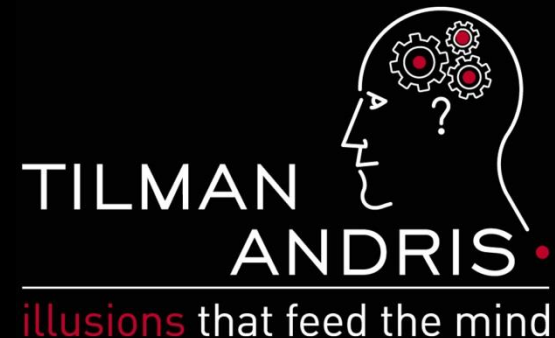


Illusions Bicycles Illusophisms

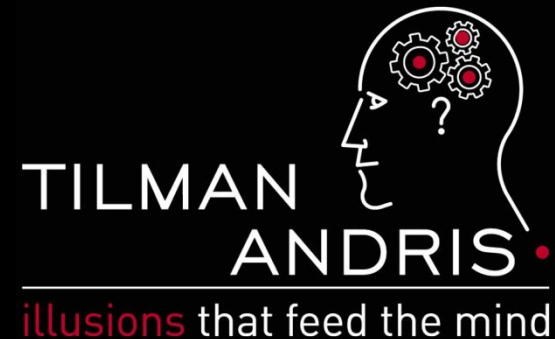
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Part I

What is magic?

Three answers





The discouerie of witchcraft,

Wherein the lewde dealing of witches
and witchmongers is notablie detected, the
knauerie of coniuors, the impietic of inchan-
tors, the follie of soothsaiers, the impudent fals-
hood of couenors, the infidelitic of atheists,
the pestilent practises of Pythonists, the
curiositic of figurecasters, the va-
niitie of dreamers, the begger-
lie art of Alcu-
mystrie,

The abomination of idolatrie, the hor-
rible art of poisoning, the vertue and power of
naturall magike, and all the conuiciences
of Legierdemaine and iuggling are deciphered:
and many other things opened, which
have long lien hidden, but bein
verie necessarie to
be knowne.

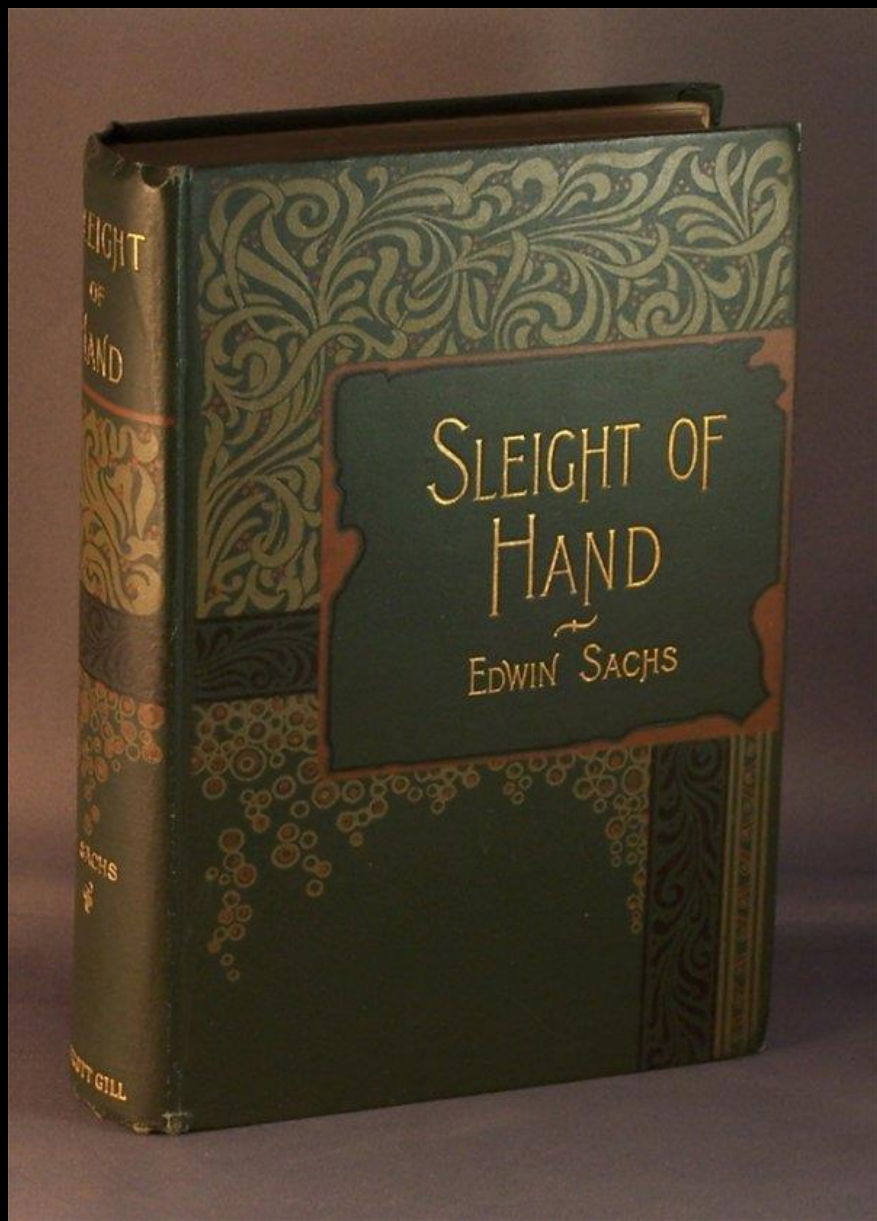
Heerevnto is added a treatise vpon the
nature and substance of spirits and diuels,
&c: all lately written
by *Reginold Scot*
Esquire.

1. Iohn. 4, 6.

Belieue not euerie spirit, but trie the spirits, whether they are
of God; for manie false prophets are gone
out into the world, &c.

“The true art [...] of juggling consisteth in legierdemaine: to wit, the nimble conveiance of the hand, which is especiallie performed three waies. The first and principall consisteth in hiding and conveiang of balles, the second in the alteration of monie, the third in the shuffeling of the cards.”

Reginald Scot: The Discoverie of Witchcraft [1584], ed. M. Summers (London: John Rodker, 1930), p. 182.



SLEIGHT
OF
HAND

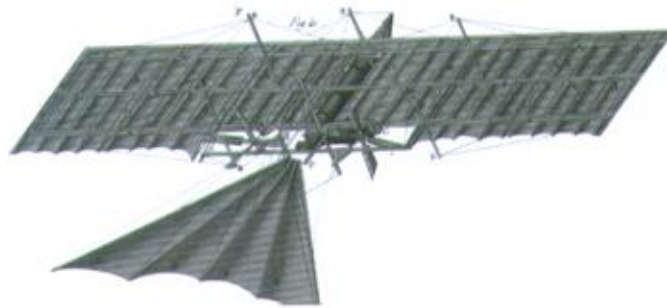
SLEIGHT OF
HAND
EDWIN SACHS

SACHS

SCOTT GILL

“Misdirection is the grand basis of the conjuror’s actions [...]. With each trick that requires it, I shall give hints for misdirecting the spectator’s attention [...].”

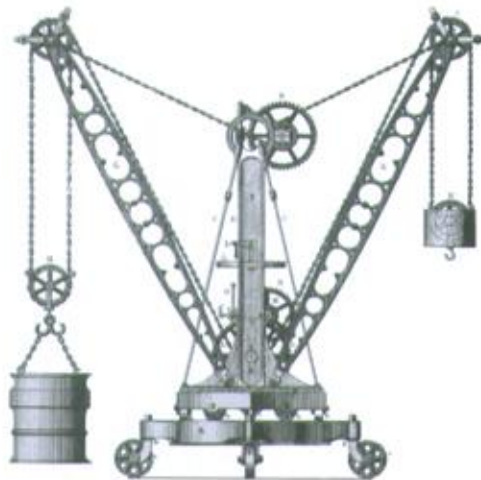
Edwin T. Sachs: Sleight-of-Hand [1885], ed. P. Fleming (Berkeley Heights: Fleming Book Company, 1946), p. 41.



DESIGNING MIRACLES

Creating the Illusion of Impossibility

Darwin Ortiz



“[Magic] creates an illusion, *the illusion of impossibility.*”

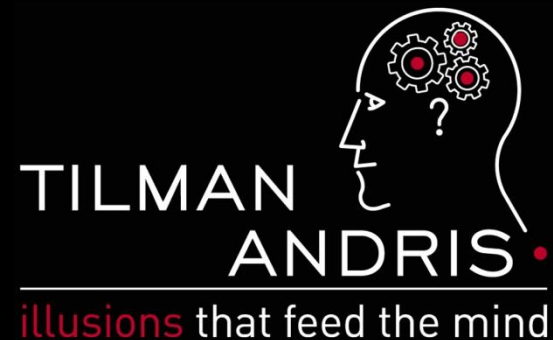
Darwin Ortiz: Designing Miracles. Creating the Illusion of Impossibility
(El Dorado Hills: A-1 MagicalMedia, 2006), p. 30.

Part I

What is magic?

Magic and reasoning

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Illusorphism

A reasoning process which proceeds from at least one false premise and leads to the conclusion that something is impossible in the present circumstances.

The reasoning of the spectator

- 1) These two rings are perfectly closed.
- 2) These two rings are separate from each other.
- 3) The magician does not open up any of these two rings in any way.
- 4) The laws of nature, given the material from which these two rings are made, do not allow for any section of one ring to pass through any section of the other ring in the present circumstances.
- 5) ...
- 6) ...
- ...

Conclusion: It is impossible for these two rings to get linked in the present circumstances.

But: The rings *do* get linked.

Two beliefs collide!

Progression of magic tricks in time

(See Al Schneider: The Theory and Practice of Magic Deception (Hopkins: self-published, 2004).)

initial condition



some action



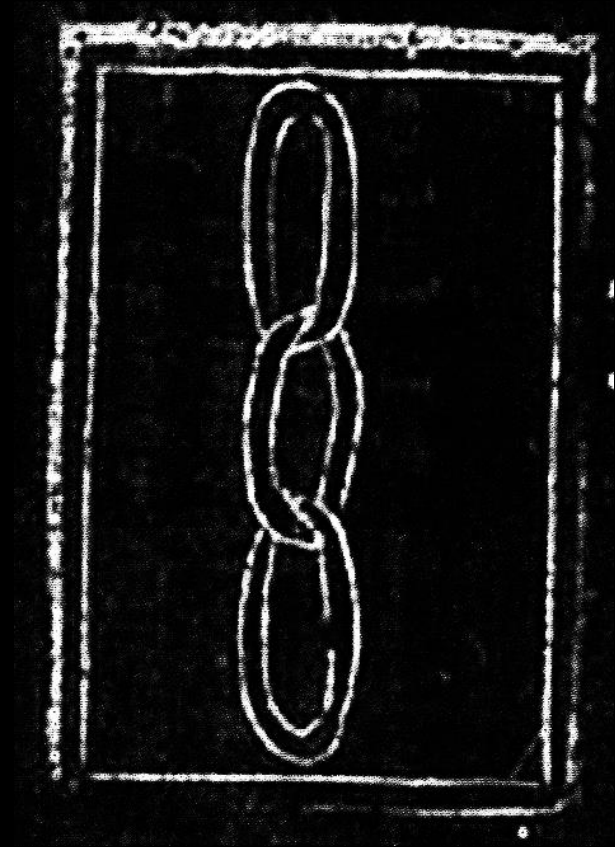
final condition



cognitive dissonance and search for mistake



The linking rings

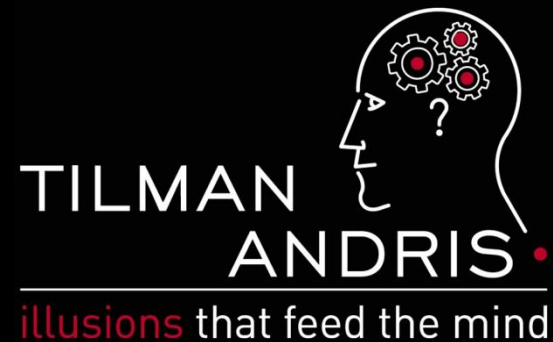


Part I

What is magic?

Conclusions

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- Reasoning process proceeding from at least one false premise
- Conclusion that something is impossible here and now
- Clash between that conclusion and some observation
- An unsolvable contradiction

Charlatan vs. magician

The reasoning of the spectator reviewed: Two sorts of premises

- 1) These two rings are perfectly closed.
- 2) These two rings are separate from each other.
- 3) The magician does not open up any of the rings in any way.

- 4) The laws of nature, given the material from which these two rings are made, do not allow for any section of one ring to pass through any section of the other ring in the present circumstances.
- 5) ...
- 6) ...
- ...

Conclusion: It is impossible for these two rings to get linked in the present circumstances.

But: The rings *do* get linked.

Part II

The magician's practice

Misdirection and coordination of actions

In-transit actions

Simulation

Causality

Misdirection and coordination of actions

Preparatory ('in transit') actions

Simulation

Causality

Abusing biases in causal judgments

Three important clues to causality:

- 1) Antecedence and temporal proximity: A is followed immediately by B.
- 2) Contiguity: B happens near A.
- 3) Correlation: A and B are statistically correlated.

Part II

The magician's practice

In conclusion: the cups and balls – all techniques combined



Concluding remarks on magic and knowledge

Do we know less than we think we know?

“All that I have, up to this moment, accepted as possessed of the highest truth and certainty, I received either from or through the senses. I observed, however, that these sometimes misled us; and it is the part of prudence not to place absolute confidence in that by which we have even once been deceived.”

Descartes, Meditationes de Prima Philosophia [1641], p.9

**The trick of the philosopher
and
the argument of the magician**

Alexander Adrion (1923-2013)

Thank you!

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