

The Shifting Shaft

There's an old country expression - *Like getting shit on your finger*, used when something just won't go away. No matter how hard you wash, how much soap you use, the odor remains.

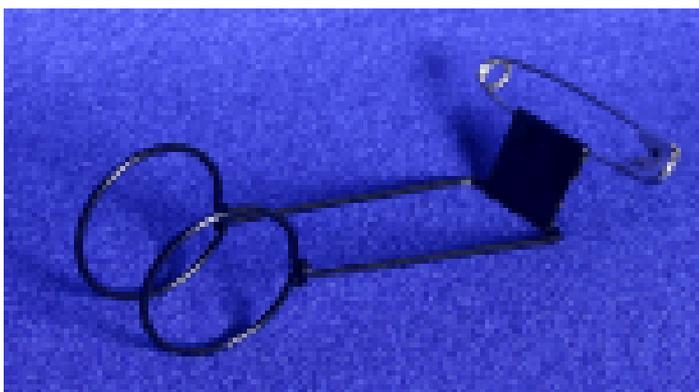


After 12 long years, I began to think the stench from [Silver Shifter](#) was finally beginning to dissipate, then this morning I ran across this. **The return of Silver Shifter!** Oh the humanity. Admittedly, it is now \$15, so you only get screwed out of 15 bucks, rather than 50.

Have they no shame? Have they no shame?

I Can't Write 'Em This Good

Penguin has a brass ball holder for sale.....



Too easy. I'll stop here.

Take care.....

i/m

i/m Not At FFFF -- AGAIN!!



To those that have been married for more than a few weeks, I assume that you have been drug to something called a *house walk* or *home show*. This is where you pay money to go look at houses and stuff you can't afford. I've never understood that. "Gee, honey, look at that \$50,000 gold shower. That would certainly look great in our master bathroom." Yeah, it probably would, but the chance of it ever being there is nil.

Call me jealous or envious and I guess you're probably right, but why should I pay good money to look at shit only CEOs and other thieves can afford? Again, I'm in the minority as these events continue to draw a lot of people.

Scott Wells, a good dude from all indications, is doing his current podcast from Fecht's annual bash. You can find it [here](#). I'm not a podcast person, but I understand he does a very credible job and if you are interested, this is probably the place to go. For me, all I see is:



The convention always sounds like fun for the in crowd. I would blame the USPS for my failure to receive an invite, but I have been through at least a dozen postal carriers and I'm beginning to think it's not their fault.

Obie, maybe it's time you get some new clipart and create a sign that's a little more modern. This is frighteningly dated, but maybe there's something cool here that I don't understand.

This is your old buddy i/m signing off from *parts unknown* rather than New York. Get use to it.



I/M's Got Goat Pellets



Sometimes the well gets damn dry. I feel bad not posting more often and I refuse to use the old *life happens*. Of course it happens, but you knew that when you started a blog, so it's a lousy excuse.

I've been writing this blog off and on for many years. I haven't checked, but it's genesis is probably as old as any that are still around. It used to be easier. There were more things to get worked up about and frankly, people just cared more. Today the Magic Café doesn't even get enough idiot traffic to be worthwhile. Sure, those that are there are not missing any MENSA meetings, but they are mostly harmless and dull.

A lot of the new stuff comes in the form of video downloads and most of them are cheap and uninspired. What's happened to all of those life-changing tricks that we waited months for, paid for on a prepublication basis and then were delivered crap - if we got anything at all. That's gone. Even the long promised Martin Gardner book was finally delivered.

I should explain the title here. The title was originally *I/M's Got Bupkis*. Once I wrote that I realized I really didn't know, exactly, what the word *bupkis* actually meant. I did a little research and came up with the following:

Often translated as meaning small round fecal pellets, referring to the shape of goat droppings. A colorful usage, though a more emphatic expression (in Yiddish more so than in English) is "bupkis mit kaduchas" ([????????](#) [???](#) [?????](#)) (bobkes mit kadokhes), translating roughly to "shivering shit balls".

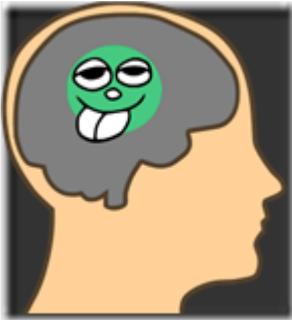
So it's literally, *I/M's Got Goat Shit*.

I guess that's fair.

Take care.....



Thinking Like A Magician-Part 1



Mike Close is certainly one of my favorite magicians. I am referring to him in his magician role, not as a person. Actually, in my few brief encounters with him he's always been a little bit of a dick.

Anyway he is the creator of one of my favorite tricks, The Pothole Trick. When properly performed it is totally inexplicable and provides both magical and other entertainment and gives the performer plenty of opportunity to banter with his spectators.

If you watch the DVD the amount of thought that he has put into the actual workings of this trick is amazing. Mike Close thinks like a magician and there is nothing wrong with that. Two of the finest performers in the world, Mike Close and David Williamson both give great credit to their audience as far as their ability to diagnose and figure out their tricks. Both of them take great pains in making sure that the spectators are fooled as well as entertained. When I hear someone say *you're thinking like a magician*, I consider it a compliment, not a valid criticism.

One point in particular in the explanation of the Pothole Trick really caught my attention. Towards the end of the trick the spectator is given one of the business cards with the hand that is dirty. We've all been there and it's damned uncomfortable. He talks at length about the necessity of waiting a beat before removing the hand to avoid it being the only thing in action and thereby calling attention to it. He's exactly right.

Watch a few demos online. I have particularly noticed in the Penguin tricks how so many of the performers try to remove the dirt with light speed and as Mike points out, you are drawn to that hand. It's a natural reaction.

Believe me, start thinking like a magician and quit believing that your audience are a bunch of drooling idiots. There are not. They are real people, not magicians.

Silver Shafter



I missed an important anniversary recently. It was just over 10 years ago when I reviewed Steve Brooks' masterpiece, Silver Shifter - the magic trick destined to change the way we perceive our universe and our very being.

For those that may be interested (and I strongly suggest it) you can find the original post at <http://intenselymagic.com/2005/09/18/fool-me-once/>. Especially if you are unfamiliar with this, I think you might find it of interest. For some additional historical perspective, these posts on [Genii](#) are priceless.

Actually, Brooks is the one that should be laughing. He's got my 50 bucks and I've got jack squat. I kind of wish I had that thing on my shelf as a reminder of a lot of things. Unfortunately, I didn't keep it. Maybe he'll bring it back as part of a new *Deluxe* line.

Take care...

