio and the apathy makes me wonder if it is really worth the effort.

One of the most disappointing statements is "Well, I never heard of him." Guess what??? Somewhere in the world is the greatest plumber who ever lived and if you're not a professional plumber, then you will have never heard of him. It's the same with magic. It seems like the only reservations coming in are for the Mark Wilson lecture which is almost sold out.

Below is the current schedule of lecturers coming up in the next three months. Our first one is coming up in three more days and currently we have only three people signed up for this Award Winner. This will most likely be your only chance to ever see him lecture. Oh well, the world is changing, and maybe I should learn to change also. I hope not.

Drivel & Drool

The Cafe' continues to push the bar higher and higher when it comes to

raw stupidity.

Bill Palmer started a thread regarding an eBay auction that he felt was misleading / overpriced. The thread is [here](#). Personally, I think there are worse things on eBay, but that's not the point.

The Cafe' gestapo removed the link. What could possibly be the *purpose*? It seems they are personally out to disenfranchise one and all. Actually, I was surprised to see them step on one of the more visible names.

So You Want To Be An Illusionist?!

I'll admit a prejudice against what magicians call *illusions*:

- Most guys dancing around, pointing, strutting and posing while someone else does the work just look ridiculous.
- Every performer that wants to *add an illusion* to his act so he can demand more money, seems to, invariably, go out and buy some rickety Super-X and proceeds to fool no one. The only audience interest is hoping the assistant doesn't fall off as she sways back and forth like a Jack-In-The-Box.
- So often the acts look like they haven't bothered to rehearse.
- I'm seldom fooled by the tricks, even though I've never studied illusions.

Recently I had the opportunity to attend a lecture by a 1st class illusionist and came away with a new appreciation for some of them:

- That stuff is heavy and hauling it around and setting up is a lot of work
- The magician doesn't have to look like an escapee from *The Pink Dildo*
- Good props are very expensive, but the end product shows well. Very well.
- A good assistant is probably better trained than the magician. He exposed the *Mismade Girl* and the work that must be accomplished in a small space and in seconds is unbelievable.
- A good illusionists must spend a lot of time deciding what works for his

act and not just buy a fancy colored box to prance around.

I could never be an illusionist. Actually, I could never afford it, but that aside, it's just not me. I will, however, have a much greater appreciation for the performers the next time I see a good illusionist.

Drivel & Drool

[More Cafe' posts I won't read:](#)

***I know some super secret, inside shit that you don't - D. Watkins
Tomorrow - i/m Drops the **E Bomb!*****

How To Float With Sexy Shoes

I use Google as my home page. It's fast, reliable and easily customizable.

One of the items I get is the "*How To*" *Tip Of The Day*. Some of the stuff is kinda helpful. Yesterday was a popular article on how to remove scratches from CDs. Be careful taking advice, as it is nothing more than a Wiki, which means any fool with a computer can offer advice.

Anyway, recently it had How To Perform The Balducci Levitation. The description was so-so, but I believe anyone could learn it from the description. You think magic isn't popular? It's had about 50,000 hits to date.

ehow.com is supported by Google ads. Basically, Google *reads* the page and then places appropriate ads on the right side. This ad on the Balducci page caught my eye:

All Heels For Men will help you make the most of your feminine side! We offer a large selection of the sexiest heels, slippers, boots and stockings to make your legs look ladylike and alluring. We specialize in only sizes 9-17 especially for the

transgendered man! Our retail store will be happy to take your order by phone at 954-748-5855 between the hours of 11am-9pm Eastern Time. We ship worldwide and rush orders are available upon request.

All Heels For Men is the web's number one source for large-sized sexy shoes. If you are a crossdressing man who has a hard time finding the feminine shoes you love in large, hard to find sizes, your search is over! We have been serving the transgendered community for over ten years, and we look forward to serving you. Remember, refer to our size chart, or add two sizes to your male shoe size in order to find your female shoe size. Special requests are always welcome, and we will do our best to find just what your fantasy desires. Please email or call us!

Since the ads rotate with each access, you may or may not see this. Computer *logic* isn't always perfect. Then again.....

Drivel & Drool

Another Report From Douche Bag Central.....

Once again, an aristocratic, pompous ands unfair reply from the Cafe staffers (minor editing for readability):

Honest question posed: I have a friend who wants to sign up to the CafÃ©. BUt he is using a free email from yahoo. He got a message stating that free emails are blocked on this forum.

Is there a reason for doing so? There are so many people using free emails such as yahoo or hotmail. WHy prevent them from entering the CafÃ©?

Another user chimes in: My youngest son wanted to join recently, as he is interested in magic. He was disheartened and I was shocked that he was not allowed in because he doesn't have money to be able to afford an email account other than the free one.

Cafe developer with basic *Cafe Fuck Off Answer:* I can assure you there are very valid reasons for it, but I'm not going to explain them here.

Suffice to say if you ever run your own board of this size, you may eventually decide to do the very same thing, perhaps even for the very same reasons. Even if you didn't, you'd clearly understand why it's being done here.

Groveling user with every bone in his body wanting to suggest that developer perform unholy act with computer, but refrains due to Cafe policies: Gene, I don't mean to be disrespectful, or even contrary, but I don't think I'd ever block some one from coming on board on the basis of their being poor.

Case in point? My son.

There's no earthly reason for this approach except abuse. None. The answer wouldn't have taken a minute. The real question here is does Brooks hire pompous, intolerable douche bags are does he train them in his own image?

If anyone reading this has this email problem, ask one of your computer savvy friends. It's a very, very minor hurdle. There are hundreds of log ons available in the "underground". Just hunt around.

Once again, we award the *i/m Platinum Jackass* to the Magic Cafe' and its predicatable staff



Freebie That's Actually Worth Something

Yesterday, the October Genii arrived. For those of us that have subscribed since the Bill Larsen days, the first instinct is to say "which year?". Since Richard Kaufman has taken over, the publication schedule has been met with boring consistency. The magazine seems to be back on track, actually having magic in it,

after going through a period when it had as much magic as the *New Yorker*. I look forward to its arrival every month.

Included in the poly bag was a *demo* DVD from L&L. Included on the DVD are over 20 performances from their DVD stable and two full explanations, Mike Close's wonderful *Dr. Strangetrick* and the Larry Jennings' self-worker *Impossible*. The choice of tricks to explain is excellent. I've always considered the Close version of *Card Warp* to be the best and Larry's location trick is inexplicable.

The performances from prior DVDs, generally, are very good. A couple, like Flip's rope trick, are painfully obvious to any but the most magically challenged.

In recent months I've begun to find the L&L DVDs tiresome on many fronts - the audience, the choice of performers and too little magic on too many DVDs. Also, they were advertising well in advance of actual shipment, with no indication that the product wasn't actually ready.

The recent set, starring Joshua Jay, shows improvements in all of these areas. I hope it continues.

Drivel & Drool

The latest from Stalag Brooks

Sometimes I feel bad about beating up on the Cafe', but then reality sets in and I know that what they do must be exposed.

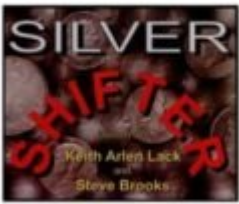
Here's a classic example, written by a long time user and genuinely helpful poster with close to 1,000 posts. You'll never see it, as it was deleted within a couple of hours:

Thank you, Magic Café, for deleting my posts in this thread. I'm only a long time member (four years) and obviously don't deserve at least a short message about the WHY behind this kind of censorship. It's getting better and better here.

Isn't that pathetic? Don't let me hear any of that bull shit about it's his site and he

can do as he pleases. There's right and there's wrong and this is **W-R-O-N-G**.

Fool Me Once



A year or two ago, I bought Silver Shifter - Steve Brooks' \$50 rubber coin. I swear that's what it is. It also came with some silver colored powder and a Q-Tip, I think.

If I rubbed the silver powder on the coin and I stood at one goal line of a football field and you stood at the other goal line it looks a little like a half dollar. Now I can perform miracles as long as you don't move any closer.

I bought this well before I understood Steve Brooks. Those of us that have bought magic over the years have opened many packages and felt seriously screwed, but NOTHING ever compared to opening the Silver Shifter package and realizing you had just paid 50 bucks for a fucking rubber coin. FIFTY BUCKS! Supposedly, they had high manufacturing costs.

Brooks promised aftermarket books and even a special section on the Cafe for purchasers. I understand it will now be a section of Cogitations II. If the man had an ounce of compassion he would have, at least, included a bottle of Vaseline with every purchase. I'm still sore.

The next release from the fertile mind that is Steve Brooks was something called Free Fall. Someone gave me this over a year ago and I never bothered to break the seal. After all the initial hoopla and congratulatory posts you would think we could see it on every street corner. Hell, I thought they may even make a TV series from it. To date, I've never seen anyone do it or mention it.

MagicChris, took his lips off Brooks' ass long enough to pen this:

That's right! Anyone that uses Free Fall or Silver Shifter knows how his

creative mind works!

Yes, Chris, I believe we do!

Having conquered the creative end of magic, Mein Brooks turns his considerable self to the craft of DVD production. He's a talented S.O.B. His latest effort is *The Rat Pack by Curtis Kam*. Peter Studebaker reviewed it in the September *Magic*. I won't fully recount the article. The final paragraph is sufficient:

If you build a better card trick the world will beat a path to your door. This ain't it.

Maybe, just maybe, I've figured out the problem. Peter's review says the performance was shot in a *pool hall/restaurant*. Talk about the fox in the hen house. How was Mein Brooks supposed to concentrate when he was working surrounded by french fries and hamburgers? The DVD never had a prayer. Never!

I'm told Curtis is a nice guy and a good performer. Too bad he teamed with this clown for a very visible project. I doubt the Cafe publicity offset the harm from the amateur production.

The Baby & The Bath Water

OK! The title is trite - it's Sunday and I'm tired and not particularly clever or original today.

Lost in all the hoopla over the Haydn/Sheets/Bush/MagiCentric/MagicWhack/MagicianX/Pinnard/Schneide/Kresk in/BabeRuth/HowieMandel.....etc. etc. uh..... controversy was the very real issue raised by MagiCentric in the original Haydn/Bush post. The lost point of the original post was there are 2 levels of accountability in magic when it comes to creation and crediting. First, there are the elite - I won't call names here as that's not the point - they can publish and produce anything and the magic world applauds. Statues are built in the park. The Magic Castle awards a fellowship and Steve Brooks gets so excited he *nearly* misses a meal.

Then there are piss ants like you and me. We can pull a rabbit out of a hat and some pious, self-righteous jackal will quickly inform us that that was developed by Reginald Scot and we should make arrangements with his estate before performing it again. It's the ethical thing to do.

Create an original idea and have it ripped off and we hear coincidence or that it was already in some underground notes privately circulated by Hofzinsler and the routine was well known among the cognoscenti.

Exaggerrated? Barely, if at all. It's sick and perverted.

Drivel & Drool

Is it possible?

I'm about to say something I've never said before and doubt I will say again. *I think the Magic Cafe **may** have done the right thing.* OK I said it and it felt REAL strange.

The giantormous thread about the 3 shell DVD is G-O-N-E as far as I can tell. I hope someone captured it. Unfortunately, I've been away and didn't have the opportunity.

My gut tells me that there's something else going on here. Brooks' boys seemed to have things well in hand last time I looked. MagicianX, always on top of things, wrote about Al Schneider's posts in the thread. It may well be that the only face saving move Brooks could make was trashing the whole thread after Al called out some of that hypocritical cadre of idiots.

As I often said in my years at Arthur Andersen, "if you hear the truth, it is nothing but a statistical anomaly". Likewise, if the Cafe does the right thing it is merely a cosmic accident that will shake the space/time continuum to its knees.