

# Ring 170 and SAM 99 "The Bev and Alouise Bergeron Ring

May 25, 2022 | Archived Famulus



**We have live meetings again.**

**Be kind and courteous. Masks are suggested. but not required.**

Our May meeting was unique. We had three special guests. Nelson Lugo (NY), Jordan Rooks (Las Vegas, NV), & Ben Price (Canada) on-hand for a unique panel discussion. They talked about their magic careers, experience performing in different markets & venues ,including their on-going shows at this year's Orlando Fringe Festival. They explained their creative process and how they developed their current shows, business, and marketing advice. Magic shows are popular at Fringe Festivals.

We followed the presentation with our monthly show. Adrian Lopez cut to four aces in a shuffled deck in a spectator's hand in another move all the aces turned over in the deck.

Greg Solomon had a clever presentation for the In and Out boxes. Then he showed an invisible string that moved an object. Our own "Dr. Bog" volunteered to help Greg with a card trick. Greg riffled through a deck of cards and told him to ,"Tell me when to stop" ( meaning stopping the card riffle) and Dr. Bog looked up and asked... "What? Stop the trick?". Greg and the audience could not stop laughing. A card was selected and put in a half-size deck and Dr. Bog was asked to find it. After another big laugh, Greg showed that all the cards were the same.

Brian Sullivan said that he would break some rules in doing card tricks. One rule was never do the same effect twice. With some fancy handling, he cut to two cards, twice, face up and face down. Then he cut to the same cards four times and finally to all four aces.

Vente concluded the show by borrowing two decks and had a card selected from each deck and they matched.

\*\*\*\*\*



### **Dennis Deliberations ... Ring # 170, Assembly #99**

#### **“The Bev and Alouise Bergeron Ring”**

Adam Smith wrote in the [\*Theory of Moral Sentiments\*](#),

*“To a real wise man, the judicious and well-weighed approbation of a single wise man*

*gives more heartfelt satisfaction than all the noisy applauses of ten thousand ignorant though enthusiastic admirers.”*

\*\*\*\*\*

### **Breaking News from Las Vegas Review – Journal**



David Blaine to launch Las Vegas Strip residency this fall

David Blaine’s evolution from street magician to Strip headliner will be complete this fall.

The extreme illusionist is headed for the Theatre at Resorts World Las Vegas in September, according to multiple sources familiar with his production plans.

Blaine spoke of his plans Saturday night while attending the David Foster show at Encore Theater at Wynn Las Vegas.

While standing in the concession line, the star performer ran into Las Vegas residents and entertainment fans Kris and Barbie Dahl. Blaine told the couple he would be opening at Resorts World residency in September, information that has been independently confirmed.

Blaine is to head up a magic production in rotation with Theatre superstar headliners Katy Perry, Luke Bryan, Carrie Underwood and (hopefully by the end of this year) Celine Dion. Blaine is considered among the most famous illusionists in the world, known for such

endurance stunts as living in a glass box for several days without break. He has performed such street illusions as defying gravity and is also an expert at close-up magic.

Resorts World President Scott Sibella is not ready to make any formal announcements, saying of Blaine, “We would love to have him in our family, but nothing now to announce.” Sibella was a top executive at MGM Grand, where David Copperfield is the resident superstar headliner. Sibella also operated Luxor in the days Criss Angel and Cirque were in partnership at its primary theater.

By [John Katsilometes](#) Las Vegas Review-Journal

\*\*\*\*\*

Wow, a whole store for just one coin trick!



## MAGIC ROADSHOW SPECIAL #13 Summer 2022

Great Ideas. Click and enjoy

[MAGIC-ROADSHOW-SPECIAL-13.pdf \(magicroadshow.com\)](#)

\*\*\*\*\*



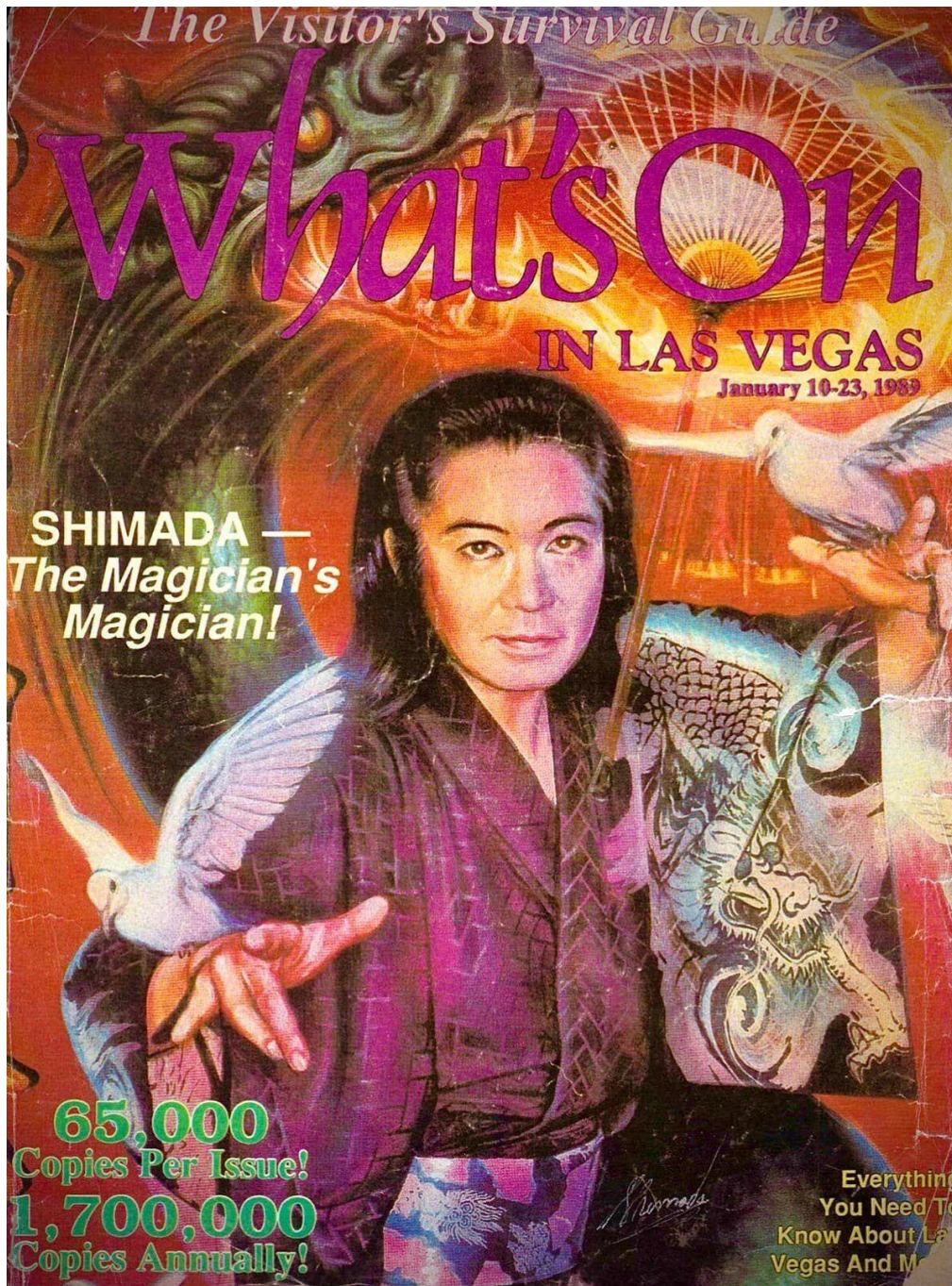
**If you are a magician and  
your friends are  
magicians, they  
are not your competition,  
they are an inspiration.**

**Learn how to give them  
your support.**



\*\*\*\*\*

The great Shimada passes at age 80.



Shimada is no longer with us. His name and memory will live on forever through recordings of his act, the magic techniques he created, and the countless magicians he has inspired.

There are few truly original people in this world and Shimada was one of them. The magic world lost an icon. Sayonara Shimada, thanks for your inspiration. You will be missed.



\*\*\*\*\*

Simon Lovell from a few years ago.



\*\*\*\*\*

I like this improvement of the classic Yagamo suspension.  
It seems to make a whole lot more sense.

I would slightly shorten her skirt and add fake toes that pivot down.

\*\*\*\*\*

Few know that Alex Elmsley was into mathematics and was a computer programmer! It appears that he may have reinvented the “Hamming Code” which is a binary data check algorithm for digital data.

Modern error check codes like “Reed-Solomon” interlace the matrix. This is the way a scratched CD or DVD is still playable. The code corrects the errors up to a point.

### **The Octal Pencil by Alex Elmsley**

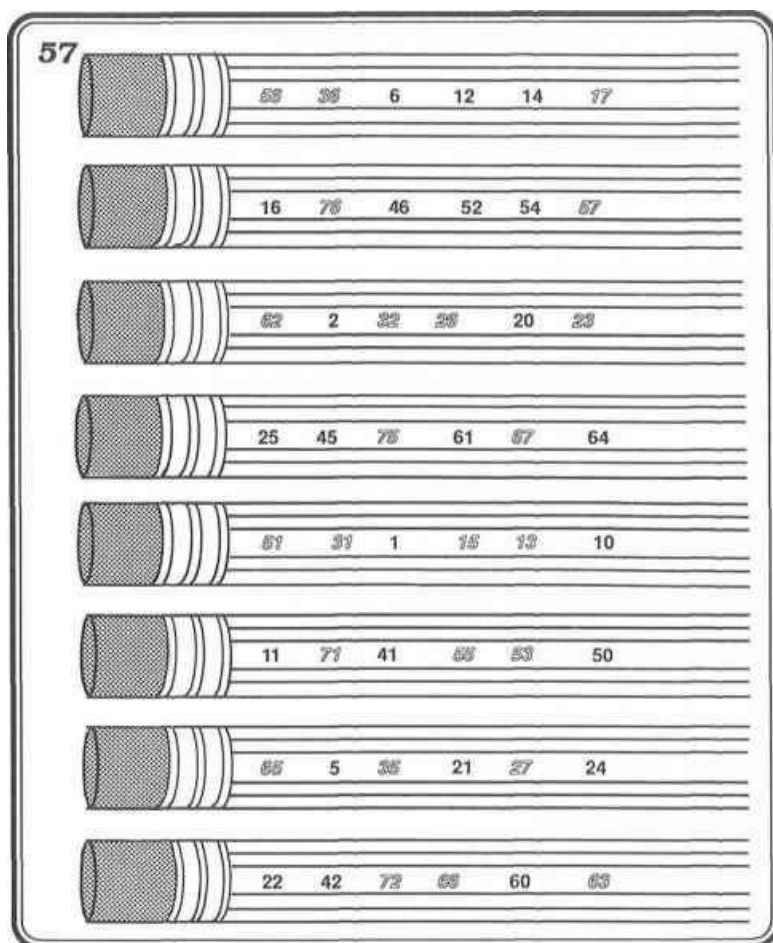
Effect: A spectator is handed a special pencil that has a series of six numbers printed on each of its eight sides (Figure 57, next page). These numbers are all different and some are printed in red, others in black. The spectator is told to choose any one of the sides of the pencil he wishes and to call out only the colors of the numbers there. However, as he does so, he is to lie about the color of one of the six numbers. This number is his choice as well.

The performer turns away from him, making visual cues impossible, and listens to the spectator's recitation of colors. Then, though no numbers have been mentioned, the performer correctly names the number at the miscalled color. The feat can be repeated with unvarying success.

Method: This astonishing effect is based on an ingenious mathematical arrangement that Mr. Elmsley calls a "liar's matrix". Consider the following eight sequences:

Examination will show that each of these sequences is unique. More interesting still, if you transform any single element in any one of the sequences from an I to an O or vice versa, that sequence remains unique. Other such matrices can be constructed, but we will work with the one above.

Next, octal notation must be explained.



It is a simple idea. You will probably have noticed that the sequences shown are built in the binary digits of Is and Os. With the age of personal computers fully arrived, binary mathematics is recognized by a much larger population than it was a few years ago. Hence, the following binary notation for the numbers 0 through 7 may already be familiar,

If binary notation is new to you, the logical progression of these eight binary numbers can be quickly understood, and they are easily [memorized](#). Now, let's analyze the first of the sequences in our liar's matrix:

O-O-I-I-I-O. These six digits, or "hits", can be split into two binary numbers: the first three bits, O-O-I: and the last three bits, I-I-O.  $O-O-I = 1$  and  $I-I-O = 6$ .  $1-6 = 16$ . 16 is the octal notation for this sequence. Octal is nothing more than a simple shorthand for bit patterns. Here are several more examples:

It is important that you understand the octal system, as this trick and the two subsequent ones rely on it.

Now to the trick itself. The eight series of numbers the spectator finds on the pencil handed him are shown in Figure 57.

The outline numbers in italic are printed in red and the solid numbers in black.

An eight-sided pencil or pen is required to hold all these numbers. In the States, at least, six-sided pencils are more common, and the trick can be done with six sequences of numbers, rather than eight. The reason for placing the numbers on a pencil, aside from novelty, is that there is an observable pattern in the formation of the numbers in these sequences. Within each row, the second digit of the first three numbers is the same; as is the first digit of the last three numbers. It is unlikely that these regularities would be



perceived unless the spectator were given enough time to examine the sequences closely. However, by wrapping the sequences around a pencil, this element of the matrix is made more difficult to discover. If the preparation of such a pencil is not appealing to you, the eight number sequences can instead be written one on each side of four blank cards.

Hand the pencil or cards to someone and ask him to decide on one of the eight series of numbers, letting no one else know which it is. He is then to choose one of the six numbers in that series. Turn your back as he does this and have him recite just the colors of his chosen numbers, reading from left to right. But as he does this, he is to lie about the color of his chosen number. "If it is red, say it is black; if black, say it is red. Don't, however, get carried away and tell me the number is green or purple. Since everyone knows the numbers are all either red or black, it would take no special powers to recognize your lie. Try to make your lie as difficult to detect as possible." This precaution against a predictable jest is necessary, as such a fledgling attempt at humor by the spectator can only diminish the desired effect.

Astonishingly, it is the spectator's lie that identifies the chosen number for you. As an example, assume he calls out, "Black, red, red, black, black, red."

Your reply: "Ah, the subtle overtones in your voice tell my trained ear that you were lying about the number forty-six." How do you know? Think of black as I and red as O in binary. The sequence BLACK-RED-RED-BLACK-BLACK-RED just called out translates into I-O-O-I-I-O. If this is converted to octal, it becomes 46, the very number he lied about. I-O-O = 4 and I-I-O = 6. Here are several more examples:

BLACK-RED-BLACK-RED-RED-BLACK = 51 RED-RED-RED-BLACK-RED-BLACK = 5  
BLACK-BLACK-BLACK-RED-BLACK-RED = 72

By recording the sequence on your fingers as it is called out, your mental work will be made easier. Simply use the first three fingers of the left hand for the first three colors, and the corresponding fingers of the right hand for the second three colors. Bend the finger into the palm to signify red, and leave it extended for black. Since your back is turned, this ticking off of the colors won't be observed.

Concerning the liar's matrix employed in this trick, Mr. Elmsley comments:

"I consider myself to be a very good programmer of the second class. I keep inventing wonderful techniques, and then discover that someone else has already invented them (but I'm catching up with him).

"Not long after inventing the liar's matrix I discovered that a man named Hamming had been there first, a long time before. Hamming codes are widely used in the main stores of

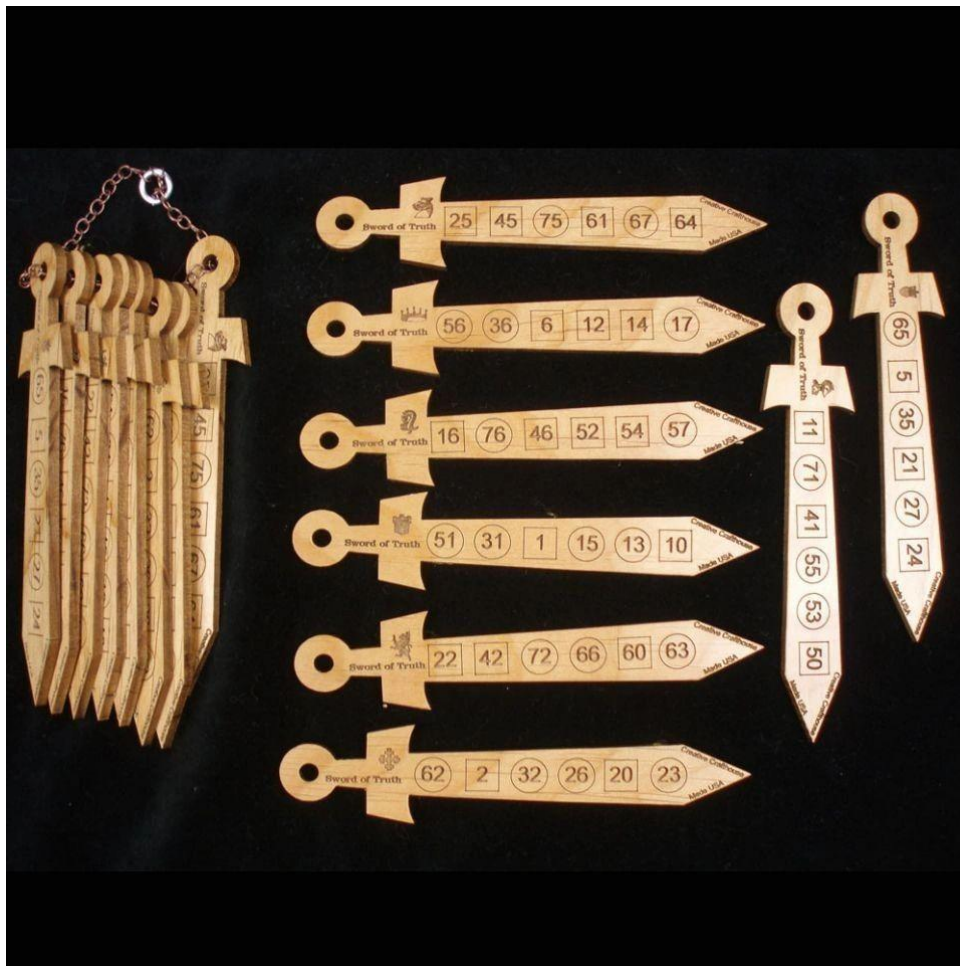
computer mainframes as a sophisticated security mechanism. If a store failure causes a single-bit error, it cannot only be detected, but corrected in flight— because the erroneous bit can be identified.

"I worked out the liar's matrix by trial and error. Later I read an article on Hamming codes that gave the mathematical analysis and a general method for their construction.

"All the same, I invented the liar's matrix all by myself!"

With the method of the "Octal Pencil" understood, a step can be taken to divorce the presentation from numbers, completely obscuring the mathematical basis of the method. This is done in the next trick.

**Here is a clever version called Swords of truth. It can be bought from Stevens Magic.**



Square is black or "1" and Circle is red or "0"

The Liar's Matrix					
58	36	6	12	14	17
16	76	46	52	54	57
65	5	35	21	27	24
22	42	72	66	60	63
51	31	1	15	13	10
11	71	41	55	53	50
25	45	75	61	67	64
62	2	32	26	20	23

<https://slidetodoc.com/alex-elmsley-and-the-hamming-code-tony-mann/>

\*\*\*\*\*

Free Tutorials

Rope Magic:

\*\*\*\*\*

Thumb Tie (fits in your pocket-plays big)

\*\*\*\*\*

A very funny bit.

The Human Xylophone

\*\*\*\*\*

Watch this full-evening show. Bookmark it. There may never be anything like it again!

\*\*\*\*\*

### **Everything Wrong with the Online Magic Community**

Beneath the lights, glitter, and awe – lies an unsightly atmosphere of conflict.





My main theory on the toxicity that the magic community experiences is their proximity to the competition.

*How many plumbers have 5,000 plumber friends on their social media?*

*How many mechanics ask other mechanics to ‘share their post’?*

The answer is probably zero or as close to zero as you could possibly get.

Magicians, on the other hand, have their entire lives soaked in this competition, their followers and their follower’s followers are all, for the most part, into magic too.

This is like corralling all the alpha males of thousands of lion prides together, into one area. **There will be fighting.**

Unfortunately, a differing opinion or style isn’t given equal respect or space. People that disagree, disagree strongly in both aggressive and passive-aggressive announcements.

Social media hasn’t helped this, it has only escalated the rate of infection, as it gives access to a global network of magic lovers. The purists hate the gimmick guys, the close-ups hate the stage guys and so on.

There are too many tribes and not enough land to co-exist, so the fighting begins—over even the most trivial of points.

“But why?” — says anyone normal

Hateful sentiments get more likes, more shares, and more retweets. In this ‘attention economy’ people jump on the bandwagon to be part of something popular, to **elevate themselves by demeaning others** for their opposing opinions or shortcomings.

Like Inception, the deeper and more specific you go down into any subject, the more polarizing the opinions. The stronger it becomes.

Magic is a dream within a dream, a niche within a niche—and the negative effects of this are swift, harsh, and often unnecessary.

### **Too many inflated egos**

Imagine you’re the most interesting person in a room... in every room. People fawn over you and strangers want to be you.

You have a talent that they can’t scientifically comprehend, so your status is immediately elevated.

Imagine what that does to a person's ego. To always have every stranger telling you how amazing you are. Your hobby becomes your identity.

You're no longer just a person, you're that magician. The person with impossible powers.

The trouble is some magicians believe it. They become enveloped in their own hype. **They wear their superiority like a second skin.**

Emperor and stoic philosopher Marcus Aurelius hired a servant to keep him humble. The servant followed him around and whispered in his ear "you're just a man", every time Aurelius received a compliment.

It's a great way to realize the insignificance of most arguments and to keep runaway egos in check.

### **The David & Goliath Effect**

Everyone in the village showed up to watch David fight Goliath.

He had attention even before winning because he had the foresight to punch up... To take on the giant.

Unfortunately, this same tactic is perpetuated within magic.

#### **I see:**

- Terrible reviews from non-buyers of products, all day long.
- People on forums giving seemingly informed opinions on something they don't own and have never tangibly held.
- Competing creators slamming their peers on an effect that is similar to their own.
- Magicians being abhorrent about products that aren't for them. (*e.g. Pro's complaining about a beginner magic kit... It's like me complaining about a child's happy meal toy. It's just not for me.*)
- Desperate YouTubers making 'rant' videos just for likes and subscribers.

It's all for attention. And the fastest, proven way to get it, is to pick a fight with a giant.

Small-time creators pretend to 'take on' the establishment, only to pitch you their own Patreon. Or their own products.

They act as if commerce is not equal and their way of paying their rent is somehow soaked in morality?

Business is business. Anyone who makes money from magic is looking to make money from magic. Fact. It doesn't mean we don't also love it.

Big or small, we're all just doing it, so we don't have to take a job driving for Amazon instead.

It's a privilege to be able to use our passion to put a roof over our heads. It's a privilege that people choose to buy into an idea we've had... But they forget it.

Regardless of people who say they're all about the art, our goal is always the same. **It's why their 'art' also comes with a price tag.** Otherwise, it would be free.

There is no David in magic. There is no Goliath. There is no superior entity... And there is no victim.

### **People's desire to create comes from the wrong place**

Magic companies have a huge part to play in this. They've made 'creating magic' look sexy.

It used to be that people would get into magic to perform. But in the last 2 decades, the idea of being a creator has taken center stage.

Trailers shot in an exotic location, or people buying Tesla's from their trick sales has fueled a mass exodus away from performing.

Like rats leaving a sinking ship, more people join magic to create than to perform.

They've traded the idea of taking their niche skills into an open market, for using their niche skills in an even smaller niche.

They're selling to the sellers now. It's probably not the best business model.

### **The hot tub analogy**

When I see more than 2 people in a 10-person hot tub at the gym, I choose not to enter the hot tub. I don't want to feel crowded.

However, this proliferation of creators in magic is like being the 11th person in a 10-person hot tub. It can't help but cause tension.

### **A magician's desire to show how smart they are**

We've all seen the comments:

"Flash."

"Thanks for the tutorial."

“It’s not a miracle, it’s called Extreme \*\*\*\* 2.0 and you can buy the secret online. Not all the bills are real.”

Telling a magician that you know what secret they’re using is like telling a Chef you know they used chicken in the ‘*chicken soup*’.

“Thank you, Captain obvious.”

However, it remains those magicians feel compelled to spoil a secret, or ‘out’ a fellow performer’s gimmick on a public platform.

It comes from a place of insecurity. A place of envy.

I don’t tell my neighbor to correct their parking or shame them because I think mine is better. I just park my car and live my life.

Because your job is to elevate yourself by building yourself up... Not by tearing others down.

### **The magic industry copies without consequence**

The wild wild west of mimicry is rife within magic.

Companies will copy other companies marketing campaigns, their strategies and even their product line.

- If a smoke machine does well, they’ll make their own.
- If a gaff deck does well, they’ll steal some of the gaffs and put them in their own gaff deck.
- If a popular trick comes out, they’ll rush their own version out and pretend you ‘screwed them over’ or somehow copied it to capitalize on sales.

Independent creators are guilty of the same.

### **Independent creation faces the mob**

The opposite can also be true. There seems to be no middle ground between outrage and silence.

In some cases, people who create in a vacuum can have their entire reputation ruined or be called a thief for an honest case of ‘independent creation’.

In the magic court of public opinion, you can be guilty of ‘stealing’ something you’ve never seen before.



**I view it like this:**

“The infinite monkey theorem states that **a monkey hitting keys at random on a typewriter keyboard for an infinite amount of time will almost surely type any given text**, such as the complete works of William Shakespeare.”

We are all an infinite number of monkeys, with an infinite supply of props—and at some point, we’ll reinvent each other’s magic effects.

It’s not theft... and it’s not a lack of crediting.

Creating has become so popular, that it’s become impossible to have bulletproof crediting.

Especially as people are self-producing or hiding their originality behind a membership paywall.

There is no resource for ‘everything’—but some magicians are quick to judge.

**In magic, reputation means more than character**

Do you ever wonder why bullies have friends?

It’s because those friends keep their enemies close. They believe that if they support the bully, they’ll never be in the firing line.

I’ve seen these cliques and fans in action before.

If you cross, offend or tick off the wrong person, their army will descend upon you. It becomes death by 1,000 cuts.

Regardless of intention, if you’re on the opposing side, you’re going down. Because people like who they like, and they assume that their ‘person’ is impervious to malpractice.

Think about it like this...

24-year-old Elvis began pursuing his wife, Priscilla, when she was just 14. Yet he’s still the King of Rock ‘n’ Roll.

It’s because it doesn’t matter what you’ve done—if people like your art, or like you, they’ll defend you to the death and destroy anyone who opposes you.

“There’s a lot of hero worship within magic.”—my friend Jake.

What people want to believe is more powerful than what is true... and I’ve seen good people in magic get flamed—and bad people rise above those ashes.

**Businesses train their own critics**

Think about a guitar tutor. One day that tutor will have nothing left to teach their student. If they're encouraging enough, their student will surpass even their ability.

Put into simpler terms, there's a reason we leave school at a certain age. We're not in school indefinitely.

There's always more to learn, but there is a saturation point for proficiency.

The same can be said for magic.

You don't need to learn everything that ever could be learned. You just need to learn enough... But what happens when you've learned enough?

In nature, the young buck wants to kill its elder. It's not personal. It's for survival in a competitive environment.

The same can be said for magic.

### **How do we ever fix it?**

All these things I've mentioned above, contribute to a toxic, competitive environment within magic. Some of which I've been guilty of myself, in the past. But I'd love people to learn from my mistakes/experiences.

No one person can change the course of the industry.

And it's not just this industry that it affects.

- Bitcoin maximalists hate '*sh\*t coin*' holders in the crypto space.
- Purist watch collectors hate quartz movement sellers.

In every niche is an assumed hierarchy or pretentious attitude towards beginners or the otherwise informed.

**It's tribalism.** Plain and simple.

If Twitter or politics has shown us anything— it's that multiple opinions can be concocted from a single fact.

There should be no sides to 'truth', but human connectivity has excelled faster than our ability to adapt to it... So we fight anyway.

You're at war with different tribes, especially within magic.

These online critics, meme accounts and avatars are hidden and void of responsibility. **They exist in the ether as faceless screen names** & fickle Facebook friends.

You can't win a war against a ghost, and you can't change a community that doesn't want to be changed.

Edited from an article by [Geraint Clarke](#) on Ellusionist.com

\*\*\*\*\*

Dennis