

Smoke ‘em if you got ‘em

I consider Jim Coles a friend, even though I never met him in the classic sense. He’s a fellow blogger and a good guy. You only need to look at his postings like The Geek Factor to realize Jim really thinks about and cares about magic.

Jim asked me to read and give my honest opinion on his latest manuscript ***Under Cover***. *Under Cover* is a 22 page pdf describing one of Jim’s pet effects – a spectators initialed quarter appears under the cellophane wrapper of a sealed cigarette pack. As with all good tricks, it can be described in a simple sentence, so it has something going for it.

The pdf is carefully photo-illustrated and Jim precisely describes the performance and preparation. To his credit, he also divulges the weaknesses of the effect:

- 1. It’s not done by real magic.*
- 2. You use a pack of cigarettes. This obviously means your a Communist and child molester. (As a former smoker, I resent the fervor of the anti-smoking crowd, which puts this at the top of the criminal heap. Meanwhile, the CEOs and CFOs are robbing us blind and laughing their asses off – but I digress.)*
- 3. No instant reset – this is not an any time any where impromptu trick. It is primarily for formal shows and those occasions where you really need to impress.*
- 4. It’s not difficult, but the setup requires some patience and precision.*

Actually, a short list. Everything has been audience tested over the years and I can’t imagine anyone having questions after reading the manuscript, but I’m sure Jim will be there to help if you need it.

Why you should by this:

- 1. The effect is off beat and not seen very often.*
- 2. It’s easily understood from a spectator’s viewpoint. You won’t lose their attention and they don’t have to remember anything.*

3. *This is a fully honed, professional routine and if it is the kind of trick you do, I can't think of a better alternative.*

4. *It's one of the rarest things in magic - a true **bargain**. It's available at Library.com for \$6.50. The price of a Frappacino and a lot less fattening.*

5. *You end clean. I can't stress the importance here. I've seen the best in the world finish routines dirty and they all look as if someone has them by the kajonies and are about to squeeze. There's too much good magic to perform tricks where there's a stench in the air from finishing dirty.*

6. *You don't have to endure terrible, overbearing music in the ads while miracles are performed for a motley collection of street bums and space queens.*

In summary - I really liked it. It's the kind of magic I like - direct, memorable and unfathomable. It requires enough thought and preparation, that you won't see everyone else doing, but there's nothing beyond the reach of the average magician.

In the right hands, you could make a serious reputation with this. I doubt you'll have women tearing off their clothes, but then again.....