

THE NEW
ENCYCLOPEDIA
OF
STAGE HYPNOTISM

By
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*The New
Encyclopedia of
Stage Hypnotism*

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Part One

Mastering Hypnotism

Preface

FASCINATION. From time immemorial Mankind, under one name or another, has been fascinated by hypnotism. Like magic, hypnotism is shrouded with mystery for it presents the magic of the mind, and this is the most astonishing magic in the world. It is the magic of YOU. Stage hypnotism ranks among the most wonderful entertainment mediums for it is entertaining, with you observing others doing what you could do. It is a very personal form of entertainment. This book shows you how to become a master of that entertainment.

Every journey commences by taking the first step. Stage hypnotism is no exception to this fact. *The New Encyclopedia of Stage Hypnotism* maps your way to mastery of the art. Part One gives you the “know how” of mastering Hypnotism. It provides some background in understanding hypnotism and suggestion, and shows you how to develop hypnotic power. Then it takes you along, step-to-step, in learning how to hypnotise, and tells you what to do. Then you must put into practice what you learn, for with experience comes expertness. Part Two of the book shows you how to use that expertness to entertain with hypnotism.

The ability to hypnotise flawlessly comes with practice. The importance of practice in hypnotising cannot be over-emphasised. For that purpose, your first objective is to obtain subjects who are interested in your work and are willing to experiment with hypnosis. Through application you become skilled in the technique.

The New Encyclopedia of Stage Hypnotism teaches you both how to hypnotise and how to present a hypnotism show. Even though you have never hypnotised in your life, if you follow these instructions you will succeed and will become a hypnotic entertainer.

You will find these instructions combine the practical with the scientific. You learn to hypnotise by a gradual approach of advancing from experiments in waking hypnosis on to the deeper phenomena of hypnosis. This is a sensible way to learn hypnotism as the lighter stages of hypnosis are more readily induced than are the deeper trance stages (with most people).

Training by this progressive method of hypnotising shows the new students how to effectively use suggestion while you train your subject(s) in how to be hypnotised.

By following this procedure of performing simple tests first, you will find you will be able to hypnotise more people successfully, as through this handling your subjects will gain confidence in your ability, and you will gain confidence in yourself.

ADVANCE THROUGH THESE FIVE STEPS:

1. *Knowledge of hypnotism*

Be sure you understand what you are to do before attempting to hypnotise anyone. Go about your work in a competent manner so it is obvious that you know what you are doing.

2. *Perseverance*

Success in hypnotising comes with experience in hypnotising. As a new student, do not expect to hypnotise everyone you try. You may succeed immediately with the very first person or you may not. If you do not succeed at once keep right on trying, for as sure as the sun shines you will eventually find a subject who responds. So persevere. You cannot fail if you follow these instructions carefully. And once you have hypnotised one or two persons you will soon find that you can influence the majority with whom you work.

3. *The first hypnosis*

Hypnotising successfully your first subject is the initial goal you must achieve. Just keep in mind that a good hypnotist might possibly try ten persons and not hypnotise one of them for a variety of reasons depending upon the situation. On the other hand, with different people under a different situation, the whole group might be hypnotised. You must learn to expect this variation in responsiveness. In time you will minimize it.

In this training, learn your processes as well as you do your ABCs. Then proceed directly to practising with people, as often as you can. You are bound to succeed. Once the ice has been broken and you have successfully hypnotised a few persons, you will have confidence in yourself, and you will be amazed at your own success.

4. *Understanding the power of suggestion*

The skillful use of suggestion is the "key" to effective hypnotising as it is both the means of producing the state of hypnosis and of controlling the state it produces. Indeed, it is the key to understanding hypnotism, as hypnotism is a hyper-suggestible state of mind. In such regard, speak positively and directly to your subjects. In this text,

careful attention is given to how to present suggestions that influence, i.e. the power of suggestion.

5. *You cannot fail*

If you perform correctly, there is no such word as fail. Study conscientiously and you will be on your way to a successful career in hypnotism.

Ormond McGill
Palo Alto, CA
1993

Introduction

Stage hypnotism provides fascinating entertainment. It combines the mysterious with human interest producing a behavioural programme that is amazing, amusing and thought provoking.

Properly presented stage hypnotism provides quality entertainment which emphasises the work done in medical and academic fields, and lifts the science of hypnotism to the status of an art.

Few forms of entertaining are more basically appealing than the hypnotic exhibition, as people like people; and, as the hypnotism show is devoted entirely to audience participation entertainment, the show is very interesting to watch and every programme is different since the cast on stage is different.

There is something so warmly human, and at the same time verging on the magical which causes hypnotism to stand unique on the entertainment spectrum. An audience will be literally convulsed with laughter in watching the fun-filled antics of hypnotised subject on stage; a few minutes later, that same audience will lean forward in their seats staring in wonder at the mental phenomena unfolding before their eyes.

The hypnotism stage show is an action show based on the greatest wonder and mystery of all the human mind. Hypnotism demonstrates the magic-of-the-mind.

This book provides consecutive instructions in how to become an expert hypnotic entertainer presenting a remarkable programme for all manner of performing situations. The performer will find a wealth of information for presenting successfully stage hypnotism. The non-performer will find a wealth of knowledge about the psychology of hypnotism and its practical application, as stage hypnotism provides the opportunity to acquaint thousands of people with the science/art through the medium of entertainment. Making knowledge entertaining is the best way to learn.

However hypnotism must never be regarded as a toy that one plays with. The human mind is a delicate instrument which must be handled with great care. The hypnotist has a legal and a moral obligation to approach the performance of hypnotism in a completely ethical manner and to appreciate that the most important person in his (or her) presentation is the subject(s) and not himself.

Chapter One

Understanding Hypnotism

Before you can learn to do anything well, you have to have some knowledge of what you do. And so ...

What is Hypnotism?

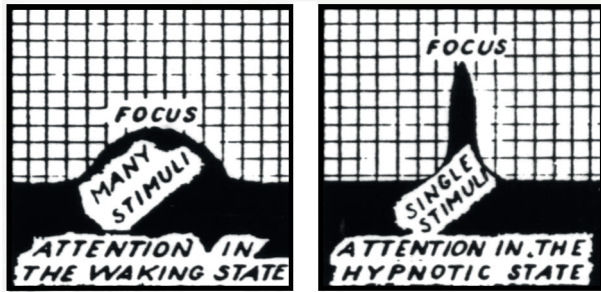
Hypnotism is much like electricity. No one knows for sure just what it is, but we use it anyway. Assuredly it has power. Basically hypnosis may be regarded as a state of mind conducive to subconscious behaviour rather than more normally regarded conscious behaviour. Hypnotism is the means of inducing that subconsciously responsive state of mind. Possibly hypnosis is best understood by regarding it as a way of programming the mind so that it functions through the automatic nervous system rather than the sympathetic nervous system of the body, as is most noticeably the case in everyday behaviour.

Gaining some understanding of the characteristics and theory of hypnosis will both make you a better hypnotist and provide interesting material to explain to your audience during the course of your show. The more you can educate while you entertain the better stage hypnotist you will be.

Characteristics of Hypnosis

Absolute Fixation of Attention

According to experiments published in the *American Journal of Psychology*, entering the state of hypnosis consists in gradually limiting the field of attention until a perfectly concentrated and unvarying focus is reached. Attention in the waking and hypnotic state is represented, in one case, by a wide curve with a broad hump in it (as illustrated in Graph A), representing the fact that we are conscious to many different stimuli at the same time in varying degrees of intensity with the peak of the hump at the focus of attention, and, in the other case, by a single spikelike peak in an otherwise flat curve (illustrated in Graph B). Entering hypnosis has resulted in so narrowing the field of attention that only a very small range of stimuli is perceived, and this range is determined by the suggestions of the hypnotist.



Graph A

Graph B

Hyperacuity of Senses Within the Field of Attention

Numerous experiments on seeing, hearing, feeling and other sensory perceptions show that they are much more accurate and active when attention is directed to them in the hypnotic state. The logical powers of the mind are also greatly enhanced, and deductions may be performed with remarkable accuracy. The comparison between the waking and hypnotic state is the same as the comparison between a shotgun and a rifle.

Artificial Control of Reflexes and Subconscious Nervous Activity

By hypnotic suggestion the pulse rate may be altered, an area of the body anaesthetized, menstrual periods be regulated, time of childbirth determined, and such automatic bodily functions controlled.

Loss of Autonomy Resulting From Diminishing Conscious Control

The hypnotised person elects to relinquish his autonomy and chooses to allow the hypnotist to direct his course of action, as long as the suggestions presented do not run counter to powerful tendencies or the moral nature of the subject. When such suggestions are given, the subject either refuses to respond to them or frequently will "awaken" from the hypnosis.

Susceptibility to Posthypnotic Responses

Suggestions given under hypnosis for actions to be performed after the subject awakens will be performed, if the subject was deeply enough entranced, often with amnesia resulting, provided that these suggestions do not violate the conditions mentioned in the foregoing characteristic.

“The most extensive work yet published on the subject of stage hypnotism. Ormond, widely recognised in North America as the Dean of Stage Hypnotism, has truly excelled himself in providing such a comprehensive work. I would strongly recommend this book to anyone contemplating a career in this field and I would also recommend it to all those who wish to improve their skills. Truly a goldmine of knowledge.”

Paul McKenna

“Ormond McGill has produced a masterwork on stage hypnotism ... all inclusive of his previous work but with much new, up-to-date material added for today’s mastery.”

*Gil Boyne,
President, American Council of Hypnotist Examiners*

“This phenomenal work by the ‘Dean of American Hypnotists’ has been out of print for over a decade. It is not only the most comprehensive book ever to be published on stage hypnotism, it also has widespread therapeutic applications as well. Now totally revised, I am convinced from my experience that there are large portions of the book that contain work never previously published. In it the author totally demystifies hypnosis and dispels many of the myths associated with it. I am confident that even the most experienced practitioner of hypnosis will gain new skills from this important work.”

Martin Roberts, PhD

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Hypnotism