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# **Conjuring: Being a Definitive Account of the Venerable Arts of Sorcery, Prestidigitation, Wizardry, Deception, Chicanery and of the Mountebanks Scoundrels Who Have Perpetrated These Subterfuges on**

*James Randi*

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**James Randi : Conjuring: Being a Definitive Account of the Venerable Arts of Sorcery, Prestidigitation, Wizardry, Deception, Chicanery and of the Mountebanks Scoundrels Who Have Perpetrated These Subterfuges on** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Conjuring: Being a Definitive Account of the Venerable Arts of Sorcery, Prestidigitation, Wizardry, Deception, Chicanery and of the Mountebanks Scoundrels Who Have Perpetrated These Subterfuges on:

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Petersenrepetitive...but worth the read...(-:

A history of magic by one of its most renowned contemporary practitioners debunks the fraudulent ""physics"" and ""healers,"" while discussing the exploits of some of the most notorious magicians in history. By the author of Flim-Flam.

From Publishers WeeklyDrawing on histories, documents and his own contacts, "The Amazing Randy," a magician also known for his work unmasking fraudulent psychics, here provides a broad but ultimately unsatisfying history of magic and its performers. Beginning with tales of Egypt and India, Randi discusses such ancient tricks as the Cups Balls routine and the role of machines like the automaton. He traces the careers of performers "Chung Ling Soo" (an early 20th-century conjurer who was not in fact Chinese but a disguised American), the famous Blackstone and Houdini. While the many illustrations (75 in color, 115 in black-and-white) are entertaining--especially those of old posters advertising performances--the book becomes tedious as it degenerates into a collection of brief profiles of relatively obscure performers. Worse, Randi's decision not to reveal how any of the tricks were done is frustrating, given his otherwise detailed descriptions of the life and work of conjurers. Copyright 1992 Reed Business Information, Inc.