

Housekeeping - 10/2007



The change to WordPress has gone well. There's a lot to learn, though.

We're committed to making this blog the most technically advanced one in magic. That we can control and will accomplish. You, on the other hand, will have to determine whether it is a place you want to visit frequently - hopefully daily.

We're adding features like the ability to subscribe by email, email posts to a friend and easily print well formatted output.

Additionally content is coming.

Some things we've tried have already been pulled.

If you see a feature you like - or don't like - let us know. We can only succeed if you like what we do.

Take care.....



Blog briefs



There's some pretty good stuff going on in blogland these days. For any of us writing blogs, it's an ego thing. Whether we're trying to be entertaining,

controversial, instructive or just screwing around, weâ€™re making the large assumption that we have something worth reading â€” at least by some people.

Writing a blog takes time and thought. If youâ€™re reading one regularly and like what you see â€” leave a comment. I can assure you that it is appreciated. If the blog sucks, then move on. It will wither and die if enough people feel that way.

Anyway, hereâ€™s a brief look at some of the blogs I read and whatâ€™s going on:

Unexpected Wonders â€” Jim Coles writes the most thoughtful posts about magic of anyone currently available. As I write this, heâ€™s complaining about being 44. Hell! Iâ€™ve got socks older than that!

Reverie â€” Tom Frankâ€™s very personal magic blog. I could never be comfortable exposing myself the way Tom does, but heâ€™s been a regular poster for a long time and those of us that follow his blog really feel like we know him.

An interesting man. His description is very telling â€” *Just celebrated the 21st anniversary of my 21st birthday. Crazy about a girl named Polly. Love to Swing Dance. Trick Deck Pitchman. I have 4 kids who won't speak to me.* See what I mean.

Be sure to catch some of his videos he makes available. The one on the linking rings is superb.

The Wizard's Ball â€” Mike only posts sporadically. I wish we saw more of him. His recent post is about the disappearing Cafe topics which we continue to endure. He comes to a conclusion that I disagree with strongly:

Instead of crapping themselves every time a naysayer comes along perhaps the Cafe could learn something and perchance improve by allowing a bit of healthy debate.

Go on Steve you know you want to.

The last thing that group wants is open discussion.

The Phantom Notebooks â€” Heâ€™s just begun a review of the Rob Stiff / MagicMakers production of Wesley James 7 DVD set *The Man Who Knows*

Erdnase. Actually it's more like a public execution. e.g. his conclusion on DVD #1: *A completely pointless and useless DVD.... and yet still the best of this 7 disc set*. I'm not a good one to comment here as I'm no fan of Wesley James either. Don't miss the series if you are into cards, at all.

Magicforge Blog Tracker " Although the MagicForge blog has been dormant since February, the blog tracker continues to perform a valuable service. Do yourself a favor and subscribe to the RSS feed. It makes it very easy to keep up with the status and postings of all the major magic blogs.

Take care.....



A person who trusts no one can't be trusted.

Ethics - Tim Ellis and the usual i/m drivel

I don't know Tim Ellis, but from everything I read and in talking with people that do know him, he's one of the genuine *good guys*. His recent post raises a huge number of ethical issues that magicians must resolve " **if they care**. He's obviously given this a lot of thought. I'll be posting some thoughts in the near future and strongly suggest that any readers here click over to Tim's blog and give your input.

Anyway, this subject brought to mind a prior post:



<Originally Posted September 26, 2005>

I'm going to talk about ethics today. Not magic ethics, in particular, but human morality as we old timers call it.

Understand, the stuff people call *marketing* today had a simpler and more easily understood moniker in my day - *lying*. As examples, I'm choosing a couple of magic related items, because I know them best.

The first is from the Genii Forum. Kaufman generally doesn't allow comments on items for sale, but this one got through:
http://geniimagazine.com/forum/cgi-bin/ultimatebb.cgi?ubb=get_topic;f=14;t=005153

In short someone is announcing an eBay sale of: *Cards as Weapons Ricky Jay s/c FIRST PRINT*

Richard Hatch, a knowledgeable man on these things calls the seller to task:

Just a quick note, the CARDS AS WEAPONS you list is the 1988 Warner reprint, not the Darien House first printing from 1977 (simultaneously published in both hardcover and softcover). The listing should be corrected. Good luck with your sale!

It was pointed out that the listing was technically correct as this was a *First Printing* of the Warner edition. Billary Clinton would be proud! Anyway, the response deserves a complete recitation:

*Usually I don't respond to people who respond to things I've posted. I've noticed that in other areas (alt.magic, magiccafe, etc.) it just becomes a meaningless dialogue that ends in someone bringing up Hitler's name (forget what that's called...it actually has a name). But I respect the Genii Forum and the people on it, so I'll respond to this. I don't feel I did anything illegal, immoral, unethical. I'm sure you're all aware that the subject line of an eBay auction is two fold: for searches, and to pique interest. The character limit is, I think, 50 or so letters, so the subject line needs to be brief. You post only that which will be in people's searches, and that which will get an interest in people. I've done both. I guess I could've put in the subject: "Warner Edition" but it wouldn't have fit and also, that's not something most people search for, not something that means too much to people. Maybe for collectors it does, but for the general population who just want this book for whatever reason (for investment, to learn card throwing, to have something by Ricky Jay, to see a naked woman) whatever the reason, *most* people don't care about Warner. So I put First Edition in the subject line to get me in the searches, and to intrigue. It is now the buyers obligation to read further, WHERE I DID PUT THAT IT'S A WARNER EDITION 1988 (nothing illegal, immoral, unethical here). If someone buys this book (or any auction) just by looking at the subject line and going no further into the description, they're fools. Anyway, I hope posting this does something positive (I never would've responded like this in any other forum (including KJ) and hope no one brings up Hitler's name.*

Let's look at this response. Firstly the limit is more than 50 and *Cards as Weapons Ricky Jay s/c FIRST PRINT - Warner Ed.* would have fit just fine. The whole *Caveat Emptor* mentality makes me ill. No amount of rationalization can possibly

obscure the fact that a non-misleading title was very possible and while I must agree that nothing *illegal* was done, I'll pass on agreeing about the *immoral* and *unethical*. Personally, I would have no problem if the title merely stated the book and author. This would accomplish what he wished for searches and not mislead people. This is assuming he stated the year, etc. in the description.

I fear most people won't understand what this is about and that's a crying shame.



<PS>

Any ugly warts?



We just upgraded to WordPress 2.3.

Everything seems to be running fine, but I always worry about latent problems. Please let me know if you see anything that doesn't seem right.

The email is intenselymagic@gmail.com

Take care.....



Political Correctness

[Drivel & Droll](#)

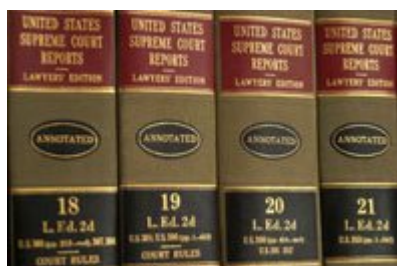


[Political Correctness](#)

Why does everyone profess to despise it, but it continues to pervade every corner of our lives? I long ago suggested that sports teams be named after vegetables - e.g. **the fighting broccoli**. This cartoonist seems to get it:



The Rules



I find certain rules absolutely immutable:

*There **ARE** bad tricks*

A good magician can make a bad trick less crappy - he can't make it good

Without surprise there is NO magic

Most magicians are better off without the story trick or emotional hook

Any trick that leaves the spectator with only 1 solution (and it is usually the right solution) is a bad trick

A layman is something more than someone who drools on our cards and is barely potty trained

*The magician in trouble theme **seldom** plays well*

Take care.....

