

# Dissecting Methods

*A lecture on using mathematics in magic*



**Hello!**

Welcome to the lecture, "**Dissecting Methods**", I hope you enjoy it! In it we will be looking at various effects (new and old) to see how the mathematics that is used in magic really work - and the cases where they don't! You will come away with a greater appreciation of the mechanics behind these effects so that you can easily adapt and expand the tricks in new and interesting ways, that would be impossible otherwise. You will also see how to *prove* that the trick will work in every case through simple reasoning, without having to test every single possibility.

**About your lecturer:**

**Steven Goodwin** is the off-stage name of mentalist and magician, **James Merlin**. As a performer, James does the traditional round of corporate ice-breakers, trade shows, and weddings, with the occasional stage performance at places like the Magicians Showcase and The Magic Circle (both London) and the Junction theatre in Cambridge (where he was once reviewed with the phrase, "*James Merlin is the Derren Brown of Cambridge*")

On the other hand, **Steven Goodwin** is much more interesting!

Professional quiz writer, composer, author, AFOL, game developer, lecturer, advocate, recreational mathematician, and general-purpose computer geek are just a few sides to his polymath personality! Steven is also not adverse to subverting the genre and crossing the streams, as was last seen in 2024 when he presented a keynote lecture in Brussels on how Open Source Software and Magic are related to intellectual property law.

His public contributions to magic have been under his private name (to avoid inquisitions from the merely curious!) and include publications such as **Abra**, **Linking Ring**, **Top Hat** and not forgetting "*The Alexa Trick*" (as published by **Alakazam.**) and the book "*Mathematics in Magic.*"

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## About the lecture:

In this lecture we will be looking at various effects (new and old) to see how the mathematics that is used in magic really work - and the cases where they don't!

But be calm. Don't be scared. The maths involved are those taught to primary school kids. If you remember how numbers were counted in forms of Hundreds-Tens-Units, you're good to go!

Over the space of 90 minutes you will learn:

- ◆ When the 1089 force doesn't work
- ◆ The theory of "Magic smells"
- ◆ 9ft Queenie, an effect with a chess board
- ◆ How to cast out suspicion, when you cast out 9s (theory and effect)
- ◆ The Gilbreath poker deal, effect
- ◆ The Gilbreath ESP deal, effect
- ◆ Background to Vedic mathematics for rapid calculation
- ◆ How to create a forcing matrix, theory and effect
- ◆ The concept of "pairing effects"
- ◆ The quirkiness of the number 142,857, simple effect with a calculator
- ◆ Total recall, a memory effect that requires no memory work
- ◆ Magic mystery tour, effect

There is also an opportunity for Q&A. At the end you will come away with a greater appreciation of the mechanics behind these effects so that you can easily adapt and expand the tricks in new and interesting ways, that would be impossible otherwise. Lecture notes are available as an electronic book from Murphy's at <https://www.murphymagic.com/Product.aspx?id=77482>