

Ulterior Motive Magic

(or **umm...** for short)

Beyond what is obvious
Lecture Notes by Daniel Jaspersen
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Introduction

Ulterior Motives is a set of magic lecture notes discussing the notion that a piece of magic can quietly serve a secondary, hidden purpose. You'll notice that the tricks themselves are essentially classics or employ common methods but either the script or behind the scenes thinking nudges at different goals.

Within these notes you'll find a classic card trick retrofitted to help me learn a difficult piece of mentalism. I've included my method for generating tips while tablehopping a restaurant. There is an idea with your business card to keep the conversation going after the magic is finished. And finally, perhaps my favorite, is a concept to gain permission to speak boldly on stage.

As we work through the various pieces you may notice that I devote more ink on the secondary goals than the magic methods themselves. In some cases, I'll refer you to other resources for the handlings and methods. This a lecture and set of notes dedicated to the Ulterior Motives rather than the tricks themselves. Actually, it's more about the concept of having a hidden goal with a trick. You may not love the piece I present, but I hope to spark a better question about how we approach tricks and performance.

Thanks for your curiosity and interest in this material.

About Daniel Jaspersen (Hey! That's me.)

Like most people, I'm a few things.

A Misfit. A Husband. A Marketing Strategist. A Parent. A Magician.

I've been a performing, working, professional performer since 1999, but in the beginning, I was a juggler. In college, I paid my rent from juggling gigs. In fact, the young version of me thought magic sucked. When I was a kid, I think I only saw very transparent magic. I don't remember ever going through the normal magic phase most boys go through. I had a couple of tricks and even a decent book. Never got into it.

That was true until I met a retired card sharp named John Deems. He, finally, blew my mind. I was a 21 year old college student at the time. Then I was hooked and it was off to the races.

Today, I'm focused on corporate events, private parties, and my theatrical stage show. Magic has come to influence many aspects of my life, including marketing, raising my 3 kids, and more.

Cheyenne Opener: a way to practice a difficult thing.

Effect: In a classic Card Trick plot, a card is freely selected and lost into a deck. The Magician spreads through the red deck of cards and finds the selected card has magically turned Blue. A second card is selected. With the selector thinking about their card, the magician invites the rest of the group to try to read her mind. In the end, one of her friends correctly guesses the selected card and the proof is on the table.

Set Up: In a Red Deck, have a Blue Seven of Hearts (7H) on the bottom with the Red 7H immediately above it. (Classic Chicago Opener set up). Per Derren Brown's notes on verbal card forces in *Pure Effect*, the seven of hearts is one of the easiest cards to work with. (Any color deck can be used)

Phase 1

“Would you pull any card you like for me?” (*Spread the cards between hands for a very free choice*)

“Look at it, show it to everyone else. Don't let me see it of course.”

(Have the guest put the card on top of the Face Down deck)

“Ok, Classic card trick right? You pull a card and my job to find it, Right? (pause) I got it!” (*push the top card over with your thumb and show it to everyone, This gets a sad little laugh.*)

While this script might seem very simplistic, it's exactly what I use. This is an opening effect. Your job is to bring the audience into the realm of magic. Start simple and familiar.)

“Let's make it a little harder” (*Cut the deck, out jog the selected card and put the bottom half on top with the selection still visible to all. The situation is now the Blue card is on top of the selection in the middle of the deck. Square everything up very cleanly.*)

“Now I have to actually look for your card.” (*thumb through the cards slowly. Display a few cards and point out that they are not the correct card. Pause at the Blue card.*)

“This is a solid Maybe” (*showing the blue card in the spread*)

Out jog the blue and casually spread through the rest of the cards to show there are no more blue cards. Cut the deck so the blue card is on top. Now the situation is Blue card and selections are first and second on top and the blue cards pair is on the bottom)

“Do you remember your card? (Double Lift to show selection) Was it the _____?”

(Table the Blue Card face down. Don't blitz through this first effect. It's a minor miracle when presented correctly)

Phase 2

Great let's do it again, but this time we'll do it the hard way. (*Gesturing to someone further away, ideally out of your reach. Ask their name - Rachel*)

Say 'Stop' anytime you like. (*Hindu shuffle force the bottom card - 7H*) **Because you are further away, we'll do it this way.**

Do not forget your card (*showing it only to Rachel*). **Don't forget it because otherwise this won't work and it'll be your fault.** (*this usually gets a good laugh*).

(After showing the card, table or pocket the deck)

Here's what I need you to do. Take your card and shout it out loud, as loud as you can...in your head. *(pause for a few quick beats between the commands, build up the 'out loud' and the 'in your head' will get a great laugh as the tension is released)* **Don't say it out loud, because that would make it too easy for me.**

Don't do anything outside of your head. Don't move your eyes. Don't move your mouth. Do not answer my questions. *(Rachel will try very hard to keep a straight face and the rest of the group will be quietly laughing about the situation.)*

(turn to the rest of the group) **The rest of you get to try and read her mind. We'll go slowly so everyone can keep up.**

(back to Rachel) **Think of the color of your card. Make it big and bright in your head.** *(snap your fingers)* **Good, very Good.** *(The verbal force towards a bright color - Red. Don't say anything to the group trying to guess. Simply continue.)*

Now, draw the shape, the suit of the card in your head. *(as you deliver this line, draw the shape of a heart in the air with your hands. Start at the top of the heart and swing your hands down to the bottom point. Don't make this too overt. Do it just below eye level. Between the color from the above and this visual force, many people in the group should gravitate toward hearts now. This heart force is straight from Pure Effect)*

(Step back for a beat) **Great. Now go back and think of the number of your card. Make the number big and bold in your head for us.** *(glance at a couple people and get a read on who is following you the best)* **That's perfect, It's definitely a number card isn't it.** *(This is the one line where I essentially tell the group that we're eliminating some of the cards)* **That means that the Jacks, Queens, Kings and even the Aces and Jokers are out. We're working with a number.** *(at this point, you're speaking directly to Rachel, but the rest of the group is leaning in with you. She should feel like you are actually rummaging around in her mind.)*

You have a number card, which is tricky, because there are so many of them. Don't say anything *(hold your hand up and count with your fingers)* **2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.** *(start counting looking at Rachel as if you're studying her. As you say 'Seven' shift your glance to the person you think has the best chance of guessing the card and punch your voice a little higher. Let your voice, posture and intensity relax as you say "8, 9, 10." Essentially, you're punching the Seven a bit harder than the other numbers. This force is very similar to Banachek's ABCD Test.)*

Situation Check: The audience saw a card selected, changed colors and now they believe that card is on the table in full view.

A second card was selected and remembered by a single member of the audience (Rachel). The rest have been following you, attempting to read Rachel's mind. In truth, you have been quietly forcing the value of her card on the group. Rachel's card is actually the card on the table in full view. Many guests will have guesses in mind.

(To Rachel, with an encouraging smile) **You did great. Good work.**

(To the guest you believe has the best shot at guessing the correct card) **Do you have a guess at Rachel's card?**

(Ask 2-3 more guests what they think the card might be. If someone guesses correctly, ask Rachel to verify. If there are several partial hits, piece them together for the group. For example: one person guesses the 7S and another says 3H. Help them see that a Spade is very similar to a heart.

If all of the guesses are completely off, joke that Mind reading is really hard. Reveal the card as if you read her mind.)

(They turn over the card to see that it matches the second card)

Cheyenne Opener - Ulterior Motives:

The classic card effect by Al Leech known as Red Hot Mama was one of the first good card tricks I learned. John Deems, a retired card sharp, got me hooked into magic. He taught me the original handling and this routine employs, essentially, the same mechanics as the original.

In the first couple years of my engagement with magic, I read Derren Brown's book *Pure Effect* in which he describes several direct mind reading effects including two verbal card forces. Soon after I got my hands on the book, I watched an episode of Derren's show *Mind Control* where he psychologically forces a card on a college student. So clean. So pure of an effect. I had to try it.

One following Friday, I went to my restaurant gig ready to blow minds with this mental miracle. Boldly placing the force card (7H) on the table of that busy Mexican restaurant, I proceeded with Derren's script. I tried the force five or six times that night. It failed every time. Of course I was rookie enough not to have a contingency plan in place. The force simply failed and I didn't really know what to do.

Back to the drawing boarding.

Somewhere in the mix of this, I encountered Banachek's Psi Series DVDs, and Psychological Subtleties books. His simple forcing techniques, specifically the verbal *ABCD Test*, gave me a little more to work with when it came to planting a thought.

One of the ensuing weeks I was performing the classic version of Chicago Opener and realized that I could divine the second (forced) card by several methods. I felt like a mind reader. Of course this changed the script a bit, but I improvised my way through. Eventually, it clicked that I could attempt to verbally force the second card on someone else at the table. If it failed, I still had natural outs.

For me this became the effect and the fun of performing this classic. The challenge of getting that verbal force to stick with at least one guest at that table. I knew that I could reveal the card myself, and in the end, the card was already on the table.

Keeping in line with the advice most mentalists abide by, I started to recognize and emphasize partial hits. Often the verbal force would hit different people in different ways at the same table. For example, one person might latch onto the value of the card, while another gets the correct suit. Run with it! Claim victory.

I've come to call this version the *Cheyenne Opener* because it was refined while I worked several restaurants and bars in Cheyenne, WY. I still perform it at nearly every event I work. The verbal and psychological forces are not 100% and never will be, but on a good

night I hit around 85%.

I never explain to the group that I forced the card on them. Imagine their wheels turning when I ask one of their friends, “Do you have a guess what card she is thinking of?” and that person nails the card exactly. That guest has no idea how they got it right and the friends all witnessed the same thing. Simply smile and let them accuse each other with ridiculous theories. Don’t step on this moment with a joke. Let it sink in.

As an opening effect, *Cheyenne Opener* sets me up as both a magician and mentalist. (You guys, the debate around dividing those two forms is absurd. Don’t get me started.) This routine serves as a litmus test for which direction I’ll take the rest of the set. In the first phase, the selection magically changes color and the second phase is straight up thought inception.

In short, *Cheyenne Opener* was created as a safe place to learn, practice, and succeed at a very difficult trick.

After Thoughts

I have used this same version quite successfully as the opener for my formal close-up show for a few years. These shows are normally for about 20-40 guests. Having the single person stand to the side of the group and the entire audience attempting to read her mind is quite focusing for the room. Nothing in the script needs to change. You simply do everything to scale for the group you’re working with.

Final Encouragements

As we grow as magicians, we frequently run into moves, concepts, and ideas which are just beyond our skill level. That’s a good thing. This is how we grow and mature as performers.

Also, some pieces of magic can only be learned by doing them for real audiences. It’s one thing to work on the Zarrow Shuffle in front of a mirror by yourself. You can study the resources, work on it, film yourself, refine the moment, and make it invisible, all from the comfort of your home.

It’s different to learn the Classic Force. The Classic Force requires you to interact with a guest, jive with their rhythm, handle the cards, and not give away the ploy all at the same time. There is a major variable which changes every time you use that force - the guest. The same is true of any Cold Reading, and most Mentalism concepts. It’s always a little different.

As you look at your dream routines and difficult moves, find ways to break down the challenges. Find ways to quietly work on them within the context of a safe routine. Soon, that move will be within your grasp and you’ll be ready to move to the next challenge.

Felony - a way to naturally increase tips while tablehopping.

Effect: In an effort to 'teach' the guest how to make more money, a \$5.00 bill is borrowed. An Extra 0 is added to the 5 in the corner with a pen – making it into '50.' The magician then explains how to "get away with spending it at a store" – The bill is changed into a legitimate \$50.00 bill and displayed.

Telling the guest that he has committed a small felony (defacing government property), the bill must be changed back into the \$5.00 and the 0's must be removed. The magician offers to 'get rid of all the evidence' by burning the bill with a lighter. Upon applying the flame to the inked part of the bill – the 0's visually disappear and the bill is returned to its original state.

Props: Thumb Tip, \$50.00, Lighter, Frixion Pen (a duplicate normal pen is also a good idea to have but not essential)

Set-up: [I'm Left Handed] As a close-up worker pocket management is very important. Here is how I load my pockets: Frixion pen in left back pocket, normal pen in left front, Lighter and Thumb tip with \$50 loaded in it in right front. Of course, in a normal performance situation, there would be more things in the pockets.

A few notes before digging into the method: For years I knew how to do the Kowalski \$100 Bill Change, yet never used it in performance. I was familiar with dozens of routines published by various magicians, but none of them resonated with me and my style.

This routine was designed to fit into one of my close-up routines that I use every night. In the bigger picture, it follows Richard Sanders' *Extreme Burn*, which is a handling of Patrick Page's classic *Easy Money*. I set up Felony with *Extreme Burn*, saying "I'll do it with my money first and then I'll show how to do it with yours."

This routine also answered another issue – How to increase tips? More often than not, the borrowed bill ends up in my pocket as a tip.

Felony can be done with any denomination of bill, but I have found that a \$5 or \$10 works best for the environments I work in.

On the Frixion Pen: This is what makes Felony different from other bill change routines. Frixion Pens are made by Pilot and are available at most office supply stores. The ink can be erased by friction or HEAT. The ink cartridge is a standard Pilot size, which means it can be put into any of their pens. That's the biggest secret to what makes this work.

Handling: I'm left handed – so this is written from a lefty POV. The Kowolski Bill Change is taught in several places, I will not go deeply into that handling. I first learned it from my college theater professor and accomplished magician, Peter Bloedel. Then from several other sources including Jay Sankey's DVDs and John Lovick's book, *Switch*.

"Anybody got any cash?" That's the fastest way to learn if anyone has any cash at the table.

Ask to borrow a \$5 or \$10 to show a way to make more money. A guest pulls out a \$5 bill, you casually pull out the friction pen. As the guest hands you the bill, "*This is perfect, 'Honest Abe' on the face, so we'll put it face down on that table. This is dishonest work we're about to do here.*" Place the bill facedown on the table in front of the guest who pulled it out "*John, I want you to do this part. You see those two fives on the left side?*" (Hand him the pen – open and ready to write) *Turn them into fifties.*"

As he starts scribbling zeros next to the fives, "*That's how you make more money.*" This causes a lot of chatter at the table. Eyes will be on John writing and talking back and forth about the illegal nature of what he is doing. Load Thumb Tip (with \$50 in it) onto Right thumb. Playfully try to hush the talk about the illegal nature of the actions – that will come into play later.

When he is finished, take the pen back – close it and put it back in your left back pocket, then take up the bill and hold it face towards the audience with your right hand – cover in the thumb tip. "*Good, now when you do try this for real, make sure you do this part at home*" talking about writing the zeros, fold the bill in half and bring in the '50s' to the front. "*Don't do it when you're checking out at the store...kinda awkward.*" This gets a good little laugh.

"Do that part at home. Then before you go to the store, fold it up and throw it in your pocket. Don't put it in your purse or wallet, you want to know exactly where it is." As you talk, execute the change halfway so the two bills are held at the left fingertips and the thumb tip is palmed in the left hand – you can now gesture openly with your right hand. This story sort of justifies the action of folding the bill in such a way.

"Go into the store and pick out about \$47 dollars of merchandise, and you don't want to go over with tax. When you go up to pay, spend that bill boldly, like it's a real \$50 bill." Finish the change and open the \$50 fully and display it.

Let this sink in! As far as they had seen the bill was simply folded up and reopened, but it's changed into a legitimate \$50. Of course, there will be talk about "*I get to keep that now, right?*" Do not hand it out – you will not get it back.

During the next couple of lines make solid eye contact and execute the bill change as quickly as possible to get the \$5 back out. Draw very little attention to your hands. "*Well there is a small problem here. John committed a small...Felony.*" This gets a solid laugh at the table. "*I don't want you to get in trouble, so we have to fix these.*" point to the zeros scribbled on the back of the bill.

Holding the bill with your right hand and showing the zeros, "*We have to get rid of the zeros. I had you write these on the same side so that I could simply tear them off if you wanted.*" Mimic tearing that side of the bill off with your left hand. Pause for an answer from John. Generally, you will get a nervous chuckle with a 'no' mixed into it. "*That's not a*

good idea, I think we should get rid of ALL the evidence.” Go to your pocket with your right hand – ditch the thumb tip and come out with the lighter. Show the lighter. This elicits everything from gasps to laughs.

Hold the bill face down at the end of the bill, showing the zeros with your left hand, and the lighter in your right open hand. *“This way we can get rid of the whole works, so you don’t get in trouble.”*

Right before you light the lighter, *“Actually, if you only burn this end (point to the zeros) I can take it back into the bank and get a new one.”* Notice that I have taken ownership of the bill by saying ‘I can take it...’ Light the lighter and wave it under the bill a few times. Miss the ink on the first pass, and then vanish it. Once the ink is all gone, turn off the lighter and quietly display the bill. Don’t step on the magical moment with a joke. Set the bill on the table – don’t hand it back to John. This maintains half ownership to you. They will grab the bill and look at it, this is fine – there is nothing to see. At this point you can hand out the lighter and show them the normal pen if they ask. Don’t offer to show it to them, but if they ask, don’t hesitate.

Felony - Ulterior Motives: Naturally increase your tips.

Once, I unknowingly performed this for a table of FBI agents. They had a good ... stern laugh about it. Yes, they tipped me the \$5. Perhaps this is obvious, but if you do this trick with a \$10, you should load a \$100 into your thumb tip. A few times, no one at the table had \$5, so I did it with \$1. Generally, I perform this with \$100 and borrow \$10.

I hope you noticed how the routine is completely reset at the end. Like I mentioned earlier, Felony is built into one of my table-hopping sets. However, I wrote it here as a stand-alone piece. The topic of pocket management is interestingly undercovered in magic literature. We often read tricks in isolation, and not as if they were in a sequence of routines.

The Frixion Pen is a beautiful secret. It hides out in the open. You can buy them at most office supply stores, and swap the ink cartridge into a standard pen. There are loads of great routines that make use of these pens. I first learned of it from the French magician, Matheiu Bich.

As mentioned above, this routine was intentionally designed to increase tips while tablehopping. There are several bits of psychology baked into the script and handling of the bill. Let’s break them down.

- 1) Most importantly, I never assume the borrowed bill will turn into a tip. Manage your expectations. It’s not your money until it is. Allow them the pleasure of tipping you.
- 2) I ask early on in the set if someone has a \$10 bill or some other cash. I’ll ask this during a card trick or some other non-money magic trick. This gets their mind rolling.
- 3) I frame the entire ordeal with the money around making a wish with our money.

Out of Frame - a way to make your business card psychologically sticky

Set Up in a standard Out To Lunch arrangement by writing the Value and Suit of a playing card you will later force (ex. 7D) on the Second Card. Leave the exposed area blank. On the Half Card, write an indifferent card (ex. KD). Have the Force Card ready for whatever force you use.

To Begin, bring out your business cards and pen. *"I'm going to make a prediction of the card that you're going to pick."* Fake write the "KD" on the Half Card. Show the guest as you hand her the cards and pen. Have her initial in the Exposed Area.

Take the cards back and say, *"Perfect, let's set this in stone."* Ask another guest to pull out her phone and open the camera. Pull the Second Card out (now with the 7D and Guest's initials). Hold the card up with the prediction facing you, borrow the camera, and shoot a pic with the guests in the background. Close the phone and put the biz card and phone onto a guest's hand - Face Down.

Ask the guest who initialed the card to think about the homepage on her phone. *"What app / icon is in the bottom right corner of your homepage?"*

She answers, *"Text Messages."*

Ask her to look and verify that she was correct and then lock her phone again (so the screen is black). *"Great. Now without looking, what time did your phone say?"*

This is a tense mind racing moment for the guest because she didn't look at the time, she was so focused on the app in the corner.

"Isn't it interesting how much we forget or miss? Do you remember the card I predicted?"



Take out your Deck and proceed to force the 7D. I use a Pop Eyed Popper Deck here, but any force will do.

Before turning the playing card over, verbally recall the prediction with the guest. She reiterates the KD. *"Can't be right. This is the 7D."* Awkward stares and blinks. Perhaps hire a chorus of crickets. Have the guest holding the prediction card turn it over to show the 7D with the initials. Reopen the phone with the photo, it also shows 7D. Chaos ensues.

Mike Piscotta has an interesting effect that inspired this idea. Apollo Robbins also had a presentational notion that influenced my thinking. Asi Wind's trick, *Double Exposure* also nudged me.

Out of Frame - Ulterior Motives

Think about commercials and ads for products. Some are dry and boring, others are sticky and linger with you. Why is that?

Once upon a time, I was tablehopping a nice restaurant. Tucked in the corner booth was a couple who had seen me perform a few years prior. I wandered over, chatted with them, and did a few bits of magic. One of the tricks was my version of Richard Sanders' beautiful piece "*Identity*." In the end, the selected card had the wife's name (Lindsey) on the back and there was a small eruption of glee from her. Of course, I gave her the card to keep. A small gift. More of a memory or story than an actual physical artifact.



I run into Lindsey every once in a while. They invited me to perform at their bar, and have become good friends. Everytime I run into her, she reaches into her purse and pulls out the card. She keeps it in her purse! She talks about it! Lindsey tells her friends about it.

Side Bar: I have a set of notes all about the Out To Lunch principle called Out And About. There are 6-7 different ideas, including this one, in those notes.

This particular piece - Out Of Frame - creates a joint experience for a group of people and two artifacts: the business card and the photo.

What if your business card didn't get tossed aside? What if it remained top of mind?

I have a stack of business cards sitting on my shelf. I've used some of them. Others, I don't even recall the person or situation I was in when I received the card. How can we make our business cards psychologically sticky? To do that, we must attach a story and moment to the artifact.

That's the goal with all pieces of magic - to create a new story in the lives of our audiences. This particular story happens when a group collectively witnesses a misremembered prediction. There is a dash of chaos, but two items which contradict their memories.

In truth, it doesn't matter if they recall the specifics of this trick or not. The point is to trigger a positive emotional (fun) recollection of meeting me. That keeps me top of mind and top of the list for their next event.

When we look around our magic arsenals, I'm guessing many performers have a few different giveaways such as signed cards, torn bills, or bent coins. What good are those items if they can't remember your name, or how to contact you? And what good is a business card if they can't recall the positive context of meeting you?

Find a trick using your business card or contact information in a fun way.

Final Encouragement

If we're going to consistently perform, we must learn to effectively market ourselves. Don't overthink this. Some of the basic essentials include a website, social media presence, and email list. Right, you've heard this before. One topic that many businesses fail to internationalize is Word of Mouth marketing. We all know it's the best / most effective way, but do we have a strategy for it?

How do we get people to talk about us?

My business card has gotten me more work than social media. I keep track of how clients find me. Whether you use this trick, or something else is irrelevant. The emotion and story attached to your card will have serious staying power for years to come. Intentionalize your Word of Mouth Marketing.

Quick Gig Story: Several years ago, I was booked for a small house party of women who worked together in Milwaukee, WI. There were 8 ladies gathered around a kitchen table with me. We had a great time. Most of them took my business card that day.

Four years later, in the middle of 2020, when Covid-19 had shut down the world, a friend of one of those ladies called me out of the blue. She asked if I performed online shows, which I did. She booked me sight-unseen to perform an online-show for her team. She was a Regional Supervisor for a very large company. That gig led to five more shows for other teams in that same company, along with 6-7 shows with their partners.

All told, one business card at a kitchen table in Milwaukee led to more than 10 paid gigs and 6 new client companies.

Hindu Thread - a way to earn permission to speak seriously.

Did you know that a piece of magic can be about something?

You know, like a song can be about love, or anger, or triumph. A book can be about coming of age, or adventure, or coping with loss. What about magic? How often do we (magicians) write our magic to be about something?

Hindu Thread (aka Gypsy Thread, or Broken and Restored Thread) is one of several pieces which I've intentionally scripted to be *about*. Of course, I'm not the first to do this. Eugene Burger crafted several scripts for the thread. Al Baker had notes on it too. Juan Tamariz wrote a massive book on infusing meaning (The Magic Rainbow). Tommy Wonder often wrote up magic about ideas.

But what should magic be about?

Well, that's a massive question and the possibilities are boundless. Really. Paintings can be about beauty, war, sorrow, guilt, hate, joy, salvation, potential, surprise, or almost anything else. Magic is that flexible too.

As an artist, I have things I wish to communicate to my audiences. There are truths which I see and want to discuss in my work. Truths such as, *many people constantly hide their mental / emotional discombobulation. Or the role of a good leader is to come alongside struggling people and guide them back.*

However, most events I perform at have hired me simply to entertain. Entertainment is easy. Let's be honest about a few things here. Entertainment is a distraction from the real world. It comes in many forms such as movies, games, fishing, sports, and a good book. With such a wide and diverse definition, to entertain is pretty easy.

BUT! But the best films weave in some sort of truth or important set of questions. Think about it. What can we learn from Spiderman? "*With great power comes ...*" Today, the Marvel super hero films (along with many others) serve the role which was previously filled by mythology. Stories which, yes, entertain, inspire, and teach have staying power. We see this format throughout the ancient world. Consider for a moment the parable of The Good Samaritan. Jesus told a gripping story, challenged the hearts of people, and taught truth. We still use this story today.

So, how can we as Entertainers earn the permission of our audiences to speak truth from the stage?

Quality matters here. Our work must create an atmosphere of magic, possibility, and unified joy. It must be more than fooling people. My 10 year old son can fool people using

a basic key card location, but he doesn't quite understand how to make magic yet. The late Spanish master Gabi Pareras once quipped, *"To achieve a good fictional effect, the fiction you propose must be consistent with the effect you show. You cannot promise unicorns and then take out a poorly disguised goat."* Remember, magic is fiction. In the same way we allow Spiderman to discuss responsibility, we have to deliver on a good piece of magic.

Which brings us back to Hindu Thread. Very rarely will I perform this beautiful piece as a stand-alone trick. In my show, it is intrinsically tied to the Needle Swallow. The entire conversation is about helping ourselves be healthy and then help those who are still struggling. There is a bit of "Put your own mask on before helping others" sort of thinking.

I don't believe I need to defend the quality of Hindu Thread as a piece of magic. It's simple, understandable, and elegant.

If we are going to speak to something important on stage, we must earn the respect of our audiences. We must work our way up out of simple entertainment and into a place of art. I would never use Hindu Thread as an opener. In fact, it's linked to my closing moments.

Right? We have to deliver on entertainment first. We can do that with strong, fun, engaging magic. Only after we have earned that could we express ourselves. If I'm being honest, sometimes it doesn't work. Sometimes I don't get that far with a group.

Ulterior Motives: Final Thoughts

For many years, the Bio on my Twitter page stated, *Magic is More*. I never expanded on that phrase anywhere, but these notes are based on that notion. Magic should be more fun. More rewarding. More potent. More beautiful. I don't believe we should stop at entertainment alone.

My fellow students of magic, thanks for looking through these notes and engaging in the conversation about Ulterior Motives in magic. I have this bad habit of rolling a new trick out to the public before it's completely ready. Actually, I don't regret this, nor do I believe it's true. I think doing it in a safe place for laymen is a crucial step in building a new piece of magic. Throughout these notes, you've seen me refer to tablehopping. That's my sandbox. That's the environment where I finish practicing. I encourage you to find a good sandbox too.

I hope there is some nugget of an idea here which you found interesting. Run with it. Don't worry so much about tricks. Focus on magic and the success which can be found in connecting audiences with spectacular experiences. Those are the stories they will tell their friends.

Peace out,

Dan Jaspersen
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