



Review as printed in the International Brotherhood of Magicians Linking Ring publication. February 2015

---

### **Key Mysteries : Steve Drury.**

Most experienced magicians would say that the more commonplace an object is, the more powerful the impact it will have when properly used as part of a magic presentation.

There are few things that are as common or as versatile a prop as a key. With a key you can be a harmless mystic or a raconteur telling a tale. More darkly, you can be a witch or a sorcerer. Tie a key to the end of a string and you can be a scientist or mentalist.

As Ed Solomon wrote in the foreword to *Key Mysteries*, “[a key] does not fool; its purpose is to entertain, enlighten, spellbind, or enchant.” *Key Mysteries* is much more than simply a book with magic routines; it’s an indepth study into the practical and symbolic properties of one of the most recognized universal images. The key represents knowledge, mystery, and initiation. As Drury points out, “In art, Christian saints, pagan gods, and medieval

Kings alike are depicted holding keys. Four thousand years ago wooden keys and locks were used in Egypt, while the Ankh was known as the key of life.”

I was stunned at how the impact of my magic increased without adding anything to my pockets except for a piece of string or leather. I would casually mention in conversation that my spectator was carrying a powerful talisman in their pocket and didn’t even know it. I would note that it’s a common item that they could use to unlock their positive potential. I had the spectator show me their keys and pick any one they wanted. I then told them about the symbolism and folklore related to keys, such as what I found in Drury’s section on keys in dreams. I then put the key on a string and turned it into a pendulum. I’d do one or two of the routines from the book and give them their key back. I was amazed at the reactions and the buzz it created. One person happened to have a skeleton key, and I went to town with a spooky story that disturbed the person more than I intended. In fact, it bothered the person so much that I felt bad about it. I finally realized that the reactions were stronger because nothing looked or felt like a magic trick. It was all organic, commonplace, and felt very real.

In addition to more than thirty pages of historical perspective from folklore to dream lore about keys, *Key Mysteries* devotes two hundred and fifty more pages to essays on presentation and prized effects from thirty premier storytelling and bizarre magicians, including: David Berglas, Eugene Burger, Bruce Bernstein, Kenton

Knepper, Docc Hilford, Marc Salem, Jeff McBride, Roni Shachnaey, Christian Chelman, E. Raymond Carlyle, Professor BC, Robert E. Neale, Bob Fitch, Ed Solomon, Luca Volpe, Dale Hildebrandt, Lary Kuehn, Barrie Richardson, Paul Prater, Simon Drake, Daniele Nigris, Leslie Melville, Paul Voodini, Alan Jones, Jim Magus, Barry Cooper, Ariel Frailich, Master Payne, and Mark Fishman.

I found the book not only entertaining but also thought provoking and a creative energy catalyst. You will never look at the Haunted Key that you only pull out at Halloween, or any other key for that matter, the same way again. The price is a bit steep compared to many magic books, but the quality of the material from a *Who's Who* of contributors makes the book worth the rating of...

Highly recommended.

*Rolando Santos*