

## Tell Me What's In the Envelope.

Written by James Randi

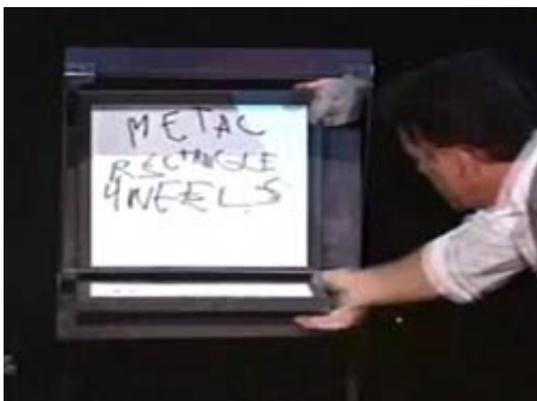
Friday, 02 November 2007 08:36

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A clown named Callahan did some old-fashioned writhing about of the sort that such fakers as Anna Eva Faye and the ancient "mediums" performed to give the impression that they were "in touch" with the dead. First, there was no assurance that Callahan didn't use one of the dozens of methods available to mentalists to discover which of 100 objects had been chosen "randomly" to test a connection with someone named Raymond Hill. This, we were told, would somehow establish whether this dead person was "present" — as if that had anything to do with it. This sensitive "psychic" finally wriggled out a description of a rectangular something of "metal with four wheels" — the 3-letter word "car" would have taken much less sweat from both Mr. Hill and from Callahan — and then Callahan assured us all that he, too, was "a skeptic." Duh.

I'll offer a brief word here about the "Phenomenon" brouhaha on Halloween... I'm away in New York City, returning to my office on Saturday.



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Geller, always the team player when woo-woo is involved, found Callahan's number "very convincing" and said that he had a flair of honesty. Criss Angel bluntly found the performance "comical," designated it as "bullshit," brandished an envelope, offered a million dollars to both Callahan and Geller if either could tell him what was in it, and the Jerry Springer Show was on. Callahan began insulting Criss, the NBC sound man edited out sections of audio, everyone shouted threats and objections — but Callahan never responded to the challenge.

(That challenge might have sounded familiar to SWIFT readers.)

From what I've seen so far, all the blogs dealing with this mess have had lots of criticism of Callahan, though he may be celebrating the fact that he'd never before had so much attention. The colorful histrionics certainly achieved some sort of high-water mark.

I'll leave it at that for now...