

THE 2018 MAGIC & MEANING CONFERENCE

The Robert E. Neale Index

A Resource for the Study of Robert E. Neale's
Trilogy of Magic

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This index is dedicated to Robert E. Neale whose works illuminate the connections between all the various forms and expressions of magic.

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Introduction

“Bob reminds us that there are many ways to experience and perform magic. Our job is not to believe or disbelieve, but ‘make’ believe. When one enters into a relationship with magic in this mind-set, it opens up new possibilities.”—Jeff McBride

*“. . . this is the best general theory of magic we have yet in any literature.”
—Lawrence Hass*

One of magic’s most profound and albeit disturbing philosophers, writers, and creators, Robert Neale invites the magic community to examine more deeply the foundations of our magical performance art. Yet, as challenging as he is, Bob’s genius can inspire us to become better in our theatrical artistry, more thoughtful about relationships with our audiences, and more appreciative of the services that magical entertainment continues to play in human communities.

Because it is difficult to penetrate the indefatigable mind of Bob Neale, we began before Jeff McBride's *Magic & Mystery School's* 2016 "Magic and Meaning Conference" to identify and index some of the essential themes that emerge from his works, ranging from *In Praise of Play* (1969) to his recent 2017-18 publications. All of Bob's books contain a table of contents, notes, and bibliographies. But none of them contain indexes. We wanted to provide an index of his major themes to assist others' appreciation of Bob's works. We do this because we wholeheartedly agree with the opinion expressed by Lawrence Hass, Ph.D., Dean of the *McBride Magic & Mystery School*, when he says of Neale's works on magic, "I thought then and continue to believe: that this is the best general theory of magic we have yet in any literature (By 'any literature' I include academic studies by scholars and non-academic writings by magicians.)" Dr. Hass, who has published Bob's *Trilogy of Magic*, confesses that if one were to select just one of the volumes from the canon of Bob's work, it might be best to begin with *An Essay on Magic* (2015).

Just a word about what we are not attempting to do in this index and why. We are not attempting to introduce Bob's works; that task has already been completed with deep insight in each respective volume of his *Trilogy*. Herein we have included both a generic and a chronologically arranged selected Neale bibliography. Neither are we attempting to interpret nor to criticize Bob's thoughts, although, in his humility, Bob has invited his readers to do so from their own contexts. Finally, we haven't extended our analysis into the hundreds of performance pieces published in his many books, lecture notes, articles, and so on. Bob and his primary publishers, Stephen Minch and Larry Hass, have already defined the connections between the many themes and the narrative scripts of many of these performance pieces.

What follows, then, is an introduction to the person of Robert Neale, a selected bibliography, and thirteen themes we believe best capture Neale's "general theory of magic." With each theme we have provided abbreviated book titles and page numbers, and, in some cases, brief explanations.

Robert E. Neale

Robert Edward Neale is a teacher, minister, story-teller, magician, origamist, and trickster. He was born on June 23, 1929, in Mount Clemens, Michigan into a family of two parents and one older brother. His father was a lawyer and his mother was a family and community person. He began doing magic at age 10 after seeing Harlan Tarbell do the "Cut and Restored Rope" and "Eyeless Vision." He continued his interest in magic and performed throughout his teens, attending several Abbott's Magic Get-Togethers. During college and seminary he dropped magic but resumed it after seminary. At Amherst College he studied philosophy, philosophy of religion, and history of religion. At Union Theological Seminary (UTS) his favorite teacher was the renowned German existentialist theologian, Paul Tillich. Bob became an ordained United Church of Christ minister and after seminary served a congregation for three years in Vermont. Along the way Bob married and had three children. He returned to Union for doctoral work in the psychology of religion and began teaching in 1962 as an instructor in the newly created

department of Psychiatry and Religion. In 1964 he received his doctorate and became a professor at UTS.

In 1964 Bob's brother was stricken with a debilitating five-year terminal illness. Bob began to focus on death, dying, and bereavement and worked one summer as a chaplain in a New York hospital. He was one of the first U. S. academicians to study the hospice movement and spent a sabbatical as a chaplain at St. Christopher's Hospice in England. Back at UTS Bob taught courses in depth psychology, group dynamics, history of healing, and play. He also began to explore such subjects as the psychology of deception, the paranormal, the occult, telepathy, hypnosis, and *I Ching*.

Bob's experience with magic led him "to many conclusions about human nature, especially in relation to religion." Bob is a "border-crosser" and a "trickster." Border-crossers can often point out the assumptions that academic disciplines use to separate themselves from areas they don't want to talk about (such as magic and religion) and are also "feared" sometimes because they see the foundational dogmatism in these disciplines. In 1986, Bob retired early from teaching at UTS and became a free-lance writer and creator of magic and origami folds. He attended the very first Mystery School Experience in 1992. (In fact, he was the very first registrant for it). In 2014 Bob was the recipient of a Special Fellowship from the Academy of Magical Arts in Hollywood, California, (the Magic Castle). He makes his home in Vermont with his wife Gail.

Bob Neale is a phenomenologist. Phenomenology is the study of experience as it is lived. Thus, it is concerned with perception, specific experiences, and consciousness and is very closely related to existentialism. Neale's works draw upon insights from psychology, philosophy, theology, cultural anthropology, mythology, literature, and sociology. However, his primary interests is on the human experiences of play, imagination, magic, mystery, wonder, awe, enchantment, illusion, story-telling, meaning making, the spiritual, evil, suffering, and life and death. He has created a phenomenological/ existential inspired psychological classification of magic—**being, doing, and relating**.

Robert E. Neale: A Selected Bibliography

Psychology of Religion

Neale, Robert E. *In Praise of Play: Toward a Psychology of Religion*. New York: Harper & Row, 1969.

Neale, Robert E., and Jürgen Moltmann, Sam Keen, and David Miller. *Theology of Play*. New York: Harper & Row, 1972.

Neale, Robert, and Arthur H. Kutscher. *Pastoral Care of the Dying and Bereaved: Selected Readings*. New York: Health Sciences, 1973.

Neale, Robert E. *The Art of Dying*. New York: HarperCollins/College Division, 1977.

---. *Loneliness, Solitude, and Companionship: New Dimensions in Relationships*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox P, 1984.

Origami

- Neale, Robert E. "Bunny Bill." Chicago: Magic, Inc., 1964.
- . *Origami, Plain and Simple*. New York: St. Martin's/Griffin, 1994.
- . *Folding Money Fooling*. Washington, D. C. Kaufman and Company, 1997.
- . *Frog Tales*. Humble, TX: H&R Magic Books, 2000.
- . *Which Came First? A Collection of Magical Designs*. London, British Origami Society Booklet, 2006.
- . "The Impossi-Bill Braid," Humble, TX: H&R Magic Books, 2009.

Magic

- Neale, Robert E. *Trans-Actions*. Chicago: Magic, Inc., 1971.
- . *Tricks of the Imagination*. Seattle, WA: Hermetic Press, 1991.
- . "Tricks of the Imagination" in *The Linking Ring*. International Brotherhood of Magicians: 1993-98.
- . *Magic and Meaning*. Seattle, WA: Hermetic Press, 1995.
- . *Magic and Meaning Expanded*. Seattle, WA: Hermetic Press, 2009
- . *Life, Death, and Other Card Tricks*. Seattle, WA: Hermetic Press, 2000.
- Neale, Robert E., and David Parr. *The Magic Mirror*. Seattle, WA: Hermetic Press, 2002.
- Neale, Robert E. *This Is Not a Book*. Seattle, WA: Hermetic Press, 2008.
- . *Magic Matters*. Sherman, TX: Theory and Art of Magic Press, 2009.
- Neale, Robert E., and Jeff McBride, George Parker, Lawrence Hass, Eugene Burger, and Rich Bloch. *Gift Magic: Performances That Leave People With a Souvenir*. Sherman, TX: Theory and Art of Magic Press, 2010.
- Neale, Robert E., *444 and Three More*. Sherman, TX: Theory and Art of Magic Press, 2011.
- . *Nine Uneasy Pieces*. Sherman, TX: Theory and Art of Magic Press, 2012.
- . *The Magic of Celebrating Illusion*. Sherman, TX: Theory and Art of Magic Press, 2013.
- . *The Sense of Wonder*. Sherman, TX: Theory and Art of Magic Press, 2014.
- . *An Essay on Magic*. Sherman, TX: Theory and Art of Magic Press, 2015.
- . *Breaking Our Magic Wands*. Sherman, TX: Theory and Art of Magic Press, 2017.
- . *The Trickster Spirit*. 2016. Vanishing, Inc., 2018.

DVD

- Neale, Robert E., and Michael Weber. *The Nonsense World of Robert Neale*. Rancho Cordova, CA: Murphy's Magic Supplies, Inc., 2006.

The Legend for References to the Works of Robert Neale

Psychology of Religion

In Praise of Play [IPOP]

Theology of Play [TOP]

Pastoral Care of the Dying and Bereaved [PCOTDAB]

The Art of Dying [TAOD]

Loneliness, Solitude, and Companionship [LSAC]

Origami

Origami, Plain and Simple [OPAS]

Folding Money Fooling [FMF]

Frog Tales [FT]

Which Came First? A Collection of Magical Designs [WCF]

“The Impossi-Bill Braid” [TIBB]

Magic

Tricks of the Imagination [TOTI]

Magic and Meaning [MM]

Life, Death, and Other Card Tricks [LDAOCT]

The Magic Mirror [TMM]

This Is Not a Book [TINAB]

Gift Magic [GM]

444 and Three More [444ATM]

The Magic of Celebrating Illusion [TMOCI]

The Sense of Wonder [TSOW]

Essay on Magic [AEOM]

Breakaway [B]

The Trickster Spirit [TTS]

Breaking Our Magic Wands [BOMW]

DVD

The Nonsense World of Robert Neale [TNWORN]

Play

Note: the main references on play are all of *In Praise of Play* (IPOP) and *Essay on Magic* (AEOM, 97-154).

Legend: *The Magic Mirror* [TMM]; *Gift Magic* [GM]; *An Essay on Magic* [AEOM]; *In Praise of Play* [IPOP]; *Magic and Meaning* [MM]; *The Magic of Celebrating Illusion* [TMOCI]

- 1) Play, central to REN’s thinking- “play is so big a topic for me” (GM, 155-156; all of IPOP, TMM, 37-57; AEOM, 97-154)
- 2) Play, one of the great realms of human behavior (AEOM, 138)
- 3) Play, psychological definition—“any activity not motivated by the need to resolve inner conflict” (IPOP, 24)
- 4) Playing, purpose of theatrical (TMM, 3-4; AEOM, 45-46)
- 5) Play, psychology of (IPOP, Chaps. 1-3)
 - Play as Play (IPOP, 19-41)
 - Play as Adventure (IPOP, 42-69)
 - Play, Possibilities of (IPOP, 70-97)

- 6) Play, Psychology of Religion (IPOP, chaps. 4-6)
 Play and Religion (IPOP, 98-125)
 Play, Myth, and Ritual (IPOP, 164-178)
- 7) Play, theology of (all of IPOP, TOP; “The Crucifixion as Play,” 76-86)
- 8) Play, religion and . . . full play in the mature adult is religious” (IPOP, back flap); “for me, religion is mature play” (GM, 155)
- 9) Play and illusion—“illusion means to be in play” (GM, 155)
- 10) Play and make-belief—see “Teddy Bear Illusion” (MM, 89; TMOCI, 106-107)
- 11) Play of symbols (TMM, 47-53; AEOM, 132-138)
- 12) Play space—“to move or function freely within prescribed limits” (TMM, 50)
- 13) Play with mastery, magic as (TMM, 37-57; AEOM, 97-154)
- 14) Play, magic as artful (AEOM, 120-125)
- 15) Play and the illusionistic world (TMM, 48-50; MM, 90-92; TMOCI, 101-109; AEOM, 126-132)
- 16) Play and the trickster (TMM, 102; see “The Trickster Spirit” and all of TTS)

The Trickster Spirit

Note: The best two Neale sources on “The Trickster Spirit” are *Magic and Meaning* (MM), 101-120; 145-162; and all of *The Trickster Spirit* (TTS)

Legend: *Magic and Meaning* [MM]; *The Trickster Spirit* [TTS]

- 1) Trickster—“the glory and garbage of the universe” (MM, 104)
- 2) Tricksters—make mischief with meaning (MM, 106)
- 3) Trickster as Wanderer (TTS, 13-18)
- 4) Trickster as Mess-Maker (TTS, 19-23)
- 5) Trickster as Spiritual (TTS, 24, ff.)
 - Trickster Spirit in all religions (MM, 102-103)
 - Trickster Imagination (TTS, 25-34)
 - Trickster Jesus (TTS, 34-36)
 - Parables (MM, 143-162; TTS, 36-40)
 - Jesus (TTS, 40-42)
- 6) Trickster Images (MM, 104; TTS, 43)
 - Clown (MM, 104; TTS, 430)
 - Magician (MM, 104-105; TTS, 44)
 - Confidence Artist (MM, 105; TTS, 44)
 - Creator/Creativity (MM, 105-106; TTS, 45)

Paul Pruyser's Three Worlds Perspective

Robert Neale, in his writings, draws heavily upon the work of Paul Pruyser, especially Pruyser's "Three Worlds" concept as outlined in *The Play of the Imagination: Toward a Psychoanalysis of Culture* (1983). This work, published after Neale's *In Praise of Play* (1969), places imagination, symbols, creativeness, playing and the transcendent in the "illusionistic world."

Legend: *The Magic Mirror* [TMM]; *An Essay on Magic* [AEOM]; *Magic and Meaning* [MM]; *The Magic of Celebrating Illusion* [TMOCI]

Paul W. Pruyser, Ph.D. (1916- 1987) was as clinical psychologist and psychoanalyst in the Menninger Foundation where he was a Clinical Professor and Director of the interdisciplinary Studies Program. His major contributions were in psychological theories of religion and culture, as seen in his exploration of eleven basic characteristics of a person's three worlds: the **Autistic**; the **Illusionistic**; and the **Realistic**.

Pruyser Reference: *The Play of the Imagination: Toward a Psychoanalysis of Culture*, International Universities Press Inc., 1983, New York, (esp. see 56-72; 163-168; 209-211)

Neale's References to Pruyser's Three Worlds (TMM, 48-50*; MM, 90-92; TMOCI, 101-109; AEOM, 126-132)

*Only 9 of the 11 characteristics are included.

The Imagination

The imagination is our mind "at play." It is the capacity of our mind that fills the "playing field" of make-believe with all its content. In the context of magic, the active imagination Robert Neale calls "magical thinking," something that we all engage in, acts of the mind that make us human.

Legend: *An Essay on Magic* [AEOM]

- 1) As life magic (AEOM, 50)
- 2) Practical power of (AEOM, 54)
- 3) Defensive use of (AEOM,59)
- 4) What if it worked (AEOM, 72)
- 5) Manipulating sacred reality as response to the holy (AEOM, 114)
- 6) As a kind of performance by adults (AEOM, 116)
- 7) As serious and powerful make-believe (AEOM, 116)
- 8) Lying between the hallucinatory and the actual (AEOM, 129)
- 9) As the original organ of religion (Freuerbach, AEOM, 131)

- 10) Sensational in its essence (Freuerbach, AEOM, 131)
- 11) Cannot cope with chaos (Langer, AEOM, 134)
- 12) The world lived, the world imagined—the same (Geertz, AEOM, 135)
- 13) Three attributes of a child’s use of the imagination (AEOM, 137)
 - Inner images affect outer objects
 - Outer objects are alive
 - Imaginative inner entities are real
- 14) Magic
 - to comment on magical thinking (AEOM, 72)
 - as fostering wonder and enjoyment of the imagination (AEOM, 80)
 - as the theater of the imagination (AEOM, 88)
 - onstage magic as backstage magic (AEOM,94)
 - reflection of offstage magics (AEOM, 94)
 - preconditions for-- (AEOM, 97, 99)
 - desire, uncertainty, and imagination (AEOM, 99)
 - unique use of the imagination (AEOM, 109)
 - purpose to symbolize great conceptions (Langer, AEOM, 126)
 - a significant and powerful kind of performance, fueled by the desire and uncertainty, guided by the imagination, focused on life and death themes (AEOM, 150)
 - Neale’s definition of (AEOM, 186)
- 15) Goal of the performer to set up mutual imagination, respect (AEOM, 88)
- 16) Greedy for meaning (AEOM, 104)

Wonder

Wonder is the theme of one of the trilogy books, *The Sense of Wonder*. This book may be the most challenging book in the *Trilogy* in that Neale explores the philosophical and psychological concepts of “surprise, admiration, astonishment, marvel, doubt, curiosity, uncertain expectation, and anxiousness to discover” (p. 54).

Legend: *The Sense of Wonder* [TSOW]; *This is Not a Book* [TINAB]

- 1) Wonder, REN’s interest “I am more interested in wonder and mystery than I am in magic.” (TINAB, xii)
- 2) Wonder, goal of REN’s interest in (TSOW, 19)
- 3) Wonder, difficulty with (TSOW, 31, 32)
- 4) Wonder, definition summary (TSOW, 54)
- 5) Wonder, many (eight) worlds of (TSOW, 37-38)
 - Credulous World (TSOW, 38-42)
 - Ironic World (TSOW, 42-47)
 - Occult World- TSOW, 47-51
 - Sentimental World (TSOW, 51-53)
 - Word World (TSOW, 53-54)
 - Psychological World (TSOW, chap. 2)

- Wonder as respect for what is/squatting (TSOW, 121- 134)
- Wonder, directed (TSOW, 134-147)
 - Uncommon or common (TSOW, 135-137)
 - Inexplicable or explicable (TSOW, 138-141)
 - Disorder and order (TSOW, 141-144)
- Wonder, stages of (TSOW, 148-158)
 - Attention (TSOW, 149-151)
 - Awe (TSOW, pp.151-154)
 - Action (TSOW, 154-158)
- 6) Wonder, enchantment and disenchantment (TSOW, 207-210)
 - Traditional enchantment (magic, religion and philosophy) (TSOW, 210-213)
 - Contemporary re-enchantment (TSOW, 214-217)
- 7) Wonder, six kinds of mystery and (TSOW, 218-223)
- 8) Wonder and Epiphany (TSOW, 228-239)
- 9) Wonder and Performance (TSOW, 285-2970)
- 10) Wonder of you and me, wondering about the (TINAB, xiii-xvi)
- 11) Wonders never cease even though wonderment does (TSOW, 117-121)

Illusions

As magicians, says Robert Neale, we are illusionists. We make illusions that we share and in which we act and relate with one another. Making illusions is what we do. Neale identifies four “grand illusions” with which we frame our lives: 1) the Grand Optical Illusion—our belief that what we see is what is there, 2) the Grand Psychological Illusion—that we are in control of our lives, 3) the Grand Spiritual Illusion—that what we believe is true, and 4) the Grand Performance Illusion—that as magicians we are performing something exceptional.

Legend: *The Magic of Celebrating Illusion* [TMOCI]

- 1) Source of meaning in life (TMOCI, 30)
- 2) Four Grand Illusions
 - Grand Optical Illusion (TMOCI, 30 ff.)
 - Grand Psychological Illusion (TMOCI, 85 ff.)
 - Grand Spiritual Illusion (TMOCI, 165 ff.)
 - Grand Performance Illusion (TMOCI, 249 ff.)
- 3) The Grand Optical Illusion (TMOCI, 30 ff.)
 - What we see (TMOCI, 31, 44)
 - Plain as our nose (TMOCI, 32 ff.)
 - Opening our eyes (TMOCI, 32)
 - First conclusion (TMOCI, 33)
 - Second conclusion (TMOCI, 35)
 - question of access to reality (TMOCI, 36)
 - Hot dog (TMOCI, 38 ff.)
 - Three reflections (TMOCI, 39)
 - I-Con (TMOCI, 42 ff.)

- 4) The Grand Psychological Illusion (TMOCI, 86 ff.)
 - Illusions of “I” (TMOCI, 86 ff.)
 - Definition of “illusion” (TMOCI, 87)
 - Definition of the Grand Psychological Illusion (TMOCI, 88)
 - Consciousness and unconsciousness (TMOCI, 89-90)
 - Conscious “I” as illusion (TMOCI, 91-92)
 - “I”/“Me” conflict (TMOCI, 92)
 - Definition of understanding (TMOCI,93)
 - Definition of the Grand Psychological Illusion (TMOCI, 94)
 - Illusions about ourselves (TMOCI, 94 ff.)
 - Illusions that relate to our self (TMOCI, 96 ff.)
 - Self-enchancement (TMOCI,96-97)
 - Control (TMOCI, 97)
 - Unrealistic optimism (TMOCI, 97-110)
 - Teddy Bear Illusion (TMOCI, 101-109)
 - Conflict between illusion and reality (TMOCI 101)
 - Conflict between blind belief and blind non-belief (TMOCI, 101)
 - Teddy Bear as an instrument of play (TMOCI, 101)
 - Importance of— (TMOCL, 103)
 - security (TMOCL, 103)
 - first possession (TMOCL, 103)
 - acceptance of child’s projections (TMOCL, 103)
 - as a transitional object (TMOCL, 103)
 - for future meaning and value (TMOCL, 103)
 - as sacred (TMOCL, 103)
 - Play as proper context for psychological illusions (TMOCL, 103)
 - Play world as illusionistic (TMOCL, 104)
 - Pruyser’s analysis of three worlds of experience (TMOCL, 104)
 - Play, between the hallucinatory and the imaginative (TMOCL,104)
 - in cultural activities
 - art (TMOCL, 107)
 - religion (TMOCL, 107)
 - imaginative living (TMOCL, 107)
 - creative science work (TMOCL, 107)
 - as Winnie-the-Pooh (TMOCL, 107-108)
 - for dealing with loss and death (TMOCL, 108)
 - Conflict with others’ Teddy Bears (TMOCL,108-109)
 - maintained by playful use (TMOCL,109)
 - Lady Truth Illusion (TMOCI, 109-112)
- 5) The Grand Spiritual Illusion (TMOCI, 165 ff.)
 - Making up meaning (TMOCI, 168)
 - Spirituality as tale-telling (TMOCI, 168-169)
 - Greedy for meaning (TMOCI, 170)
 - Making up ultimate meanings (TMOCI, 172)
 - Believers vs. disbelievers (TMOCI, 173)
 - “A True Story” (TMOCI, 173-174)
 - Making up meaning (TMOCI, 174-178)
 - Four falls (TMOCI, 175-176)

- Four stories (TMOCI, 177-179)
- Commentary (TMOCI, 179-184)
- Elie Wiesel's "The Sufficient Story" (TMOCI, 182-183)
- Celebrating Nonsense (TMOCI, 184-190)
 - Costs of celebration (TMOCI, 185)
 - Illusions as crucial (TMOCI, 185)
 - Questions about celebrating illusions (TMOCI, 186)
 - Celebrating stories (TMOCI, 186-187)
 - "Life as a Fountain" (TMOCI, 187-188)
 - "Shaggy dog stories and ultimate meaning (TMOCI, 189-190)
- Let's Pretend (TMOCI, 190-195)
 - Definition of the 'perfect illusion' (TMOCI, 190)
 - Make-believe as an alternative to belief and non-belief (TMOCI, 191)
 - Illusions as our realities (TMOCI, 191)
 - "The Prince and the Magician" (TMOCI, 192-194)
 - What is "reality"? (TMOCI, 195)
- 6) The Grand Performance Illusion
 - Definition of the Grand Performance Illusion (TMOCI, 251)
 - Magic as Exceptional
 - Four approaches to magic (TMOCI, 251)
 - Robert-Houdin's two magics (TMOCI, 252)
 - Samuel Taylor Coleridge's "suspension of disbelief" (TMOCI, 252-255)
 - "Suspending familiarity" (TMOCI, 254-255)
 - Exposing the magic of criminals (TMOCI, 255-255)
 - On-stage magic as theater (TMOCI, 256)
 - Perception of magic by magicians/by audiences (TMOCI, 257)
 - Neale's alternative definition of the magician (TMOCI, 256)
 - Neale's primary task of the magician (TMOCI, 258)
 - Neale's fifth approach to magic (TMOCI, 259)
 - Magic performed by all of us (TMOCI, 260)
 - Magicians and audiences as partners (TMOCI, 261)
 - Magical as exceptional (TMOCI, 261-262)
 - "Monkey Movement" (TMOCI, 262-263)
 - as spirituality (TMOCI, 264-265)
 - truth as fiction (TMOCI, 265)
 - three meanings of 'truth' (TMOCI, 266)
 - Monkey Movement Illusion (TMOCI, 262-269)
 - Monkey Movement and the Exceptional Magician (TMOCI, 262)
 - The Monkey Movement Image (TMOCI, 262-263)
 - The Monkey Movement act (TMOCI, 263)
 - Monkey Movement and spirituality (TMOCI, 264)
 - Monkey Movement between illusion and disillusion (TMOCI, 264)
 - Monkey Movement dilemma (TMOCI, 265)
 - Definition of "spirituality" (TMOCI, 265)
 - Three meanings of "truth" (TMOCI, 266)
 - The Mothers as First Magicians (TMOCI, 266-269)
 - Definition of the mother magician (TMOCI, 267)
 - Three tasks (TMOCI, 267-268)

- The Teddy Bear Illusion and play (TMOCI, 268-269)
- Definition of magic as play (TMOCI, 269)
- First performance stage of magic as the playpen (TMOCI, 269)
- The Fathers as Early Magicians (TMOCI, 270-276)
 - Deception as a source of enlightenment (TMOCI, 270-271)
 - Deception in religion (TMOCI, 271)
 - The “bull roarer” example (TMOCI, 271-273)
 - The function of exposing illusions (TMOCI, 273-274)
 - Deception as essential to death and rebirth (TMOCI, 274)
 - Destruction and recreation as “monkey movement” (TMOCI, 275)
 - The function of deception in maintaining “monkey movement” (TMOCI, 275-276)
- Stage Entertainment Magicians as “The Parents”
 - Definition of the “illusionist” (TMOCI, 276)
 - Neutral, destructive, and creative illusions (TMOCI, 276-277)
 - Illusions about illusions (TMOCI, 277)
 - Performer as mother (TMOCI, 278)
 - Performer as father (TMOCI, 279)
 - The dynamics of “parenting” (TMOCI, 280)
 - Magic, the magician, and the audience (TMOCI, 281)
 - The function of the stage (theater) (TMOCI, 281)
 - Performance to realize audience “omnipotence” (TMOCI, 282)
 - The “exceptional magician” (TMOCI, 283-284)
 - The consequence of “parenting magic” (TMOCI, 284-285)
 - Opening the audience to opportunities for play (TMOCI, 285)
 - Penn & Teller as “parenting magicians” (TMOCI, 285-289)
 - Wallace Stevens’ “final belief” (TMOCI, 293)

Magic

Magic is often thought of, says Robert Neale, as what other people do and what we don’t. However, he insists, “we are all magicians,” and we are magical beings, performers of magic in ways we often don’t realize. Hence, in the *Trilogy*, Bob’s discussion of magic encompasses what he identifies as all the various magics, ranging from “life” (off-stage) magic to “theatrical” (on-stage) magic. His own definition is challenging: “Magic is the performance exercise of the imaginative mastery which grants symbolic power over life and death by means of ritual control over change in the artful play of impossible effects of being, doing, and relating.”

Legend: *An Essay on Magic* [AEOM]; *The Sense of Wonder* [TSOW]

- 1) Magic, definition of
 - what we do not do/others do (AEOM, 55)
 - Daniel O’Keefe’s definition (AEOM, 70)
 - Nevil Maskelyne’s definition (AEOM, 84-86)
 - “the theater of magical imagination” (AEOM, 88)

- as a mirror (AEOM, 89-94)
- Sir James Frazer's definition (AEOM, 104-106)
- ability to evoke images (AEOM, 110)
- Neale's definition (AEOM, 120-125, 150, 172-173, 186)
- Langer's definition (AEOM, 127)
- as the performance of meaningful impossibility (AEOM, 155)
- as a form of story-telling (AEOM, 169)
- 2) Magic, effects of
 - changes the psychology (AEOM, 53)
 - benefits of (AEOM, 54, 71, 88)
 - George Vetter's seven stages of magic (AEOM, 60-61)
 - O'Keefe's effects of power, peace, psychological harmony, and escape (AEOM, 68)
 - attitudes about (AEOM, 81)
- 3) Magic, character of
 - as evil (AEOM, 59)
 - continuity of (AEOM, 71)
 - The Magic Dilemma (AEOM, 82-89)
 - charlatan vs. magician (AEOM, 85, 87)
 - inconsequential or quackery (AEOM, 83)
 - as an attitude (AEOM, 111-113, 115)
 - magical thinking (AEOM, 50, 72, 114)
 - definition of (AEOM, 114)
 - provides symbolic power over life and death (AEOM, 120-125, 138)
 - Lifton's three themes associated with life and death: movement, connection, and integrity (AEOM, 138-148)
 - as a blessing (AEOM, 148-150, 209)
 - as a creative assistant to wonder (TSOW, 298)
- 4) Magic, sources of
 - from desire and uncertainty (AEOM, 101)
 - magic as greed (AEOM, 102)
 - supporting three needs of survival, pleasure, and meaning (AEOM, 102)
 - Piaget's magical thinking in children (AEOM, 107-137)
 - from play (AEOM, 127)
- 5) Magic, on stage
 - definition (AEOM, 72)
 - three types: reduced, restored, reflexive (AEOM, 73, 90)
 - reduced: distractive or deceptive (AEOM, 73-75)
 - restored: humanistic and existential (AEOM, 73, 75-78)
 - reflexive: expanded self-awareness (AEOM, 73, 79-81)
 - "backstage magic" (AEOM, 91)
 - as a ritual engagement with the audience (AEOM, 137)
- 6) Magic, off stage
 - Life magics (AEOM, 50)
 - occurrences of (AEOM, 50, 51)

- examples of (AEOM, 50-53)
- Traditional magics (AEOM, 54)
 - community magics (AEOM, 55)
 - ceremonial magic (AEOM, 57)
 - Individual and group magics (AEOM, 57)
 - black and white magics (AEOM, 58-59)
- Modern magics (AEOM, 63)
 - Acknowledged* modern magic (AEOM, 63)
 - Daniel O'Keefe's seven basic institutions of magic (AEOM, 63-64, 65)
 - superstition (AEOM, 64-65)
 - occult sciences and theosophies (AEOM, 66)
 - the paranormal (AEOM, 67)
 - magic cults and sects (AEOM, 67-68)
 - Religion as creator of magic (O'Keefe, AEOM, 68)
 - Unexplored* modern magics (AEOM, 69-70)
- 7) Magic, play with symbols as
 - Geertz's definition of sacred symbols (AEOM, 132-133)
 - religious symbolism (AEOM, 134)
- 8) Magic, play and
 - the place of magic in play (AEOM, 138)
- 9) Magic tricks, classification of
 - Previous classifications
 - Daniel O'Keefe's seven institutions of magic (AEOM, 63-64, 65)
 - Physical (AEOM, 157)
 - Technological (AEOM, 158)
 - Social (AEOM, 158-161)
 - Outcome (AEOM, 161-162)
 - S. H. Sharpe's Analysis of Conjuring Feats (AEOM, 162-164)
 - Dariel Fitzkee's Nineteen Basic Effects (AEOM, 164-165)
 - Harry Blackstone, Jr.'s List of Effects (AEOM, 165)
 - Psychological (AEOM, 172)
 - New classification
 - Neale classification (AEOM, 48, 174-179)
- 10) Magic, religion and
 - magic vs. religion (AEOM, 59)
 - ceremonial magic vs. religion (AEOM, 111-114)
- 11) Magic, reaction to
 - Love and hate (AEOM, 53)
- 12) Magic, understanding of
 - as tricks (AEOM, 47)
 - as superstitious nonsense (AEOM, 47)
 - as evil (AEOM, 47)
- 13) Magical thinking
 - life magic as (AEOM, 50, 72)

- 14) Magic as performance –
 - the reflexive performer (AEOM, 93)
 - drive to perform (AEOM, 100)
 - Malinowski’s necessity for (AEOM, 101)
 - S. J. Tambiah’s theory (AEOM, 116-120)
 - as ritual engagement with the audience (AEOM, 137)
 - criteria for selecting tricks (AEOM, 193, 197-208)
 - the results of magical performance (AEOM, 195)
 - motivation for (AEOM, 2018-209)
- 15) Metamagic
 - underlying magic (AEOM, 48)
 - “backstage magic” (AEOM, 92)

The Magician(s)

“I am a magician,” says Robert Neale. “We are all magicians.” He explores the various roles and types of magicians related to each of the categories of magic, ranging from “Life” (off-stage) magics to “Theatrical” (on-stage) magics.

Legend: *An Essay on Magic* [AEOM]; *The Magic of Celebrating Illusion* [TMOCI]; *The Sense of Wonder* [TSOW]

- 1) Magician, definition of
 - as a thaumaturgist (TSOW, 37, 60)
 - Victor Walter’s definition (TSOW, 273-274)
 - as an actor
 - Orson Welles (TSOW, 277-278)
 - Robert-Houdin (TMOCI, 251-252)
 - as a wonder-worker (TSOW, 278, 282)
 - as a fake miracle-worker (TSOW, 278)
 - as an edifier (TSOW, 283, 284)
- 2) Magicians, what they do
 - wonder about wonder (TSOW, 117)
 - focus on the exotic (TSOW, 290)
 - focus on witness and shock (TSOW, 296)
 - focus on the power (of the magus) (TSOW, 296)
 - create illusions (TMOCI, 30)
 - pander to special groups (TMOCI, 252)
 - create suspension of disbelief (TMOCI, 253)
 - give the charm of novelty (TMOCI, 254)
 - expose the magic of criminals in daily life (TMOCI, 255-257)
 - a mirror that reflects the magic performed by everyone in everyday life (TMOCI, 258-259)
- 3) Magicians
 - Stephen Minch (AEOM, 37)
 - David Parr (AEOM, 37-40)

- Larry Hass (AEOM, 37-40)
- Robert Neale (TMOCI, 259-260; AEOM, 41-42)
- Jeff McBride (TMOCI, 280, 289)
- Penn & Teller (TMOCI, 286-290; AEOM, 201)
- Ricky Jay (TMOCI, 289; AEOM, 201)
- Eugene Burger (TMOCI, 289)
- Dai Vernon (AEOM, 79, 218)
- Orson Welles (AEOM, 83-84)
- Nevil Maskelyne (AEOM, 84-87)
- Robert-Houdin (TMOCI, 251-252)
- W. E. Butler (AEOM 109-111)
- S. H. Sharpe (AEOM, 162-163, 181)
- Winston Freer (AEOM 163-164)
- Dariel Fitzkee (AEOM 164-165, 180, 182)
- Harry Blackstone, Jr. (AEOM, 165)
- Charles Reynolds (AEOM, 169)
- Harry Houdini (AEOM, 185)
- Kreskin (AEOM, 185)
- David Copperfield (AEOM, 206)
- 4) Magicians, types of
 - roles they play (TMOCI, 282; AEOM, 41)
 - (great) stage performers (TMOCI, 283)
 - exceptional magicians (TMOCI, 283)
 - (on) stage magicians (AEOM, 98, 204)
- 5) Magicians, who they are
 - I am a magician (TMOCI, 30, 42, 86, 166, 250)
 - We all are magicians (TMOCI, 30, 42, 86, 166, 250)
 - Role models (TMOCI, 252)
 - first magicians (the mothers) (TMOCI, 262, 266-269, 278)
 - religious professionals (AEOM, 56)
 - religious initiates (AEOM, 56)
 - priests (AEOM, 56)
 - shamans (AEOM, 56)
 - Iranian *magi* (AEOM, 57)
 - witches (AEOM, 58)
 - sorcerers (AEOM, 58)
 - the Navaho (AEOM, 58)
 - Jesus (AEOM, 59, 78, 183)
 - Merlin (AEOM, 60)
 - Faust (AEOM, 600)
 - early clergy magicians (as the fathers) (TMOCI, 262, 270-276, 279)
 - stage entertainment magicians (the parents) TMOCI, 262, 276-278)
 - soldiers (AEOM, 101)
 - gamblers (AEOM, 101)
 - athletes (AEOM, 101)
 - actors (AEOM, 101)
 - primitive hunters (AEOM, 101)
- 6) "The Prince and the Magician," (TMOCI, 192-194)

Off-Stage/On-Stage Magic

The foundation of Robert Neale's theory of magic is his connection of what he identifies as the various types of "off-stage magics" with the several manifestations of "on-stage magics." To the point, Neale notes, "Stage magic is the mirror of daily life magic" (AEOM, 89).

Legend: *An Essay on Magic* [AEOM]

1) On-stage magics

- Reflection of the magic that occurs in daily life (AEOM, 43)
- Magic as the mirror of magic, the many magics (AEOM, 46)
- The many forms of magic (AEOM, 48)
- Stage magics as theatrical (AEOM, 72)
 - plays with the reality of magic in our lives (AEOM, 72)
 - as the mirror of daily life magic (AEOM, 89)
- Three types of stage magic—reduced, restored, reflexive (AEOM, 79)
 - Reflexive magic as a celebration of all life magics (AEOM, 79)
 - about fostering wonder and the joy of the imagination (AEOM, 80)
- Stage magic as only a diversion (AEOM, 82)
 - as distractive (AEOM, 90)
 - as deceptive (AEOM, 90)
 - as humanistic (AEOM, 90)
 - as existential (AEOM, 90)
 - as reflexive (AEOM, 90)
- Performance of tricks (AEOM, 137)
- Fueled by desire and uncertainty (AEOM, 150)
- Guided by imagination (AEOM, 150)
- Themes of life and death (AEOM, 150)
- Offers experiences of movement, connection, and/or integrity (AEOM, 150)
- Onstage magic as backstage magic, "a mirror reflecting the off-stage magics that occur offstage" (AEOM, 94)

2) Off-stage Magics

- Life magic (AEOM, 90)
- Traditional Magic (AEOM, 90)
- Modern Magic (AEOM, 90)

3) The many magics

- Motivation/direction for stage performances (AEOM, 49)
- Life magic-What we do (AEOM,50)
- Effect of life magics (AEOM, 53)
- Benefits of life magics – faith, hope, and love (AEOM, 54)
- Life magics as helpful/hurtful (AEOM,54)
- Orthodoxy as the condition of traditional magics (AEOM, 55)
- Traditional magics as battle between the individual and groups (AEOM, 55)
- Community magic as good (AEOM,57)
- Individual/group magics as bad (AEOM, 57)
- Modern magics in cultural/social settings (AEOM, 63)
- Two classifications of "modern magics": acknowledge and unexplored (AEOM, 63)

- Pervasive unexplored magics (AEOM, 69)
- 4) Backstage magic as metamagic (AEOM, 92)
 - as education on magic in daily life (AEOM, 92)
- 5) Reflexive magic as “trickster magic” AEOM, 92
 - the reflexive performer as a theatrical trickster (AEOM, 93)

Performance

Robert Neale addresses the performance of each of his various “magicians” and in all categories of what he identifies as “life magics” (off-stage magic) and “theatrical magic” (on-stage magics). He offers a number of suggestions for making “on-stage” magic more meaningful and empathetic with the magic that is natural to audiences.

Legend: *An Essay on Magic* [AEOM]; *In Praise of Play* [IPOP]; *The Magic of Celebrating Illusion* [TMOCI]; *The Sense of Wonder* [TSOW]

- 1) Chapter 3-Performance of Tricks (Preface, AEOM, 43)
- 2) The nature and significance of performing magic (AEOM, 97)
- 3) Preconditions for magical performance
 - Desire and uncertainty (AEOM, 99)
- 4) Functions of Magical Performance
 - Life magic-helpful or harmful (AEOM, 54)
 - Ceremonial magical performance (AEOM, 56)
 - Individual and group magical performance (AEOM, 57)
 - Black magical performance (AEOM, 58)
 - White and black magical performance (AEOM, 59)
 - Merlin vs. Faust (AEOM, 60)
 - To symbolize great conceptions (AEOM, 126)
 - [as an actor] To play the role of a magician (TMOCI, 251-252)
 - To suspend belief in the supernatural (TMOCI, 252-253)
 - To create the charm of novelty by suspending familiarity (TMOCI, 254)
 - To expose the magic of criminals in daily life (TMOCI, 255)
 - [as a mirror] To reflect the magic performed in daily life by everyone (TMOCI, 258)
 - To mirror the magic of the audience (TMOCI, 259)
 - To create mental impressions (AEOM, 84)
 - To create a fictional reality (TMOCI, 292)
- 5) Purpose of stage magical performance (AEOM, 72)
 - Distractive and deceptive stage magical performance (AEOM, 73-75)
 - Humanistic and existential stage magical performance (AEOM, 76-78)
 - Religious stage magical performance (AEOM, 77-78)
 - Bizarre stage magical performance (AEOM, 78)
 - Reflexive stage magical performance (AEOM, 79-80)
 - Reduced magical performance intended only to deceive or distract (AEOM 124)

- To elicit the breadth and depth of wonder without mystery (TSOW, 284)
- To remind the audience of the wonders they have experienced (TSOW, 285)
- The Mother as “First Magician”
 - To provide opportunity for illusion (TMOCI, 267)
 - To provide opportunity for disillusion (TMOCI, 267)
 - To enable the “Teddy Bear” illusion (TMOCI, 68)
- The Father as “Second Magician” (TMOCI, 270-276)
 - To create deception for the purpose of enlightenment (TMOCI, 271)
 - To create illusions (TMOCI, 276)
- The magician as “mother” (TMOCI, 278)
- The magician as “father” (TMOCI, 279)
- The Magician as “Parent” (TMOCI, 284)
 - To celebrate illusion and disillusion and the movement between them (TMOCI, 284)
- 6) The differences between the performances of the charlatan and the magician (AEOM, 87)
- 7) The varieties of onstage magics (AEOM, 90)
- 8) The performer of reflexive magic as a “theatrical trickster” (AEOM, 93)
- 9) Magical thinking (performance) in children (AEOM, 107)
- 10) Magical performance as
 - parody (AEOM, 83)
 - a display of the impossible (AEOM, 88)
 - a recognition of the audience as magicians (AEOM, 88-89)
 - backstage magic (AEOM, 91-92)
 - a mirror to the audience (AEOM, 94)
 - calling forth images (AEOM, 110)
 - an attempt to control the sacred (AEOM, 112)
 - manipulating sacred reality through magical imagination (AEOM, 114)
 - ritual acts [hence] performance acts (Tambiah, AEOM, 118)
 - a magical use of the imagination (AEOM, 116)
 - the practice, maintenance, and display of mastery (AEOM, 121)
 - the mastery of the imagination (AEOM, 121)
 - ritual behavior (AEOM, 123, 127)
 - the artful display of impossible effects of being, doing, and relating (AEOM, 123)
 - play reality as impossible effects for controlling life and death (AEOM 123)
 - significant and powerful (AEOM, 150)
 - the performance exercise of imaginative mastery (AEOM, 186)
- 11) Magic as “the performance exercise of the imagination” AEOM, 121)
 - “to be witnessed and appreciated” (AEOM, 121)
- 12) Behaving magically as adults (AEOM, 115)
- 13) When we see a magic performance (AEOM, 195)
- 14) Criteria for good onstage magical performance (AEOM, 197-201, 205-207)
- 15) Why we perform onstage magic (AEOM, 208)
- 16) The appropriate spirit for performing onstage magic (AEOM, 209)
- 17) Stages for Magical Performing

First stage-the playpen (TMOCI, 269)
Second stage-sacred space (TMOCI, 276)

Psychological Classification of Magic

One of the unique contributions that Robert Neale makes to the magical literature is his psychological classification of magic. Neale summarizes the various past classifications of magic effects of Nevil Maskelyne, Sam Sharpe, Winston Freer, Dariel Fitzkee and Harry Blackstone, Jr. as focusing on the **physical, technological, social, and outcome** (AEOM, pp. 156-171).

Neale's **existential** and **psychological** approach (AEOM, 172-193; TMM, 66-73) focuses on magic effects that emphasize **Being, Doing, and Relating**. Below is a summary (AEOM, 174-175; TMM, 68).

Legend: *The Magic Mirror* [TMM]; *An Essay on Magic* [AEOM]

- 1) Being (AEOM, pp. 180-181; TMM, 68-69)
 - existing and not existing
 - characteristics changing and not changing
 - holding together and falling apart
- 2) Doing (AEOM; TMM, 69-70)
 - moving and not moving in space
 - moving and not moving in time
 - functioning according to one's nature or not
- 3) Relating (AEOM, 182; TMM, 70-73)
 - attracting or repelling
 - agreeing or disagreeing
 - union or disunion

The Ethical Heart of Spiritual Illusions: The Four "Falls"

"Bob suggests," says Larry Hass, "that our accounts of ultimate things—reality as a whole, life in essence, what it all means, where it all comes from—are tall tales. They are 'whoppers,' and he argues that it is important and less destructive to joyfully celebrate this fact rather than to slide into the rigidity of 'totalitarian imagination.'" (TMOCI, 198)

Legend: *The Magic of Celebrating Illusion* [TMOCI]

- 1) Faith, as an "excess of imagination" (TMOCI, 181)
- 2) Totalitarian imagination, falling into (TMOCI, 175-176)
- 3) The Four "Falls" (TMOCI, 198-200)
 - First "fall"- forgetting that stories are created out of our imaginations

Second “fall”- believing in only one revelation; others are wrong

Third “fall”- freezing that specific final revelation

Fourth “fall”- defending that final revelation from all attacks and rejecting, attacking and even killing others

4) Only stories of our imaginations, all of our “sacred cows” (physical, psychological, and spiritual) are (TMOCI, 198-200)

5) Celebrating our imaginations and illusions “all the way down” (TMOCI, 199-201)

6) Teller of tales, when it comes to ultimate things we are all (TMOCI, 199-200)

Life and Death and . . .

“Magic is the performance exercise of imaginative mastery that grants *symbolic power over life and death* by means of ritual control over change in the artful play of impossible effects of being, doing, and relating.” (AEOM, pp. 120-121)

Legend: *An Essay on Magic* [AEOM]; *Life, Death, and Other Card Tricks* [LDAOCT]; “Broken Wand Ceremony” in *Breaking Our Magic Wands* [BOMW]

Symbolic power over life and death: Our attempt here is not to cite all his references to life and death but to suggest an overarching perspective in Bob’s works. This perspective includes his philosophical, theological, and psychological writings, especially his early works in pastoral care and psychology of religion as well as his later works on origami and magic. In all his writings there is a deep awareness of life in all of its beauty, ugliness, messiness, and absurdity as well as the ultimate awareness that “one day we all die.” Like Prospero, the magician in Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*, we all have to let go of our “magic” in order to step into the deeper mystery of life and death and what may beyond death (see Bob’s “Broken Wand Ceremony,” BOMW, pp. 38-39).

We conclude with these words from Bob’s book, *Life, Death, and Other Card Tricks*. Writing about Albert Camus’s existential classic novel, *The Plague*, Bob says, “The novel is a chronicle of heroism. In the face of suffering and death we are to love, endure and heal. In a crisis of life and death, people may meet and grow to love each other. This is the hope and this is the ultimate reward. For Camus, there is meaning in this and there is no meaning greater than this.”

Bob continues, “Death does prompt us to hold one another, to heal one another—and to create card tricks. In response to my brother, my dying friend, Camus and to the experience of death itself, my card trick ‘Sole Survivor’ (MM, pp. 133-136; LDAOCT, pp. 143-146) came into being.” (LDAOCT, p. viii- ix)

May we, even as we do our card tricks, “meet and grow to love each other.”