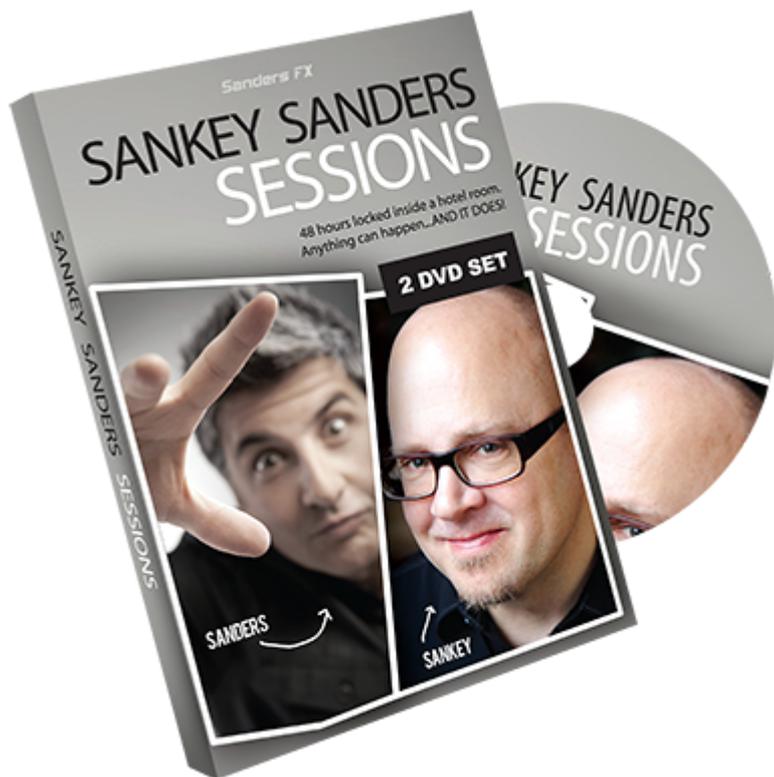


# Are We Really That Gullible?



This is a re-release from approximately 10 years ago. At that time I described it as **two guys fucking around in front of a camera and trying to sell it**. After all of these years, this release can best be described as **two guys fucking around in front of a camera and trying to sell it**. I didn't look at the whole thing again, as I have much better things to do. I'm sure there's some fool on the Café willing to say they got their money's worth if they get just one good idea from any DVD. If I only get one good idea I feel screwed. Actually, I can't recall getting any good ideas from this release, but surely there is something worthwhile if you're willing to dig it out. I'm not! I'm assuming this has been released to take advantage of the buzz that has been created by the new releases from Richard Sanders. Hopefully, we'll get a chance to look at some of them in the future. A couple are pretty good. Nothing in the class of Extreme Burn or his rope material, though. I like both of these guys. Over the years they have produced some really good magic. They've also produced a lot of Turkey's. It's the nature of the business.

I was recently looking at Wayne Houchen's *Sinful*, which was his attempt to milk the popularity of his terrific *Quarter In Soda Can*. (Actually, there's some presentational ideas on that disk which may make it worth your money). In his interview with Paul Harris he talks about the time, in his late teens, when his

creativity was at its peak. He hasn't had that kind of inspiration since then and probably never will. The same can be said of Sankey and Sanders. Look at any creative magician and you'll see a diminution in the quality of their output as they get older. If it's not clear yet - save your money. Buy one of Richard Kaufman's latest reprints. That will be far better use of your money in my opinion.



One other thing that I nearly forgot. There is approximately 2 1/2 hours of material on these two DVDs. I would really hate to see what was left on the cutting room floor, but at least fill them up fellers. This is actually shameful.

 [Posted with Blogsy](#)

---

## 7 Boobs and a Magic Trick

Big Blind Media is certainly taking advantage of the overhead camera to explain this trick on their latest release *Ultimate Self Working Card Tricks Volume 2*.



Now don't you understand the workings better!

L&L Phase 2.

By the way, this isn't a bad collection at all. Some of the big names in card magic have contributed decent tricks. I just personally find tricks of this genre tedious and more mathematical than mystical.

---

## Missed Target



I've spent a good bit of time over the last couple of days watching John Bannon's latest DVD effort, *Bullet Party*. It's not bad, just uninspired. It reminds me so much of the later efforts of Ammar, Malone and Osterlind. They just seem tired and the best material was already used. All of the excitement and energy shown in the earlier DVDs just wasn't there. I feel the same way about *Bullet Party*. This DVD set consists of two DVDs and two sets of cards for the headlining packet tricks. It's a good value. There's actually enough material for two DVDs, which is not always the case recently. Bannon has certainly improved his on camera persona. His introductions to each trick are very well done. I guess standing in the woods introducing card tricks is now the thing to do since the Paul Harris boxed set. I don't understand that, nor do I understand performing the tricks while sitting on a weight bench in a workout room. Maybe somebody can explain it to me. It's not that the tricks are bad, it's just that I've come to expect so much more from him. I'm glad I got it and certainly don't feel screwed, but I'm certainly not excited. OH!! One other thing. They traded Sammie Pennington for David Solomon. I don't care which side of the tracks you play on, that's not a good deal!

i/m



**Another i/m tip:** Carry a small mirror with you when you perform. Before going “on stage” look at yourself in the mirror. If you are wearing a dunce cap, fez or other humorous item on your head. TAKE IT OFF! It’s not funny and you look ridiculous.

---

## Damn! That dude is cool

✘ I see that Big Blind Media is about to produce their second set of videos featuring John Bannon, Bullet Train. It is available now for pre-order according to an ad on the Café. To their credit, I didn’t see a promised delivery date.

The [trailer on their site](#) shows John performing an intriguing looking trick. There’s a neat magicians throw off and the use of several different types of preprinted cards. I’ve never seen anything quite like it and it looks as if it would have some commercial usage.

I think Big Blind Media is taking the right approach here to combat piracy. The two disc set is priced at \$40, rather than pricing it like it has the secret to immortality as so many seem to be doing now, and it comes with a dozen or so preprinted cards. I’m not so naïve as to believe that this will eliminate copying, but I certainly thinks it makes it less attractive.

The previously mentioned trailer shows John performing in a basement, I guess. It seems that using basements, caves, jail cells, etc. are very much in vogue. I’m not sure why.

A little bit of advice here Fellers. I consider John Bannon to be one of the great creators of magic in the past 20 years, but he will never be cool. I imagine John

would be among the first to agree. Just let him present his magic in a straight forward fashion and do away with the attempts at artistic filming and editing. He's just not the right subject.

Having said that, I am anxious to see the DVDs. I always get something worthwhile out of every thing he publishes.

Until Cardzilla....

(I hope they're still using Sammie. What a nice diversion during the weaker efforts)

---

## Bob White's Card Magic - A Practical Approach



I recently had a chance to briefly view Bob White's most recent DVD, *Card Magic - A Practical Approach*. I like him and his magic.

His earlier works have been seemingly well received. Personally, I thought his work on the Malini Egg bag was exceptional and the *Torn and Restored Tissue* DVD can be considered the definitive work on the subject.

I'm not so impressed with his current effort. The theme of the DVD is uniformity of action. An unquestionably important and somewhat overlooked subject, but not ground breaking. Bob teaches his work on multiple lifts, the Elmsley count, the Gemini Count, false counts and a one handed Tilt. It's OK and I thought the work

on the double lift was the best, but when it was over I found my self saying *so what*.

The tricks using the sleights taught are less than inspiring. Bob's not a showman and the tricks for the most part are pedestrian. There are about 10 of them. Others may find them better than I did.

Bob is one of the magic untouchables, so I don't think the reviews I've seen are particularly honest. It's difficult to criticize nice guys - especially underground legends.

Also, these are premium priced DVDs and this is not a premium product. Cut the price in half and it would be OK - at \$50 bucks? No way!

---

## **I think I'll just play with the box**



One of the funnest (yeah, I know - just trying to sound like the street types that permeate every DVD) things I ever did was attend a convention where Paul Harris was the headline attraction. Not only was he the featured act and lecturer, but if you were lucky enough to register early and had \$25 (a big deal then) you had a small group session with Paul. He was a charming host and willingly helped everyone. I was a fan before the convention and that experience only served to reinforce and magnify my appreciation of the man and his work. This was well before Paul went away to contemplate. I continue to be a huge fan to this date and his 3 volume set of his writings is my most valuable magic possession.

After a number of months I finally got around to viewing all of the his DVD set, *True Astonishments*. The Café has nearly 70,000 views and well over 1000 posts

on this DVD set. Not surprisingly, the majority of the comments there had nothing but good to great things to say. As a matter of fact, I can't honestly recall a negative comment. This may be the first.

I am not writing this easily. Like many others, some of my most pleasant magical moments were spent with Paul's books. Even though they were production nightmares in the comb bound format, the content was just plain fun. Don't get me wrong, there were plenty, and I do mean plenty, of misses in those books. There were also the beginnings of some of today's most popular and varied tricks. Like many other authors with voluminous output e.g. Sankey, Osterlind, Lorayne, Ammar etc. most of the good stuff occurs in the early writings and the quality tends to peter out as more books and DVDs are produced. Maybe they should be more like Alexander the Great and despair over no more worlds to conquer rather than issuing substandard crap. I fully expect Harry Lorayne's next book to be nothing but pictures of him admiring himself in the mirror.

*True Astonishments* comes in a cleverly designed wooden box and is an absolute artistic success - at least externally. The actual content on the DVD is, at best, derivative and, at worst, just plain bad. Paul introduces the DVDs talking about the long delay between the announcement and the actual issuance of the product. I can't help but believe that in his heart he knew there wasn't a lot there.

Many of the effects are performed by Bro something or other. I believe he had something to do with Criss Angel. His performances are *competent*. That's the best I can say. I personally like Wayne Houchen and he is, by far, the best of the presenters. The rest of them, to be kind, are terrible. The soundless teaching sessions are okay - that is if you want to learn any of this stuff.

I would assume most magicians plunking down 300 bucks for this set assumed they were getting Paul Harris. He was a wonderful performer. Too bad we don't get to see him in action. Fortunately, I guess, there really isn't 9 DVDs worth of material here, so the agony doesn't last as long as you might expect.

Every effect has the cleverly spelled *Phoote Notes* link which cuts to Paul playing Grizzly Adams somewhere in the Northwest woods. He's as likable as always and, I guess, the comments are worthwhile. I must say, though, that the definition of [\*polishing a turd\*](#) in an earlier post applies in most every case.

Paul, you can do better. I've seen it.

***(Note to the production crew - cutting different performances into small pieces and then gluing them together into a single performance with different spectators isn't artistic - it's just irritating.)***