

It was 50 years ago



this year that one of the most important things to happen to close-up magic occurred. Harry Lorayne published *Close-Up Card Magic*. This was closely followed by two small paperbacks *Personal Secrets* and *My Favorite Card Tricks*. I've always considered the threesome to be a single event.

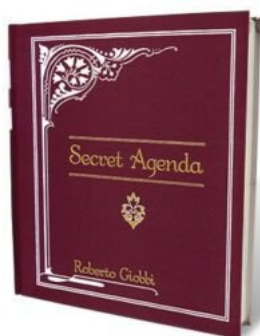
Like many others I cut my teeth on this book. There are items in there that I continue to see performed with great regularity. Harry also brought a new informal style of writing to the forefront and his *afterthoughts* were I think, a stroke of genius. Just this week, I took the book out again and some of the thrill returned that I experienced many, many years ago. I suggest that anyone that has the book on their shelves do the same.

Those of us that admired Harry certainly regret to see what has happened to him over the past few years. He has become mean and just plain cruel to anyone that dares to question anything he has done. A lot of the douche bags on the Café want to excuse him and I would like to do the same, but this has been going on too long to blame it on age. The fact is, has never again achieved the level he first reached 50 years ago and his last overpriced book was an embarrassment.

He will always have *Close-Up Card Magic* as a monument to be enjoyed by future generations. Time will gradually heal the many wounds he has opened among his former admirers.

Secret Agenda - A book you must

have



As I have said before, we are very fortunate that our silly little hobby attracts many people with extraordinary intelligence and passion. Sure, we have more than our share of idiots (see Magic Café), but we are also blessed to have people like Jim Steinmeyer and Robert Giobbi among us.

Recently I have spent some time with Giobbi's book called *Daily Agenda*. The name and the structure he has chosen is somewhat unfortunate and trivializes much of what he is doing, in my opinion. There was a blog earlier this year that was going to track his writings on a daily basis, but like many of us with good intentions it seemed to die on the vine.

If you haven't seen this book, it has short articles for each day of the year. They run the gamut from jokes to very deep thoughts. He might spend three or four days on the ambitious card, the handling of a break, or simple reviews of obscure methods. I particularly have enjoyed his references to some of the favorites moves and tricks of Fred Kaps. It's too bad that Kaps died at such an early age and so little of what he did was captured. His choice of material and methodology seems to have been impeccable.

Do yourself a favor and grab a copy of this book. You'll thank me.