

I'll begin this report as I began last month's report. As I sit at my computer and write this Ring Report, it is again snowing here on Long Island. We should have around 2-3 inches of snow when it's done. Not as bad as last time when we got over a foot!

Our March meeting was vastly different. There was not one trick performed or viewed. Instead, we spent the evening having a round table discussion and the topic was - Magician's Assistants.

The discussion was headed up by long time member Werner Reich. First, a little background. Werner is a Holocaust survivor who also spent time at Auschwitz. He also co-authored, along with William Rauscher, *The Deathcamp Magicians*. The book talks about what became of Herbert Nivelli, a professional magician who was Werner's bunkmate in the Birkenau concentration camp and had taught Reich some card tricks during their internment. Their common interest in magic had so fascinated a concentration camp guard that Reich is sure it saved Nivelli's life and, indirectly, his own.

Werner started the evening off with an approximately twenty minute presentation discussing a magician's interaction with an assistant. A little clarification here. We are not talking about the Pam Thompson or Nani Darnell type of assistants. The presentation and ensuing discussion centered on the courtesies, politeness and graciousness that should be used when asking an audience member or spectator to assist in the magician's presentation of a trick. We talked about what to do when an assistant makes a mistake due to themselves or due to the magician. We discussed what to do if a cell phone rings; if the assistant is unable to read something for the magician; if the assistant is drunk or if the assistant tries to one-up the magician. I think you get the idea. There were so many other situations that were discussed.

It was a very enlightening discussion and each member was able to contribute to the discussion.

Next month, a Tom Frank lecture.