

**// Something About Magic And Magician Culture**  
**by Geoff Kanick**

magic  
sleight-of-hand  
prestidigitation  
conjuring

There are different ways to define it.  
How do you define it?

The power of apparently influencing the course of events by using mysterious or supernatural forces.

Teller defined it as: The theatrical linking of a cause with an effect that has no basis in physical reality, but that — in our hearts — ought to.

I asked my 4 year old niece Coco what magic is and she said, “A lot...and none.” Which might be the most profound answer.

There are many categories of magic:  
Close-up magic  
Stage magic  
Illusions, which are sometimes called Big Box Magic  
There's parlor magic  
Mentalism... which some mentalists argue is not magic  
Street magic  
Bizarre magic  
Mathemagic  
Card magic  
Coin magic  
Comedy magic  
Kids magic  
Gospel magic  
Quick Change Acts  
Manipulation Acts  
Cardistry  
Escapology  
Pickpocket Routines  
Impromptu Magic

There are people rooted in the traditions of the Spanish school of magic.

Others who look to the teachings of Dai Vernon and Charlie Miller.

There are lectures and conventions, big conventions where more than 1000 magicians gather and fill an expo hall with magic and vendors and late night jam sessions.

Some magicians call them tricks, some call them effects, or illusions.

There are debates whether to use a push off or a strike.

Snap changes

Double deals

The Diagonal Palm Shift

The Pass

Erdnase color change

The Bubble Peek

The Glide

Riffle Shuffle

OverHand Shuffle

Waterfall Shuffle

Faro Shuffle

Hindu Shuffle

Zarrow Shuffle

A triple cut

An Under Cut

A Table Cut

A Slug

A Stack

A Peek

A Glimpse

A Steal

An X Card

An Out

A Trap

A Flash

A Gaff

A Fan

A Pressure Fan

A Card Spring

A Dribble

Feeling Heat

And hours in front of the mirror

Lots of different thoughts about who Erdnase really was...

Books titled:

*Expert Card Technique*

*Expert at the Card Table*

*The Royal Road To Card Magic*

*Now You See It, Now You Don't*

*Tarbell*

*Magic and Showmanship*

Illustrations, drawings, diagrams.

And Plots

And kickers

And multi phase routines

Counting tricks

Ace Assemblies

Card to Impossible Location

Oil and Water

Out of this World

Written rules and unwritten rules.

"A magician never reveals his secret"

"Misdirection is direction"

"Never repeat the same trick twice"

There is a lot of stealing in magic, between magicians. And currently a big divide between the older generation and the youtubers.

When I was six I received a Lance Burton Magic Kit for Christmas.

It included all the props, a booklet with instructions, and an instructional VHS.

I learned my first Cups and Balls routine. Ball and Vase. Vanishing Bill.

The Mind Reading Color Cube, in a blue plastic box with a matching lid.

Some adults had no idea how I knew the color they were thinking.

Another Christmas my mom made me a Magician's Cape, with secret pockets.

Including one long pocket along the seam for the magic wand.

Every year around Thanksgiving I would watch "The World's Greatest Magic" on tv.

I would tape it, and watch it over and over, constantly rewinding the VHS.

In second grade there was a living history project, and I came to class dressed as Houdini.

I picked handcuffs in front of the class.

I wanted to be able to escape from anything. This prompted a new rule in our home, which was that you're not allowed to be tied to anything you can't pick up...in case there is a fire. I got my first straight jacket when my grandmother asked what I wanted for my 13th birthday. Also the search results that come back after Googling straight jacket are... surprising. And now, they don't feel surprising at all.

I would ask my Mom or Dad or Sarah or Sonja or Sasha to  
pick a card, pick a card, any card, pick a card  
Is this your card?

One night my mom confessed, I've picked so many cards, I don't know if that one is mine or not...

I really began working on sleight of hand when I was a freshman in high school.

My senior year, I created an independent study class for Magic.

I put on a two act stage show, we built props and illusions.

The show included a Spike Drop, a Shadow Box, and a Coffin Escape.

The coffin is still in a Storage Unit in Tacoma, WA.

I worked for a summer at the Lakewood Costume Shop, behind the magic counter.

I had two doves named Oscar and Bianca. They had a baby chick named Elvis.

When I moved away to college, my parents took them to the pet store and traded them for cat food.

I went to Vegas when I was 18 for a week of magic workshops. I needed to be 21 to check into my room. I didn't know this until I was at the counter, so a stranger pretended to be my dad. That was also the first time I was ever in a room with more than three magicians.

When I was in grad school for Acting, I kept it a secret that I was a magician. I never performed a magic trick for the other students or tutors. But on weekends I would journey to Covent Garden to watch the street performers. A magician bought me a hamburger. Near the end of the program I did incorporate magic into my thesis project called Empty Space.

Here are some titles of magic shows I created and performed:

*Magick Kanick : An Evening of Illusion and Escape*

*Hypothesis*

*Something About Fate Chance & Luck*

*Perpetual Nonsense : An uncommon understanding of the common*

*Delightfully Dangerous*

*Ghostlight*

If I'm stressed I shuffle cards, or practice an Elmsley count.

I have cried watching magic, I have laughed watching magic, I have cringed watching magic, I have watched a lot of magic, a lot of magic. I read magic books, I watch online magic lectures. I

practice magic with my close-up mat on the window sill and look outside and use the window like a mirror. I set up my phone and video while I practice and watch the video back to look for flashes.

I get very shy around other magicians.

I have cried about the passing of magicians.

Some of whom I had seen in person, some whom I have only watched video of or read their books.

Every time I visit home to the Pacific Northwest, I perform an Uncle Geoff Magic show for my three nieces and two nephews. I wear a full suit, bring my brass tipped magic wand, my close-up mat, and perform the whole show at the kids table, which is maybe two and a half feet tall.

When you really love someone or something, I believe that there is always more to uncover or understand or experience. There is an excitement in journeying together into the unknown, and knowing that the understanding and relationship will evolve and change. And to love that it is alive.

I really love magic.

I love what it has the potential to do.

The feeling it can create in others.

The thought, the time, the mystery, the beauty,

The elegant solutions.

The connection.

And I really love performing magic.

Magic is not the choreography of sleights and misdirection.

Magic happens in the hearts and minds of those viewing it.

Without you, there is no magic.

Thank you.