

Steve Beam's

*Semi-Automatic  
Card Tricks*



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DEDICATION

To Dawn,  
A queen in a deck full of jokers.

# Steve Beam's Semi-Automatic Card Tricks Volume One

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## INTRODUCTION

J.G. Thompson, Jr. in Classic Secrets of Magic said, "If a magician knows a hundred ways of locating a card and only one way of revealing it, the effect to the audience is that the magician knows only one trick. On the other hand, if the magician knows one way of finding a card and a hundred ways of revealing it, the effect is that he knows a hundred tricks." Well maybe that is the effect J.G. had on his audiences who watched a hundred of his card tricks. I have found that a hundred tricks is way too many for any audience to endure . . . and that is why I have only included fifty in this tome.

Would not the average audience be willing to watch a quick forty or fifty tricks without gorging themselves? If not, then why not? Card tricks and the people who perform them, have developed a bad reputation. There are several reasons for this. Since there are many self-working card tricks, almost everyone knows one. And these same people usually pride themselves on trying to show their trick to others who treasure the same trick as their one link to the magicians' secrets. ("Is it three piles of seven, or seven piles of three?")

To compare with other branches of magic, there are few self-working coin tricks and laymen don't have easy access to other magicians' props. This prevents them from inflicting tricks of other types on unsuspecting audiences. They are restricted to card tricks. However, performing a trick once a year is like telling a joke with the same frequency. The results are no more reliable than the memory from which they are extracted.

Laymen aren't the only ones to blame for the reputation of card tricks. Novice magicians assume that others are mutually enthralled with their newest discovery in the art of magic. And if their audiences are excited by one trick, just think how excited they will be to see ten tricks.

Then we move on to the full scale cardmen. These are the people who have made a scholarly study of playing cards and their possibilities which would rival that of the Dead Sea Scrolls. They talk in jargon and thrive on the esoteric. Technical refinements of standard items account for much of the space on their bookshelves and in their repertoires. These are men who know several dozen different ways to secretly locate a selected card and are not happy until you have seen each of them along with the latest technical variations. Note that it is not necessary that they reveal the selection for them to be entertained, only that they locate it. These cardicians can show you five different tricks that all look the same. This is like hearing five different jokes with the same punchline.

So laymen, beginners, and cardmen are partly responsible for the reputation of card tricks. But card tricks themselves share the blame for their own reputation. Because of their number, their individual identities, the games they play, and their construction, there are simply thousands more card tricks than other types of magic tricks. Even at the average magician's meeting, the number of card tricks will far exceed all other tricks combined.

Now that you see why you will start from a deficit position when you perform card magic, your goal should be to overcome this. Fortunately, the recipe is simple. Select strong material, routine it well, practice it thoroughly, and present it properly. Start out strong and build. The end result will be that your audiences will recognize that you are not the average one-trick-wonder and will be willing to follow you.

My goal in this book was to make available to you a wide variety of choice self-working material. These are items I have used to fool magicians and entertain laymen for years. Most have

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been seasoned by time, practice, and performance. These are top quality effects with state of the art methods. They are self-working without appearing to be.

These are not beginner card tricks. They are professional caliber card tricks which can be performed by beginners if they are willing to take the time and expend the effort necessary to master them. However, without proper practice and presentation, even the best card trick will make the performer look like a beginner.

I have one comment on my writing style. I tend to give lengthy effects. This is to present the tricks to you in the way in which they should be presented to the audience. In some routines it is necessary to capture the whole mood by a detailed recounting of the effect. A clear understanding of the desired product should streamline your creation of the product.

There is an old stage aphorism to always leave them wanting more. As an author, I hope I will leave you wanting more. Just in case you have an audience who will sit through a hundred card effects, I already have the next fifty tricks in the wings waiting to go on. Think of Volume 2 as your encore.

Steve Beam  
August 15, 1993

*Beam's Paradox: "A lack of presentation is a form of presentation."*

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## ON PERFORMING MAGIC

Performing as a magician is a difficult thing to successfully accomplish. There are many skills which you must develop and fears which you must conquer or at least control to allow you to present yourself to an audience as a magician. You must be able to lie convincingly while speaking before large groups and manipulating objects, all while trying to convince intelligent people that you can do the impossible.

There are many parts to a successful performance. What the magician says is at least as important as what he does. For example, picture a magician with a deck of cards. He turns over the top card of the pack, the five of spades. He turns it face down and snaps his fingers. When he turns the top card face up again, it is now the queen of hearts.

What happened? What was the effect? Did the five change into the queen? Or, did the five vanish, leaving the queen as the new top card? Did the five stay where it was and the queen appear on top of it? Or did the five not vanish but travel to another location in the pack? Is the queen really the five but temporarily disguised as a queen?

These possibilities highlight the power of proper presentation to narrow the possible effects down to the effect you wish to accomplish. Without this focus, the effect may not be clear to the audience.

Your patter and routining steer the audience down the correct path. If they veer from that path, you must steer them back onto it. This is particularly important during self-working tricks. This is because sleight of hand tends to be more visual by nature. For example, if you vanish a card by sleight of hand, the spectators think they see it disappear. First they see it, then it's gone. The disappearance is obvious. Generally speaking, if you vanish a card by a self-working method, you have to set the stage so that the audience thinks the card is in a certain place and is later shown it is not there.

As you think about how you will present your magic, work on focusing the attention of the audience on the path you wish them to take. If you don't steer them, they will steer themselves. To extend the metaphor, that will put the audience in the driver's seat during your act and they will reach their own conclusions as to what is happening. What is "misdirection" if it is not the "direction" in which you steer the audience's attention and thoughts? You are not only the star of the show but also the director.

Magic isn't what it appears to be. To paraphrase Edgar Shoaff on advertising, magic "is the art of making whole lies out of half truths." Thought must be expended to ensure that the lies are artfully strung together to make a coherent, alternate truth. To some extent, being a good magician means being a good liar.

While telling your lies, you also have the disadvantage of seeing what goes on behind the scenes. This ability to "lie" while looking at the truth is something which you must develop (unless you have some political training).

At least as important as the lies themselves, is the attitude with which you direct the events and deliver the lies. While the moment you perform a secret maneuver probably creates more tension for you than the rest of the trick, you must act casually. You will find that this naturalness and the required confidence will come with practice. Robert Houdin said that a magician is an actor playing the part of a magician. For most beginners, this means acting like they are not scared to

death that they will be caught executing a move.

To illustrate, assume you are using a gimmicked card case in a trick. At the conclusion of the trick, beginners often focus attention on the gimmick with a mad scramble to return it to their pocket. If you handle the case gingerly, it will draw suspicion. Rather, you should toss the case to the table as you would any ordinary, non-gimmicked case. When you are finished with it, create a reason to remove it. Perhaps it is in your way when you start your next effect. You pick it up, look around for a place to set it, then "decide" to put it up. This casualness must be conveyed in your attitude.

If you don't fear the audience, they won't suspect you. Laymen are like dogs when it comes to sniffing fear. As with public speaking, confidence is a powerful tool to win the audience over. People naturally follow a leader. If the performer doesn't appear to be a confident leader, someone else will assume the role and fill the void.

The simplest way to ensure that you are the leader is to develop a clear, well thought out presentation for each trick you perform. You want the audience to have confidence that you are leading them to something they will enjoy seeing. You have the advantage since you are the only one who has been there before. They will follow you as long as you appear to know where you are going and are offering something interesting. The presentation which accompanies the mechanics of your trick is what guides them on the journey.

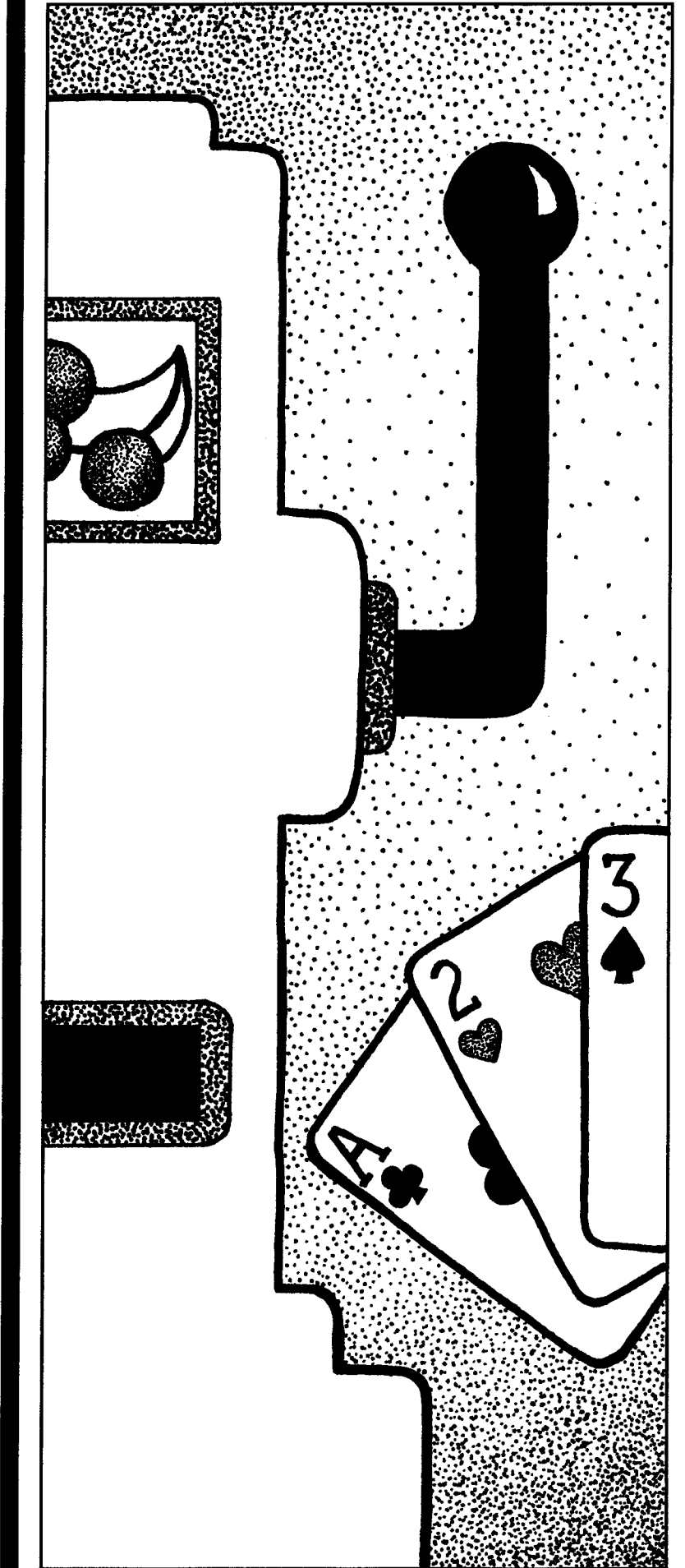
Once you have decided how to present your magic you must practice. More than anything else, practice will build your confidence and strengthen your presentation. Most of the routines and presentational ploys I have developed have been born of practice sessions. This is where you fine tune your delivery and timing. There is no other performance artist which would think of walking out on stage without proper practice and a thorough knowledge of his material. Magicians should never even consider it --- the consequences can be catastrophic.

Attitude, confidence, leadership, presentation, and practice combine to form a magician. But there is another important piece. You must have performance material. One could argue that the material is not important --- that any trick in the right hands can be effective. However, since the magician is supposed to be doing magic, he should not only entertain but also mystify. There are many tricks that are just not mysterious although they may be entertaining when properly presented. Further, there are some tricks which fit some personalities but which don't fit others. Just as musicians choose their music, magicians must choose their tricks to produce their magic. I have attempted to make the choosing process easy by including a wide variety of choice material. The difficulty should come from trying to refrain from performing all of them at the same showing.

*"To the drawing-room conjurer the most important weapon of deceit is his cunningly arranged conversation."*

*--- C. Lang Neil in The Modern Conjurer (1903)*

# Gambling Effects



## GENTLEMAN'S BET

*Principle by Norman Gilbreath*  
*Routine by Steve Beam*

This effect is based upon a natural handling of the Gilbreath Principle as used by Persi Diaconis. It is an ever so slight variation on handling of the trick which was originally published in a book by Martin Gardner. While the method is transparent to anyone familiar with the principle (as many of the Gilbreath effects are) I am stressing the presentation of this idea. This turns what was basically a novelty effect into a good presentation piece.

**Effect.** The deck is shuffled by a member of the audience. The magician explains that he is going to have a gentleman's bet for a dollar with a spectator. He's going to allow the spectator to choose the magician's side of the bet. *"I'm going to deal two cards at a time from the top of the pack. Whenever you say stop, that will be my pair and the one I will bet on. If you stop me at two cards of the same color, I will bet that future pairs will be the same color. If you stop me on two colors which are different, that is, one red and one black, I will bet that future pairs will be of different colors. You will bet against me. The rules will become evident as we progress."*

The magician drops pairs face down from the top of the pack. When the spectator stops the magician, the spectator gets a choice of the pair just dealt or the next pair. We will assume that the chosen pair contains one red and one black card. *"That means that I will bet that future pairs are different and you will bet that they are either both red or both black."* If the spectator resists betting against the magician, he is assured that this is simply a "gentleman's bet."

The magician reassembles the pack. He turns over the first pair. *"Oh gee, I'm sorry. It's a mixed pair. I guess you lose. But that's okay. I'm going to give you an opportunity to get your*

*dollar back. We'll bet double-or-nothing on the next pair. After all, it's only a gentleman's bet."*

The next pair is also mixed. *"I guess I win again. I'm ahead two dollars. But if we bet again, I could lose everything. The first time I lose, I'm out of it. You only have to win once to wipe me out and to get you out of debt."*

The magician deals quickly through the entire deck, winning every time. As he deals, he quickly recounts how much money he has won each time. At the conclusion of the trick, *"Just make your check payable to 'Steven L. Beam.'"* When the spectator protests that it was only a gentleman's bet, the magician proclaims, *"That's right. And gentlemen pay their debts. That's Steven L. Beam."*

**The Work.** Alternate the colors throughout the deck, red / black / red / black / etc. Remove the jokers and make sure you have a full deck. (At the very least, you need an even number of cards, with the same number of reds and blacks.) Split the deck so that the bottom cards of each half are different colors. Offer these halves to a spectator to shuffle together. The cards are squared.

Because of the Gilbreath principle, all pairs from the top to the bottom will consist of mixed red/black pairs. This allows the magician to deal through the deck, two cards at a time. When the spectator selects one of the pairs, it will consist of a mixed pair. You can either drop the balance of the deck on the table or you can pick up the dealt pairs and replace them on the top.

You are now ready to proceed with the betting. Needless to say, you will win every time.

**Presentation Notes.** Without proper routining, this trick will drag. This is because you must deal through and evaluate 26 pairs. I



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add humor to the routine by getting faster and faster. After the first couple of bets and the audience realize we are playing double-or-nothing until the spectator wins, I stop asking about the wager and proceed to deal the next pair. I have memorized the amount of the losses and strongly recommend that you do also. By doubling the bet each time, your winnings (and the spectator's losses) total:

1st Bet:	\$1.00
2nd bet:	2.00
3rd bet:	4.00
4th bet:	8.00
5th bet:	16.00
6th bet:	32.00
7th bet:	64.00
8th bet:	128.00
9th bet:	256.00
10th bet:	512.00
11th bet:	1024.00
12th bet:	2048.00
13th bet:	4096.00
14th bet:	8192.00
15th bet:	16,384.00
16th bet:	32,768.00
17th bet:	65,536.00
18th bet:	131,072.00
19th bet:	262,144.00
20th bet:	524,288.00
21st bet:	1,048,576.00
22nd bet:	2,097,152.00
23rd bet:	4,194,304.00
24th bet:	8,388,608.00
25th bet:	16,777,216.00
26th bet:	33,554,432.00

The speed of the deal increases to a frantic pace as the numbers get larger. After I give the balance after the fifteenth bet (\$16,384) I tell them, "*You might want to place your car keys on the table for collateral.*" After the winning a total of \$131,072 with the 18th bet, I ask them, "*Would you sign the back of the deed to your house and place it on the table for me?*" I don't give them an opportunity to answer because they might ask you to stop. Instead, I keep going by dealing even faster.

Other lines which can be inserted as desired are:

*"I would quit now... but I'm getting rich."  
"Boy is my wife going to be happy."  
"Where have you been all my life?"*

The audience should be actively laughing at the situation the spectator is in. Because of the total, most will think I'm not serious, but they are still glad that they aren't the ones playing the game. On the last bet I have one long sentence before looking up. "*And that (the final pair) brings the total to \$33,554,432 --- Please make your check payable to Steven L. Beam.*" This is said with some finality and it lets everyone know that the trick is over and it's time for a response.

Background. As I said, the trick itself was originally published in a Martin Gardner book and credited to Perci Diaconis. This is the first effect that would come to mind if you were trying to invent a trick based upon the Gilbreath Principle. The principle itself was originally published by Norman Gilbreath in the July, 1958 issue of **The Linking Ring**.

## UNBEATABLE

John Riggs

This is a unique handling of a principle with which you are already familiar from the previous effect. The magician appears to be unbeatable in a game of chance. The spectator can win only when the magician allows him to. This is one you must try with a deck of cards in hand to appreciate the effect (and probably fool yourself).

**Effect.** The magician asks a spectator to cut and shuffle a deck of cards. The magician says that when he turns the top pair over, there are three options. *"The pair could be red, black, or mixed. If the pair consists of two red cards, you win. If the pair consists of two blacks, you win. If the pair is mixed, I win. You get two chances to win, I only get one. Since like pairs win for you, the odds are two to one against me."* Note that this line of banter, while technically incorrect (there are two choices for unmixed pairs --- red/black and black/red) it sounds like you are being fair and above board.

He proceeds to flip the top four or five pairs face up. Each time, the magician wins because they are all mixed pairs. The magician asks the spectator to cut the deck into two and give the magician a half. Now that they each have a half, the magician continues to win every time from his half. *"I can win anytime. You can only win when I let you."* All the way through the pack, the magician beats the spectator into card pulp.

**The Work.** Start with a 52 card pack. Alternate the colors red and black. Cut the deck as desired and then table it face up. Ask that the spectator cut the pack in the middle. When he makes the cut, there are two possibilities. If the face cards of each half are the same color, ask that he try again. *"The piles are uneven. Try again and take your time."* You want him to cut until the face cards of each half are different colors.

When he makes the cut to two different colors successfully, ask that he riffle shuffle the two halves together. Pick up the deck and explain how the game will be played. Deal the four or five pairs face up, winning each time. (This is because of the Gilbreath Principle as already explained.)

Place the deck over near the spectator. Ask that he cut the deck in half as you extend your palm up left hand. This will cause him to cut the top half of the pack into your left hand. This is more subtle than asking him to hand you the upper half. This way, it appears that he had a free choice of the half he was to give you. Note that by handing you the top half, your pairs are still in order. Your pairs will still all be mixed. However, you don't know whether they cut at or between pairs in the middle. If they cut between two pairs, you will also win in their half. First, let's deal with your half.

Turn over the top pair of your half. You win again. Deal a couple more pairs, winning again and again. *"I always win on my half. Let's try your half."*

Turn over the top pair of the spectator's half. If it is mixed, take credit for the win. *"I really feel bad about this. Let's fix it so that you win."* Since the pair is mixed, you will assume that they cut between two pairs and that their pile is in order. Flip the next card face up and add it to the already face up pair. *"If we add this card to this one (the one that matches the single you just turned up) then you would win."*

You are now cheating to help the spectator win. What a compassionate guy you are. You are actually trying to cut into the pairs. Once you do, they will win on their pile almost every time. Of course, if the top two cards of their half had been the same color, you would not have to make any adjustment in the stack.

Now alternate turning over pairs in

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your half and pairs in his half. *"You win on your half. I win in my half. I win, you win."* If you win on the spectator's pile, *"Look, I won on*

*your half."* Act nonchalant and take credit for the win. Finish the halves quickly and try to collect your winnings.

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*"There are no secrets to success. It is the result of preparation, hard work, learning from failure."*

*General Colin L. Powell*

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## COLOR VISION

### Steve Beam

This trick establishes the magician as someone who is either psychic or has xray vision. During the routine, the magician and the spectator take turns "guessing" the color of the top card of the pack. The guesses are made from a borrowed and shuffled pack and the magician offers the spectator the choice of who will go first.

As the spectator guesses, he has two piles, one each for the correct and incorrect guesses. The magician also identifies a place for his own correct and incorrect guesses.

While the spectator's guesses are divided evenly between the correct and incorrect piles, the magician is 100% correct. This allows for lots of humor as the magician constantly brushes imaginary specks of dust in the area marked for his incorrect guesses. Half way through, he uses a handkerchief to polish the area of the table earmarked for his errors. These actions are designed to gloat over the fact that he doesn't miss any.

While I do not present this as a gambling trick, it has obvious potential for being one. You can see that by charging an imaginary dollar for each wrong guess, you have an unbeatable proposition.

The Work. This is based upon the Gilbreath principle although there are several features which disguise that fact. Alternate the red cards with the black. The deck may be cut as desired. Turn the deck face up and table it. Ask the spectator to cut the pack. If the cards on the face of each half are of a different color, ask the spectator to riffle the two halves together.

If they are the same color, ask him to complete the cut. Then, have it cut again. Continue asking him to complete the cut until there are two different colors on the faces of the halves. When you reach this situation, ask the spectator to riffle shuffle the two halves to-

gether. Finish by asking the spectator to turn the deck face down. (As an alternative to the face up cutting procedure, you may choose to split the pack into two halves prior to the shuffle yourself. If so, be sure to cut so that the two cards on top or two cards on bottom of the two halves are of different color.)

Now, because of the Gilbreath principle, the cards are grouped in pairs by color. In other words, if you were to deal the cards off the top of the pack in pairs, each pair would consist of a red and a black card. This means that if you knew the color of the first card of each of the pairs, you would also know the color of the second card of the pair. The second color would be the opposite of the first.

To disguise this, the cards are dealt off the top one at a time. If the spectator goes first, you watch the color of the card he turns face up. If it is red, you "guess" that the next card will be black. If he turns over a black card, you "guess" that the next card will be red. You will not do anything that links the pairs together in the minds of the spectator. As far as the audience is concerned, the deck consists of 52 individual cards --- not 26 pairs.

To further disguise the principle involved, you have offered the spectator a choice of who goes first. This would tend to eliminate the principle since the arrangement of one pair does not tell you anything about the second, third, or subsequent pairs. If the spectator wishes to have the magician go first, turn over the top card and use it illustrate the rules of the game. Further, it can be used to point to the areas where the "correct" and "incorrect" piles will go. You note the color of this card. Place it off to the side.

You now use the color of the discarded card to discern the color of the new top card of the pack. The top card will be the opposite

color since it is the second card of the original top pair.

After you turn that card up, it is the spectator's turn and you will alternate from this point forward. You will now use the color of the spectator's card to discern the color of the next card.

If the spectator chose to go first, you can continue the game until the pack is exhausted. If you went first, you will continue until there is one card left in the deck and one card off to the side which was discarded earlier. You will guess the color of the last card (using the preceding spectator's last card). Pick up the discarded card and drop it on top of the spectator's "wrong" pile. *"I'll give you this one."*

Leftovers. Now that you know how to perform the trick, you need to make it entertaining. There is a lot of interest in the trick since the suspense builds as the magician continues to get them all right. However, this interest will wane some time after the first half of the pack has been dealt. You need to make sure that the spectator doesn't spend a lot of time making his choice. It is important to speed the process.

To make it more entertaining, toward the end of the deal, you can continue to polish the area of the table set aside for your misses. Blow on the table to fog up the area (as if you were cleaning glass) and wipe the area with a

cloth.

Toward the end, you can also take one card face down from the top of the pack, call its color, and place it on top of your "correct" pile. The spectators will complain that neither they or you know with certainty that your guess was correct. *"Oh, okay. We can do it face up if you insist."* Turn the card face up and leave it in the correct pile.

Don Morris suggested the use of the xray glasses sold in many novelty stores and in the backs of most comic books. Somewhere in the middle, pretend to be having some difficulty determining the color of the next card. Place the xray glasses on and then make your "guess." Place the card on the correct pile.

John Riggs suggested placing your drink on a coaster in the area formerly established for your "misses." Or, reach into your pocket and produce a small card about the same size as a playing card. On it you have printed, "This space for rent."

Remember that you are after mystery and humor. Do not seriously harass the spectator with the results. There should be enough humor in the routine to take the edge off the defeat. If not, toss the discarded card on top of their "correct" pile. This appears to be a magnanimous gesture on your part --- but only because they don't know that you cheated to win.

## SCALING THE CARDS

*Steve Beam*

This double effect can be played as a demonstration of skill or of a sixth sense. It can also be used as part of a gambling demonstration to show the magician's expertise and fine touch with a deck of cards. The first effect is legitimate. It helps to sell the second effect which is part bluff.

**Effect.** The magician takes a borrowed and shuffled deck from a spectator. He gives the deck a riffle as he holds the deck to his ear. *"Just what I thought, exactly 52 cards. Pretty darned impressive, huh? It is the result of years of practice. And, judging from the response it received, I guess I wasted my twenties. But it is not as easy at it looks. I'll show you."*

At this, the magician tables the pack. The magician asks the spectator to cut the deck into thirds. Pointing to a packet, *"How many cards do you think are in this packet?"* No matter what the answer, the magician counts the cards in that packet out loud to check the spectator's guess.

Picking up the other two packets, the magician apparently weighs them. He then announces the number of cards in each packet. The cards in these packets are counted and once again he is correct.

*"That is a demonstration of skill. Now I will show you a demonstration of magic. You can choose either red or black and I will take the color you don't choose. Red? Okay, how many red cards do you think are in your pile? Eight? Let's see."* The packet is dealt face up showing some number of red cards.

*"You chose red so I get the blacks. I think there are nine black cards in my first pile and eleven black cards in my second pile."* The black cards in the two piles are counted, revealing the correct number of blacks. All of this is made more amazing by the use of a shuffled

pack.

**The Work.** A little bit of knowledge goes a long way in this trick. You must secretly learn the identity of the 26th card from the top of the 52 card pack. I use the card counting gag to identify the 26th card. Hold the deck as shown in **figure 1**. Use your right thumb to lift up on the top half of the pack. Try to split the deck at the exact center. As soon as the deck splits, compare the thicknesses of the two halves. If one appears larger than another, adjust by slipping a card or two from the larger half to the smaller half. When the halves are equal, secretly note the bottom card of the upper half. This will be the 26th card. After a small amount of practice, you will be able to split the deck at the 26th card automatically and in about one second. Now hold the deck to your right ear and allow the top half of the pack to spring off the right thumb. *"Yes, exactly 52 cards."*

Another option, is to take the shuffled deck from the spectator and spread through the cards as if looking for the jokers. Secretly count to the 27th card from the face. This card will be the 26th card from the back (top) of the pack. (Of course this assumes a 52 card pack. If you are using jokers, you must adjust the count.)

Assuming you have used a method to learn the identity of the 26th card, table the pack. Ask the spectator to cut the top third of the pack to (your) right. Point to a location about ten inches to the right of the remaining cards. Now, ask that they cut off another third of the pack. Point to a location between the two tabled packets for him to deposit the packet he now holds. This middle pile contains the key card, formerly at the 26th position.

Have the spectator guess the number of cards in the middle pile. No matter what the answer, pick up the middle pile. One at a time,

deal the cards face up onto the table. Count them out loud as you do. You must, without pausing, remember the number at which your key falls. Continue counting until you have counted the entire packet.

Assume your key falls at the ninth position and that there are a total of 20 cards in the packet. This is enough information to complete the first phase of the effect. Flip the packet face down. Pick up the right packet in your right hand and the left packet in your left hand.

Mentally subtract the location of the key in the center pile (nine) from 26. This yields 17 and that is the number of cards in the pile in your right hand. Do not announce that number yet. To determine the number of cards in your left hand, add the number of cards in the middle pile (20) to the number of cards in your right hand (17) yielding 37. Subtract this number from 52 and you have the number of cards in your left hand. Announce the number of cards in each hand as you hand the piles to two different spectators to verify. Take your applause.

You can forget the key's location now, but remember the number of cards in the middle packet (20). Offer to show the audience a demonstration of magic. Have the spectator choose red or black, stating that you will take the color he doesn't choose. Assume he chooses red, ask him to guess how many red cards he thinks are in the middle packet. No matter what the response, pick up the middle pile and deal the cards face up. Count the red cards out loud as you deal. Assume there are 10 cards in the pile.

Now it is time for you to "divine" the number of black cards in the two remaining piles. You do this despite the fact that these packets have been in the possession of the two spectators who counted them earlier. Subtract the number of red cards in the middle pile from the number of total cards in that pile ( $20-10=10$ ). The answer gives the number of black

cards in the middle pile.

Since ten black cards are accounted for in the middle pile, that means the total number of black cards in the two remaining piles would be 26 minus 10, or 16. You are now going to bluff a little. You want it to appear that you can tell them the number of cards in each of the two remaining piles. Actually, you can't. You only know the total number of black cards between the two piles.

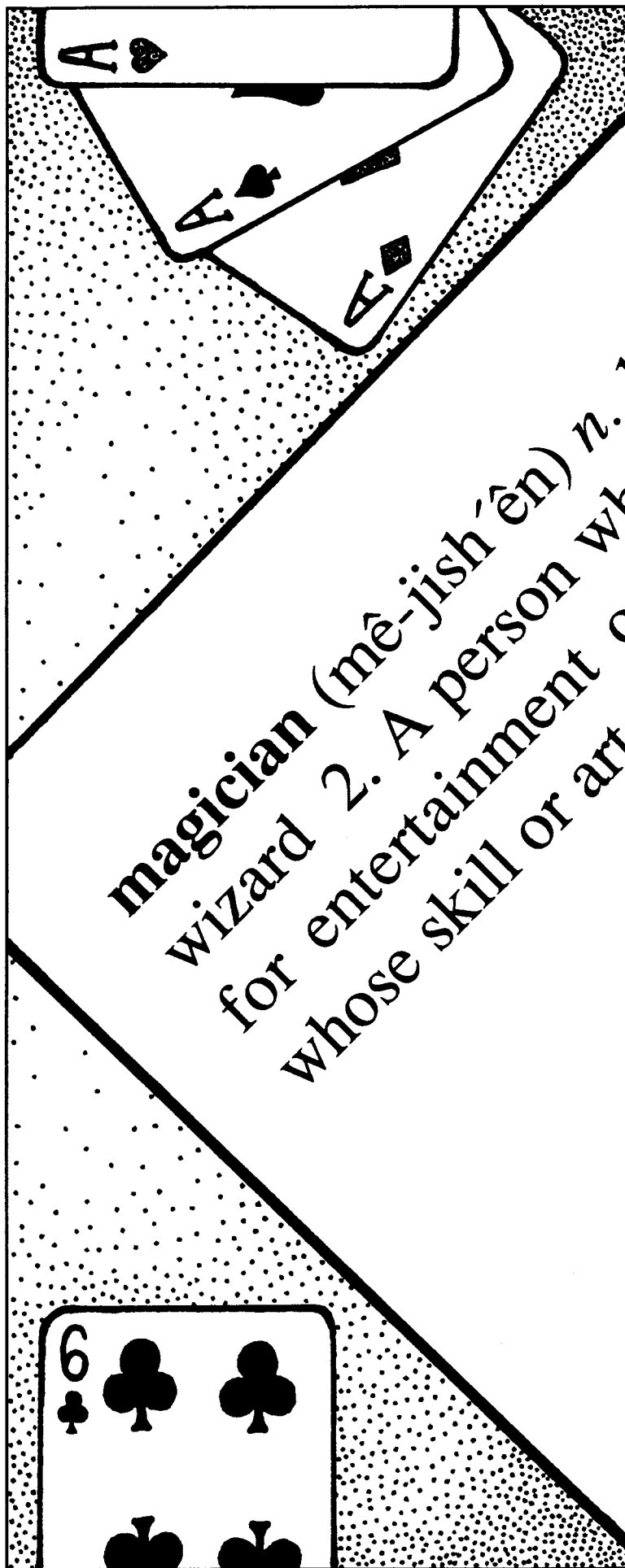
Take the packets from the two spectators who earlier counted them. Divide the total number of black cards approximately in half. Call out two approximately equal numbers which total the number of black cards. Since 16 is the total, state that one pile contains 7 black cards and the other contains 9 black cards. Place one pile on top of the other, combining the piles. "*Nine plus seven totals sixteen.*"

Now deal through the combined piles face up, counting the black cards out loud as you deal. Slow down the dealing as you approach the end of the pile. Remember that the audience doesn't know the outcome until they see the color of the last card of the pile. Turn over the last card as dramatically as possible. I always turn it up so that only I can see the face. I pause as if I have made a mistake. Then slowly, I drop the card face up onto the tabled pile.

Leftovers. At the end of the first phase, you hand the two packets to two spectators to count to speed the effect along. While there appears to be a lot of counting in this routine, presenting it properly will hold the suspenseful mood until the end.

Background. This was inspired by Mike Rogers' *Trost And Us* which was originally published in the October, 1971 issue of *Genii*. It was later reprinted as *Trost And Us -- Or Weighing The Cards* in Mike Rogers' The Complete Mike Rogers (Magic, Inc., 1975). According to these references, Mr. Rogers was inspired by an effect belonging to Nick Trost which was published in *The New Tops* in the sixties.

# Spelling Effects



magician (mê-jish'ên) n.  
wizard 2. A person who  
for entertainment work  
whose skill or art



## BOTTOMING OUT

*Steve Beam*

**Effect.** The magician states that a deck of cards is similar to a dictionary. That is, in order to find a particular playing card, you must be able to spell it. *"Let me illustrate."* A card is selected and returned to the middle of the pack. *"I am going to spell the value of each card in order. Stop me when I spell the value of your card. At that point, despite the fact that I don't know your card or its location, the last card dealt will be your card."*

The magician deals three cards to the table as he spells "ace." Dealing another three, he spells "two." Five more are dealt as he spells "three." This continues with each value. Somewhere past the halfway point, the magician appears worried. *Are you sure you understand the instructions?* About the time the jack is spelled, the magician asks if anyone else has noticed that the temperature in the room has risen. Finally, he deals the fifty-second card to the table. With the whole deck on the table, the spectator calls "stop." The magician looks up, *"I don't have any choice. I have to stop. I'm out of cards. What was your card? The king of hearts? Well, I guess the last card dealt is this one. Would you please turn it face up and start the applause? Thank you."*

**The Work.** All that is necessary is to be able to secretly control a selected card to the bottom of the pack. For my favorite method, consult Steve Pressley's bottom control (move which controls a card to the bottom) in the appendix. The rest of the trick works automatically as long as you start with a complete 52 card deck without jokers.

Concentrate on the presentation. Normally dealing tricks are boring. However, if you use Steve's control, the spectators know that the selection is in the middle, not near the bottom of the pack. For this reason, when you pass the middle of the pack, their attention

heightens. They know you will fail. You play on this by appearing worried. Rather than speeding up near the end of the deal, I slow down. This is to make it appear as though I am giving them every opportunity to stop me *in the middle*. When you yank victory from the jaws of defeat, their surprise should be reflected in their applause.

You may wish to change the ending so that you are left holding the selection. Simply add a joker to the pack before starting the effect. The extra card will ensure that you end with the selection and will make it impossible for the audience to duplicate if you lose the joker prior to their try.

**Background.** This trick resulted from a coincidence reported in an article Gary Plants found in a Charleston, West Virginia newspaper regarding playing cards. The article said that if you count the letters of each of the values of all the cards in a pack, the total will be fifty-two.

To illustrate, there are three letters in "ace." Add this to the three letters in the word "two" totaling six. Add the five letters in the word "three" and you arrive at a total of eleven. Continue this through the jack, queen, and king and the total will be fifty-two.

I later discovered a trick based upon the same principle except that it uses a full deck setup. In *Gwynne's Speller* (spelling trick #35 in the *Encyclopedia of Card Tricks*) all of the values are spelled yielding a card of that value at the end of each word. That is, spelling "ace" results in an ace. Then spelling "two" results in a two. This is continued until a king turns up at the last letter. However, this isn't much of a plot as it is written, it's more of a puzzle. Adding a selection to the presentation adds an element of suspense otherwise missing.

If you like spelling effects, I would

recommend you spend a couple of hours revisiting the chapter on spelling effects in The Encyclopedia of Card Tricks. There are 42

effects utilizing numerous principles of card magic.

*When a magician steps out on stage, he leaves his honesty in the wings.*

## RAW DEAL

Wayne Kyzer

Wayne Kyzer combined the idea used in *Bottoming Out* with elements of Jim Steinmeyer's *Remote Control* for a simple spelling effect which has a lot of potential for comedy.

**Effect.** The magician has a card selected and returned to the middle of the pack. *"At this moment, your card is one of fifty-two cards. My job is to narrow it down to just one and you are going to help me. Just in case this doesn't work, have you had experience as a scapegoat before?"*

Regardless of the answer, the magician states that it is the spectator's fault if the trick fails. The magician asks the spectator to spell the following, dealing one card to the table for each letter spelled. *"It is my fault."*

*"Now that we have established who will accept the blame, it's time for me to try to discern the identity of your card. I am going to make several statements regarding your card and give you several instructions. Please do not tell me if my statements are correct until I ask. I think your card is a red card. Please spell 'red card' dealing one card for each letter."* The spectator spells "r-e-d--c-a-r-d."

*"I have narrowed your card down to one of 26. Now I must narrow it down further. I know your card is red. That means it is either a heart or a diamond. I think your card is a diamond. Please spell 'Diamond.'"* The spectator deals one card for each letter without the 's' on the end.

*"Okay, we know we are working with a red card, a diamond. That narrows it down to thirteen cards. I'm really going out on a limb now. The value of your card is high or low. I*

*think you chose a high card. Please spell 'high card.'"* The volunteer deals and spells accordingly.

*"Your card is either odd or even. I say it is odd. Please spell (and deal) 'odd.'"* The spectator deals three cards.

*"It's getting close now. Your card is either a spot card or a court card. I think it is a spot card. Please spell 'spot card.'"* The spectator spells "s-p-o-t--c-a-r-d."

*"I believe we have now narrowed it down to one card. Please spell 'one card.'"* The spectator spells "o-n-e--c-a-r-d."

*"Now for the big question. Have I been right?"* The spectator states that the magician has missed several of his "guesses." To this, the magician asks, *"Then why didn't you tell me sooner?"* The audience is quick to respond that they were told not to alert the magician if he made a mistake. *"I did say that I had it narrowed down to one card. How many cards do you have left?"* The spectator answers that he has one card left. *"Well turn it over and see if I missed my guess."* The spectator turns the remaining card over. It is the selection. Despite missing several guesses, the magician located the selection.

**The Work.** Once you control the selection to the bottom of the pack, the trick works itself. There are 51 letters in the "guesses" that the magician asks the spectator to spell and deal. That leaves the spectator holding his selection. You don't have to know the identity of the selection because you will always make the same guesses totalling the same number of letters.

## I CANNOT SPELL A LIE

Allan Slaight

Allan is the editor of one the biggest and one of the best magic books of all time, Stewart James, The First Fifty Years. This was not only one of the most informational magic books ever written, but it was also one of the most entertaining.

The Work. Have the deck shuffled, a card selected, returned, and controlled to the 22nd position from the top of the pack. "This apparently ordinary deck of cards is actually an incredibly sophisticated electronic device. It's a computer which has been programmed to distinguish truth from lies.." (Allan recommends running through the shuffled deck upjogging 22 cards as you tell them you are programming the computer. Then use Karl Fulves's Riffle Shuffle Control to control the selection to the 22nd position.) Place the deck face down on the table.

"I will ask you a series of questions about your card. Each answer can be the truth, or you may tell a lie. You will deal a card from the top of the deck for each letter in your answer. When we're through, your chosen card will be on top. Ready? First, turn on the computer." When they appear puzzled, slide the top card of the pack toward them. "Just insert this key in the lock down here." They take the top card of the pack and insert it into the lower half of the pack which you open to facilitate the insertion. The card is now at the 21st position.

"Is your card red or black? You may lie or tell the truth."

If black: "Is it a club or a spade? You may lie or tell the truth."

If red: "Is it a diamond or one of the hearts. You may lie or tell the truth." He spells his answer and the "s" is employed only with hearts.

If the shorter answer (club or hearts): "Is it a value card or a court card? You may lie or tell the truth."

If the longer answer (spade or diamond): "Is it a spot card or a face card? You may lie or tell the truth."

"Now we want to find the number of your card. Just answer yes or no to this question: Is your card below seven? You may lie or tell the truth."

If they answer yes: "That means your number is the ace, 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6. What is the number of your card? You may lie or tell the truth." Since the selection is now fourth from the top, you can spell any answer except three. Count if they say three. The card will be on top of the packet or on top of the deck. Reveal it accordingly.

If they answer no: "That means your card is the 7,8,9,10, jack, queen, or king. Name your card. You may lie or tell the truth." Since the selection is now fifth from the top, you can spell any answer except for the ten. The card will be on top of the packet or on top of the deck. Reveal it accordingly.

If they name ten, one additional question: "I have said this deck is really a computer programmed to separate the truth from falsehoods. Do you believe I should leave the computer on or turn it off to locate your card? You may lie or tell the truth."

If they say "on": Spectator spells the answer and the card is on top of the packet.

If they say "off": Push the top card of the deck forward as you did before and say, "Then take this other key and put it in the lock here." Indicate the center of the pack again. The

## SPELLING EFFECTS

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spectator follows your directions. The selection (which may or may not really be the ten) is now on top of the deck.

**Background.** Allan has supplied the following lineage to his effect. In 1919, Charles Jordan's Thirty Card Mysteries contained the *Simplicity Speller* where Jordan seems to have originated the concept of adjusting the number of letters in the spelling process to produce a desired total in a spelled packet.

In the April, 1922 **Magic Circular**, Herbert Milton reveals a brilliant concept in which any card is selected from a bank of 15 and controlled to the 21st position. The spectator answers questions regarding the color, suit, odd or even, high or low, and actual value.

In **Jinx** #4, January, 1935, Ted Annemann reprints a December, 1934 letter from Vincent Dalban of London, England. Dalban suggests a plot for a card effect which ends with the sentence "The performer seems to know when the man is telling a lie." However, the effect does not involve the spelling of a card.

In 1937, Martin Gardner's *Card Speller* (one of my favorites) appeared in Joe Berg's Here's New Magic. In this effect, the selection is controlled to a position 14th from the top and the spectator is asked three questions: the card's color, suit, and whether it is odd or even. If he chooses to, the spectator may answer the questions incorrectly (lie). Regardless of how he

replies, the spelling ends on the chosen card.

In 1940, Gardner published his 12 Tricks With A Borrowed Deck. This booklet contains his *Improved Lie Speller* in which two selections are made. The first spectator truthfully answers the same three questions truthfully. The second spectator is allowed to lie.

In Karl Fulves's **Pallbearer's Review** (Volume 4, #2, 1968) Bruce Cervon combines elements of the Jordan adjustment principle, Milton's question procedure, and Gardner's lie-or-truth theme in *Perfect Speller*.

In 1979 in Memory Book Number One, Allan Slaight's *Pluperfect Speller* appeared in the limited circulation booklet which is presented only to participants at the annual Stewart James Weekend. In this, Allan adds a question regarding the value of the selection in an effect inspired by Cervon's *Perfect Speller*.

Allan has bumped the usual three questions up to five. And, by consistently following through with the tag "you-may-lie-or-tell-the-truth" he has added some humor while at the same time strengthening the effect.

This was originally published in issue #45 of **The Trapdoor**. Allan credits Karl Fulves with suggesting he use a version of Jay Ose's "turn off the computer" idea. Phil Goldstein gave him the idea of asking a two letter/three letter question after spelling the ten and so phrasing the question that the reply would always be the two letter word.

## SUPER SPELLER

*Tom Craven*

In this effect, you appear to give the spectator all possible chances to determine the outcome of the effect. It is difficult, even for magicians, to believe that the magician controls the ultimate outcome of the effect.

**Effect.** The spectator takes a small packet of cards, shuffles them, and selects one. This card is lost in the packet. The magician asks the spectator questions to which the spectator can answer with a lie or answer with the truth. Despite the impossibility of this, the spectator locates his own card.

**The Work.** You will need to remove the following eighteen cards from the pack.

Spades:	4, 5, 9, jack, king
Diamonds:	Ace, 2, 6, 10
Clubs:	3, 7, 8, queen
Hearts:	4, 5, 9, jack, king

Each of these cards spells with either twelve or thirteen letters. Mix these eighteen cards thoroughly and crimp the bottom card of the stack so that you will be able to cut below it when desired. (See the breather crimp in the appendix.) Drop the stock on top of the pack and you are ready to perform.

False shuffle and/or cut as desired. (Refer to the appendix for false shuffles and false cuts which retain the top stock.) Table the deck. Cut off all the cards above and including your crimped card. Hand these eighteen cards to a spectator.

Instruct him to shuffle his packet while you turn your back. *"When you are finished shuffling, I would like you to deal your packet into two even piles. If the piles come out uneven, you can either give me one back or take another one from the pack."* This ruse is to further convince them that they control what is

happening. Obviously if they start with eighteen cards they will end with two packets of nine cards each on the table.

Ask him to shuffle either of the two packets and replace it on the table. Now instruct him to pick up the other packet and shuffle it. At the conclusion of the shuffle, he should note the bottom card of that packet and drop it on top of the tabled packet. We will assume he noted the king of hearts. Turn back around to face the spectator.

*"You will play the part of the magician and find your own card. This would be too easy if you looked at the faces since you know the name of your card. Instead, you will do some random spelling to find the card. To get you in the swing of it, you must practice. Name any card other than the chosen one."*

No matter what card he names, instruct him to deal one card for each letter onto the table. Assume he names the ace of clubs. He will spell A-C-E--O-F--C-L-U-B-S as he deals ten cards to the table. He then drops the cards remaining in his hand onto the tabled pile and picks up the pile.

*"What kind of trick are we doing? If he doesn't say it, you say, "Card trick."* Have him spell C-A-R-D--T-R-I-C-K, dealing a card for each letter as before. Once again, the remaining cards are dropped on top of the dealt packet.

*"Do you have any idea where your card is? You can lie or tell the truth."* If he says "yes," have him spell Y-E-S. If he says "no," have him spell N-O. Again, the remaining cards are dropped on top of the dealt packet.

*"Would you like to find your card on the first, second, or third try?"* Your future actions depend upon his answer. There are three options.

**First Try.** If he wants you to find his

card on the first try, have him spell his answer F-I-R-S-T. Once again he will drop the remainder onto the dealt packet. "Okay, for the first try, I want you to spell the name of your card." He will spell K-I-N-G--O-F--H-E-A-R-T-S. If his selection was a diamond, he would be instructed to turn over the last card dealt (the "S"). Since it is not, instruct him to turn over the next card, the top card of the packet in his hands. It will be his selection.

Second Try. If he says that he would like you to find his card on the second try, have him spell S-E-C-O-N-D. Once again he will drop the remainder on top of the dealt packet. Ask him to take the top and bottom cards and see if either is his selection. He will say, "No." "That was your *first* try." Place both of these cards on top of the pile. Now have him spell the name of the selection. If his selection was a diamond, he would be instructed to turn over the last card dealt (the "S"). Since it is not, instruct him to turn over the next card, the top card of the packet in his hands. It will be his selection.

Third Try. If he says that he would like you to find his card on the third try, have him spell T-H-I-R-D. Once again he will drop the remainder on top of the tabled packet. Ask him to look at the top card. "Was that your card? No? That was your first try." Have him replace the card on top. "Look at the bottom

card. Was that your card? No? That was your second try." Have him to leave the card on the bottom. Now have him spell the name of the selection. If his selection was a diamond, he would be instructed to turn over the last card dealt (the "S"). Since it is not, instruct him to turn over the next card, the top card of the packet in his hands. It will be his selection.

Leftovers. While there is apparently no way for the magician to predict or control the spectator's answers, the card is under the control of the magician at all times. After the spectator notes the card at the beginning and drops one packet on top of the other, the selection is ninth from the top. By spelling "card trick" the card returns to the top. Regardless of whether the spectator answers the next question "yes" or "no," the selection is sent to the bottom. Then the spectator is allowed a choice of first, second, or third tries. Either one he chooses, the magician sends his selection from the bottom to the thirteenth position where it can be spelled using either twelve or thirteen letters.

Background. Tom credits both Nick Brown and Gary Dismukes for the original inspiration for this effect. Some of the basic concept can be found in the February 1988 issue of **The New Invocation**. The trick is called *Remote Control* and is by Jim Steinmeyer and has inspired many of the recent spelling effects.

## THE CUSTOM CARD TRICK

Tom Craven

I named this trick because of the ability to customize it for any performance you may have to give. This gives you the option of making your act topical or personalized. This will cause the effect to vary depending upon how you decide to customize it. For this reason, I will describe it to you the way Tom showed it to me. This is exactly the way it happened.

**Effect.** Since Tom hails from Kent, Ohio, he called me at work on January 25th and asked me if I had a deck of cards handy. *"I read my horoscope this morning and it told me that today was the perfect day to call you up and perform the Steve Beam Card Trick for you."* I had no idea what he was talking about but I reached for my deck of cards. (This must have been during my lunch hour. Otherwise, I would have insisted that he call me back since this wasn't work related.)

*"Shuffle the deck. When you are finished, spell 'Steve Beam Card Trick,' dealing one card to the table for each letter of the title of the trick."* I proceeded to deal "S-t-e-v-e - B-e-a-m - C-a-r-d - T-r-i-c-k" to the table. *"Discard the rest of the pack. We won't need them for the rest of the trick. Now, cut off a small number of cards from the cards on the table, less than half of the packet, and count them secretly. When you are finished, place them in your pocket out of sight. You are now thinking of a secret number that only you know."* Following his instructions, I cut off four cards and placed them in my pocket.

*"Remove any card from the packet you are holding, turn it face up. Since this is the Steve Beam Card Trick, please sign your name on the face of that card."* I turned over the top card of the packet I was holding, the ace of hearts. I signed my name across its face.

*"Turn the signed selection face down*

*and place it on the table. Now enough cards to equal your secret number onto the top of your selection. Pick up the tabled pile, your card with an unknown number of cards on top of it, and place this packet on top of the packet in your hand."* I did so, sending the signed ace of hearts to a position fifth from the top. (Four cards on top of my selection.)

*"As I said, my horoscope told me to show you this trick today. What is today?"* I told him it was January the 25th. He asked me to spell the date "January twenty fifth" as I moved one card from the top of the packet to the bottom of the packet for each letter spelled. I proceeded to do this. *"Since you pocketed some cards earlier, I have no idea how many cards are in your pocket or in your hand. Therefore, I could have no idea where your selection is at this point. Is this correct?"* I told him that it sounded good so far. *"Well, if my horoscope is correct, turn over the top card of the packet you are holding and tell me that I have found your card."* I turned over the top card of the packet and it was my signed, selection.

**The Work.** This trick works automatically. The only requirement is that you use two phrases with the same number of letters. In the example above, "Steve Beam Card Trick" and "January twenty fifth" both spell with eighteen letters. Following the instructions above, the spectator will always end up with his selection on top of the packet.

Had he called me on a different date, he would have changed one of the phrases to make it fit. For example, "January twenty-sixth" spells with the same number of letters. Suppose he called me on May 5th. "May" spells with four less letters than "January" and "fifth" spells with six less letters than "twenty-sixth." Note that May 5th can be spelled as



follows:

- May fifth (8 letters)
- May the fifth (11 letters)
- The fifth of May (13 letters)
- The fifth day of May (16 letters)

Rearranging the name of the trick, you would arrive at:

- Steve's Card Trick (15 or 16 letters)
- The Beam Card Trick (16 letters)
- Mr. Beam's Card Trick (16, 17, or 18 letters)
- Steve Beam Card Trick (18 letters)
- Steve Beam's Card Trick (19 or 20 letters)
- Mister Beam's Card Trick (20 or 21 letters)
- The Steve Beam Card Trick (21 letters)

Notice that by spelling or not spelling the punctuation, you can change the number of letters in the name of the trick. Using this technique, you would now match the date with the name of the trick. In the above example, "The fifth day of may" and "The Beam Card Trick" both spell with sixteen letters. This would give you the match you need for performing the effect.

The above example personalizes the trick to the person for whom you are performing. However, if you would like to make the trick topical, try the following combinations at the appropriate time of the year.

- New Years Card Trick / The first of January (17 letters)
- Valentine Card Trick / February Fourteenth (18 letters)
- Halloween Card Trick / October thirty-first (18 letters)
- Saint Nicholas Card Trick / December the twenty-fifth (22 letters)

The combinations are endless and are only limited by the amount of time you are willing to put into it. The great thing about this trick is that the audience will appreciate the fact that you went to the trouble.

Background. While based on an old principle, Tom was inspired by Karl Fulves' *Last October* from his book, More Self-Working Card Tricks (Dover, 1984). Stating that he learned the trick on October 21st, Karl's original has the spectator count off 31 cards because there are 31 days in October. At the conclusion, he is to deal 10 cards for "October" and 21 cards for the 21st date. Tom's version, using two phrases rather than the number of cards helps to disguise the mathematical working of the effect. And, while Karl doesn't mention it, his trick can also be performed over the phone.

Another trick, *Remote Control* was published in the February 1988 issue of **The New Invocation** (#43). In this effect by Jim Steinmeyer, he arrives at the selected card by spelling his name, "Jim Steinmeyer." I guess this adds the personalized touch for the magician since his name is spelled. After all, the magician has a right to enjoy the tricks too.

## THE WORLD'S GREATEST MAGICIAN

*Steve Beam*

This has become one of my favorite locations. It fools magicians and entertains laymen. It utilizes Norm Houghton's method of locating a selection which I will explained. You can use any location which controls the selection to a position thirty-second from the top of the pack.

**Houghton's Control.** Start with a deck containing exactly 52 cards (no jokers). Ask the spectator to shuffle the pack and cut off less than a third of the deck for himself. Instruct him to count the cards he has secretly and quietly as you turn your back.

When he has finished counting, ask him to remember his secret number and hide his packet so that you can't guess at his number. Turn the remaining cards face up and hold them in dealing position. Start dealing cards to the table in a face up pile. As you do, he is to remember the card which falls at his secret

number. However, under no circumstances should he communicate when he has selected a card.

Deal exactly twenty cards face up to the table, counting them as you do. Look up at the spectator and ask him if he has remembered a card. (If he hasn't then he cut off more than a third of the pack.) He should say that he has selected a card.

Pick up the tabled pile and place it on top of the cards you hold. Turn the combined packet face down and you will find that the selection is now the thirty-second card from the top of the pack.

**Routine.** Using Norm's control just explained, control the selection to a position 32 cards from the top of the pack. Pause as if a thought had just occurred to you. *"It occurs to me that before we find your card, there is another important question we should answer. That is,*

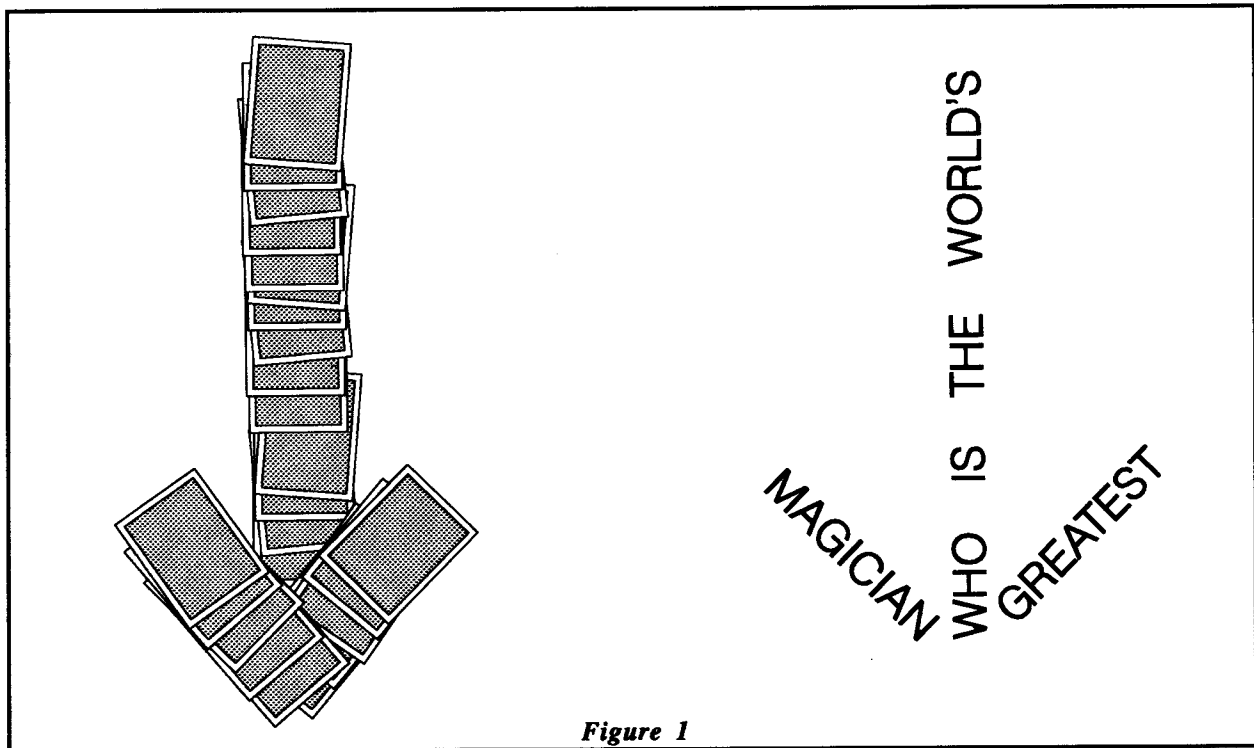


Figure 1

## SPELLING EFFECTS

*who is the world's greatest magician? Now, you can't ask me, I'm biased. We can't ask you. You might pick someone else and I would have to hurt you. Our only choice is to ask the deck of cards who's the world's greatest magician."*

Dealing the cards in a straight line from you to the spectator, deal one card for each letter.

*"Who...W-H-O...Is...I-S...The...T-H-E...World's...W-O-R-L-D-apostrophe-S..."*

Counting the word "apostrophe" as one letter, you have dealt a straight line from you to the spectator using fifteen cards. You are now going to spell the word "greatest" with the next eight cards. You will start at the card nearest you and deal at an angle to the right. You are forming the right arm of an arrow which is pointing toward you.

*"Greatest...G-R-E-A-T-E-S-T..."*

You will now spell the word "magician" with the next eight cards. You will start at the card nearest you and deal at an angle to the left. You are forming the left arm of the arrow which is pointing toward you.

Because the spelling throws them off, most people won't notice the arrow even after it is completed. Look up to the audience. *"Is anyone getting any message?"* Place the deck on the table between you and the arrow.

Pause for a moment while the audience catches on to the arrow pointing to you as the world's greatest magician. *"Well, now that the cards have answered this question, let's return to the original question. That is, "What is the name*

*of your card?"* Turn over the top card of the tabled packet revealing the chosen card.

Leftovers. This is the perfect combination of method with effect. Before becoming acquainted with Norm's effect, I would control the selection to the bottom of the pack using Steve Pressley's bottom control. I would make the arrow as described above and place the remaining packet at the point of the arrow. After some byplay, I would turn the whole packet face up revealing the selection and replace it in the front of the arrow.

Using the control to the bottom did allow flexibility in the spelling of the question. Virtually any question with less than 52 letters could be spelled using the cards. Of course, under normal performing circumstances, you wouldn't want to deal much more than 32 cards. Always remember that your patience and interest in magic may not be shared with your audience. If it was, they would be doing the magic tricks.

Background. The idea of making messages out of a spread of playing cards is not mine. The "Q" card trick goes way back. Jerry Andrus formed an arrow using a faro shuffle in *The Arrow* from Andrus Deals You In (1956). He also formed the initials "IOU" using several spreads in Curious Cards (1975). The latter was my inspiration for using a deck of cards to form my initials in issue #25 of The Trapdoor.

Karrell Fox formed a question mark in *The Question Is...* in the Tarbell Course in Magic, Volume 5, page 96. Fred Lowe combined the "Q" card trick (clock effect) with the question mark idea in 1975 in Alton Sharpe's Expert Card Mysteries.

*"If I have been able to see farther than others, it was because I stood on the shoulders of giants."*

Sir Isaac Newton (1642-1727)

*"The reward for work well done is the opportunity to do more."  
--- Jonas Salk, M.D.*



## QUADRUPLE PREDICTION

*Steve Beam*

This effect appears impossible. If you are willing to spend a little time understanding the concept, you will be amply rewarded. Do not be put off by the apparent complexity of the workings. This is simple to do and easy to remember. I have spent a lot of space describing it so that you can understand not just how to do it, but the concepts behind it. If you grasp the reason why it works, the working itself will be almost automatic and there will be little to remember. As I always explain to my accounting staff (I am a finance director) the time spent learning why something works is usually more than regained by the decreased time spent memorizing.

From a shuffled pack, the magician removes a prediction card and tosses it face down on the table. *"You have probably seen a magician do a trick using one prediction card. I don't want to bore you, let me show you something with two prediction cards."*

The magician removes another card and tosses it face down on top of the first. *"You may have seen a magician do a trick using two predictions, let me try something more difficult. I will remove three prediction cards."* Again, the magician removes a card and tosses it face down on top of the first two.

*"You have probably seen a triple prediction before. I don't want to bore you. Nobody has ever seen a quadruple prediction. I will show you something with four predictions."* The magician removes a fourth card and tosses it face down on top of the other three cards.

The four face down predictions are placed aside out of the way. He removes the four aces and drops them face up on the table. The deck can be reshuffled if desired. The magician divides the pack into four piles. The spectators are allowed to cut the aces into each of the piles. There is no possible way the

magician can know the location of any of the aces once the pack is reassembled.

The four prediction cards are turned face up. *"I predicted the location of the aces before we started. Further, I foresaw your actions during the next two minutes. It's all kind of fuzzy to me now, but I think it ends with a standing ovation. Let's find out."* The magician allows the spectator to choose the order in which the prediction cards will be used. One at a time the magician deals piles containing the same number as the value of the prediction cards. After the four predictions are used to deal four piles in the order chosen by the spectators, the piles are turned over to reveal the four aces. The magician predicted the locations the spectators would send the aces to during the cutting process and the order of predictions the spectators would dictate.

**The Work.** Take a shuffled deck and remove any king, ten, seven, and four. The suits should be mixed. Place these cards face down in a row from left to right on the far side of the table. The leftmost card should be the king. The order of the other three cards is not important. Openly cull the four aces and place them face up to the side.

Take the deck from the spectator. Count twelve cards in groups of fours from the top of the deck and into the right hand. Drop these twelve cards face down on the table to the right. Count off nine more cards by threes. Drop this nine card packet to the table to the immediate left of the first pile. Thumb off the next nine cards in three groups of three and drop this nine card packet to the table to the left of the first two. Finally, drop the final fourteen cards (all of the remaining cards) to the table to the left of the first three piles. I usually cut them first so that it looks consistent, although not identical, to the activity with the previous packets.



See **figure 1** for the layout. This counting should be done as casually as possible and not as if the trick depends upon it (which it does). You can vary the counting in any way which would speed the process and achieve the same result. For the sake of explanation, we will number the piles 1-4 from left to right. (This is the reverse of the order in which the packets were tabled.)

Pick up the four aces. Ask the spectator to cut pile #1 to the left. Drop the first ace face down on the bottom half of pile #1. Ask him to cut the top half of pile #2 off and place it on pile #1, burying the first ace. Drop the second ace squarely on top of pile #2. Direct him to cut half of pile #3 onto pile #2, burying the second ace. Place the third ace on top of pile #3. Direct the spectator to cut the top half of pile #4 onto pile #3. Place the last ace on top of pile #4.

There are five piles on the table. Piles one through four, plus the top half of pile #1 which was cut off to the left at the beginning of the effect.

Pick up the piles in reverse order, four on top of three, both on top of two, and all on top of one. Finally, place the combined pile on top of the remaining packet which was formerly the top half of packet #1.

**False Cut.** Those who are paying close attention realize that an ace is on top of the pack. You will now give the deck a quick and easy false cut to apparently bury the ace in the middle of the pack. The pack is resting on the table with one long edge toward you. Your left

hand holds onto the top third of the pack while your right hand strips out the lower two thirds. This larger packet is carried forward on the table about ten inches. The right hand releases half of its cards and brings the remaining cards back toward the left hand's packet. The cards remaining in the right hand are deposited on the table between the other two packets.

Your right hand now returns to the packet nearest you. Pick up this packet, place it on the middle packet. Place this combined packet on the farthest packet completing the cut and restoring the order of the deck.

**Revelations.** You are now ready to reveal the predictions. If you have followed the instructions, the aces will be in the following positions from the top of the deck: 1, 14, 24, and 34. Pick up the deck and hold it in dealing position.

Remind them that you placed the four predictions out before the trick began. Flip the predictions face up and replace them on the table in the same order. The king is still leftmost. "A king represents the number thirteen." Deal thirteen cards into a pile "south" of the king. That is, deal thirteen cards into a pile just your side of the king. Since the king will always be the first card, it will always be dealt first. The order of the other cards doesn't matter but we will assume they are in 7-4-10 order.

Pause for a moment. "As I told you before we started, I was going to predict the future. The future is fluid and can be changed."

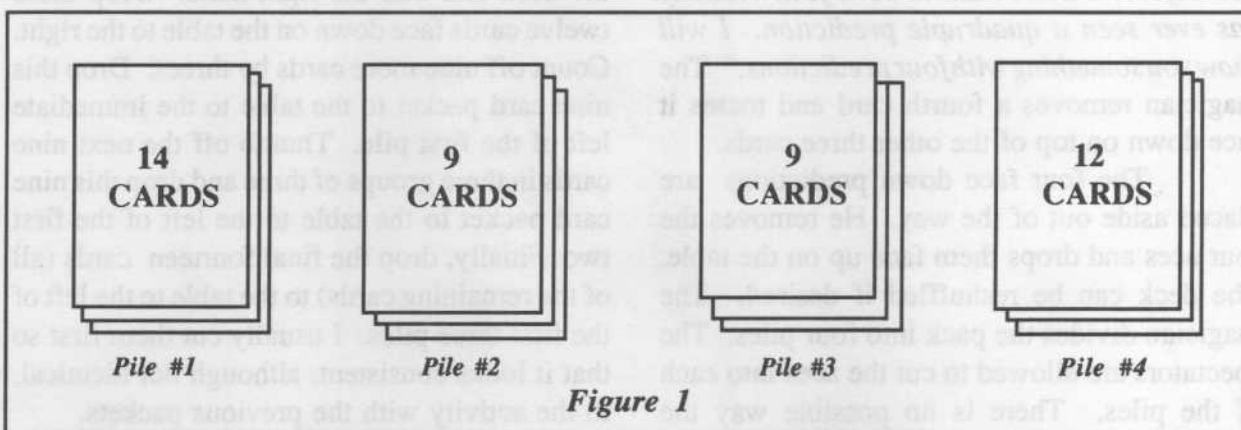


Figure 1

*But, true predictions would reflect that change. I am going to allow you to change the order of the predictions. Would you like me to deal the 7, the 4, or the 10 next?"*

The instructions which follow will tell you how to conclude the trick based upon the order of the cards the spectator selects. (Remember that the 13 cards have already been dealt for the king so it is fixed.) Also, note that the predictions can be changed again after you have dealt the second pile if desired. Here are the various endings depending upon the order of the last three predictions.

**7-4-10 Order.** Deal seven cards to the table beneath the seven reversing their order. Thumb four cards from your left hand to your right without reversing their order. Count as you do this. Drop this four card packet to the table south of the four. Thumb ten cards from your left hand to your right without reversing their order, counting them during the process. Drop this ten card packet to the table south of the ten. The four aces are on the bottom of the four packets.

**4-7-10 Order.** This is identical to the last count, reversing the steps for the four and the seven. Deal four cards to the table beneath the four reversing their order. Thumb seven cards from your left hand to your right without reversing their order. Count as you do this. Drop this seven card packet to the table south of the seven. Thumb ten cards from your left hand to your right without reversing their order, counting them as you do. Drop this ten card packet to the table south of the ten. The four aces are on the bottom of the four packets.

**10-4-7 Order.** Deal ten cards south of the ten, reversing their order. Deal four cards south of the four, reversing their order. Count seven cards from your left hand to your right without reversing their order. Drop this packet to the table south of the seven. The four aces are on the bottom of the four packets.

**10-7-4 Order.** Deal ten cards south of the ten, reversing their order. Deal seven cards south of the seven, reversing their order. Count

four cards from your left hand to your right without reversing their order. Drop this packet to the table south of the four. The four aces are on the bottom of the four packets.

**4-10-7 Order.** Deal four cards south of the four, reversing their order. Count seven cards into the right hand without reversing their order. Pause and look at the audience. *"I'll give you one last chance. Would you like to change the ten for the seven?"* If they opt to change their minds, finish as described above for the 4-7-10 order. Otherwise, thumb over three more cards into your right hand on top of the packet already there (it doesn't matter whether you reverse their order). Do this with a count of "eight, nine, and ten." Drop this ten card packet south of the ten. Finally, thumb over seven cards into your right hand without reversing their order. Drop this packet south of the seven. The four aces are on the bottom of the four packets.

**7-10-4 Order.** Deal seven cards south of the seven, reversing their order. Count four cards into the right hand without reversing their order. Pause and look at the audience. *"I'll give you one last chance. Would you like to change the ten for the four?"* If they opt to change their minds, finish as described above for the 7-4-10 order. Otherwise, thumb over six more cards into your right hand on top of the packet already there (it doesn't matter whether you reverse their order). Do this with a count of "five, six, seven, eight, nine, and ten." Drop this ten card packet south of the ten. Finally, thumb over four cards into your right hand without reversing their order. Drop this packet south of the four. The four aces are on the bottom of the four packets.

**Conclusion.** This trick is too astounding to simply flip the packets face up and reveal the aces on the faces. You must build up the climax by explaining what happened. *"I told you I would predict the future. I removed four predictions before we started this effect. You were then able to shuffle the pack and remove the four aces. You cut the aces into the pack.*



*You could have cut high or low, deep or shallow. You lost the aces into the pack. Then you were able to change the order of the prediction cards. You had a free choice in which order the piles would be dealt. Despite all of the control you had over the cards, I predicted the future.*" Turn over one packet for each of the last four words.

**Leftovers.** When performing the effect, I make a big deal out of the choice they have in switching the order of the prediction cards. This, after all, is what makes this trick so special --- the fact that your prediction can be altered and you can still successfully predict the outcome. As I come to each of the choices, I tell the spectators that they can switch the current prediction with each of the other cards. "*You have a perfectly free choice. Which one of the remaining predictions would you like to use next? It's all up to you.*" When I get down to the last prediction, I deliver the same line. Since there are no predictions remaining, they realize they have no choice. Then, when this line is delivered, it usually gets a laugh.

**Background.** The use of floating indicators was published in A Conjuring Melange (Fleming Book Company, 1947) by Stanley Collins. He controlled selections to positions first, tenth, and nineteenth from the top. He then removed three indicators --- a four, a six, and a nine. Giving the spectators a free choice of the order of the indicators used, he would deal down to the numbers indicated. Upon turning over the packets, the selections were discovered.

Using the floating indicators to locate the four aces was published as *10-6-9-4* in Jean Hugard's and Fred Braue's Show Stoppers With Cards. In the original trick by Bert Fenn and Neal Elias, the aces were lost in the pack by the magician. Then, the magician would remove the four top cards which would act as the indicators (a ten, six, nine and four). They

added the ten to the other three indicators used by Collins since the first card dealt comes off the top and can be any number.

I wanted to change three things about the trick. First, I thought it would be more impressive if there was a greater spread in the values of the cards used for indicators. In the Fenn/Elias trick, there is a difference of one between the ten and the nine and a difference of two between the six and the four. The difference between the highest card (ten) and the lowest card (four) is six. Using the cards above, there is a difference of three between each of the values and the difference between the highest and lowest cards is nine (13-4). This makes the spectator's choice seem all that more difficult to control.

The second change I made was from using four indicators to four predictions. Predicting everything in advance seemed much stronger than removing four indicators after the aces were lost in the pack. This also allows the spectator to shuffle the pack at the beginning without having to control or cull the four indicator cards.

The third change I made was to have the spectators lose the aces. It is much stronger to have spectators to lose cards in the pack than to have the magician lose them. This seems to take the control of the cards completely away from the magician. He doesn't control the aces or the predictions. This is when I added the *Free Cut Principle* popularized by Gene Finnell to maintain control of the aces even while the spectators were allowed to cut them into the pack.

The last thing I added was a cover for the change in the deal when the largest of the floating prediction cards, the ten in this trick, is to be dealt as the middle of the floating predictions (see 4-10-7 and 7-10-4 above). Until the above handling, there has not been a satisfactory method for altering the count in the middle.

## THE LADDER PREDICTION

*Steve Beam*

This prediction effect requires very little in the way of effort to accomplish. Consequently, I would recommend you spend the effort you will save mastering it and apply it to the performance of the trick.

**Effect.** The magician introduces a deck of cards which is thoroughly shuffled and cut. He spreads the pack face down on the table in an overlapping ribbon and asks the spectator for a number from one to fifty-two. *"You have a completely free choice. I will tell you in advance that we are going to count to the number you name."*

Upon receiving the number and allowing the spectator to change his mind as often as desired, the spectator counts in the spread to the selected number. The card is removed and noted. Then, the waiter approaches with the check. On the check, there is a note identifying the selected card. The magician addresses the waiter, *"My compliments to the chef."*

**The Work.** This effect is based upon a standard magician's prop called a Svengali deck. These are available at your local magic shop and in most magic sets and trick sections at the dime store. However, I am going to have you construct your own in order to take advantage of the face up shuffle. This will help to deceive those who are familiar with the standard deck.

A Svengali deck is a deck of cards where every other card in the pack is the same card. When counting from the top of the face down Svengali deck, all the cards at even numbered positions would be, say, the five of hearts. The cards at odd numbered positions would be indifferent cards, none of which are repeated. Further, all of the matching fives are slightly shorter than the indifferent cards. In a well made deck, this difference in length is less than

a sixteenth of an inch.

This short card principle allows you to perform an interesting effect in itself. By riffing the pack from the face to the back, you will find that the cards drop in pairs. Because the second card in each pair is the five, the audience will not see any of the five of hearts except the one on the face of the pack. This allows you to show the pack consisting of indifferent cards.

If you were to turn the pack around and riffle from the back to the front, the cards would again fall in pairs. Only this time, since you are riffing the pack from the back to the face, only the fives would be visible as the cards stream by. This is because the indifferent cards are now the back cards of the pairs. In other words, the duplicates are the second card of each falling pair.

Now that you understand the principle, let me say that you are not going to perform the above displays. That is because magicians (and laymen who have purchased a Svengali deck at the dime store) would recognize the riffing actions. These actions are universally associated with a Svengali deck. Therefore, you want to avoid them. Instead, you want to utilize the short card principle in a manner which won't draw suspicion. You are going to construct a *reverse Svengali deck*

Go to your local magic store and order a short deck of cards. This is an ordinary deck except that the card has been shortened by a fraction of an inch. This has been done by a machine designed especially for this which will keep the corners and edges smooth. In addition to the short deck, order a one way force deck. This is a deck of cards consisting of the same card, say fifty-two five of hearts. Your total investment at this point should be less than

\$15. (If you don't have a magic shop in your area, contact Haines House of Cards in Cincinnati, Ohio. This is where the magic shops will order your decks from. You will want to specify a back design, such as Bicycle, when you order.)

Before you start construction, remove the five of hearts from your short deck and replace it with a short joker. Deal one card face up on the table from the one way deck. On top of this, place a short card from the other deck. Then, another five followed by another short. Continue alternating the cards until you have exhausted the two packs and now have one deck consisting of 104 cards. Divide this into two packs and you now have two reverse Svengali decks. Of course, you only need one for the effect.

A reverse Svengali is a deck of fifty-two cards with every other card having the same value. Assuming the duplicate is the five of hearts, the indifferent cards between the fives of hearts are short cards. In a regular Svengali deck, the fives would be short and the indifferent cards would be of normal length.

The same principle that allows you to show the cards all different or all the same with a regular Svengali deck will allow you to riffle shuffle the cards without disturbing the pairing

sequence. In other words, during a riffle shuffle, the cards will fall in the same pairs as during the riffling action explained above. So, you may riffle shuffle the pack as often as desired. However, by using the reverse Svengali described above, you can perform the shuffle with the cards face up. This has the effect of showing the audience that the cards are all different without calling attention to the "fact" by stating it.

Start the shuffle either by riffling half the face up pack from the right hand into the left (see figure 1) or by cutting off half the face up pack from the left hand into the right. Do your cutting at the short ends so you can utilize the short cards. Either of these methods assures that you will have an indifferent short card on top of both halves before the shuffle. Holding the cards by the ends during the dovetail shuffle will ensure that the pairs fall together.

*"Since we're all honest here, it should be okay if I keep the deck face up during this trick."* This is said as you shuffle and simultaneously scan the audience from left to right. Then, appear to notice someone at the end of the scan who doesn't appear honest. *"On the other hand, maybe I should do this face down."* If that is too subtle, and you know someone in the audience who is a good sport, you can end with, *"Oh, I forgot Joe was here. Maybe I should turn them*

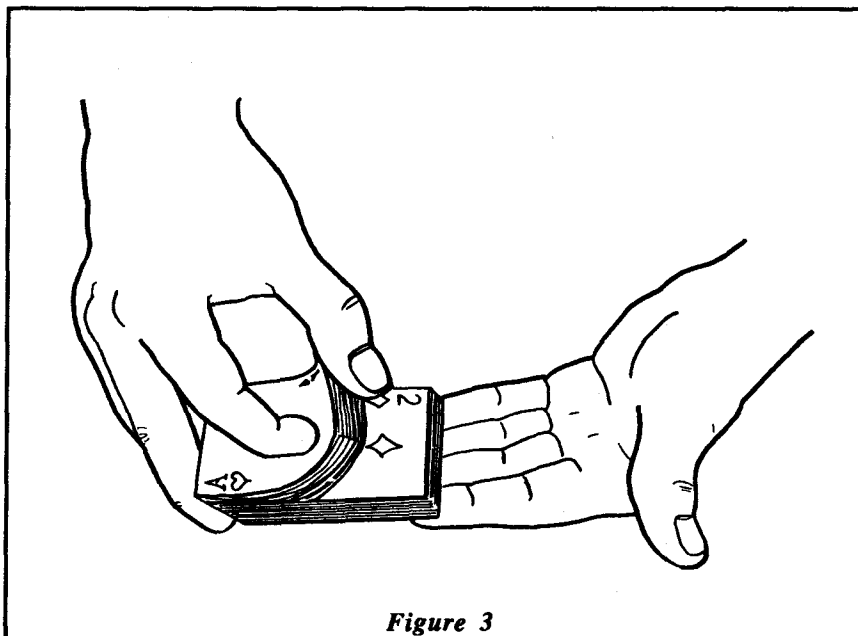


Figure 3

*face down.*" Either way, turn the pack face down and execute a few more shuffles. This brief face up shuffle has enabled you to show the deck to be ordinary while actually containing twenty-six duplicates.

After turning the deck face down, it may be cut by a spectator as desired. If he cuts by holding the packet at the short ends, he too will return an indifferent short card to the top. If he cuts by holding the packet at the long edges, there is a 50 percent chance he will return a five to the top. Rather than take chances, you should follow his cut with one of your own, ensuring an indifferent card goes to the top of the pack.

Now spread the pack on the table from your left to your right. Make as even a spread as possible. You will find that a rough performing surface (carpet, newspaper, or magician's close-up mat, etc.) will provide more traction than a smooth table top and will assist in making the spread.

By spreading from the left to the right, you will be aware that the bottom of the deck is on your left and the top of the pack on your right. However, because the cards are spread horizontally, top and bottom lose their relevance to the spectators. Instead, they will view the ends as left and right. Also note that their left is your right.

Ask for a number from one to fifty-two. While you do not care what number within that range is selected, you are interested in whether that number is odd or even. After they choose a number, they may change their minds as often as they desire. Once they decide upon a number, note whether it is odd or even.

Remember that from the top of the pack, all the odd cards are indifferent cards. All the even cards are fives of hearts. However, if you were to count from the bottom of the pack, all the even cards would be indifferent cards and the odd cards would be fives.

Assume they select the number fifteen. Since it is odd, ask them to count to the fifteenth card from the edge of the spread. As you

request this, point to the end of the spread on your left. This is the bottom of the pack. They will arrive at a five of hearts.

If we assume they select the number twenty, it is an even number. Ask them to count to the twentieth card from the edge of the spread. As you request this, point to the end of the spread on your right (their left). This is the top of the pack. They will arrive at a five of hearts.

Once they arrive at a five, do not let them look at it. Instead, you are going to further emphasize the freedom of their selection by letting them see other cards. Ask them to keep their finger on the card they have selected. Slide the card immediately above and the card immediately below their selection out of the spread. Turn these two cards face up and replace them in the spread, again sandwiching the selection. *"Now that we have isolated your selection, you can let go of it."* You have apparently been very fair with them.

Scoop up all the face down cards above and below the three card sandwich. Place the cards just gathered into the card case (and away from suspicion). Tell them that this is so you cannot be accused later of switching the card they selected with one of the other cards in the pack.

Now ask them to open your prediction envelope and read your prediction, the five of hearts. They can then reveal the face down card sandwiched between the two face up indifferent cards on the table.

The method for predicting the card is up to you. Do not underestimate the method of prediction for it can strengthen the effect by making it seem more impossible. You can have an envelope with the prediction taped to the bottom of a spectator's chair before your performance. Or, if at a restaurant, you may wish to clue the waiter in to bringing you the check with your prediction on it at the critical time. Lacking this, you may wish simply to write the name of the predicted card on a piece of paper which is folded and left on the table

before you start.

Leftovers. If you think it would add any to the effect without confusing the audience, you can allow the spectator a little more freedom in the selection of the card. Once again, assume that he chooses the number fifteen. Since fifteen is odd, you would count from the top of the pack. However, here is where the choices come in.

*"Do you want the fifteenth card? Or, after counting down to the fifteenth card, do you want the one on either side of it? That is, do you want the one immediately following or immediately before the fifteenth card instead of the fifteenth card? By the way, I offer you these selections for the ladies in the audience. I try to*

*make this as much like a shopping trip as possible. Now, what is your preference?*

If they want either the card before or after the fifteenth card, that means that they want an even numbered card, either fourteen or sixteen. If they make this choice, you will count from the bottom of the pack instead of the top.

Regardless of which number they choose, have a deck with a different colored back in your pocket. *"Ladies, may I remind you that this model playing card comes in a lovely red material if you wish."* Produce the pack from your pocket, show it, and then replace it. This adds a little humor and continues the shopping theme established earlier in your "choice" presentation.

***"The shortest distance between two points is usually obstructed by a lack of presentation."***

## THE PORTABLE LADDER

*Scott Robinson*

Scott liked the *Ladder Prediction* but wanted a way to make it impromptu. As this is, it can be used as a revelation or a force.

**Effect.** The magician has a card selected, returned, and lost in the pack. *You have a free choice of any number between 1 and 52. When we count to the number you selected, we will arrive at a card. We will count from that card a value equal to that card to arrive at another card. Using this method, we will arrive at a truly random selection --- one that even you don't control.*" Upon following this procedure, the last card found is the selection.

**The Work.** There is a quick setup of 13 cards. Arrange the top thirteen card of the pack in king to ace order from the top. Place a pencil dot on the non-index corners of the back of the ace in your sequence. This dot should be just large enough for you to spot it when spreading the cards from hand to hand. Crimp the card which is fourteenth from the bottom of the pack. (See the glossary for the breather crimp.)

Spread the cards between your hands for a selection. During the spreading process, note where the pencil dotted card lies. Be sure to have the selection taken from the middle 26 cards of the pack. After the selection, your top stock will be undisturbed and there will still be thirteen cards under your crimped card on the bottom of the deck.

Have the card replaced in the pack, controlled to the top without disturbing the rest of the cards. (You may wish to use the *double undercut* as explained in the Glossary.) Execute a quick false cut.

Explain what their role is in the location process. You will ask for a number between one and fifty-two. Upon locating the card at that position, you will count that card's value from that card's location to guarantee a random

playing card as the result. There is no way you could have known which number would be called so you couldn't have known the card at that value.

Ask for any number between one and fifty-two. Here is where the trickery begins. Their selection is currently at the fourteenth position from the top and there is a crimped card fourteenth from the bottom. The only work involved in this for you is deciding whether to cut the cards at the crimp after the number is called. There is a fifty percent chance that you will cut the deck.

You will not cut the pack if the number selected is less than thirteen or greater than thirty-nine. You will cut the pack if the number they select is between thirteen and thirty-nine exclusive.

Let us test a few examples. Suppose the spectator selects the number eight. Ribbon spread the cards face down on the table from you to the spectator. This ensures the top half of the pack is closest to the spectator. Instruct him to count over in the spread to the eighth card. He will end up on the eighth card from the top of the pack since he is counting from the top. He will find a six there since six is the eighth card in your thirteen card setup. Ask him to turn that card face up and replace it in the spread in its original position. Since that card is a six, he is to count over six more cards from the six. He will arrive at his selection. This same process works for any chosen number between one and thirteen.

Suppose the spectator selects a number greater than thirty-nine, say forty-five. Ribbon spread the deck from the spectator back to you. This will cause the bottom of the deck to be nearest the spectator. When he counts over to the forty-fifth card (from the bottom) he will

end up at the seventh card from the top. The seventh card from the top of the pack is a six. If he now counts six cards back toward himself he will arrive at the fourteenth card from the top, his selection.

Suppose the spectator selects a number between thirteen and thirty-nine, say twenty-two. Since this card is between the two critical numbers, you must cut the pack at the crimped card, placing thirteen indifferent cards on top of the pack. This sends the selection down to the twenty-sixth position from the top (thirteen indifferent cards, your thirteen card stock, and the selection).

Your first decision was whether to cut the pack. If you do have to cut the pack, you then have to decide whether to spread the cards with the top or the bottom of the deck nearest the spectator. If his number was less than twenty-six, spread the cards from you to him. This places the upper half nearest him. In our example, twenty-two, you would spread the cards from you to him. He would then count down to the twenty-second card, arriving at a five (the ninth card from the top of your stock). Starting with the next card and counting down five more cards he will arrive at the selection.

If you had to cut the pack because the number was between thirteen and thirty-nine, but the chosen number was greater than twenty-six (say thirty-two) spread the deck from the spectator to you. This puts the lower half of the pack nearest the spectator ensuring that he will

count from the bottom of the deck. He will count over to the thirty-second card from the bottom which is the same as the twentieth card from the top. He will arrive at a seven, the seventh card in your thirteen card stock. Counting seven cards back toward himself, he will arrive at the selected card.

Leftovers. While the concept may seem difficult, it is actually quite easy. I never memorize anything. I simply remember the location of the selection at all times. When the number is called, I immediately decide whether or not to cut the pack. Knowing the location of the selection after the cut, I inherently know which side of the pack to spread nearest to the spectator.

Now that I have described the concept, let me give you one variation in handling. Rather than waiting for the number to be called and then cutting the pack, I prefer to cut the pack first. I hold the pack in my left hand and cut below the crimp. Using my left hand to gesture toward the person selecting the number, I ask for the number between one and fifty-two. If the number is between thirteen and thirty-nine exclusive, I complete the cut by placing the left half on top of the right half. If the number is less than thirteen or greater than thirty-nine, I replace the right half on top of the left, restoring the pack to its original condition. This bit of finesse shifts the focus away from the cards at the critical time and places it directly on the spectator.

## THE FALLING PREDICTION

John Riggs

John has constructed this item so that it can be performed on platform if desired. The effect is strong and the preparation slight.

**Effect.** The magician tosses a deck of cards with a rubber band around it out into the audience. He then brings out another deck. Extending the deck to his side with the faces of the cards toward the audience, he starts dropping cards one at a time from the face of the pack. *"Please call stop.... some time tonight."* The cards drop to the floor slowly and deliberately. When a spectator calls stop, we will assume that the five of hearts is on the face of the pack. *"You had a free choice, you could have stopped me at any card in the pack. You allowed those on the floor to go by. And, for whatever reason, you stopped me before you had the opportunity to choose one of these remaining cards."*

As he explains this, he takes the card they stopped at into his right hand and continues to thumb off a few more cards. This shows the remaining cards to be different from the selection. *"Before I started, I gave someone in the audience a deck of cards. Will that person stand and remove the rubber band from around the pack. Now, thumb through that pack face down. You will notice something strange. All of the cards have blue backs except for one which has a red back. That card was my prediction card. Will you turn that card face up and yell out its name?"* The spectator calls out the "five of hearts." The prediction is correct.

**Preparation.** In the effect *The Ladder Prediction*, I explained the workings of the Svengali deck. In the current effect, I will elaborate on the concept, again assuming the duplicate card used in your Svengali is the five of hearts. This trick uses a "roughed" Svengali deck. That is, each of the matching five of

hearts has had its face treated and each of the indifferent cards has had its back treated. The surfaces are treated in order to allow the roughed surfaces of the cards to stick together when they are spread or, in this case, thumbed off the face of the pack. The untreated surfaces spread normally and are therefore the only ones exposed.

There are many ways to treat the surfaces of the cards. First of all, most magic shops sell a roughed Svengali deck. Second, most also sell roughing fluid which will allow you to convert any (or several) Svengali decks into roughed packs.

If you don't have access to a magic shop, you may wish to try various brands of hair spray. Remove the 26 mates from your Svengali deck and place them face up on a sheet of newspaper. Place the 26 indifferent cards face down on a newspaper. Now spray a very light coating of hair spray on the faces of the 26 mates and on the backs of the 26 indifferent cards. Do not saturate the backs of the cards, only a very light coating is needed. Allow the

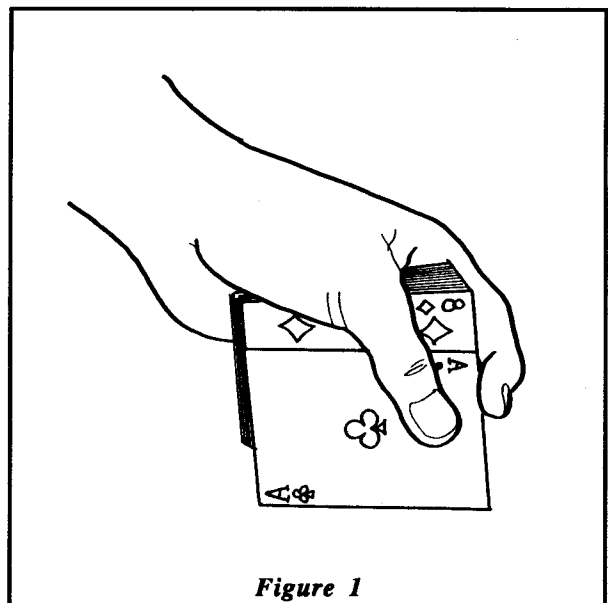


Figure 1



hair spray to dry and then reassemble the pack with the mates located every other card starting with the top card of the face down pack.

For the last bit of preparation, take another blue backed deck. Place a red backed card, which matches the duplicate card in your Svengali deck, in the middle of the face down blue deck. Place a rubber band around the pack and place this in your coat pocket.

**The Work.** With the deck "roughed" in the manner I described, you will find it an easy matter to deal the cards off the pack in pairs. In fact, when properly treated, it is more difficult to deal the cards singly than in pairs. This is the secret to the effect.

Introduce the banded deck and toss it out to a member of the audience. Now bring forward the gimmicked Svengali deck. You can dovetail shuffle the gimmicked pack without disturbing the order of the pairs as described in the last effect.

When ready to perform, hold the pack face up in the left hand in dealing position. Extend your left arm over a hat, purse, or other receptacle which will catch the falling cards. Angle the hand slightly so that the audience can see the faces of the cards. Lightly thumb the top two cards as if they were one off the right edge of the pack. The two cards will fall into the receptacle. See **figure 1**.

You will find that a light touch works well in pushing the pairs. Further, you will find that you do not want to consciously try to push two cards. Try to thumb the face card of the pack over to the right. The card below it will "cling" to it and it will happen automatically.

Thumb the cards off the pack and ask the person holding the banded pack to call stop whenever she wishes. Thumb the cards over until she stops you. At that moment, you want to quickly thumb off one more card. That is, you want to push a single card off the face of the pack and let it fall into the discard container. This will expose the face of one of the 26 duplicates. This is all timing which you should rehearse until you can do it without appearing

to rush. Despite a free choice, they have stopped you on the five of hearts (your duplicate). And, remember they made their choice while seeing the faces of the cards.

Take the five of hearts off the face of the pack and display it in your right hand. Thumb off the remainder of the cards, slowly at first and then quickly to finish. You want the audience to know that all the cards are different. However, they do not have to actually see all the cards to know this. They will draw that conclusion after having seen only a dozen or so.

Now ask the member of the audience who is holding the banded pack to remove the rubber band. Ask her to spread through the deck face down. *"You will notice that there is one red backed card in the blue backed deck. I placed this card there before the show. Would you remove that card and turn it face up. Call out its name for all to hear."* They will call out the five of hearts.

**Leftovers.** Early in my youth I was badly fooled by the Brainwave pack. At age twelve I found out that it used the rough / smooth principle. I ordered some roughing fluid through the mail. When it arrived, I noticed that there were no instructions, simply a bottle of liquid labeled, "roughing fluid." I wasn't going to let a lack of instructions slow me down. I mean, how complicated could it be to apply some fluid to the backs and faces of some playing cards.

I took about a dozen decks of cards and set about treating them. I finished applying the substance in the early hours of the next morning. Knowing that the substance had to completely dry before the roughing effect would work, I assembled the packs and placed them in their respective cases. I went to sleep, despite the incredible anticipation I felt.

The next morning, I leapt out of the bed and over to the cards. I removed what can best be described as a solid block of 52 playing cards from the first case. When hurled at someone with some vigor, this block would be nearly fatal. (I instead, hurled it at an inanimate object

## *FUTURE FORETOLD*

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as I remember. Then again, they never did find that friend of mine from next door.) All dozen decks had been "glued" together.

The moral of the story is that you should allow the roughing fluid to completely dry before assembling and casing the packs. I just

thought this story would be helpful for you. But now that I think about it, for some of you I should have explained the story *before* I instructed you in how to apply the fluid. Then again, how many twelve year olds will be reading this?

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Regarding self-working card tricks: *"You had better watch your step because this is the one branch of conjuring where social pests have had a field day. Nothing about your work must give the slightest hint of the man who always insists on doing card tricks."*

*Henry Hay in Amateur Magician's Handbook (1950)*

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## THE FALLING PREDICTION II

*Steve Beam*

This is my impromptu version of John's *Falling Prediction*. The effect is identical, only the method is different. As in the original, the banded deck with the odd backed five of hearts is tossed out to the audience.

The magician spreads through an ordinary pack to locate the five of hearts. He cuts the deck to relocate the five to a position about 2/3rds of the way through the pack from the face. He picks up a break above the five and closes the face up spread, retaining the break.

The deck is held face up in the left hand in dealing position with a break above the five. The pack is held so the faces of the cards are toward the audience. The edges are kept from their view so they will not see the break.

The magician stands with his right side toward the audience. He holds a receptacle in his right hand and the deck in the left. He starts dealing the cards off the pack as he requests the

person with the banded deck to stop him.

This time, the dealing is done a little bit differently. The left hand dips into the receptacle where it thumbs off the card on the face of the pack. It bounces back up out of the container, exposing a new card on the face. Each deal is accompanied by the dipping motion so that the thumbing action is covered by the container.

When the spectator calls stop, the magician proceeds with one more dip. At the bottom of the action, all the cards above the break are released. When the hand comes back up into view, the five of hearts is on the face of the packet. This card is removed and displayed in the right hand. The left hand continues thumbing off the next five or ten cards before dribbling the remaining cards into the receptacle. The trick is concluded as before.

## THE POSTCARD

### *Martini*

**Effect.** The magician opens an envelope to show a prediction card face down inside. This is dropped on the table and another card is freely selected and signed by a spectator. After the spectator replaces the card in the pack, the magician tries to find it. (See presentational ideas in *Leftovers*.) After failing miserably, he removes the prediction from the envelope. It is the signed selection and the envelope is otherwise empty.

**The Work.** The secret rests with a gimmick you can make up in less than a minute. Its exact makeup will depend upon the envelope you are using. Start with a letter sized envelope with a small flap. That is, you don't want a flap which folds down to the middle of the envelope proper. You would like it to overlap the envelope for only 20 to 25% of the envelope proper.

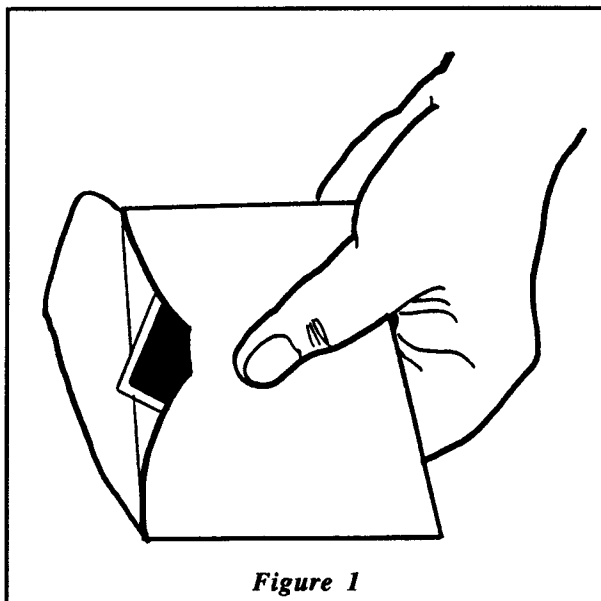
Take one of the jokers from the pack and cut off a quarter of it so that when the cut edge of the quarter card is inserted into the envelope, it will appear as though it is a whole card peeking out from the opening. (See **figure 1**.) This is your gimmick. Place this all the way in

the envelope so that when slid halfway out, it will appear to be a whole card. Place the envelope on the table with the flap side up.

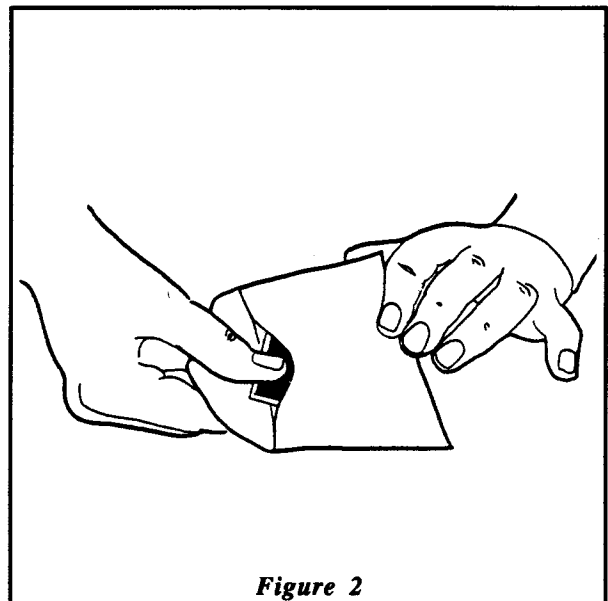
Introduce the envelope. Open the flap and slide the gimmick out as shown in **figure 1**. Tell the audience that this is your prediction. Slide the gimmick back in and carefully place the envelope back on the table. Be sure that the gimmick is kept at the far side of the opening so that if it were a whole card it could fit in the envelope as you are holding it.

Have a card selected from the pack and signed. Ask the spectator to replace the card in the middle of the pack. Control the selection to the top of the pack. Cut to and dramatically remove an indifferent card without disturbing the top card of the pack. State that this card will not only be the selection, but that it will match the card you placed in the envelope before the show.

As you refer to the envelope, pick it up and place it over the top of the pack. As you do, thumb the top card over about half an inch under cover of the envelope. Deposit the envelope on the pack and use your right hand to



*Figure 1*



*Figure 2*

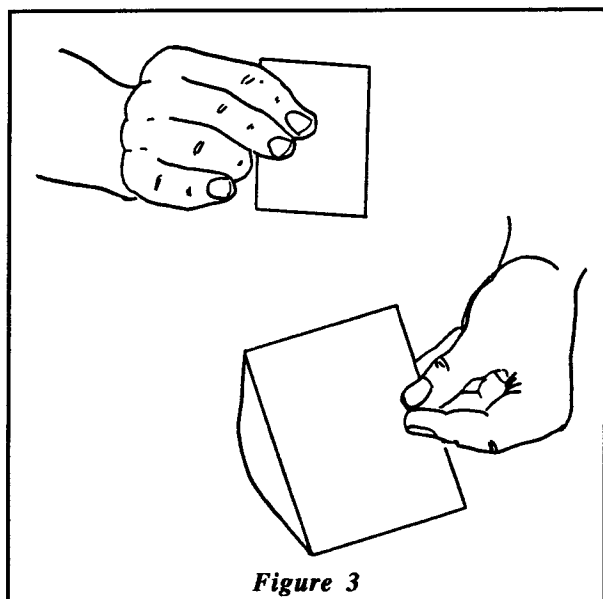


Figure 3

gesture to the tabled card. Immediately pick up the envelope, secretly taking with it the selection. Place the envelope on the table, overlapping the near table edge. (At least part of the card, as well as the envelope, should overlap the table edge.) Ask that the tabled card be turned over. It is not the selection. Try again by removing another card. Table this and ask that it be turned over. Failure again. Table the deck.

Pick up the envelope with the selection underneath. The fact that the card and envelope overlap the table edge makes it easier to pick up the card with the envelope. Take the envelope in your palm down left hand and open the flap so that once again you are in the position shown in **figure 1**. Slide the gimmick slightly out of the envelope as shown in **figure 2**.

You are now going to do two things simultaneously. Slide the gimmick and the selection free from the envelope with your right hand as your left hand flips the envelope over. The right hand lifts the selection up so

that the face of the signed selection can be seen by all. See **figure 3**. The right thumb holds the gimmick against the back of the selection.

Use the envelope to brush against the card as if to say that these two objects are the only two objects necessary to do the trick. Drop the envelope to the table as you steal the gimmick into your fingerpalm. Drop the selection to the table as well for the finish.

**Leftovers.** While playing with this, I thought you might wish to add another bit of humor to it. Note that this can be added to many signed card locations. Since the selection is signed, it wouldn't make sense to have problems locating it when you spread through the cards face up. All you would have to do is locate the signed card and remove it. However, this is exactly what you will do using this presentation. If you pre-signed several cards in the pack with a sloppy, illegible signature, you could remove them. When the spectators see you removing signed cards in an attempt to find the signed selection, they will catch on to what you are doing. *"I guess I should have started this with a new deck."* Finally, in desperation, you may wish to ask them for a handwriting sample. *"You know, a driver's license, a personal check to the magician, something with a good sample. It has nothing to do with the trick. I just had a sudden, uncontrollable urge to see what your handwriting looks like"*. After seeing the handwriting, *"Oh, I recognize that handwriting. It looks like the writing on the prediction card."* At this, the magician removes the prediction and it is the signed selection. Once again, the magician's good name is validated.

**Background.** *The Postcard* was originally published in issue #45 of **The Trapdoor**.

## THE OPENED PREDICTION

Steve Beam

You will either love this or ignore it. This effect demands testosterone levels not dictated by most card tricks. If you present it properly with the appropriate attention to details, you will have one of the cleanest and most puzzling solutions to an ancient problem.

Effect. From a borrowed and shuffled pack, the magician removes a joker and writes the name of a card on its face. On this occasion, he writes the name of the queen of hearts on the face of the joker and places it face up on the table for all to see. He hands the pack to a spectator who deals cards face up to the table one at a time.

At any time the volunteer desires, he is instructed to deal one card face down on top of the face up pile. After this one face down card, he is to continue dealing the rest of the cards face up. Anyone counting the face up cards would know that fifty-one cards are seen, all except the predicted queen of hearts. When the spectator spreads the pack to reveal the face down card, he finds the predicted card.

The Work. Borrow a shuffled pack of cards. State that you want to write a prediction on one of the cards. Spread through the pack looking for the joker while clandestinely noting the top (back) card of the pack. We will assume that it is the queen of hearts. Remove the joker without disturbing the order of the rest of the pack.

Using a permanent marker, write the name of the top card on the face of the joker and place it face up on the table. Hand the pack to the volunteer and ask him to start dealing cards face up onto the table in a pile. After he has dealt about a dozen cards on the table, "*Whenever you get the urge to stop, feel free to do so. Stop some time in the middle of the pack.*" When he stops, ask him to turn the remaining

cards face down and to, "*Deal the next card face down on top of the tabled cards so that no one knows what it is.*"

Since this is the original top card of the pack, you know that it is the queen of hearts. However, now comes the all vital sales pitch which helps to conceal that fact. He still holds the pack face down. "*Let's see what would have happened if you would have dealt one more card before stopping. Turn the next card face up and deal it on the pile.*" He does so. "*That's not the queen of hearts. Try the next one.*" He deals the next card face up onto the pile. "*That's not it either. Go ahead and continue your deal through the rest of the pack. Remember, we are still looking for the queen of hearts.*" He continues dealing cards face up on the pile until he exhausts the pack.

More selling occurs here as you creatively summarize what has transpired. "*Remember that you shuffled the pack before we started. I wrote a prediction on the face of the joker before you started dealing. You then dealt cards one at a time until you stopped. Did I influence where you stopped at any point? No? Well, it wasn't because I didn't try. You must not have noticed all this body language I was sending out. So, when you stopped, you dealt the next card face down and continued dealing. We have seen fifty-one cards but we have not yet seen the one card I predicted. Spread through the pack and find the one card you chose to deal face down. Turn that card over and compare it with the prediction.*" He turns the queen of hearts face up. "*And to think, you said I was wasting all of that body language.*"

Leftovers. The triumphant completion of this effect relies upon three critical points. First, you must act as if you are really interested in the two cards which you ask him to deal

following the face down card. You should appear genuinely interested in the identities of those cards. It helps to act a little relieved that they are not the card you predicted. You are shifting attention to these cards to remove the heat from the face down card they dealt. Further, your action implies that if they would have dealt one or two more cards to the table, they would have ended up with either of these two cards as their prediction. This, of course, is not the case since they were dealing their cards off the face of the pack.

You are securing time misdirection so that they forget that they simply turned the pack face down and dealt the original top card. By the time they exhaust the remaining cards in the pack, they will have forgotten that they ever dealt the cards from the deck while it was face up. This will make the trick virtually impossible to reconstruct later.

The second critical point is the verbal summary you provide at the conclusion of the effect before you reveal the predicted card. You are emphasizing the fact that they had a free choice where to stop. You and I know that where they stopped had no effect on the card they dealt face down. However, this is the point you want to emphasize as if it was critical in their selection.

The third key point not to overlook is confidence. You must build this up as if it is a miracle. Present it as the genuine article and they will believe it. If you act unsure or proceed with any insecurity, you will get caught.

Using one of the odds games as a ruse to learn the identity of the top card would allow you to perform this effect over the phone. After finding out the identity of the top card, instruct the spectator to start the deal with the cards face up. Then he turns them face down and drops the next card, the force card, face down. The rest of the cards are dealt face up. Now, with an impressive finish, you can reveal the card he freely stopped at, which even he doesn't know, over the phone.

Background. When an effect is pro-

posed without any solution, it is referred to as a card problem. *The Open Prediction* is a famous problem posed by Paul Curry in the forties. Mr. Curry also originated another incredible plot with a method, *Out Of This World*.

The Open Prediction has been subjected to study by many notable card magicians. Some of the solutions posed have been true to the original problem and some have not. The above version meets all the conditions set for the problem. While the deck is held face up at first and later face down, this will not be remembered later. In other words, the rest of the trick convinces them that they held the deck face down the whole time. It fools their memories.

Another strong point of the above handling is that the spectator does all the dealing, both before and after dealing the face down card. Most solutions have the magician take the deck from the spectator after the face down card is dealt and continue the deal with the rest of the pack. While one of the sources below states that this is not all that important, it's probably because it also makes the solution more difficult. A lone dealer does make the handling consistent throughout. In most methods, the sleight of hand occurs when it is most expected, when the magician takes the deck from the spectator.

You may wish to consult Paul Curry's solution (which, interestingly enough, does not meet his own conditions). It is published along with other wonderful effects in his Special Effects (1977). Ed Marlo went one on one with the *Open Prediction* in **Hierophant #1** (September, 1969). In this source, he provides fifteen methods with a myriad of variations. These follow his earlier effort (1953) in one of the classic texts of card magic, The Cardician.

Rick Johnsson's solution to the problem appeared in his Practical Impossibilities (1976). I can vouch for the effectiveness of this version, having used it for a number of years. Bill Miesel, editor of **The Precursor**, tackled

the problem with his *Barefaced Commitment* in *Arcane #13* (1985).

Stewart James attacked the problem with twenty-five methods in Howard Lyons' *Ibidem #3* (August, 1955) and later reprinted these in the colossal Stewart James In Print --- The First Fifty Years. Stewart also added additional constraints to the existing problem with his **Fifty-one Faces North**. This effect is discussed but not tipped in both of the references just cited. According to editor Allan Slaight, it will receive a more detailed discussion in Stewart's upcoming The James File.

Karl Fulves made numerous attempts at solving Stewart's modified problem in his booklet, Cards 2: 51 Faces North. While the attempts were valid, the discussion of the prob-

lem and his approach to its solution are more valuable than the solutions themselves. One of the ideas proffered here was a variation on the theme. In the mutation, two spectators would each deal through their respective decks leaving one card face down and the rest face up. The two face down cards are shown to match.

Others who have "dealt with" the problem include Bruce Cervon (*Open Prediction*, December 1967 **Pallbearers Review**) and Robert Parrish (*On The Open Prediction*, Winter 1968 **Pallbearers Review**). One of the most impressive, albeit not the simplest, is a yet to be published version Ken Krenznel showed me at the 1991 Baltimore IBM convention. It was direct and stunning (but not angleproof).



## THE UNOPENED PREDICTION

*Steve Beam*

I named this the *Unopened Prediction* because it is not offered as a solution to the Open Prediction card problem just discussed. Instead, it is an adaptation of the various concepts into a slightly different effect.

**Effect #1.** The magician removes a blue backed card from his wallet and places it on the table face down. He calls this a prediction. Producing a full deck of cards, he shuffles it and hands it to a spectator face up. The magician instructs the volunteer to deal cards face up to the table until he wishes to stop. At that point, he is instructed to deal the next card face down. He then continues dealing through the pack until the cards (and the audience) are exhausted.

The magician spreads the deck face up and displays the single face down card. *"Isn't that incredible? I predicted a blue backed card -- and you stopped me on a blue backed card."* At this proclamation, the audience will be skeptical. The deck is flipped face down. *"No, you don't understand. This is the only blue backed card in the deck. All the rest have red backs."* The magician spreads the cards face down and shows a lone card face up among the red backers, a queen of hearts. The queen is tabled face up next to the face down prediction.

*"Of course it would really be a miracle if the faces of the cards matched."* The magician gestures for the spectator to turn over the prediction. It is the queen of hearts, a perfect match.

**Effect #2.** This is similar to the first effect except for the sequence and presentation. The prediction, the queen of hearts is placed face up on the table. After dealing all the way through the pack leaving one card face down, the magician removes the face down card and turns it face up. It is the queen of hearts. *"The really hard part of the prediction was getting the*

*back to match. You will notice that both queens have a blue back. I think you can see why that was the toughest part of the prediction."* At this, the magician turns the deck over to show all the rest of the cards have red backs.

**The Work.** If you are nervous about things going wrong during a performance, let me suggest that you do the dealing rather than the volunteer. Start by placing a blue backed queen of hearts in your wallet. Place a blue backed indifferent card on top of the red backed pack and place another blue backed queen of hearts on top of this. Remove the red backed cards which correspond to the blue backed strangers. You will not need them for this effect. The set up from the top is: blue backed queen, blue backed indifferent card, red backed deck minus two cards.

To perform, remove the prediction from your wallet and place it face down on the table for the first effect or face up for the second. Remove the deck from its case.

You can shuffle the cards with a face up overhand shuffle, being sure to return the last stock containing the two blue cards back to the bottom. If you are doing the dealing, hold the pack face up in your left hand in dealing position. Start dealing cards face up to the table. Deal quickly. After a dozen or so cards have been dealt, tell the spectator that he can stop you at any time.

When he stops you, flip the deck face down. *"I will deal one card face down... and continue dealing."* Deal the top card face down on top of the face up pile. Be careful not to spread any more cards as you take the top card --- you don't want to flash any of the red backs.

Use your left thumb to flip the packet back face up and continue to deal face up cards. There should be only a momentary pause in

your dealing rhythm when you deal the single card face down. Deal all the way through to the last card, the indifferent blue backer.

Ending #1. For the first effect above, spread the cards face up showing the single face down blue card. Outjog this card and square the rest of the pack. Flip the deck face down and spread through the pack with the exception of the last card, the blue backed indifferent card. Remove the face up queen and table it beside the prediction. Turn the prediction card face up and show the match.

Ending #2. To end the effect as described in the second effect above, spread through the pack face up at the conclusion of the deal-through. Remove the single face down card and table it beside the prediction. Dramatically turn the face down card face up showing the face matches the face up prediction. That is the first surprise. Turn the pack face down and spread it between your hands, all but the last card. The red backs are surprise #2.

Note that there are other ways to display

the red backed cards. My favorite is to ribbon spread the pack face up on the table. Do not spread the few cards nearest the top. Then flip the spread face down. The group of cards at the face of the pack conceals the blue backed card.

Leftovers. If you think about it, revealing that the faces match in the first effect should not be all that strong. If you predicted they would stop you at the only blue backed card, you would already know its value. While it doesn't make sense, it does have an extra impact.

Background. This started with my *Opened Prediction* so I will refer you to the credits listed at the end of that description. (*Opened Prediction* immediately precedes this effect.) I got the idea to use the odd backed card in conjunction with the Open Prediction plot from Ed Marlo's *Unwritten Prediction* in Jon Racherbaumer's **Hierophant #1** (1969). He credits the effect to Alex Elmsley's *Open Intruder* from the September, 1956 issue of **The Pentagram** (Volume 10, #12).

## THE CLOSED PREDICTION

*Steve Beam*

In this effect which is based upon the previous two, the fact that there is a prediction is not made known until the action predicted has come to pass.

Effect. The magician deals through the pack, dealing cards face down onto the table. Whenever a spectator wishes, she may stop the magician. At that point, the magician deals the next card face up. The rest of the deck is dealt face down. The magician spreads the pack on the table showing all the cards are face down except the face up queen of hearts. *"Would you believe me if I told you that I took a card from another deck before the show and placed it in this deck?"* The spectators will usually buy this without arguing so the magician ups the ante. *"Well, would you believe me if I told you that the card I removed from the other pack to predict which one you would leave face up was this card, the queen of hearts?"*

If the spectator answers that she would believe the magician, the magician says, *"Well then, that's it; the trick is over --- I wish all my audiences were that easy to please."* He says this as if that was the end of the effect. Needless to say, at this point, the spectator protests and the magician is in the same predicament he would be if the spectator said she wouldn't believe him. Either way, the magician must now prove his statement. At this, he removes the single face up card and flips it over. It is the only blue backed card in a red backed pack.

The Work. Start with a blue backed card on the bottom of the red backed pack. We will assume the stranger card is the queen of hearts. Remove the matching queen of hearts.

Hold the deck face down in dealing position in the left hand. Deal cards face down to the table. When the spectator stops you, flip the pack face up, and deal the face card of the pack face up onto the tabled pile. It is the odd backed queen but the spectators will not yet see the back.

Without missing much more than a beat, continue dealing cards off the face of the pack face down onto the tabled pile. Don't rush this but don't change your dealing rhythm. Continue dealing the cards until the pack is exhausted.

Ribbon spread the pack on the table or spread it between your hands. Display the face up queen as you ask your questions. When it comes time to prove your assertion, ask the spectator to remove the queen and turn it face down to show its blue back.

Leftovers. While you can allow the spectator to deal, I prefer to do the dealing to speed the process. It also removes all "heat" from the process.

Background. Again this started with my *Opened Prediction* and my *Unopened Prediction* so I will refer you to the sources cited at the end of their descriptions. Basically, this is the result of my using the ideas in each of my two items to accomplish Ed Marlo's *Unwritten Prediction* from Jon Racherbaumer's *Hierophant #1* (1969). Ed gave two methods. The first was a psychological stop procedure with the spectator doing the dealing. The second used a face up bottom deal with the magician doing the dealing. (It is difficult to locate a layman nowadays who can perform a respectable bottom deal.)

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## THE PUBLIC PREDICTION

*Steve Beam*

This is the last mutation of the Open Prediction problem. It is not posed as a solution to the other since the handling is quite varied.

**Effect.** The magician removes a blue card from a blue backed deck and mixes it into a red backed deck. He deals cards face up to the table asking the spectator to stop him "*when you think I have found the card which matches the blue backed card.*" When she stops him, he deals the next card face up to the side. He continues dealing through the pack. He picks up the packet and flips it face down. He thumbs through it looking for the blue backed card. "*Let's find the blue backed card so we can see if you were successful in finding it's mate.*" Thumbing all the way through the pack, he can't find the blue backed card. He is puzzled at first. "*Wait a minute. I asked you to stop me on the card which matches the card from the other deck. The only true match would be the blue backed card itself. Let's see.*" The magician gestures for the spectator to turn the card off to the side face down. It is the blue backed card. "*You sure know how to follow instructions.*"

**The Work.** Take a blue backed card, say

the queen of hearts, and place it in a red backed pack. Secretly control it to the bottom with a double undercut (see the Glossary) or by placing a breather crimp in it before hand. Hold the deck face down in dealing position. Start dealing cards face up rapidly onto the table.

When the spectator asks you to stop in the middle of the pack, flip the pack face up. Deal the face card, the queen of hearts off to the side and continue dealing face up from the face up packet. At the conclusion of the deal, state that you will find the blue backed card to check "her guess." Spread through the cards face down. Act as if there is something wrong. Then realize that she must have stopped you on the blue backed card. Instruct her to turn over the queen of hearts for the climax.

**Background.** You might say that this is an open version of the *Closed Prediction*. In this version, you show the audience that you are placing a blue backed card in a red backed pack. Then, they find it. In the *Closed Prediction*, they didn't know that the card was in there until after the deal-through. You have used basically the same method to accomplish two different effects.

## THE SOLUTION

*John Riggs*

I showed John my versions of the *Open Prediction* at the 1993 Winter Carnival of Magic in Gatlinburg, Tennessee. The next day (we were snowed in with two feet plus of snow) he asked me to shuffle the deck. He proceeded to do the perfect version of the effect. It solves all of the conditions set forth in Stewart James' *Fifty one Faces North* as outlined in *Ibidem #3* (see *The Opened Prediction*).

Effect. This is meant to be performed before a group. The magician asks a spectator to shuffle a borrowed pack of cards. He takes the pack back and spreads through it to note a card. He writes a prediction on a piece of paper and leaves the paper out in the open.

Addressing one of the spectators, "*We are going to attempt a miracle. For this miracle, I will need your cooperation and your concentration. I am going to ask you to deal cards face up one at a time onto the table from the face down deck. Whenever you wish, somewhere in the middle, you will stop, and deal a card face down onto the face up pile. As you deal, we will look for the card I have written on the piece of paper. To repeat, stop when you wish and deal the next card face down. You have a free choice when to stop. Do you understand the instructions?*"

When the spectator acknowledges, he is instructed to start dealing. At any point during the deal, he places one card face down on top of the face up tabled pile. He then continues dealing through the pack face up looking for the predicted card. At the conclusion of the deal, the spectators have seen the faces of fifty-one cards --- all but the predicted card. The spectator spreads through the face up cards and turns over the single face down card. It is the predicted card.

The Work. I have tried this on several magicians. It has destroyed them. This is as

good as its hype. Upon taking back the shuffled pack, spread the cards with their faces toward you. Note a card about two thirds of the way back in the pack (one third down from the top). This will be the card you predict. However, you will want to also remember the card that is two cards past the prediction card in the spread. For our purposes, assume that you will predict the queen of spades. Further assume that the ace of hearts is two cards past the queen.

Close the spread and hand it face down to the spectator. Write "queen of spades" on a piece of paper and leave it out in the open where the writing can be read by all. Address the spectator holding the pack with the above patter. As you instruct him, each time you say the word "stop," you will pause. Simultaneously you will kick him under the table.

That's right. Each of the three times you say stop are followed above with punctuation. This allows the spectator a moment to associate the kick in the leg with an almost subliminal instruction to stop. Experience will tell you how hard you should kick the spectator. If he starts cursing at you upon being kicked, you are probably kicking him too hard.

You will kick him a total of four times. The first three are during the opening instructions when you are setting him up. Watch his eyes as you issue the instructions. They will tell you if he has received your message. A discrete wink during the kicking may help to communicate the message to the volunteer.

The fourth kick comes during the deal. As he deals, look for your key card, the ace of hearts. When he deals that card, it is your notice that you have one more card to go before the prediction. As the next card is dealt to the table, kick the spectator again. Since this one is clearly face up on the table, it is too late for him

to turn it face down. His only choice is to deal the next card face down.

I learned the hard way that it is best to have your volunteer seated close to you with some distance between the other spectators. I performed this on another magician's wife at a large gathering in a restaurant. Querying her later, she said that during the first couple of kicks she didn't realize who was kicking her. She said that if she would have known it was me, she would have gotten the message earlier.

Leftovers. The use of the participant taken secretly into your confidence and basing the conclusion of the trick upon his/her actions is referred to as the *impromptu stooge*. A stooge, also referred to as a *shill* or a *confederate*, is someone who secretly assists the magician in accomplishing a trick. One who is solicited secretly during the course of the trick is referred to as an *impromptu stooge*. Of course, cooperation will be greater if you don't share with the volunteer that he is referred to by the magic fraternity as a "stooge."

When magicians try to reconstruct this, the use of a stooge may come to mind. However, without a marked deck, a stooge wouldn't know when to leave the predicted card face down. This is because the cards remain face down during the deal. For example, assume the magician and the stooge agreed before the trick to leave the queen of spades face down during the dealing procedure. Since anyone can shuffle the pack and only the magician looks at it afterward, the spectator would have to learn the queen's location somehow. This causes magicians to discard the stooge theory.

I have one final note. On those occasions where the spectator insists on being uncooperative, he should limp away from the table.

Background. The credits for Paul Curry's *Open Prediction* and Stewart James' *51 Faces North* have already been provided. The latter is an extension of the former, with the following conditions:

(1) You may use a borrowed pack which may be incomplete and you do not need to know

which card(s) are missing, only that the one you predict is there. Nothing is added or removed from the pack.

(2) No privacy required to set anything as the deck is never out of sight.

(3) Everything used is ordinary and all may be borrowed (including the writing materials if the prediction is written rather than removed in the form of a playing card.

(4) The prediction which is seen by everyone, is labeled as such at the beginning and there are no alternative meanings for the prediction. That is, this is not a contingency trick.

(5) When he starts dealing, you do not know where the prediction card is. (While I don't consider this an important criteria as relates to method rather than effect, the above trick meets it. Technically, you do not know precisely where the card is. You only know its position relative to your key.)

(6) You do not know the location of any other card. Technically, you do not know the key's location until it is turned face up. But you know the location of all of the cards once they are turned face up.

(7) You never know when he will leave a card face down, until after he has done it. Technically, you do not know when he will do it until after he has done it because you don't know if he will cooperate until he has done so.

The use of the spectator kick was from Fast And Loose, Whit Haydn's lecture notes (1982). He devised his *Impromptu Card Code* to perform a card divination effect for a blind participant. In this, the blind volunteer became an impromptu stooge and was able to discern the color of the cards and more by the number of kicks she received. That is, one kick meant a red card and two kicks meant a black.

If you find an uncooperative volunteer as you perform the above effect, perhaps you should direct the volunteer to obtain a copy of Whit's lecture notes. Show them how many times you would have kicked them had you chosen to perform Whit's routine.

## LII-kelihood Stewart James

Stewart James is a creative genius who has graced the magic fraternity with his presence. I met him at the 1992 Stewart James Gettogether, an annual event held in Courtright Ontario. Of course, I felt I had met him more than a decade earlier when I studied his material through his many publications. Stewart dabbles in every aspect of things magical, but he specializes in self-working magic. This is in contrast to what he refers to as "muscle magic." You are already familiar with his work from the discussions in the previous tricks.

When Allan Slaight, the editor and more of the gigantic Stewart James - The First Fifty Years asked me if I would like a contribution from Stewart for my book, I was delighted. Then he sent at least four unpublished items from which I was to choose. This was Allan's idea of a practical joke. He knows that it is difficult to choose between gems. Below you will find my choice. Try it on a magician and watch him as the ending sinks in.

At the above weekend convention, Allan played another practical joke. I had not received much sleep the night before flying in and I was supposed to lecture the next morning. To compensate, I had planned to take a nap during the afternoon since nothing was on the agenda and the events didn't start until dinner. Knowing that the first James book was one of my all time favorites, Allan said that I might wish to take the draft for the second book back to my room to read myself to sleep.

Well, anyone who knows me knows that I don't sleep when it comes to magic. I spent the whole afternoon reading through the half completed draft of the book. Suffice it to say that you are in for several nights of missed sleep when The James File is finally published.

I should also mention that the title is

Allan's idea. He said, "*I'm going to call it LII-kelihood. A touch of Latin to add some class!*" Speaking as one who spent four years studying German and no years studying Latin, I hope that the above is not obscene. I have no idea what it means.

**Effect.** A spectator cuts off a small packet of cards from a shuffled pack, counts them, and hides them in her pocket. The magician asks her to name a number between twenty and forty. The performer deals cards in a face up row on the table while the spectator notes the card which falls on the number equal to the cards in the cut off packet. While dealing, the performer claims he will search out a particular card.

The magician removes two slips of paper from his pocket and gives one to the spectator who is instructed to write the name of the card she noted while the performer does the same. Both slips are folded and placed on the table.

The tabled cards are returned to the talon and the deck is again shuffled. The spectator opens her slip to reveal the name of her card. She then counts to the number she named and finds her selected card at that location. For the first time, she reveals the number of cards in the pocket group. She counts to that position as the performer informs her that the card at that number --- a figure he could not have known because he never counted through the remainder of the deck --- will be the card he wrote on his slip. The card is revealed and the performer hands his slip to the spectator, asking her to open it and read the prediction aloud. It is the card to which she just counted. However, the prediction has been "written" with a typewriter! This piece of dynamite will explode once the spectators have a chance to let it sink

## FUTURE FORETOLD

in. That is, once they realize that the performer must have known the outcome well in advance.

The Work. Type the name of a card on a slip of paper and place it in your pocket with a matching blank slip. Cut the card which matches this prediction, which we will assume is the queen of hearts, to the bottom of the pack. You can riffle shuffle as much as you wish, being sure to retain the bottom card on the bottom.

The spectator cuts off a small packet of cards, we will assume it consists of eight cards. She counts them, remembers this number, and hides them. She is then asked to name another number between twenty and forty. In this example, we will assume she names the number 29. Instruct her to note the card at the number equal to the cards in her cut-off packet as you deal the cards face up in a row on the table. Explain that you will also be looking for a particular card.

Because she named 29, begin your mental count on 30 and continue until you reach 52. Deal the face up cards so that they overlap in a long row. The spectator will have remembered

the eighth card dealt while you pretend to look for a certain card. Remove the two slips from your pocket and give the blank one and a pencil to the spectator to write the name of her card. You pretend to do the same thing with the other pencil, naturally keeping the typing concealed.

Scoop up the tabled cards, retaining their order, and deposit them face down beneath the cards remaining in your hand. False shuffle and cut if desired.

Ask the spectator to open her slip and show the name of the card she has chosen. Instruct her to deal 29 cards --- the number she named aloud --- face down in a pile and turn the last one face up. It will be the one she noted earlier as the writing on her slip will verify.

Leave her card on the table and return the dealt packet to the top of the talon. Instruct the spectator to remove the cards from her pocket and count them aloud to the table. (There will be eight.) Then request that she deal cards equal to that number and show the last card. When it is revealed, slide your prediction slip to her and ask her to check to see what card you had written earlier --- much earlier.

*"Psychiatrist - a person who pulls habits out of rats." --- Dr. Douglas Bush*

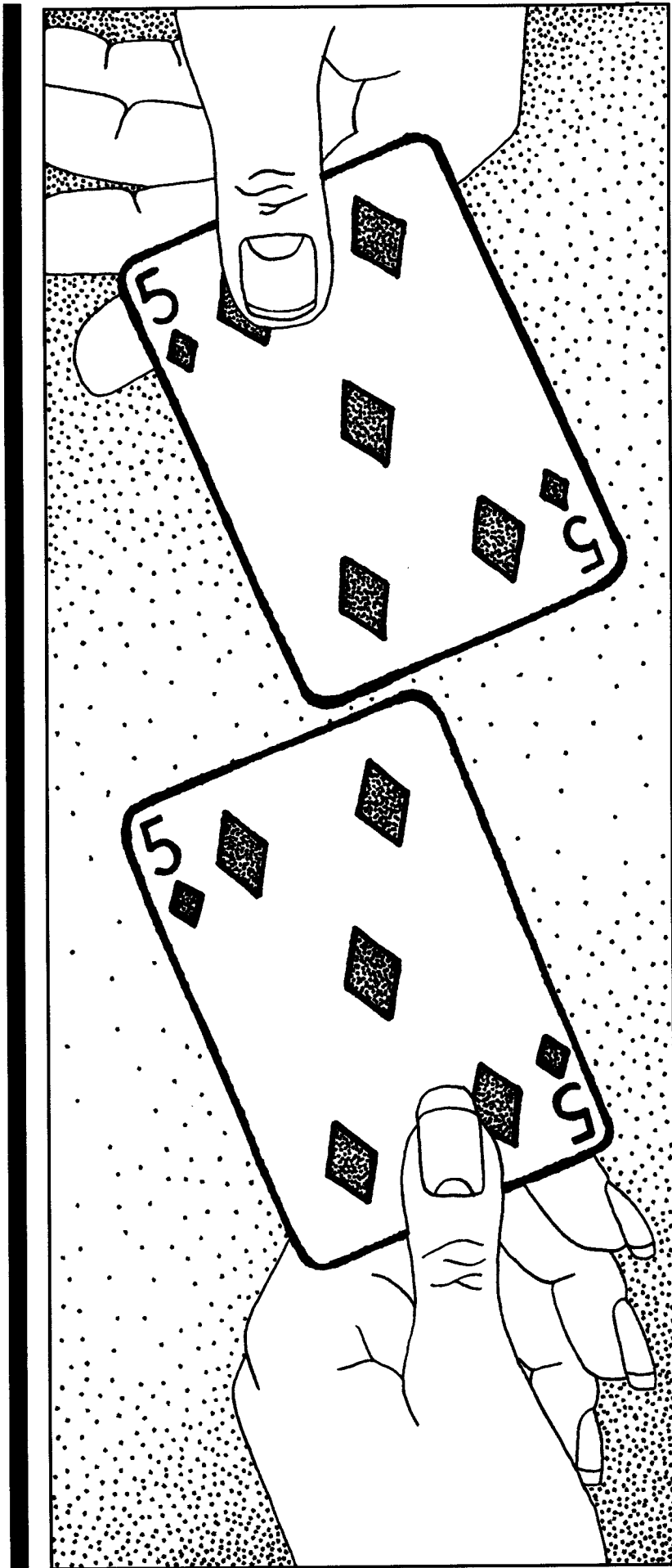


**Regarding card tricks and strategems:**

***"Count them --- if you can --- and you'll find a monstrous array of inventions, representing, probably, more time and effort than has gone into the development of many much more useful things --- the investigation into the conquest of cancer being one specific and glaring example."***

***---Dariel Fitzkee in Chapter 3 of The Card Expert Entertains (1947)***

# Coincidences



## BY COINCIDENCE

I have always been intrigued by matching effects such as the *Smyth Myth* as found in Hen Fetch's Five O' Fetch. My original printed endeavors into this type of effect were published in my Vanishing Art book. Later (1979) I worked with the effect for my Card Tricks from Mount Olympus. I have worked extensively with the effect since then. I have several self-working and sleight of hand methods. Below, I will present several steps forward in my journey. They are not attempts to cling to the original problem. These are side journeys into parallel effects which were opened by my interest in the original effect.

I am not thrilled by magic writers who publish every version they have of a particular effect. Many of these consist of minute variations ("try holding the deck with your right hand this time...") which add nothing to the method or the effect. I think each of the versions below give you something in addition effect, improved working conditions, or efficiency of method. Most have the advantage of being completely self-working.

The basic principle for these effects is the one-ahead principle which is used in a unique way. After playing with the idea I thought I had discovered, I found out about Paul Curry's *Power of Thought* which was released in 1947. As this was prior to my

release (birth in 1958) I will concede the principle to someone else — at least until I finish back dating some notes. For a more recent reference, you may wish to consult Paul Curry Presents for *More Power of Thought*. In the original, Mr. Curry referenced Tom Bowyer's *The Frequent Miracle* from the May 1940 Sphinx as his inspiration.

In 1991, The Collected Works of Alex Elmsley featured nine effects based upon Curry's routine. I am delighted that I developed my work prior to reading any of these sources. I'm afraid I would have been more than content to use the excellent material by Curry and Elmsley rather than going off on my own tangents. I would encourage you to read all of the above and all of what follows. I have a few more routines using similar ideas which will be released later — as soon as they work like they are supposed to.

I have experimented with different set-ups and different presentations. I have attempted to make them user friendly. You will note that there are several completely different set-ups used to accomplish the following effects. Most either reset themselves or end in an arrangement which allows you to immediately go into one of the others. (I prefer to case the deck and later — for the next group — perform another variation without resetting.)

## MATING SEASON I

*Steve Beam*

**Effect.** The magician holds the pack in dealing position. The spectator calls out three numbers between 1 and 26. The magician deals the cards face up in pairs. The pairs which fall at each of the chosen locations match, they have the same value and color (black tens, red eights, etc.)

The versatility of this method is demonstrated by the fact that you have control over the matching of the cards right up until you deal the cards. It can be used as a stop trick or a prediction. Also, the prediction avenue can be exploited as the final revelation in a prediction effect using the one ahead method such as the dealer item, Mental Epic.

A similar effect would be that the cards are cut by a spectator and the magician deals. The spectator may call stop at any time. The next two cards dealt will always be mates.

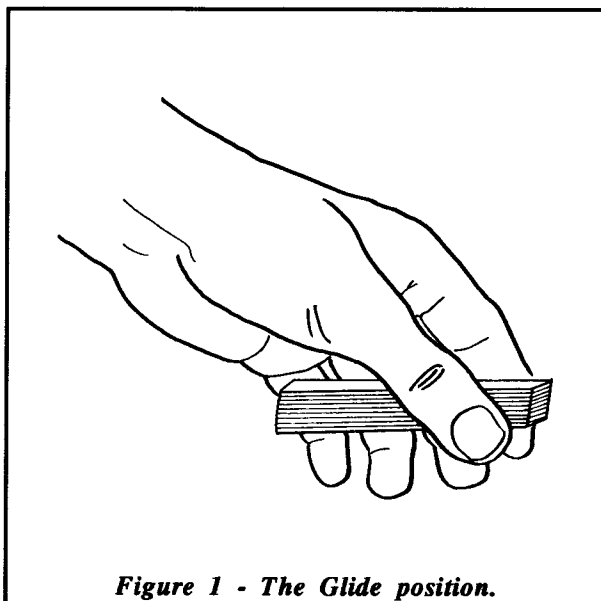
My favorite presentation is to ask a spectator to concentrate on a number between 1 and 26. *"I think I have the number. Don't change your mind. I am going to make my prediction."* The magician cuts the pack which

he is currently fanning toward himself. The deck is turned face down. Hearing the number, the magician deals the cards in pairs. The pair at the chosen number is the only pair which matches. Multiple spectators can be used.

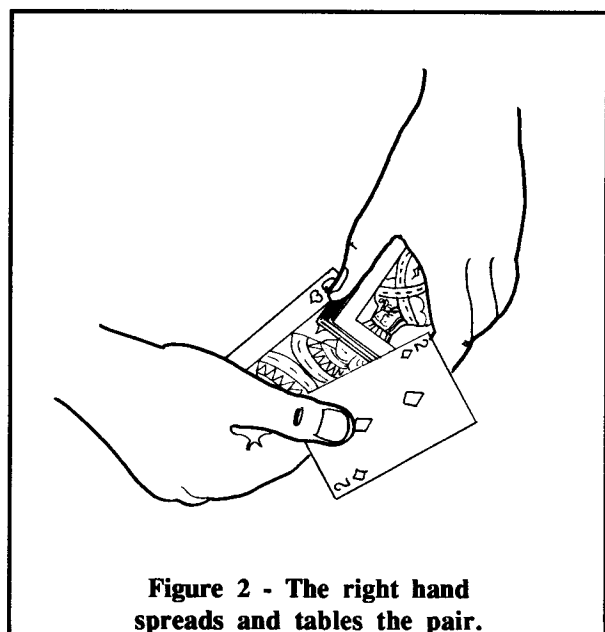
**The Work.** Start with the deck set up in a mirror stack. That is, the top card matches the bottom, the second card matches the second card from the bottom, the third from the top matches the third from the bottom, etc. This is continued throughout the pack. Now, place a joker on the top (back) of the pack.

Hold the pack face up in the left hand in glide position as shown in **figure 1**. Approach the face up pack with your palm up right hand. Place your thumb on the face card and your fingers on the bottom card. Pinch these two cards and drag them out to the right. This is similar to the milk-build shuffle. As soon as the cards clear the fingers and thumb, spread the two cards into a fan and place them on the table.

Continue this double deal showing



**Figure 1 - The Glide position.**



**Figure 2 - The right hand spreads and tables the pair.**

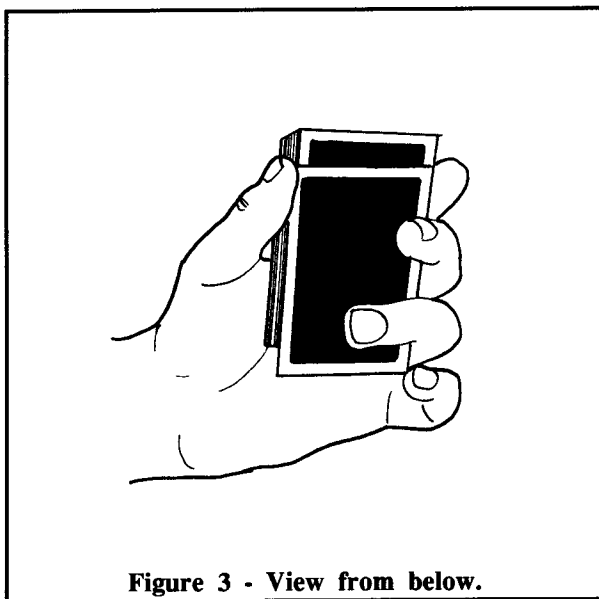


Figure 3 - View from below.

that none of the pairs dealt match. Each pair is placed directly on top of the previously dealt pair. Once covered, the audience won't detect the common cards between the dealt pairs. When you wish to have the dealt pair match, execute the glide as you perform apparently the same deal with the face card (top) and the second card from the back (bottom).

(To perform the glide, hold the deck in the left hand from above as shown in figure 1. Use your left third finger to pull the bottom card of the face up pack to the left about a quarter of an inch. See figure 3 for an exposed view of this action. This allows you to take the second card from the bottom. As soon as you remove the card, the third finger pulls the bottom card back flush with the rest of the pack.)

To continue the deal with subsequent pairs not matching, start dealing again without performing the glide. Once again, the pairs will not match. One of the visual niceties of this is that the audience sees three cards at once and none of them match. They see the two most recently dealt cards on the table and the card on the face of the pack. Mentally, they will see that even if you had dealt the next card with either card of the current pair, there still would not be a match. You can cause the pair to match again when-

ever you wish by executing the glide again.

**Leftovers.** Many cardmen look down on the use of the glide. For their benefit, may I suggest you look upon the glide as was done in 1903 in C. Lang Neil's The Modern Conjuror. In this classic work, it is referred to as "dealing seconds from the bottom." So the next time you are among the elite of the sleight of hand workers, tell them you have been dealing seconds from the the bottom for years. After getting their attention, execute the glide.

The fact that you can do this face up allows additional freedom in how you choose to use this. You can ask the spectator to predict the color and the value of the pairs which will match. That is, they can choose the red threes and the black kings. Start dealing. When you see a red three or a black king on the face, execute the glide as you take the pair into the right hand. Continue dealing normally until the one card of the remaining pair appears on the face of the pack. Execute the glide again and the second pair will match.

If using the prediction option discussed in the last effect, ask two spectators to concentrate on a color, red or black. They are then to think of a value, ace through king. You appear to concentrate to divine their thoughts. Pick up the pack and tinker with it as if setting up a prediction.

If you move any cards out of order, be sure to replace them before proceeding. Example, openly move one card from one side of the spread to the other. Study the spread and then cut the spread. Now pretend to set up the next prediction. Remove the card just relocated and replace it in its original position. Cut the pack again and turn the pack face down and proceed with the effect.

I probably don't need to say this, but you can also deal the cards with the pack face down. You don't gain anything from my point of view, but you may prefer this way.

**Background.** This was originally published in issue #38 of The Trapdoor (1991) as *Mating Season IV*.

## MATING SEASON II

*Steve Beam*

I was very excited about this when I first published it in issue #38 of **The Trapdoor**. It is totally self working and has many possibilities. While it will take considerable space to describe, there are three separate effects contained within. Each is more impressive than the preceding one so that it builds to a strong climax. There are a couple of possible presentations which will represent the effect to the audience as either a prediction or a matching effect.

Here is what the audience sees. After a spectator fails to do so, the magician cuts the deck exactly in half. The spectator then inserts the joker into either half. Since the packs are now uneven (because of the joker) the magician removes the top card of the packet containing the joker. This card is placed face down to the side. The packets are once again even.

Both packets are dealt through looking for either the first match (color and value) or the joker, whichever comes first. You will hit the joker first. You explain that because the joker is wild, the pair which shows (the joker and an indifferent card) is the first matching pair. And, although they had a free choice where to place the joker and in which half, all the pairs from that point match. The joker has caused all the pairs from that point on to match.

The halves are combined. To prove that it is not luck, the card which is laying to the side is given to the spectator to insert into the pack. The pack is spread on the table and the card just placed into the pack along with the one beneath it are removed. The two cards match. The spectator was able to find the matching card.

**The Work.** Start with the pack set up as follows. The top card of the pack matches the 27th card. The second card matches the 28th

card. The third card matches the 29th card. This continues through until the 26th card matches the 52nd card. Place the joker somewhere in the middle of the pack.

Spread the pack face up on the table. "Let me show you something with the joker." This shows the pack in apparently random order. Remove the joker and place it to one side. Square the pack and ask the spectator to cut the face up pack exactly in half.

If the face cards of each half match, he has succeeded in cutting the pack exactly in half. If they do not, pick up the lower half and pretend to weigh it. Confidently, "You missed it by three cards" (or as close as you can estimate it). Drop this on the upper half completing the cut. (The pack may be cut as many times as you wish.)

Pick up the deck and cut it between the 26th and 27th cards. This is easy since the face card of each half will match. When you spot the matching card to the card on the face in the middle of the pack, lift up on the top half. Pivot this half face down as you place it on the table. Flip the lower half face down beside it.

While you don't go to any extra efforts to cover it, you don't want the audience to spend any extra time noticing that the two cards (on the face and where you cut) match.

Since this is a self-working trick, you may as well get credit for all the skill possible. I lift off the top 26 cards and pretend to weigh them. "Okay, here are 26 cards." Table them face down and pick up the other half as if you are weighing them. "Yep. Here are another 26." Table them face down. The audience doesn't know whether you are bluffing. While their minds are wrestling with this, they won't have time to notice the matching cards on the face of each half.

## COINCIDENCES

Shift the attention to the joker. Ask that a spectator insert the joker into the middle of either half. She has a free choice how deep or shallow to place the card. (Tell her this after she has placed it close to the center.)

*“Do you realize what you have just done? You have just thrown my halves out of balance again. To compensate, I will remove one card from the half where you placed the joker. Once again, both halves are created equal.”* Deal the top card of the packet in which she inserted the joker face down off to the side.

The rest of the trick is automatic. If you will deal simultaneously from both halves as shown in the illustration, you will come to the joker before any of the pairs match. When the joker turns up as one card of a pair, stop the deal. Pause to highlight what you are about to show them. Also mention that this pair matches because the joker is “wild.” They will wonder what you are up to. Reiterate the fact that they could have placed the joker in either half and at any location in their chosen half. This appears to be an attempt by you to convince them that this “matching” pair is something magical. Continue the deal again, a pair at a time. All of the rest of the pairs from that point on will match.

Deal through the remaining two halves as quickly as possible to reduce the dead time inherent in many magic presentations. There should be adequate amazement to compensate for the few seconds necessary to deal through approximately 13 pairs.

You are now ready for the second big effect. (This is the third effect if you include cutting exactly 26 cards at the beginning of the effect.) The spectator is now going to magically find the mate for the card you removed at the beginning of the effect.

Combine the face up halves, placing the half containing the joker on top. Turn the resulting pack face down. Slide the face down card toward the spectator. Ask that she place the card in the middle of the pack, leaving it

protruding for half its length.

Pick up the pack and spread it between your hands. As you do, execute Bill Simon’s *Prophecy Move*. (My handling of this move is explained in the chapter on new moves). This cuts the pack, turns the single card face up, and places it next to its mate. Spread the pack face down on the table. Slide out the single face up card (the card originally placed to one side) and the card immediately below it.

Talk about the impossibility of it all. They chose which card to place aside (by which pile they chose to place the joker in). Without knowing what this card was, they stabbed it into the pack and happened to place it immediately above its mate.

**Leftovers.** If you do not like the Prophecy move, you can have the spectator cut the single card into the pack to find its mate. It matches the bottom card of the face up pile from which it was not removed. To give the spectator some feeling that he is doing the work, ask him to cut that pile in half. He is instructed to place the face down card on top of the packet he cut off. He can then complete the cut, placing the matching card on top of the face down card. He can then bury this face up half in the middle of the other face up half with a cut.

Turn the deck face down and spread it on the table. The card below the lone face up card is the mate to the face up card.

**Routine.** The trick is a strong one. It is logical throughout. The only thing it lacks is a decent presentation. The effect can be sold in different ways — depending upon the patter which accompanies. You could have set up the pack in the form of a prediction. You predicted where they would place the joker. Or, the joker, when placed at the location of their choice, caused all the other pairs to come together.

I am currently using a patter theme revolving around the historical chase between a man and a woman. *“First there was the cave and the club — Ah... (sigh...) men didn’t know when we had a good thing. Then came cruising in the ’57 Chevy convertible... which in my case*

was a '73 Ford Pinto. I don't know that 'cruising' was the right term. 'Pushing' would probably be more accurate.

Then came the sixties and *The Dating Game*. Somehow three men to one lady didn't seem like good odds. One man gets the woman... the other two get each other. Definitely not my idea of good odds.

Now we're in the nineties. We're talking *Love Connection*, matchmaking by computer, and even 976-DATE. Things are more modern, but I think it all goes back to one thing which attracts women. That's right... a sense of humor. I want to illustrate what I mean by using this deck of cards. The joker will represent a sense of humor." Spread the deck face up and remove the joker. This shows the pack to be "mixed."

"Start by cutting the pack into exactly two halves — to represent an equal number of men and women." They cut the deck as explained. "Sorry, you have three more women than men. We might as well go back to the *Dating Game*. Let me try." At this, you complete their cut and cut at 26 cards.

Now I would like you to add the joker, or the sense of humor, to either of the two groups. They do. You remove the top card from the half that gets the joker to make them even again. From here, deal through and demonstrate that the sense of humor brings the couples together. That is, directly after it in the deal, all the pairs match.

Finish off as explained above by having the lone card which was placed to one side reunited with the pack and locate its mate.

False Cuts. There are two tabled false cuts which can add to the apparent carelessness in handling the setup deck. These are logical extensions of a false cut explained in Al Koran's

### Professional Presentations.

Full Deck Falsie. From *Card Tricks From Mount Olympus*, table the pack in front of you. Undercut the bottom two thirds with your right hand and carry this packet to the far side of the mat, about 8 to 10 inches away. Drop half of this packet at that location and bring the remaining packet to a position between the other two. From you, the order is top, middle, bottom. Pick up the packet nearest you, place it on the middle packet. Take this combined packet and place it on the farthest packet. This reassembles the entire pack in its original condition.

Partial Falsie. This simulates a triple cut while actually completing a simple cut. Note that a simple cut is allowed with most versions of this trick. However, a triple cut would lose the setup.

Table the deck in front of you. With your right hand, lift the top third of the pack and drop it just in front of the original pack. With your left hand, take the next section of the original half, about a third of the pack, and place it on the far side of the packets now on the table.

From you to the spectators, the order of the packets is: bottom, top, middle. Pick up the original bottom portion and place it on top of the original top portion. Place these combined cards on top of the original middle packet. This has the effect of completing a simple cut.

Note that you could have cut the pack into fourths or fifths following the same sequence. However, this looks much too contrived to be of benefit.

Background. This was originally published in issue #38 of *The Trapdoor* as *Mating Season V*.

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*"Magic is in the mind of the spectator --- not in your fingers."*  
Bro. John Hamman, S.M. in *The Secrets of Brother John Hamman* (1989)

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## MATING SEASON III

*Steve Beam*

If you like the previous effect, what would you say if I told you that you could perform it with a borrowed, shuffled deck? Before continuing, take a moment to tackle the problem.

A deck is thoroughly shuffled by a spectator. There are no deck switches and there is nothing added or taken away. The cards are divided into two groups. The spectator takes a joker and places it in the middle of one of the groups. To make the piles even again, a card is removed from the half which now contains the joker.

Cards are dealt simultaneously from each pile. The pairs are dealt face up. None of the pairs match in color and value until you come to the joker. Starting with the joker, all remaining pairs match. The discarded card is brought back into play and it finds its mate as described in the last routine. Remember, the deck may be borrowed and legitimately shuffled.

The Work. This started as a problem with me also. I wanted a way to be able to do the exact same effect with a shuffled pack. There is one drawback — that the pack is destroyed in the process. After the deck is shuffled, ask for the spectator to cut off about a third of the pack. She can do so from the top, bottom, or middle. Take the (approximately) 17 cards and tear them in half as evenly as possible. Combine the packets so that all the torn middles face in the same direction. You are now automatically setup for the trick with these halves. The pack can be legitimately cut as desired and still retain the necessary order.

For example, if there are 17 cards cut off and given to you, you will tear them into 34. Before and after cutting, the top card will

match the 18th card (the top card of the lower half). The 2nd card matches the 19th, the 3rd card matches the 20th. This continues throughout the packet with the 17th card matching the bottom 34th) card.

Note. Okay, you are ticked at the fact that you had to tear a few cards. (I told you to use a borrowed deck, so what's the beef?) To keep from being accused of not sticking with the original problem, I said that the cards were "divided" into two piles. You can use the full deck by tearing them in three or four manageable groups.

In other words, after the shuffle, ask for a third of the pack. Tear these in half and table them separately. Ask for another third of the pack. Tear these and place them on top of the tabled packets — keeping them separate. Finally, tear the last third and place them on the tabled packets. You have two stacks of 52 cards. Turn them so the torn edges face the same way and combine the packets. The stack of 104 cards is now set up for the trick.

This number of cards is too cumbersome to work with. It also would take too long to deal through 52 pairs. Cutting the pack in thirds is the logical way to accomplish the same effect.

Back to Work. Now that you have the packet torn in halves and combined into one packet, execute a few false cuts as explained at the conclusion of the previous trick. You can use any cut or false shuffle as long as the result is no more damaging to the stack than a simple cut.

Cut the pack in the exact middle and turn the tabled halves so that the torn edges face each other. That is, if the cards were pushed together, they would form whole cards. Have the full size joker inserted into one of the

*STEVE BEAM'S SEMI-AUTOMATIC CARD TRICKS*

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halves. Remove the top card of the half which now contains the joker and place it to one side. Deal through the two packets, one pair at a time. None of the pairs above the joker match.

After the joker is dealt, all the remaining pairs match. Then, introduce the card placed aside earlier and have it locate its mate as explained in the previous routine.

## MATING SEASON IV

Steve Beam

This version, which will require some work to execute confidently, is a killer trick. It is so bold and happens so quickly, that it is almost impossible to follow. No joker is used.

**Effect.** The magician cuts the pack in two halves. "Are you feeling lucky? Give me a number between 1 and 26." Assume they call 14. The magician quickly deals a card from both halves simultaneously. This dealing of pairs is repeated down through the pack. None of the pairs match until the 14th pair is reached.

After this effect sinks in, "Let me show you what happens when a magician is lucky with cards." The magician picks up the two face up halves and taps them together. The face card of one changes to match the face card of the other.

Immediately the two halves are dealt out again. This time, all the pairs match. "Did I mention ... that magicians cheat?" This is a stunning effect which takes less than a minute to execute.

**The Work.** As the method closely resembles earlier methods, I will not spend a lot

of space explaining it. Start with the pack set up as before. Top card matches the 27th, second card matches the 28th, third matches the 29th, etc.

The pack is false shuffled and cut. For this method, I do the splitting of the pack in the hands. Hold the pack face up. Cut the pack between the 26th and 27th card. You can be sure you get it right by looking for the card which matches the card on the bottom (face) of the pack. Now allow one more card to riffle off the top half onto the lower half. Split the pack at that point.

Your right hand takes the top 25 cards face down in dealing position while your left hand retains the lower 27 face down in dealing position.

Rotate both hands palm down as you thumb off the top card of each half face up onto the table. See **figure 1**. The cards will not match. This deal should be done with an inward sweeping motion of both hands and the cards should land on the table with a bit of a thud. Of course, this thud is provided by the sound of your fingertips hitting the table through the cards.

Rotate the hands palm up so that you can see the cards just dealt. Immediately repeat the deal, two more cards, and another thud. Back and forth the hands will go, each time revealing a new, different pair.

When you are ready for the cards to match on the number they chose, emulate the exact same sweeping motion as you turn the hands palm down. Only this time, the right hand does not release a card. The left hand releases its top card and then the hands rotate palm up again. Note that both hands make the thud noise again. The fact that the right hand does come into contact with the right packet

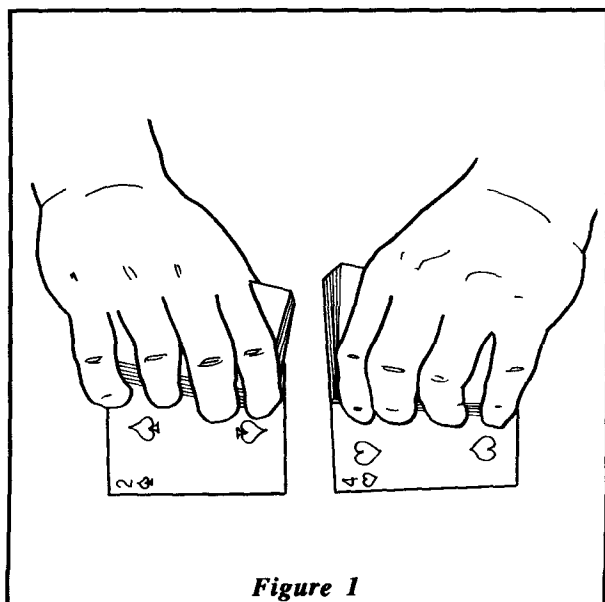


Figure 1

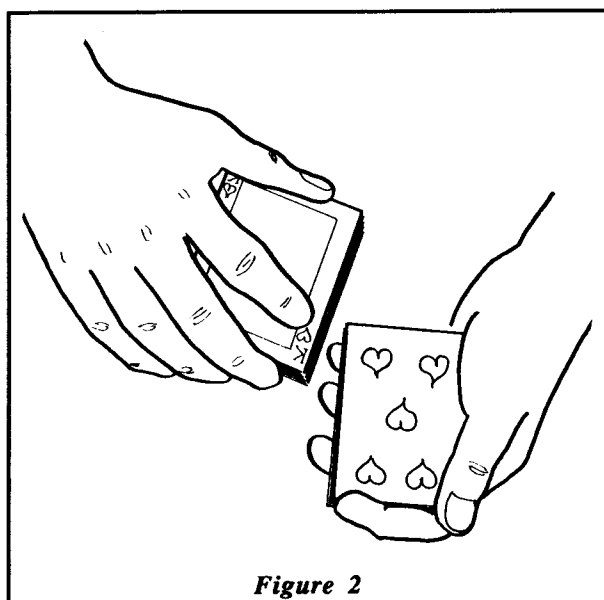


Figure 2

will cause the top card of the packet to move slightly. They will assume this is the card being dealt as it settles during the deal.

I know this may seem bold to many of you. However, the audience is dividing their attention between two cards all the way through the pack. Since the pairs are dealt in succession without a lot of time in between, there is no way they can memorize the cards as they fall. Then, when you wish to have the cards match, your actions imitate perfectly the previous actions when you dealt two cards.

If you felt that was bold, wait until you read what follows. Drop the piles remaining in your hands face up on top of their respective face up piles on the table. Some of the people in the audience may notice that the face cards of each half don't match even without your mentioning it (which you do not do.)

Pick up both halves and hold the left packet face up in dealing position. The right half is held from above in the right hand. See **figure 2**. Obtain a left little finger break above the card on the face of the left half. (See Harvey Rosenthal's *Pop-Up Move* from issue #34 of **The Trapdoor**.)

You are now going to execute a color change. You can simply tap the back of the right half to the face of the left, picking up the card above the break with the right thumb. Give the packets a little rubbing motion before separating them. The face of both halves now match.

Regardless of the change you use, allow the spectators a moment to appreciate it. Then, flip the halves face down and hold them in dealing position. Start dealing through both halves by pairs as before but as fast as you can. All the cards match. This is a stunning climax and there is nothing to clean up when you are finished.

Leftovers. You may think that the climax tends to expose the method of the first matching. Based upon my experience with the trick, I would contend exactly the opposite.

In the example above, the number fourteen was chosen. That means that you deal through and show that the first thirteen pairs, or 26 cards — one half the pack, do not match. This is what makes the final climax so strong. The climax does not expose the first effect. The first effect makes the climax impossible.

Finally, if you reassemble the pack, the trick is ready to repeat. The deck resets into its original order.

## CUTTING MATCH

*Steve Beam*

This a great opener for a two deck trick. In effect, a spectator is asked to cut two borrowed and shuffled packs. He cuts both packs between the same two cards. For example, he cuts both packs between the four of hearts and the two of diamonds.

**The Work.** Borrow two decks, one red and one blue. They can be shuffled if desired. Spread through the red deck. When you come to the jokers, upjog them and remove them. Note the top and bottom card of the pack. Assume the top card is the two of diamonds and the bottom card is the four of hearts. Remove the jokers and place them on the table in a position to form a "t" formation as shown in **figure 1**. Table the red deck.

Pick up the blue deck. Spread through the cards from the back to the front. You are looking for either of the two cards you have just noted. You are going to cull them into positions exactly the opposite of the other pack. In other words, you want the two of diamonds on the bottom of this pack and the four of hearts on top.

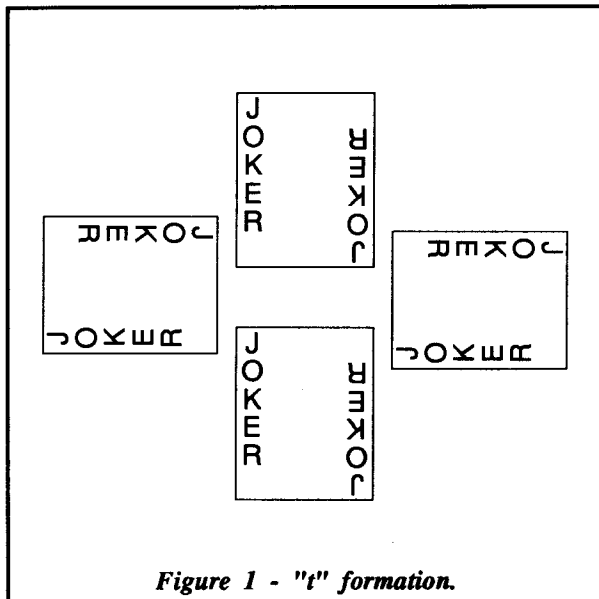


Figure 1 - "t" formation.

There are two possible scenarios. The best possible scenario is that you will come to the two of diamonds first. We will deal with that option in this paragraph. When you come to the two, separate the spread to the right of the two. Place the left hand's cards (with the deuce on the face) face down on the table. This sends it to the bottom of the pile you will assemble. Continue spreading the cards in your hands from back to front until you come to the four of hearts. Cut the pack to the *left* of the four. Table the left hand's cards on top of the packet already there. Finally, place the remaining cards on top of the tabled packet. This completes the deck and sends the four of hearts to the top. Place the red pack on the table edge near you and to your left. This cull is done under cover of removing the jokers from the second pack.

The other possible scenario is that you will come to the four before the two. If that happens, simply cut the deck a few card to the right of the four. Place the left hand's cards on the face of the right hand's cards without tabling anything. Continue spreading through the cards until you come to the deuce. Proceed as you would with the cull already described. Remember to remove the jokers. Place the blue pack on the table edge near you and to your right.

Note that by using the cards which happen to be at the top and bottom of the red deck you don't have to cull cards in the first pack. If you like puns, as you place the jokers on the table, "*I'll discard 'dis' card.*" (Keep reading, the puns get worse.)

Lay the blue jokers on the table, completing the "t" formation shown in **figure 1**. "*They make a nice display --- But enough of 'dis' playing around.*" (I warned you.) Discard the jokers as you deliver this last line.

Ask for the assistance of two spectators. Ask the first spectator to cut the red pack. Point to a location for him to deposit the top half of the red pack about a foot directly in front of where the red pack currently resides. Ask the second spectator to cut the blue pack. Point to a location for him to deposit the top half of the blue pack about a foot directly in front of where the blue pack currently resides.

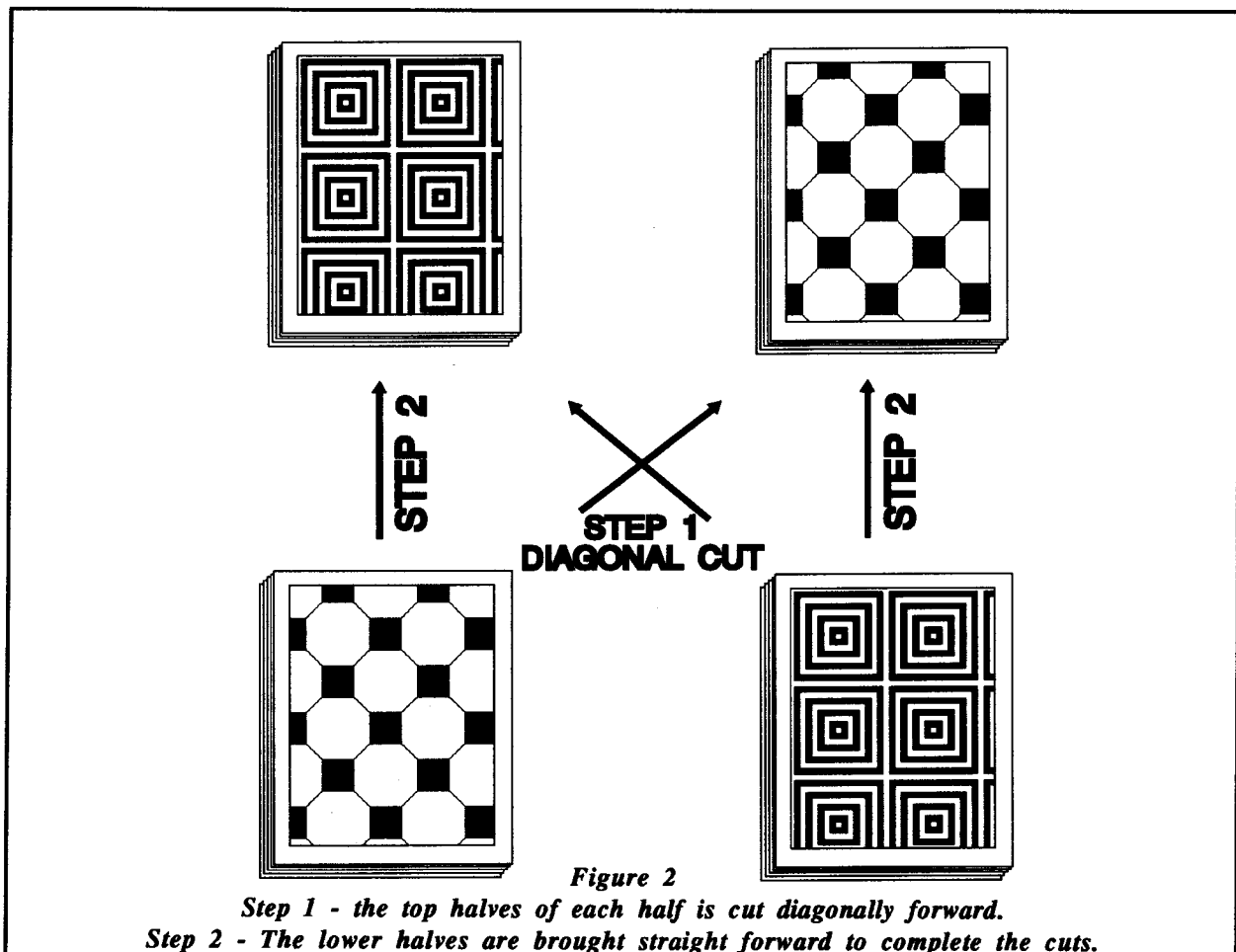
*"Now I would like you to mark the place where you cut. Would you place your half on top of his half and would you place your half on top of his half."* With this patter, you direct the first spectator to place the original bottom of the red half on top of the original top of the blue half. Direct the second spectator to place the original bottom half of the blue deck on top of the original top half of the red deck. See figure 2 for a visual summary of this action.

*"Let me explain what has just happened.*

*You both had a free choice where you cut your packs. You could have cut as deep or as shallow as you wished. However, you each happen to cut your respective packs at a location controlled completely by you. We marked the locations where you cut by combining the different colored packs."* As this last paragraph is delivered, spread one of the packs from left to right on the close up mat. Spread the other pack from right to left on the close up mat.

Dramatically remove the two pairs of cards which fall where the two different colored packs meet in the middle of the pack. *"Wouldn't it be amazing if you both cut your pack at the ... four of hearts... and the two of diamonds."* At this point, reveal that the cards of each pair match each other.

Background. This was originally published in Magic The Vanishing Art or How To Turn A Trick For Fun and Profit (1979).



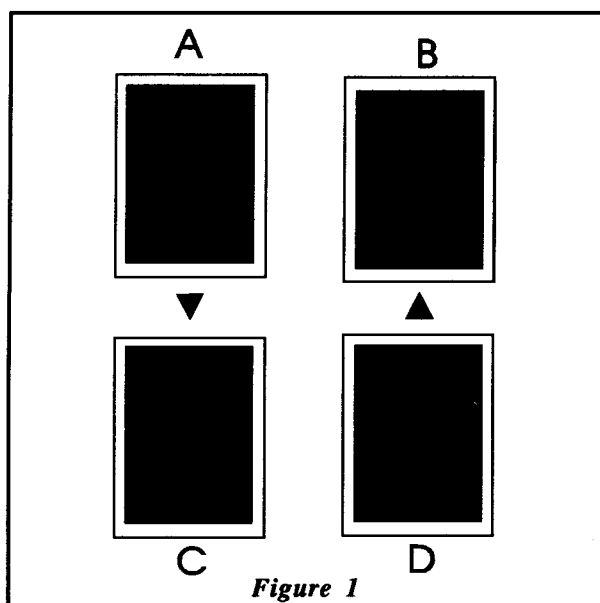
## FORTE

Wayne Kyzer

**Effect.** This is a quick four way coincidence. Despite the fact that the spectator seems to control the events, he produces four of a kind.

**The Work.** Start with two fours on top of the pack, one 18th from the top, and one 19th from the top. False shuffle the pack and hand it to the spectator. Tell him you will turn your back. He is to deal cards to the table one at a time. He can deal up to a dozen cards (ostensibly to save time). He deals his pile to position "A" in **figure 1**.

Ask him to hand you the pack behind your back. Tell him that without looking at the packet he dealt, you will attempt to remove the same number of cards he did. Actually, you



will simply reverse count (deal from one hand to another while reversing the order) the top seventeen cards. Place the 17 cards at position "D." The remaining cards go at position "B." If the spectator chooses to count along, he will realize that you have messed up.

You are now going to ask the spectator to deal cards from the packet tabled at "A" to

position "C." You will simultaneously deal cards from the seventeen cards at position "D" to the talon (balance of the pack) located at position "B." You deal a card for every card he deals. Ask him to turn his last card face up and leave it in position "A." You point to designate "A" rather than referring to the location by a letter of the alphabet. When he turns his last card face up, you will have cards remaining. Turn the card which coincides with his last card face up and drop it on top of the pile at "D."

*"Well, I didn't get the number right. But we both have fours."* Act as if this coincidence is an effort on your part to salvage a trick which has gone sour. *"Maybe this was more than a coincidence."* Turn over the top card of the packet at position "B" and replace it face up exposing another four. Finally, turn over the top card at position "C" revealing the fourth four.

**Leftovers.** When you count the seventeen cards, you should do it with a varying rhythm. If it appears that you are simply trying to count seventeen cards, it will appear too mathematical. One by one, I run three cards, then four, then two, etc.

If you wish to enable the spectator to deal off more cards at the beginning, you need to move the fours to positions deeper in the pack. For example, if you move them to the 25th and 26th positions, he can deal off up to 24 cards. Then when you take the pack behind your pack, you will have to reverse count 24 cards (25-1). You need to make a trade-off. How much flexibility would you like the spectator to have versus how much dealing you wish you and the spectator to do.

There are additional opportunities for humor here as you place your seventeen cards

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beside the spectator's pile on the table. If your pile is substantially greater in number than his, the spectator will anxiously await your inevitable demise.

Background. This uses the standard reverse count principle. The key is matching your card with his number of cards. The rest is window dressing to produce four of a kind.

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*"People who can't sing, dance, play a musical instrument or do anything else to entertain, think they can do magic . . . The tragic thing is that a lot of people feel they can buy ability, but even the simplest trick requires a great deal of practice, experience, and showmanship."*

*--- Dai Vernon in The Vernon Chronicles, Volume 4 (1992 L&L Publishing)*

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## OPEN AND SHUT

*Wayne Kyzer*

This is another four way coincidence utilizing two predictions, one open and the other secret. It is important to work with presentation on this one to ensure it does not look like pure mathematics.

The Work. Start by secretly getting two aces to the bottom of the pack and one to the top. The other ace is somewhere in the middle of the pack. Note that you can perform a convincing riffle shuffle here retaining the top and two bottom cards.

State that you will make two predictions, one open and the other closed. The first prediction will be a number that you will write on a card. With the faces of the pack toward you, spread through the pack from the face. Spread the cards from your left hand to your right. Start counting with the first card past the two aces on the face. Count cards one at a time. Somewhere between the number ten and twenty, you want to locate a card with a lot of white space on it. If you come to the ace that is in the middle of the pack, ignore it and do not include it in your count. Any low value card will do nicely. Assume you reach the two of diamonds as you count fifteen. Spread the cards a little bit at that point so that you can write the number 15 on the face of the two. Square the pack leaving the deuce in the middle.

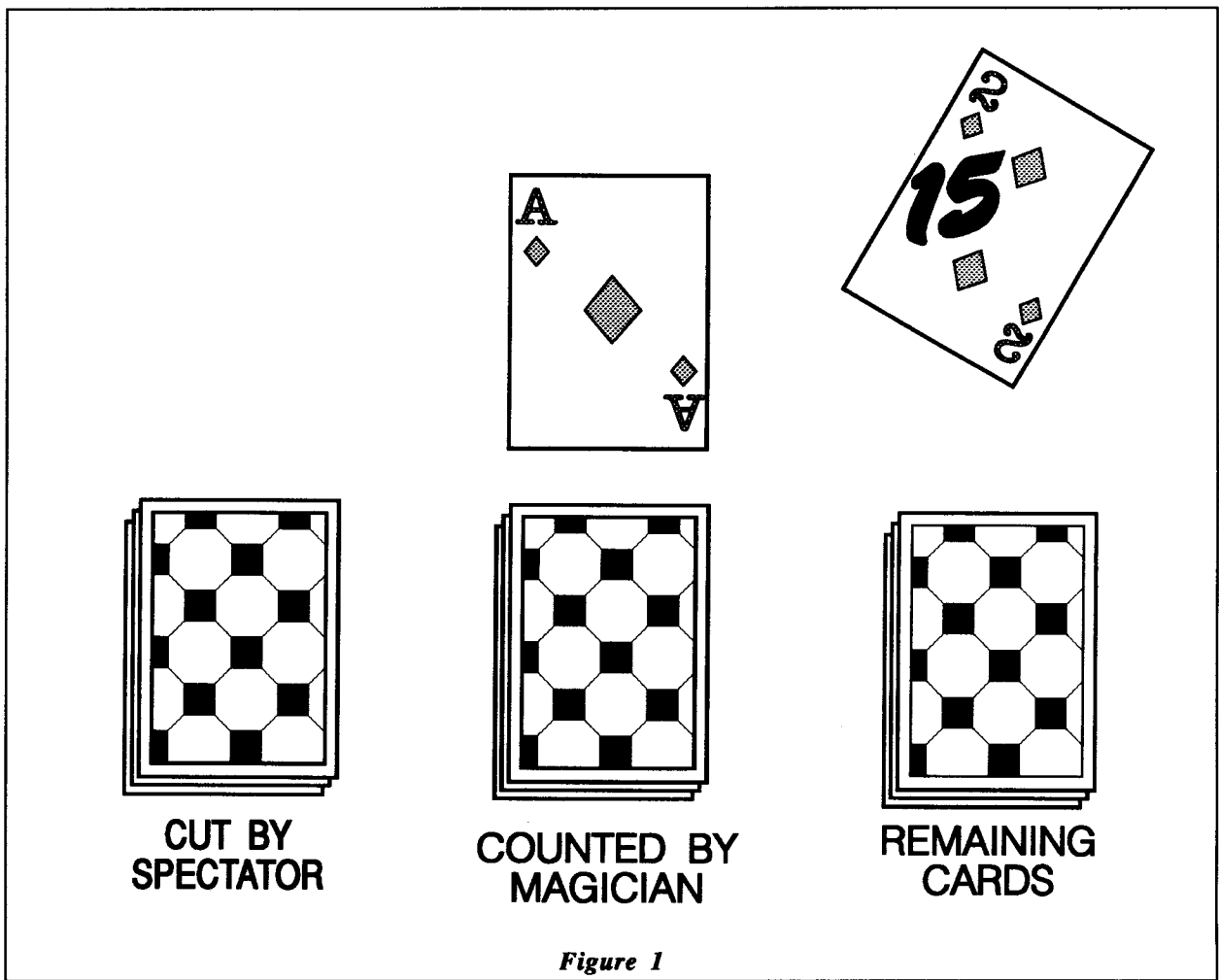
*"I have made a closed prediction, now it is time for an open prediction."* Spread through the pack and remove the ace from the middle. Table it face up toward the spectator without disturbing the order of the rest of the cards.

Hand the pack to the spectator and ask that he cut off any number of cards to the table. It doesn't matter how many cards he cuts as long as it's less than half the pack. Note that the top card of the packet he cuts is an ace.

Take the rest of the deck after the cut. *"There is no way I could have known how many cards you would cut to the table when I wrote my prediction earlier. Is that correct?"* As you deliver this line, spread through the cards with the faces toward you. Split the pack above the card you wrote on, the two of diamonds. Deal off the deuce face up with your left hand and place the right hand's cards behind (under) the left hand's. In other words, you have cut the pack and sent one of the aces, the one which was on top, to a position from the top (back) of the pack equal to the number you predicted, 15. Turn the pack face down.

*"Of course it is correct. That is why I didn't predict how many cards you would cut off."* The magician points to the spectator's pile. *"Instead, I predicted how many cards I would deal here."* The magician deals fifteen cards while the spectators realize that they have been duped. The fifteenth card is a ace but do not reveal it yet. Drop the remaining cards to the right of the pile you just dealt. The layout of the piles is shown in **figure 1** on the next page. *"While you may think this is just a joke, I really did make a prediction. I couldn't have known how many cards I would have to deal after you removed a group from the top to arrive at a matching ace."* Turn over the top card of the fifteen card pile you just dealt to reveal the second ace. This should be appreciated since they don't realize you cut the pack as you removed the prediction card.

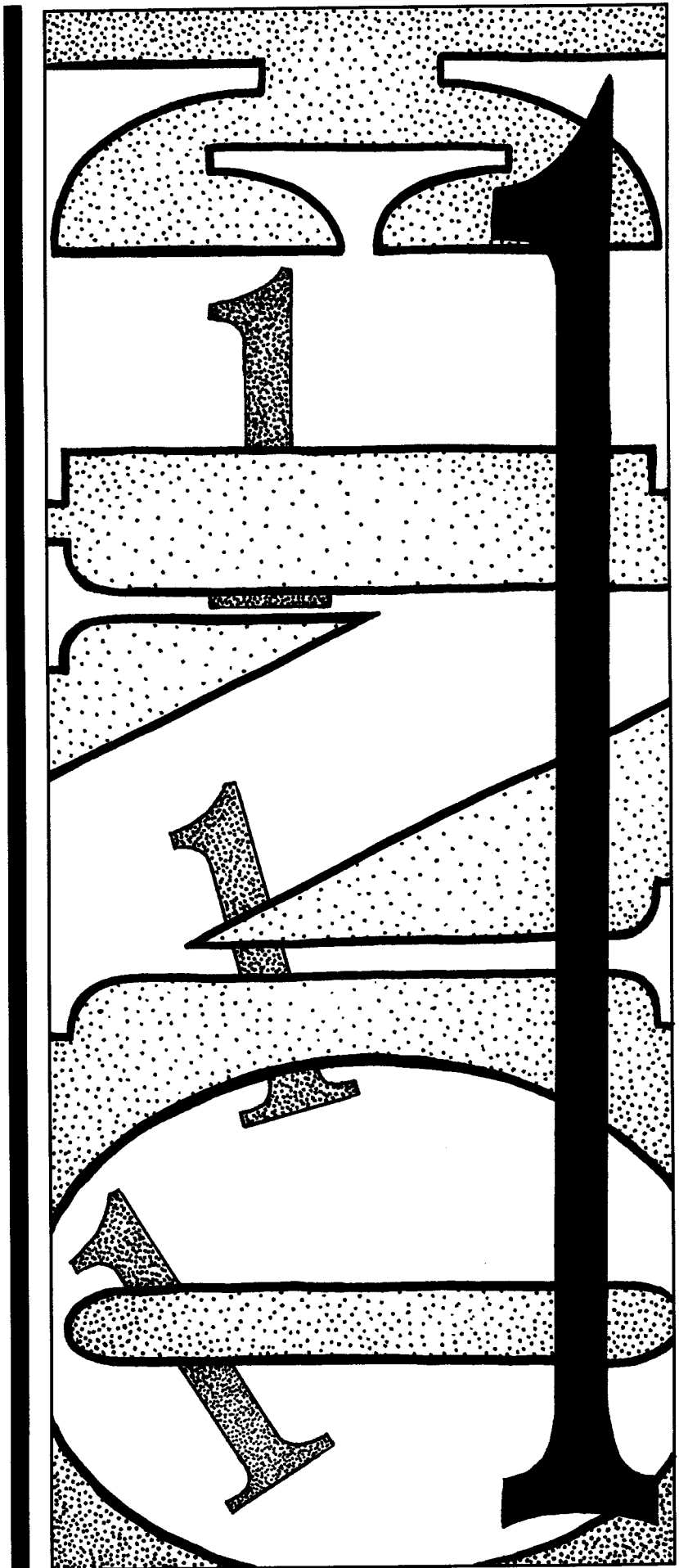
This is enough of an effect to stand on its own, but you are not finished yet. Turn over the aces on top of each of the other packets for the climax. This is a mystifying revelation of the four aces.



*"A diplomat and a stage magician are the two professions that have to have a high silk hat. All the tricks that either one of them have are in the hat, and are all known to other diplomats and magicians."*

**Will Rogers**

*Singularities*



## MATHEMATICAL CARD TRICK

*Steve Beam*

The title of this effect will probably be enough to scare away potential readers. It conjures up images of the worst possible card trickster, the part-time party conjuror. He introduces the pack of playing cards, much to the surprise and terror of the party hosts. He then proceeds to leap into dozens of tricks, each consisting of enough counting and dealing to significantly lengthen the evening.

However, the effect you are about to read is one of my longstanding favorites. It can be performed in front of moderately large groups because the emphasis is on the presentation.

**Effect.** The magician has a card selected and returned to the pack which is then tabled. *"I am the magician. My job, should I choose to accept it, is to locate your card. That is, I must determine how far down, from the top of the deck, your card is located. Toward that end, I have spared all expense in purchasing this alphanumeric pocket computer... from the K-Mart alphanumeric pocket computer division. The magician removes a device which is an average, everyday pocket calculator.*

*"The term 'alphanumeric' means that this device will accept both numbers and letters of the alphabet. I am going to ask you some questions and program in your answers. The answers to the questions will be fed into the computer. The resulting number will give me the location of your card."*

The magician addresses the man who selected the card. *"Do you mind if I ask you a few questions?"* The spectator says that he doesn't. *Do you realize that I've already asked you two?* Regardless what the spectator answers, the magician continues. *"Sir, what is your name? John? Okay John. Let's see. That's J-O-H.....N."* The magician punches one key

for each letter of John's name until the last. This is done slowly and deliberately and he announces each letter as he keys it. He then presses eight to twelve keys before announcing the last letter.

*"Well, John --- if that is your real name, how old are you? Thirty-five? Okay. L-I-A-R."* As the magician spells "liar," he presses one key for each letter.

*"Okay John, what is your wife's name? Oh, you don't have a wife? Okay, E-U-N-U-C-H. I believe we have enough information now."* The magician punches one key for each letter in the word "eunuch."

*"I will now punch in the control keys to start the program running. Now if you sir will press the 'equals' key, we will arrive at our answer which will tell us the location of your card. Please press the key and loudly read the number which appears in the display."*

The spectator calls out the number 14.75. The magician is obviously in a predicament. *"Look, don't let that eunuch crack spoil the trick. Please call out the number in the display."* Again the spectator calls out the number 14.75.

Addressing the audience, *"Folks, remember a moment ago when John here lied about his age? It wouldn't be too much of a stretch of the imagination to think that he's up to his old tricks again."* The magician looks at the display to see for himself and then addresses the spectator. *"Gee, I'm sorry John. It does say 14.75. That's fourteen and three quarters. You can understand my confusion. After all, you haven't been totally truthful with us to date. Well, let me see how I'm going to get out of this one."*

Picking up the deck, *"Well, let's see. The fourteen part is easy."* At this, he deals

fourteen cards to the table. "That takes care of the fourteen. Let's see, three quarters." Suddenly, as if he has had a great idea, he reaches into his pocket and fishes for some change. Finally, he removes three quarters and drops them one by one to the table. Triumphantly he exclaims, "*I believe that takes care of the three quarters. Now John, what was the name of your card?*" John tells him the name of the card and the magician turns over the new top card of the pack. It is John's selection. As the magician takes his bows, "*I thank you, the cards thank you, and the liar John thanks you.*"

Editorial. There is very little method to this trick. It is mostly effect. Start with three quarters in your pants pocket and a pocket calculator. Have the deck shuffled and a card selected, returned and controlled to the fifteenth position from the top of the pack. Pick up the calculator and start with the lines.

I cannot explain why all the lines are funny. You will just have to trust me, they are. I cannot explain why the audience laughs when I press all the keys for the last letter of the spectator's name, they just do.

When you ask the spectator's age, typing in "L-I-A-R" gets a laugh. Again, women are famous for lying about their age. Men are not. So, once again, I don't know why this gets a laugh but it does.

When you move to the third question, you have to be careful. First, there are two possible answers since he may or may not have a wife. Second, you do not want to offend him with your response.

To deal with the first problem, if he says he does not have a wife, I immediately input the above answer. However, if he provides me with his wife's name, I cleanly type in her name. I do not make fun of the gentleman's wife's name. Then I follow his response by asking for his girlfriend's name. I don't give him time to answer since he may be quick enough to provide me with a name. I state (loud enough to drown out any possible answer he may have) "*Oh, you don't have one? E-U-N-U-*

*C-H.*" He is in a no-win situation.

To keep from offending the spectator there are several things which come into play. First, I choose my volunteers carefully. There is an art to it which you will hone after years of choosing the wrong volunteer. Second, I choose my audiences carefully. I would not perform this at a bikers' convention where someone might seriously believe I am questioning his manhood. Third, I am not calling him anything directly to his face. This is a subtle point. I am typing his answers into the computer, apparently oblivious to the fact that he can hear what I am saying in the process. In other words, looking him in the face and telling him he is a liar or a eunuch would be confrontational. Telling it to a machine is not. Fourth, I do not use this as an opener. Instead, I use it after the audience has gotten to know me and know that I am not to be taken seriously. They may even like me. At that point in the show, it is unlikely anyone will be offended by something I might say. Fifth, and finally, if there is any doubt, do not use the trick. This applies to all of your material. If there is any chance that a reasonable person may be offended (as opposed to a politically correct history revisionist) eliminate the trick. It is just not worth it.

I have experimented with the lines I use for the third input sequence for the last twenty years. I like this routine since it **always** plays well. I like to include it in my presentation whenever possible. During my experimentation, I have tried other lines. This has led to some less offensive alternatives I will give you here.

If the spectator is not married, you could immediately type in "H-A-P-P-Y." If he states he is married, I type in his wife's name. Then I ask for his girlfriend's name. This question usually gets a laugh by itself. Then I pause for his response. If he says he doesn't have one, I type in "W-H-I-P-P-E-D." If he gives me a name, I type in "S-T-U-D."

The Work. Control the selection to the fifteenth position from the top of the pack.

## SINGULARITIES

You can do this by counting fourteen cards as you spread the pack for a selection. Split the pack beneath the fourteenth card for him to replace his selection. This sends his selection to the fifteenth position.

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Deal down to the whole number the spectator calls out. To pick up the fraction, remove three quarters from your pocket and drop them on the table. Finish by revealing the selection which is now on top of the pack.

Leftovers. This is a piece from my professional repertoire. Many things must come together for a successful result. Do not be fooled by its simplicity into believing that it doesn't merit practice to perfect.

Background. I originated this routine while still in high school. I believed this was subconsciously inspired by Milton Kort's (Detroit, Michigan) marketed effect, *MIKO*. In this effect, the spectator divides the value of the card he is holding by two. He is told the result will match the card the magician is now holding. Since the spectator is holding the seven of clubs, the magician has apparently made a mistake. However, upon turning over the card he is holding, the magician shows the three-and-

a-half of clubs.

A closer ancestor to my routine can be found in J.G. Thompson's The Living End. It is Richard Himber's *Try This For Size*. In this effect, the spectator's selection is controlled to the fifteenth position from the top of the pack. After the card is returned, the magician "secretly" (the author doesn't say how) tears off the corner of the card above the selection, the fourteenth card from the top. After using a half dollar as a crystal ball, he is able to divine the location of the selection, 14 and 3/4ths cards down.

Mr. Himber's effect can be improved and combined with my routine by tearing off a quarter of the fifteenth card before the trick. Hold the deck so that the torn corner is nearest the magician. After having a card selected from below the torn card, you can use the torn card as a short card. That is, while the spectator is looking at his card, riffle up the edge of pack which is missing the corner. There will be a discernible snap when you reach the torn card. Use your right thumb to pick up this single card along with all the cards above it and have the selection replaced on the lower half. Place the upper half on the lower, controlling the selection to the sixteenth position.

Go through the calculator mechanics, arriving at the number 14.75. Deal down fourteen cards. Pause for effect since this is supposed to be the hard part, the problem. Proudly lift up the torn card so that all can see it is only three fourths of a card. Ask for the name of the selection and turn over the next card.

Also, not having the selection included in the location improves the presentation. In other words, in Mr. Himber's original, the selection is included in the number 14.75. (There are 13.75 cards above it.) I prefer having the 14.75 cards above the selection. Then, the next card is the selection. It allows you to take a "presentational pause" after the torn card gag and before the revelation of the selection.

*The Mathematical Card Trick* was origi-

fourteen cards to the table. "That takes care of the fourteen. Let's see, three quarters." Suddenly, as if he has had a great idea, he reaches into his pocket and fishes for some change. Finally, he removes three quarters and drops them one by one to the table. Triumphantly he exclaims, "*I believe that takes care of the three quarters. Now John, what was the name of your card?*" John tells him the name of the card and the magician turns over the new top card of the pack. It is John's selection. As the magician takes his bows, "*I thank you, the cards thank you, and the liar John thanks you.*"

Editorial. There is very little method to this trick. It is mostly effect. Start with three quarters in your pants pocket and a pocket calculator. Have the deck shuffled and a card selected, returned and controlled to the fifteenth position from the top of the pack. Pick up the calculator and start with the lines.

I cannot explain why all the lines are funny. You will just have to trust me, they are. I cannot explain why the audience laughs when I press all the keys for the last letter of the spectator's name, they just do.

When you ask the spectator's age, typing in "L-I-A-R" gets a laugh. Again, women are famous for lying about their age. Men are not. So, once again, I don't know why this gets a laugh but it does.

When you move to the third question, you have to be careful. First, there are two possible answers since he may or may not have a wife. Second, you do not want to offend him with your response.

To deal with the first problem, if he says he does not have a wife, I immediately input the above answer. However, if he provides me with his wife's name, I cleanly type in her name. I do not make fun of the gentleman's wife's name. Then I follow his response by asking for his girlfriend's name. I don't give him time to answer since he may be quick enough to provide me with a name. I state (loud enough to drown out any possible answer he may have) "*Oh, you don't have one? E-U-N-U-*

*C-H.*" He is in a no-win situation.

To keep from offending the spectator there are several things which come into play. First, I choose my volunteers carefully. There is an art to it which you will hone after years of choosing the wrong volunteer. Second, I choose my audiences carefully. I would not perform this at a bikers' convention where someone might seriously believe I am questioning his manhood. Third, I am not calling him anything directly to his face. This is a subtle point. I am typing his answers into the computer, apparently oblivious to the fact that he can hear what I am saying in the process. In other words, looking him in the face and telling him he is a liar or a eunuch would be confrontational. Telling it to a machine is not. Fourth, I do not use this as an opener. Instead, I use it after the audience has gotten to know me and know that I am not to be taken seriously. They may even like me. At that point in the show, it is unlikely anyone will be offended by something I might say. Fifth, and finally, if there is any doubt, do not use the trick. This applies to all of your material. If there is any chance that a reasonable person may be offended (as opposed to a politically correct history revisionist) eliminate the trick. It is just not worth it.

I have experimented with the lines I use for the third input sequence for the last twenty years. I like this routine since it **always** plays well. I like to include it in my presentation whenever possible. During my experimentation, I have tried other lines. This has led to some less offensive alternatives I will give you here.

If the spectator is not married, you could immediately type in "H-A-P-P-Y." If he states he is married, I type in his wife's name. Then I ask for his girlfriend's name. This question usually gets a laugh by itself. Then I pause for his response. If he says he doesn't have one, I type in "W-H-I-P-P-E-D." If he gives me a name, I type in "S-T-U-D."

The Work. Control the selection to the fifteenth position from the top of the pack.

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nally published in 1979 in Magic The Vanishing Art or How to Turn a Trick For Fun and Profit. In the original, the calculator ended with the number 14.375. *"That's what? About 14 and 3/8ths. No, that's exactly 14 and 3/8ths."* After dealing fourteen cards face down, I would pause. Then I dramatically (maybe even "cockily") dealt three eights face up one at a time. *"And what was the name of your card?"* Pausing for a moment for dramatic effect, I would then turn over the next card. On my better nights, that turned out to be the selection.

Later, I decided that the fraction .375 was a little esoteric so I changed it to something the audience could easily convert, .75 ( three fourths). I would then deal down fourteen cards, followed by three fours ("fourths") and then reveal the selection.

Then I crossed over into using coins. "14.5" became "fourteen and a half." After dealing fourteen cards, there would be a half dollar on top of the deck. Later, "14.75" became "fourteen and three quarters." After the fourteenth card, there would be three quarters on top of the next card. This became too cumbersome to load easily, even though I glued the three coins together.

Finally, just last year, Wayne Kyzer suggested that I just reach in my pocket at appropriate time and remove the three quarters. I have found that this gives the appearance of the magician thinking quickly and bailing himself out at the last moment. Since it now appears completely extemporaneous, both the humor, the drama, and the response are heightened.

## BOXER SHORTS

*Richard Bartram*

For a trick to be a good opener for me, it must be quick, visual, and if possible, humorous. The first trick sets the tone for what is to come. It should also leave the magician with an ordinary deck of playing cards --- preferably set up for a killer effect. This effect meets all of these criteria.

**Effect.** The magician removes a case full of playing cards. as soon as the cards are removed from the box, the box disappears.

**The Work.** This requires about two minutes worth of advance preparation. You are going to construct a gimmicked card case. Cut the card box so that only the flap, half the back, and half of one side remain. The resulting gimmick is shown in **figure 1**.

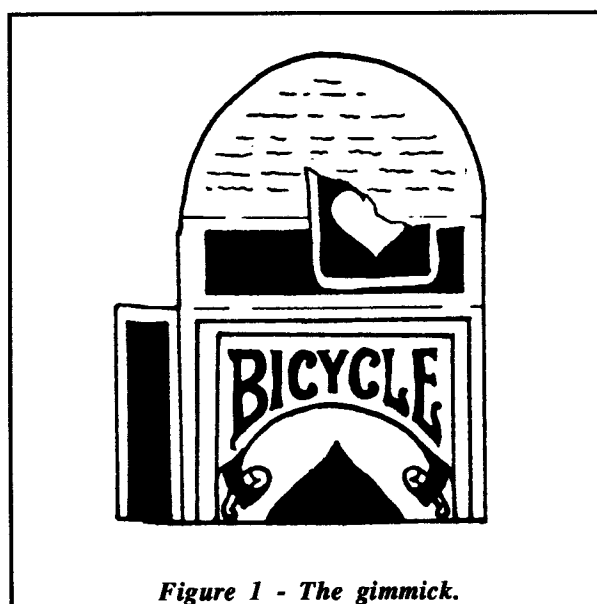
Place the gimmick on the table with the printed side down. Turn the deck face down and place the deck "into" the shell formed by what is left of the case. Tuck the flap in underneath the top card. While this last detail isn't necessary, it helps with the illusion. The sound of removing the flap from under this card perfectly emulates the noise made by the flap being opened on a case.

Without disturbing this setup, pick up the case and its contents and place it into the dealing position in the left hand. Now let's alter the hold a little to capitalize on the remaining sides of the box. Curl the left little finger underneath the box. Slide the box forward so as to expose as much of the remaining narrow side of the case. Finally, the left thumb rests along the left side of the deck. This covers the fact that the case is missing on that side. See **figure 2** to make the left hand's position clear.

From this point, it is a simple matter to get into the starting position. Simply rotate the hand palm down. This is the starting position. Note that you can place this setup in your left

coat pocket and remove it set for performance. In this manner, you have a very clean opening for your card effects, even if you would like to start the close-up act with something other than cards.

Make your opening comments as you show them as much of the case as you can. Now



*Figure 1 - The gimmick.*

turn your left hand so that its palm faces you. Use your right thumb to open the flap on the case. Note the sound made as the flap is pulled from underneath the top card of the pack.

Use your right hand to rotate the flap all the way up and over the pack and down onto the back. You will have to move your left forefinger out of the way for a moment so that the flap can come to rest flat against the gimmick. You are apparently moving the flap out of your way so that you can remove the cards from the case.

During this, the back of the left hand has been toward the audience and the deck has been held vertically. As soon as the flap is out of the way, your right hand grasps the deck from above with the thumb at the near end and the

fingers at far end. Lower the deck so that the back of the cards are exposed. The right hand takes control of the cards and gimmick for just a moment as it lifts the whole setup and moves it toward the heel of the left hand.

As soon as the gimmick is directly above the left second, third, and fourth fingers, the left hand takes possession of the cards again. Finally, the right hand slides the cards only back up toward the left thumb and forefinger. It

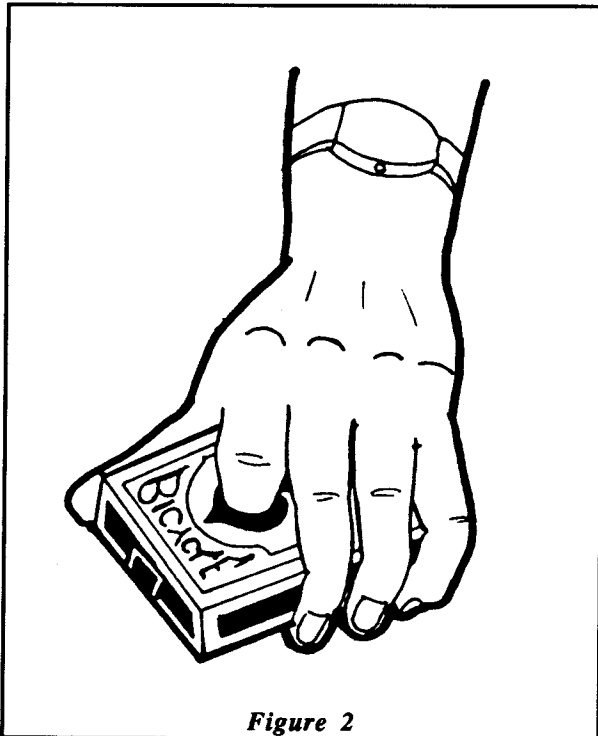


Figure 2

stops pushing forward when the right thumb contacts the rear edge of the gimmick underneath the deck. While this action takes about a

second and passes for squaring the cards, the real purpose is to reposition the gimmick so that it is held near the heel of the hand between the three lower fingers.

Immediately, spread the cards from the left hand to the right showing the box has vanished. As soon as you have spread about a third of the cards, split the spread at that point. Pivot both hands palm down to show both sides of the hands. The gimmick is covered by the left fingers. There isn't much heat here since they are looking for something the size of a card box. The folded gimmick is slightly larger than half a playing card.

Place the hands together and continue spreading. When about half the cards have been spread, split the spread and show both sides of both hands again. Replace the right hand's cards on the left. At this point you can proceed into any card routine using an ordinary pack of playing cards. It is a simple matter to go south with the gimmick which is hidden in your left hand while removing something needed for the next trick from the pocket.

Background. There are numerous vanishing card cases throughout magic literature. Most are performed as a trick --- with the performer deliberately causing the case to vanish. This vanish is done on the offbeat --- apparently without the magician being aware of what would happen. This was originally published in issue #26 of **The Trapdoor**.

## ODD MAN OUT

*Steve Beam*

This self-working trick is very puzzling and hard to reconstruct. Think about the effect to see what solutions you can develop before reading how it is accomplished.

**Effect.** The spectator cuts the deck and removes five cards from the location where he cut. These five random cards are shuffled by the spectator. He then selects one and cuts it into the deck. The magician weighs the remaining cards without looking at them. He cuts the pack, apparently basing the cut upon the weight of the four cards. For the first time, the cards are turned face up. The magician deals down to the total of the four values. The last card dealt is the mentally chosen card. In order to have known where to cut the cards, the magician would have had to have known where the selection was which the spectator cut into the pack and the total of the values of the four remaining cards.

**Set-up.** Start with any ace, three, five, seven, and nine on top of the deck. The suits and the order of the cards do not matter but I prefer to mix the colors and the order. This adds an air of innocence to the five cards (diffusing suspicion from the fact that they represent the odd values beneath the number ten). Crimp the sixteenth card from the face of the deck. (I use a breather crimp.) You can use any crimp which will allow you to cut under the crimp.

**The Work.** To begin with, you will force the five top cards of the pack. I use a force reminiscent of Henry Christ's cut deeper force. It was published without fanfare in Richard Kaufman's Secrets of Brother John Hamman. You will find it within the description of *The Magic Cards* on page 99. Hold the deck in your left hand. Ask a spectator to cut off the top half of the deck. "*Mark where you cut by turning your half face up and replacing it on*

*the lower half.*" They replace their half face up on top of the lower face down half.

Turn your left hand palm down as you move it to the table to spread the cards in a ribbon spread. Spread the deck on the table. Push the face up cards away and draw the top five face down cards singly off the remainder of the spread. Push them toward the spectator. Ask that the spectator mix the five cards he holds.

Reassemble the pack by flipping the face up cards face down and placing them beneath the remainder of the pack. This replaces your crimped card sixteenth from the bottom.

Ask the spectator to peek at any one of the five cards and commit the peeked card to memory. Ask him to place it on top of the pack and cut the deck. This cuts his selection into the middle, sixteen cards beneath your crimp.

Take the remaining four cards in your left hand. Pretend to weigh the cards. Now cut the deck beneath the crimp and complete the cut. This cut sends the selection to a position sixteen from the top. Alternatively, you could weigh the cards one at a time, cutting each time you weigh a card. On the fourth card, cut beneath the crimp. This also sends the selection to the sixteenth position.

Ask the spectator to turn the four remaining cards face up. Since you know the original five values, you know the one that is missing. This is a contingency trick. You will alter the ending based upon the card which is missing. If you stop reading now, you will miss one of the easiest to remember and easiest to perform contingency tricks. All of the contingencies except one follow the same path.

Subtract the missing value from the number ten. Unless the five was selected (this

Table 1 - Odd Man Out

<u>Selection</u>	<u>Mate (10 minus selection)</u>	<u>Remainder</u>
Ace	9	3+5+7=15
3	7	1+5+9=15
5	N/A	N/A
7	3	1+5+9=15
9	Ace	3+5+7=15

is the one exception) the difference will match one of the remaining cards. In other words, if the three is missing from the five cards, subtract three from ten. That leaves seven which is one of the remaining cards. This means that you will deal with the seven last. Slide out any of the other three remaining cards. Let's assume you slide out the five. Thumb five cards from the left hand into the right without reversing their order. Count them one by one as you do. Drop these five cards to the table.

Slide out the ace (for example) next. Deal one card to the table, placing it on top of the five cards already there. Slide the nine out next. Thumb nine cards from the left hand to the right without reversing their order. Drop them to the table. This leaves the seven for the last. You will also note that the top card of the remainder of the deck is now the selection. Thumb seven cards over into your right hand, counting them as you do. Don't reverse the cards as you count them. Drop these last seven cards on top of the tabled packet.

Ask for the name of the selected card. Turn the top card of the tabled packet face up. It is the mentally thought of card.

This system works as long as you deal with the "mate" of the selection last. In this instance, the mate is the card corresponding to the value arrived at when subtracting the selection from ten.

Alternative Ending. If the missing card is the five, the remaining cards (ace, three, seven, and nine) will total twenty cards. Ask that the spectator total the value of the cards which they will tell you total twenty. Ask that

they drop the four cards face down on top of the deck. Note that this sends the selection (the five which is currently sixteenth from the top) to the twentieth position. Ask that they deal down to the total they arrived at (20) and turn over the card at that location. It is the selection.

Mental Cues. With most contingency tricks, your memory gets a workout. This has several cues designed to make the trick easy to remember. To begin with, the cards you use are the odd values under ten (1, 3, 5, 7, & 9).

Second, all but one of the cards are handled identically. To remember which one, it is the only one where the difference when subtracted from ten doesn't equal the value of one of the remaining cards.

Third, to remember which card of the remainder to deal last, you simply subtract from ten. The difference matches one of the remaining values.

The Why. Your method of counting does not actually reveal the card which falls at the position which equals the total of the remaining cards. With four of the five selections, you will reveal the sixteenth card. That means that you have to use three of the four remaining cards to get rid of the top fifteen cards. The sixteenth card will be the next card and will be used to count the last of the four cards.

If you remove one of the cards (the selection) and then temporarily eliminate it's mate (the difference between ten and the value of the selection) the remainder will be fifteen. The formulas in the table illustrate the method.

By dealing with the mate of the selection last, you eliminate the top fifteen cards

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(third column above). You then count the number of cards equal to the mate. Since you don't reverse the order of the cards as you count them, when you drop the last packet onto the table, the sixteenth card becomes the top card of the tabled packet.

Presentation. My patter consists of emphasizing just how impossible this effect is.

*"This is called "Out of Control." That's because everything has been out of my control since the start. You chose the five cards. You merely thought of one of those five. You then lost that card in the middle of the pack. We will use the remaining cards, the ones you discarded, to try to locate your mentally chosen card."*

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*"I, myself, had the pleasure of creating almost as much of a sensation one night on the same bunch of boys when I did the low-down trick of ringing in a marked deck."*

*---Dariel Fitzkee in Chapter 1 of The Card Expert Entertains (1947)*

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## THE TRAVELER

*Michael Beam*

**Effect.** The spectator shuffles the pack and cuts it into two halves. He gets his choice of halves. The two halves are cut and shuffled. Both the performer and the spectator reach into their respective tabled halves and remove a card. Each places their selection on top of the other's half. Both halves are cut, losing the two selections.

Each now takes their half and spreads through it, trying to find the other's selection. They both remove a card and place it face down on the table. The magician turns over the card he removed. It is the spectator's selection. The volunteer turns over the card he removed. It is not the magician's selection. *"I don't understand. I tried to make it easy for you. I placed my card in your half up side down."* At this, the magician spreads the spectator's half. The magician's card is the only face up card in the face down half.

**The Work.** Offer a deck to be shuffled. Have it tabled and then instruct a volunteer to cut it into two halves. For future reference, assume he cuts the top half from your left to your right. Ask him to choose either half. Assume he takes the original bottom half, the half on your left. Ask him to shuffle his chosen packet as you shuffle yours. While you execute a tabled riffle shuffle, it is an easy matter to glimpse and remember the top card. This is your key card. Assume it is the three of hearts.

Table your half in front of you and ask that the spectator do the same thing. Ask that he do what you do. Reach into the middle of your half and remove a card. Note it and pretend to remember it. Ask that the spectator remember the card he removes from his half. Actually, you can completely forget your card as you will not see it again.

Place your card on top of the spectators

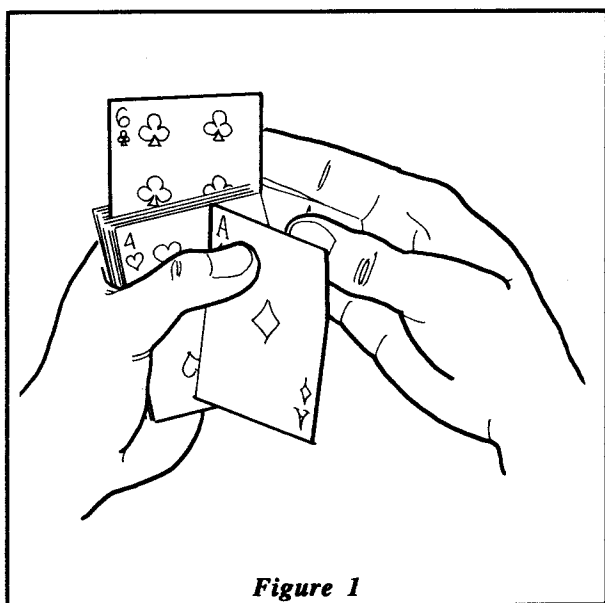
half, and cut his cards burying it in the middle. Ask that he place his card on top of your half and cut your half. When he completes the cut, his card is apparently lost in your half. Actually, it is immediately above your key card, the three of hearts.

*"I will look through my cards and try to find your card while you do the same."* Pick up your half and start to thumb through it. As the spectator does the same thing, note and remember the face card of the pack. Assume it is the ace of diamonds. You will later claim this is your selection. You are now going to secretly reverse this card. You can do this easily in several ways. One way is to spread through the pack and upjog the spectator's selection. It will be the card immediately behind your key. Hold the pack in your left hand in a squared condition except for the upjogged card. As the right hand approaches the left, the left thumb pushes the face card over to the right. The right edge of this card is engaged by your right thumb which flips it over face down. See **figure 1**. Your right hand then continues upward to remove the upjogged card. Place this card face down on the table. The ace is reversed on the face and the spectator's selection is face down on the table.

Another way to reverse your supposed selection is to remove the spectator's selection. Then, while attention is directed to the tabled card, you drop your left hand to your side. Thumb over the face card of the packet and engage it with your body which helps to flip the card face down onto the face up half. Bring the cards back into view, keeping their backs to the audience.

One final option would be to remove the spectator's selection and do one of the many sleight of hand, riffle shuffle reverses which reverse the bottom card as you shuffle the pack.

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When the spectator tables his half after removing the card he thinks you chose, drop your half on top of his and square the cards. Shift the focus to the card you removed from your half. Ask the spectator for the name of the card he selected. Turn over the card from your half and it is his selection.

Now tell him your card is the ace of diamonds. He flips over the card he removed from his half. It is an indifferent card. *"That's strange. We did everything right."* You are now going to apparently reenact what happened.

The pack is reassembled with the exception of the two cards out on the table.

Remember back at the beginning of the trick, where we assumed that the spectator cut the pack and chose the bottom half. If this happened, Cut off less than half the pack, a few cards above the reversed card. Cut it off to your right as was done in the beginning. *"And which half did you choose? That's right. You chose this half."* Point to the bottom half and then move it a little toward him. *"And I took the remaining half."* Move the top half toward you.

*"Then I placed my card on top of your half and cut it."* Without placing any cards on top, cut his half and complete the cut. This sends the reversed ace of diamonds to the middle of the pack. *"Then you placed your card on top of my half and cut the pack."* Cut the half nearest you and complete the cut.

*"Wait just a second. I just realized what went wrong. I was trying to make your job easy for you so I placed my card in your half upside down."* Spread his half on the table and the ace of diamonds will be face up among the face down cards for the climax.

If the spectator chose the original top half of the pack at the beginning of the trick, you alter the reenactment slightly. Cut below the face up card rather than above it. Then place the top half near him. Continue through with the rest of the trick as described above. Your card will end up reversed in his half.



## MARKED PHENOMENA

Steve Beam

Occasionally there is an unorthodox use of a known principle which tends to throw others off the track when attempting to reconstruct the method. *Marked Phenomena* is just that type of effect. While it starts off as a formulaic card effect, it then takes a turn into an unusual ending where the spectator finds the magician's card. This was the result of my experimenting with *The Traveler*.

Effect. A volunteer shuffles a deck of cards and cuts it in half. He gives the half of his choice to the wizard. Both remove a card from their respective halves and bury it in the other's half. "I will try to find your card while you try to find mine." At this, the magician and spectator spread through their respective halves and attempt to locate the card the other selected. Both place their "guesses" face down on the table.

The spectator names his selection. The magician turns his "guess" face up and it turns out to be correct. "Now it's your turn. My card was the five of spades." The spectator turns his "guess" card face up and it is the magician's selection. The conjuror closes with: "I know how I found your card. What puzzles me is how did you find mine?"

The Work. While the method will be apparent in a moment, stay tuned for the complete description. It uses a marked deck. These are available at your local magic shop and I would strongly suggest the use of one with a Bicycle™ back design. These were not generally available in marked form years ago and so they will still catch people off guard. Also, this back design is familiar to everyone who has played cards in the past so they will receive less attention than most other designs. (My favorite deck is the one which uses the small white letters. You can find them at a magic shop for about \$15. You do not want a deck which

requires a lot of mental calculation.)

Hand the deck out to be shuffled. Ask that the volunteer cut the deck in half and hand you either half. Without looking at the faces of the cards, each of you should remove a card from your half and place it face down on the table. Instruct the spectator to look at and remember the card he has selected while you apparently do the same thing. Actually, you do not need to remember the identity of your card since it will not be the one he reveals later. Meanwhile, you need to "read" the identity of the top card of your half. This becomes your key card for locating his selection.

You and the volunteer should table your halves. Place your card on top of his half and cut the half completing the cut. Your selection is now lost in his half. Instruct the volunteer to place his selection on top of your half and cut the pack, completing the cut. His card is now immediately above your key card.

Charge the volunteer with running through his half to find your card while you will attempt to find his card in your half. He will run through and remove any card. You will take a little longer, allowing his card to be tabled first. You spread through your cards with the faces toward you and remove the card immediately behind your key card. This will be his selection.

As you table his selection, you must "read" the value of the card he has tabled. This is the critical part of the effect. You must read the back of his guess quickly to avoid suspicion.

Ask for the name of his card and turn over his selection. Conclude the effect by announcing the name of the card you just read as your selection. He will turn it over and reveal "your card."

Alternate Methods - Ordinary Deck.

The reason for using the marked deck is to learn the identity of your selection. You can easily find out the identity of the volunteer's selection by glimpsing the top card of your pack and using the key card principle to locate it. (In other words, you don't require the marked pack to acquire a key card.)

Other alternatives for finding his selection would be the use of a shiner of some sort. That is, using a reflective surface to reflect the image of his selection into your line of vision. A highly polished table top will give you a moment to identify "your" card as the spectator places it face down on the table.

Another method which I have used for magicians is to have "stooge" or confederate behind the volunteer. When the volunteer makes his guess, the stooge secretly telegraphs the information to you. He can do this by a predetermined code. Or, he can do this by holding up a duplicate of the card you selected out of sight of the spectator. There is very little heat on this since the spectator assume you already know the card you selected.

Finally, while you can't depend on this, analysis of the effect will lead you and the volunteer to realize that there is no reason for him to hide the identity of his guess from you. After all, you chose the card, you should already know it. You may find someone not handy with

a deck of cards will flash the identity to you, allowing you to finish the effect without other aids.

Leftovers. The interesting thing about this trick is that you use the marked deck to learn the identity of the card *you* selected. I could have designed the handling to make the trick even more impossible. However, this is an ideal illustration of Rick Johnsson's *Too Perfect Theory* as explained in Jon Racherbaumer's **Hierophant #5**.

Additional shuffles added to the routine would make this more impossible and eliminate other possible solutions. The only solution remaining would be the use of a marked pack or a glimpse. The trick could be considered "too perfect." Therefore, I prefer to handle this as a standard *Do As I Do* trick. Magicians will follow the use of the key card, although they won't be certain how the magician secured the identity of the top card of the magician's half.

They will expend so much effort trying to reconstruct the effect with the use of a key card that they will be thrown far off the real method. Only later in their reasoning will they understand that key cards would not have helped the participant locate the magician's card. By then, they are knee deep in the substance you have been shoveling.

## THE CASCADE

*Tom Craven*

This is a self-working version of an earlier creation of Tom's which required a faro shuffle. This one is just as convincing and even harder to reconstruct than the original.

**Effect.** The magician has a card selected from and returned to the middle of the pack. He solicits a number between ten and twenty. He deals the chosen number of cards face up onto the table showing that the selection is not among them (or among the next few, for that matter). He scoops them up and allows them to drop face down to the table singly and with a flourish. At the chosen number, the selection descends face up.

**The Work.** This requires a double face card which can be procured at any magic shop. In this trick, you will need a card which has another card on its back. To make this easier for you to follow, I will assume your double facer is a five of diamonds on one side and a six of clubs on the other.

Locate the normal five of diamonds and six of clubs. Place the five on top of the pack and the six somewhere in the top half of the pack. Place the double facer on the bottom (face) of the pack with the five upward.

You will employ the Henry Christ cut deeper force to induce the spectator to select the five on top of the pack. Hold the pack face down in the left hand in dealing position. Ask a volunteer to cut off the top fourth of the pack and turn it face up on top of the pack. After he does this, tell him that you really shouldn't have limited him to the top ten or so cards. Ask him to repeat the cut, cutting deeper in the pack.

Once again, he turns over the packet that he cuts off and replaces it on top of the pack. Spread through the cards as you tell the volunteer that his card will be the first face down card you come to. Ask him to take it and remember

it, then replace it on top of the pack. It is the five of diamonds. Replace the face up cards that were above his selection on top of the pack face down. You can insert a false cut here if you wish.

Turn the pack face up and hold it in dealing position in the left hand. The double facer will be on the face of the pack with the six of clubs showing. Ask for a number between ten and twenty.

Deal the cards face up to the table, but as you would in a reverse faro. That is, deal the double facer to the table. Deal the next card on top of the gimmick but overlapping inward (injogged) for about half its length. Deal the third card squarely on top of the first, and the fourth squarely on top of the second. See figure 1.

Continue dealing, alternating the injogged and outjogged cards as you count to the chosen number. Stop when you deal the card which corresponds to the selected number.

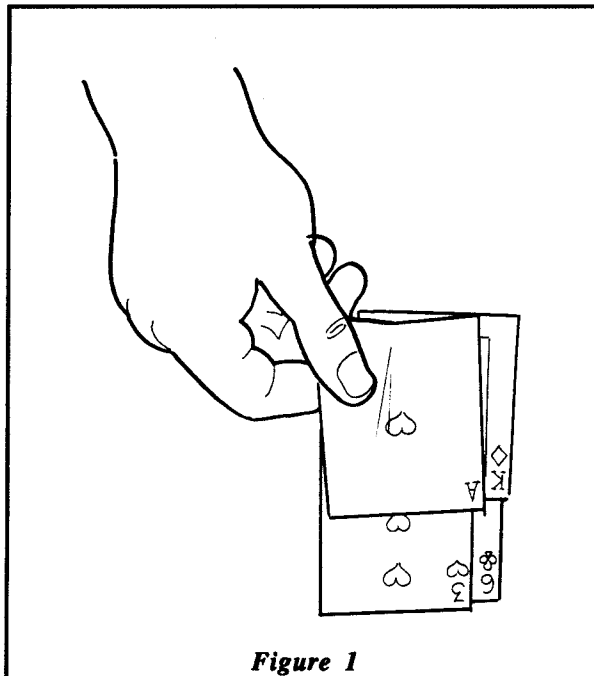


Figure 1

## SINGULARITIES

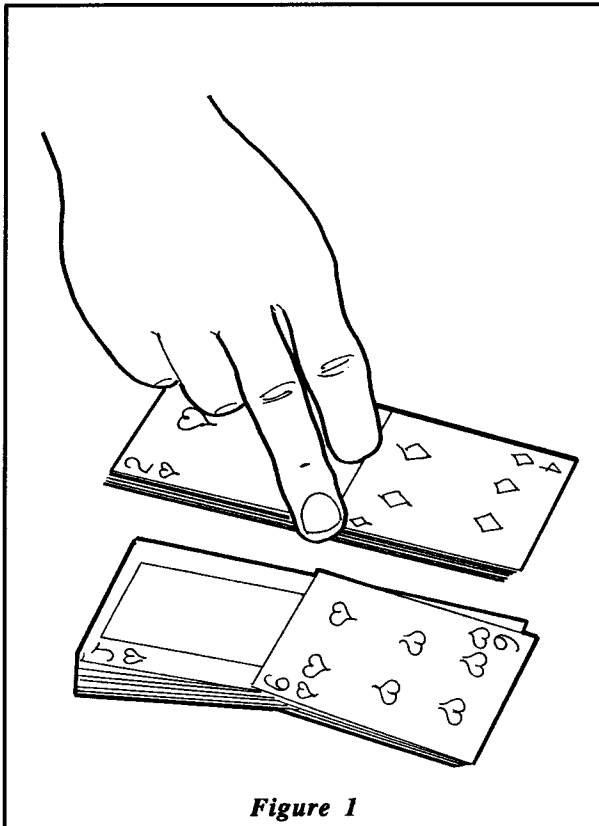


Figure 1

Split the remaining face up cards in half, making sure that you don't cut the packet at the regular five of diamonds. Riffle shuffle these two face up packets together and leave them in their telescoped condition. Turn the packet so that it is perpendicular to the table edge, with the top card on the end nearest you. The position of the top card is important for the successful completion of the effect.

Pick up the face up telescoped packet you dealt to the table and place it on top of the face up cards you just shuffled together as shown in **figure 2**. Take this combined telescoped pack and turn it face down and hold it with both hands as shown in **figure 3**.

You are now going to alternate releasing the ends of the packet with each hand. If the bottom card of the telescoped pack is on the left side, release your left hand's grip on the pack. (Release the right hand's grip if the bottom card is on the right side.) The bottom card will fall

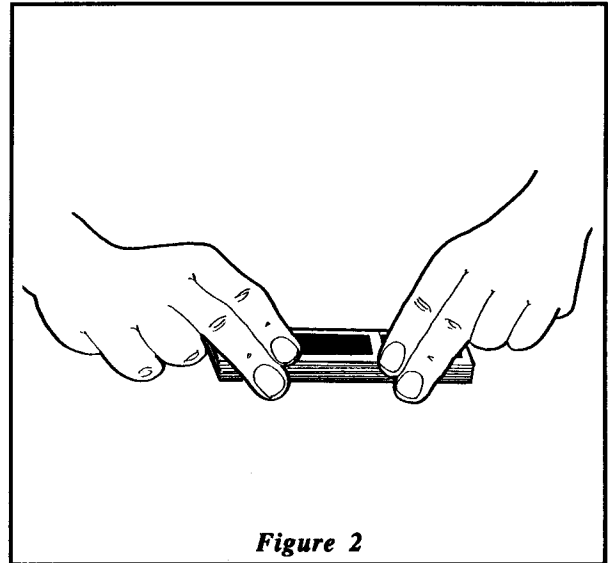


Figure 2

face down onto the table. Grab the pack again with the left hand and then release the right side with the right hand. The next card, the new bottom card, will fall from the right side. Continue releasing the left and right side allowing each successive bottom card to drop to the table. Count the cards out loud as they descend. When you reach the selected number, the five of diamonds will fall face up for an impressive revelation.

You can repeat the trick with the six of clubs, the card on the other side of your gimmick. Turn the cards which remain in your hand face up and square them. Pick up the five of diamonds from the table and place it on the face of the packet you are holding. Pick up the remaining tabled cards and turn them face up and place them on the bottom of the face up packet you hold. Spread through the pack and locate the six of clubs. Transfer it to the back of the pack without disturbing the gimmick on the face and you are ready to repeat the effect.

**Background.** This is Tom's self-working handling of his "Drop-Count" Revelation which originally appeared in the December 1983 issue of *Apocalypse* (Volume 6, Number 12). This updated version has puzzled several well versed magicians.

## THE PACKED WALLET

*Simon Lovell*

Simon is one of Great Britain's craziest magicians. His straight jacket escape is something to behold --- from a distance. The routine which you are about to read is a worker. While the emphasis is on the humor, the magic itself is well constructed and powerfully delivered.

Effect and Routine. The magician shuffles the deck. *"These cards are so mixed up, they probably need therapy. But, they can't talk so they can't tell me. So, let's not hold that problem against them. Instead, I would like you to take your very own pet card."* He offers the pack for a selection. *"It's not much of a pet. But you don't have to feed it. But do remember its name in case you have to chase it through a field late at night and call it back to you. Because all you will see is its back running away. And, if you haven't remembered its name, it's gone. It's history --- and you have lost your pet."*

The card is noted and replaced in the pack. The magician riffles the pack and very cleanly reaches into his inside breast pocket and removes his wallet. Opening it, he finds one card, the selection. The selection is replaced in the pack and the wallet is replaced in the pocket.

*"Now this time you can choose where it goes. You can choose this pocket, my shoe, this pocket, or the wallet."* Assuming the spectator doesn't choose the wallet, the magician follows the choice with, *"...Or the wallet."* He continues to offer the layman a "choice" until the layman chooses the wallet. If this takes three or four times with the magician saying, *"...Or the wallet,"* it's even funnier.

When the spectator finally chooses the wallet, the magician squeezes the pack away, leaving only the single selected card. *"Whoa! All the cards except the selection have vanished."* The magician once again removes the wallet. Opening it, he finds the missing 51

playing cards.

The Work. You will need two decks of cards and two wallets. If you don't want to use two wallets, I will explain how to use envelopes in just a moment. Choose a card to force for the effect. We will assume you will use the queen of hearts.

Place this card face down in one of the wallets. Place the other 51 cards in the other wallet. Place both of these wallets in your inside breast pocket and you are ready to perform this effect.

Start the effect by forcing the queen of hearts from the other pack. Have it replaced in the pack and you needn't bother controlling it. Do a few all-around square ups for the magicians present. You may as well get credit for sleight of hand.

Riffle the pack for the magic to happen and then table it. Reach into your coat and remove the thin wallet. Open it and remove the duplicate of the force card. Act as if a miracle has occurred as you replace the wallet in the coat.

Pick up the deck and maneuver the top card forward so that you are in a position to cop the rest of the pack. See **figure 1**. Your right hand takes possession of the top card as if it were a complete pack. Your left hand, with the pack in gambler's cop position travels to your left coat pocket. This is done as you tell them that you will repeat the effect and they can choose "this pocket." Your hand comes out empty and points to your shoe, "This shoe..." Point to your right coat pocket and then the wallet, "This pocket...or the wallet."

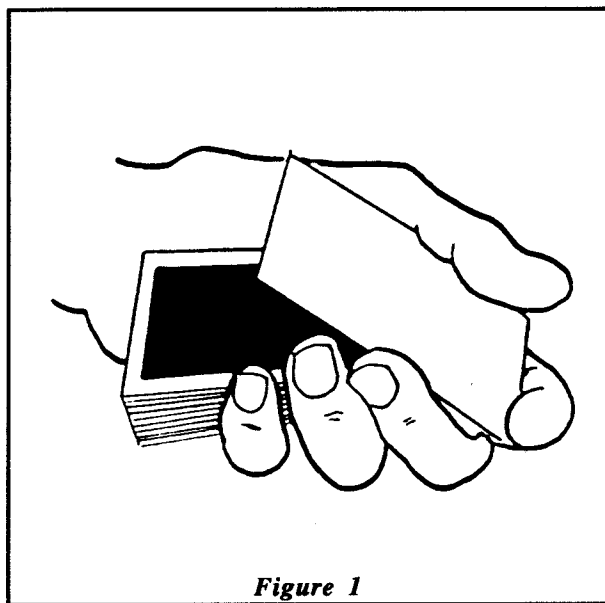
Bring your left hand back to the right and pretend to hold the pack as shown in **figure 2**. Remember to act like you are holding a full pack, not just a single card.

## SINGULARITIES

Use the byplay with the wallet forcing them to “choose” it. If they choose the wallet first, you have a miracle. Personally, I prefer the humor which results from the multiple choices.

When they choose the wallet, squeeze both hands together as if you are squeezing the air out of the pack. See **figure 3**. Make a big deal out of this. Do not simply turn over the card and flick it to show it's a single card.

After making a big deal out of the

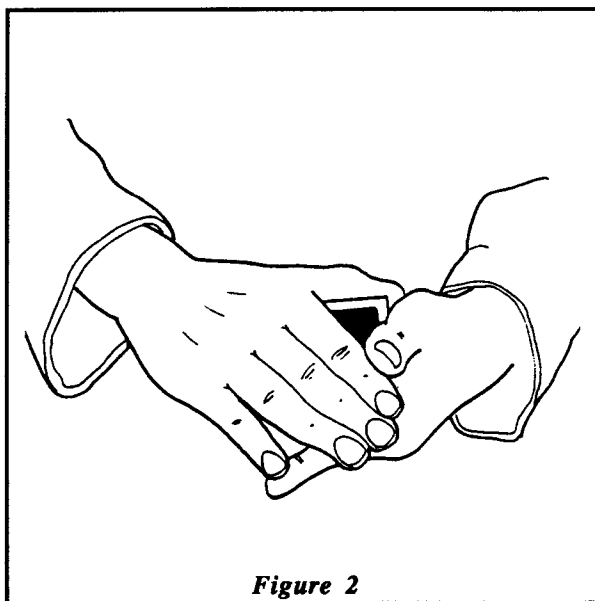


*Figure 1*

vanish, show the remaining card is the selection. Drop it to the table. Cleanly reach into your coat and produce the fat wallet. Open it up to show the deck has travelled to the wallet. Remove the cards and place them on the table selection.

**Leftovers.** Simon has arranged things such that you are left with a full deck of playing cards. Of course it is not the same deck you started with, but if you are sharp enough to use matching packs the audience will never know the difference.

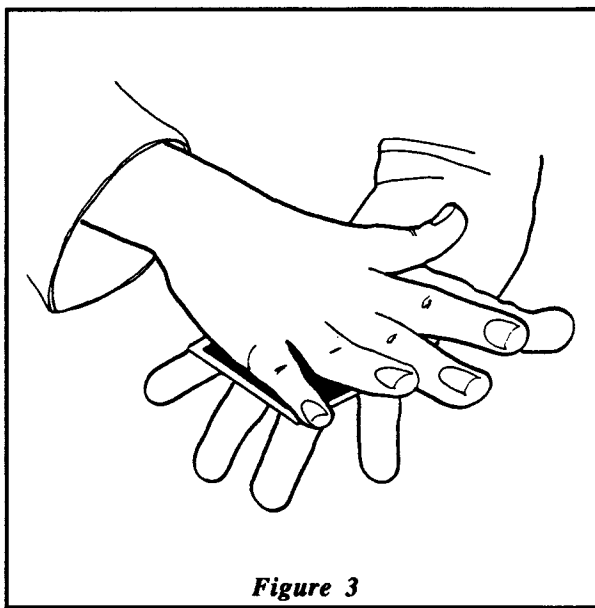
Further, it dawns on me that if you set up the deck in the wallet in your favorite setup, you can now proceed into something using a 51 card setup. You have apparently used the pack in several tricks prior to it travelling to the wallet. It seems impossible that there is any



*Figure 2*

possible way to be left with a full deck setup at this point after all the pack has been through. However, the original deck is now in your outside coat pocket.

Finally, if you don't want to use the



*Figure 3*

wallets, you can start with the duplicate in a sealed envelope. The 51 cards start in a matching envelope with the end torn off. Everything is identical to the original routine. When the first card vanishes, reach in and remove the thin envelope. Tear off the end of it in a manner which resembles the other envelope which was pre-torn. Replace the envelope in your pocket.

Squeeze the air out of the pack causing the pack to vanish. Now reach in and remove the fat envelope with the rest of the pack.

Background. *Packed Wallet* was originally published in issue #48 of **The Trapdoor**.

*"Nearly Every modern conjurer of any pretensions of skill commences with a card trick. There is something about a good card trick well executed that always takes with an intelligent audience."*

*--- Edwin T. Sachs in Chapter 12 of Sleight of Hand (1877)*

## LUBE JOB

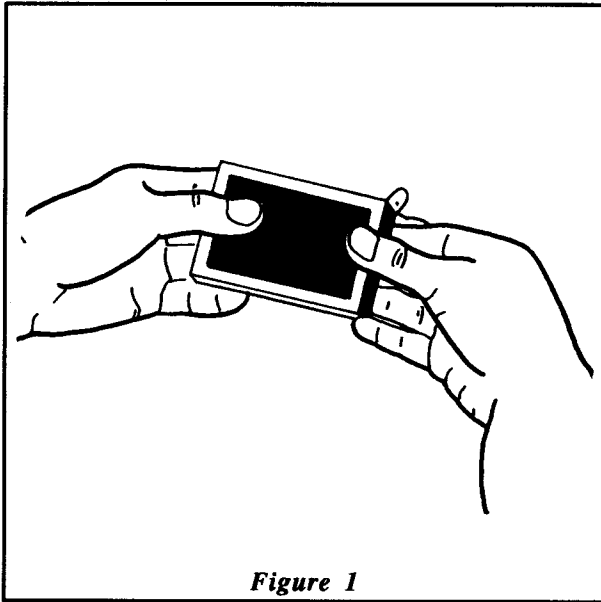
*Steve Beam*

While this is not exactly a trick, it is an entertaining opener to a series of card tricks.

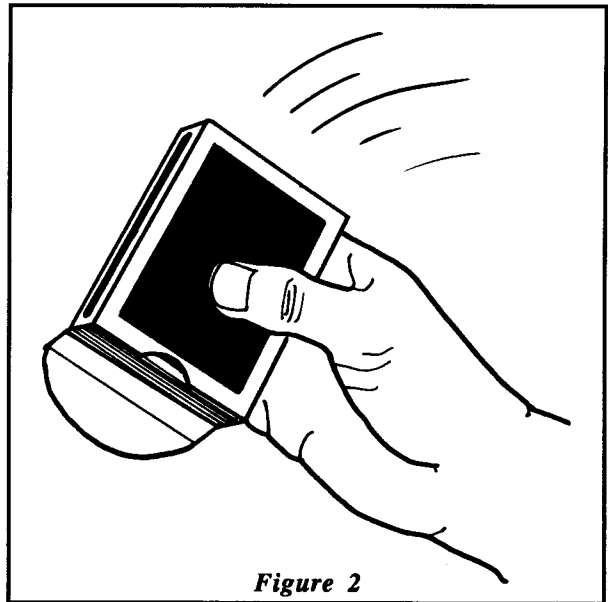
Effect. There isn't much method for this, it's all effect. The magician removes a card case and opens the flap. *"Although I'm a little rusty, I would like to show you a few card tricks."* While talking, the magician attempts

to slide the cards out of the case as shown in **figure 1**. They won't budge.

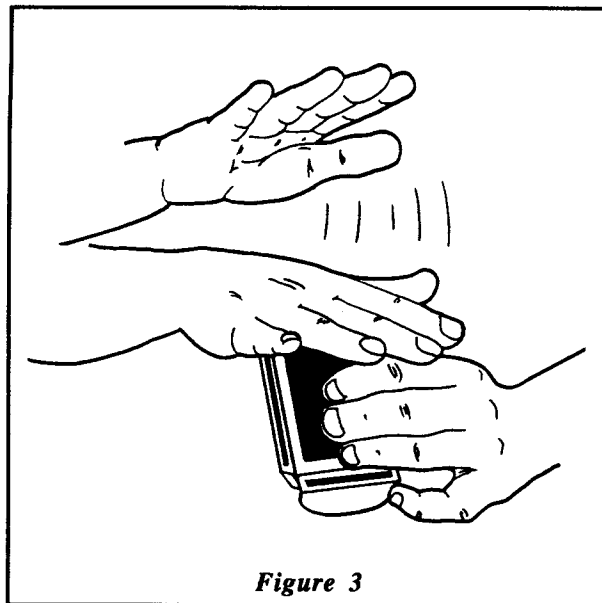
Taking the case as one would a stubborn ketchup bottle, he attempts to shake the cards out as shown in **figure 2**. Still, the cards remain wedged in the case. Taking the case back in the left hand as shown in **figure 3**, the magician



*Figure 1*



*Figure 2*



*Figure 3*



beats on the bottom of the case with his right hand.

Finally, in disgust, the magician removes an oil can and lubricates the mouth of the card case. He slides the cards out easily. *"Boy, I didn't realize I was that rusty."*

**The Work.** In figure 1, you squeeze the cards through the case with your left fingers while apparently trying to remove the cards with your right.

In figure 2, you squeeze the cards through the case with your right thumb and fingers which keeps the pack from falling out.

In figure 3, your left fingers and thumb squeeze the cards through the case as your right hand "beats" on the bottom of the case. This is

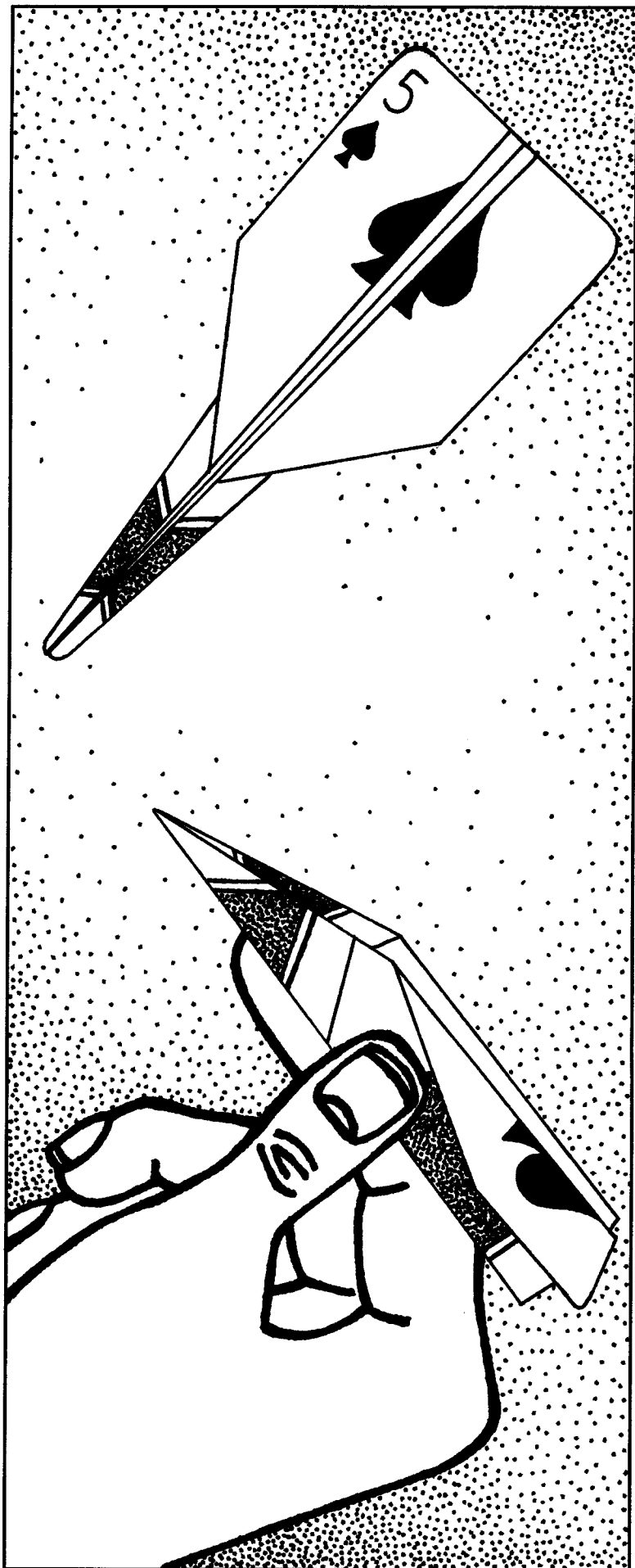
more convincing than it reads, but it doesn't matter whether the audience thinks you are serious.

When you remove the oil can, pretend to apply oil to the corners of the pack visible through the mouth of the case. When the cards come sliding easily out of the case, there is no reason to say anything. There should be laughter because it is visually funny. When you tie in the line about being rusty, it brings the gag full circle and you are ready to proceed with your card routines.

Needless to say, make sure your oil can is completely empty before attempting this.

**Background.** This originally appeared in issue #49 of **The Trapdoor**.

# Topological



## CHARGED CARDS

*Steve Beam*

This is a six phase card suspension effect. While it takes a lot of space to describe, the effect is self-working and only requires about two to three minutes of performing time. In the first four phases, a single playing card is suspended in various ways. In the fourth phase, the card box is suspended. In the final phase, an entire spread of playing cards is suspended in the air.

Each effect builds on the preceding one to get stronger and more impossible as you progress. The first three phases can be performed with a borrowed (stiff) business card or a playing card. I will describe it with a playing card.

*"Charge cards are wonderful things. They allow you to buy a deck of cards this month and pay for it next month, and the next month, and the next month. However, I am not going to talk about charge cards, I want to discuss charged cards. That is, cards that have been charged with static electricity."*

At this, a single card rises from the deck (phase I). It is then torn in half. The halves are rubbed on the magician's sleeve to increase the static. Each piece is placed on the table on its long (torn) edge, using the other for support. *"This is sort of a two card, house of cards --- a slum of cards, if you will. They say that a house divided cannot stand. We will test that theory."* The magician knocks one of the halves over, and the other remains on the table, standing vertically and with no visible support (phase II).

The halves are "charged" again and they are balanced on the table, this time on their short ends. Again, one of the cards is removed and the other remains standing (phase III). This makes a very convincing demonstration of card magic --- or static electricity --- depending upon your patter.

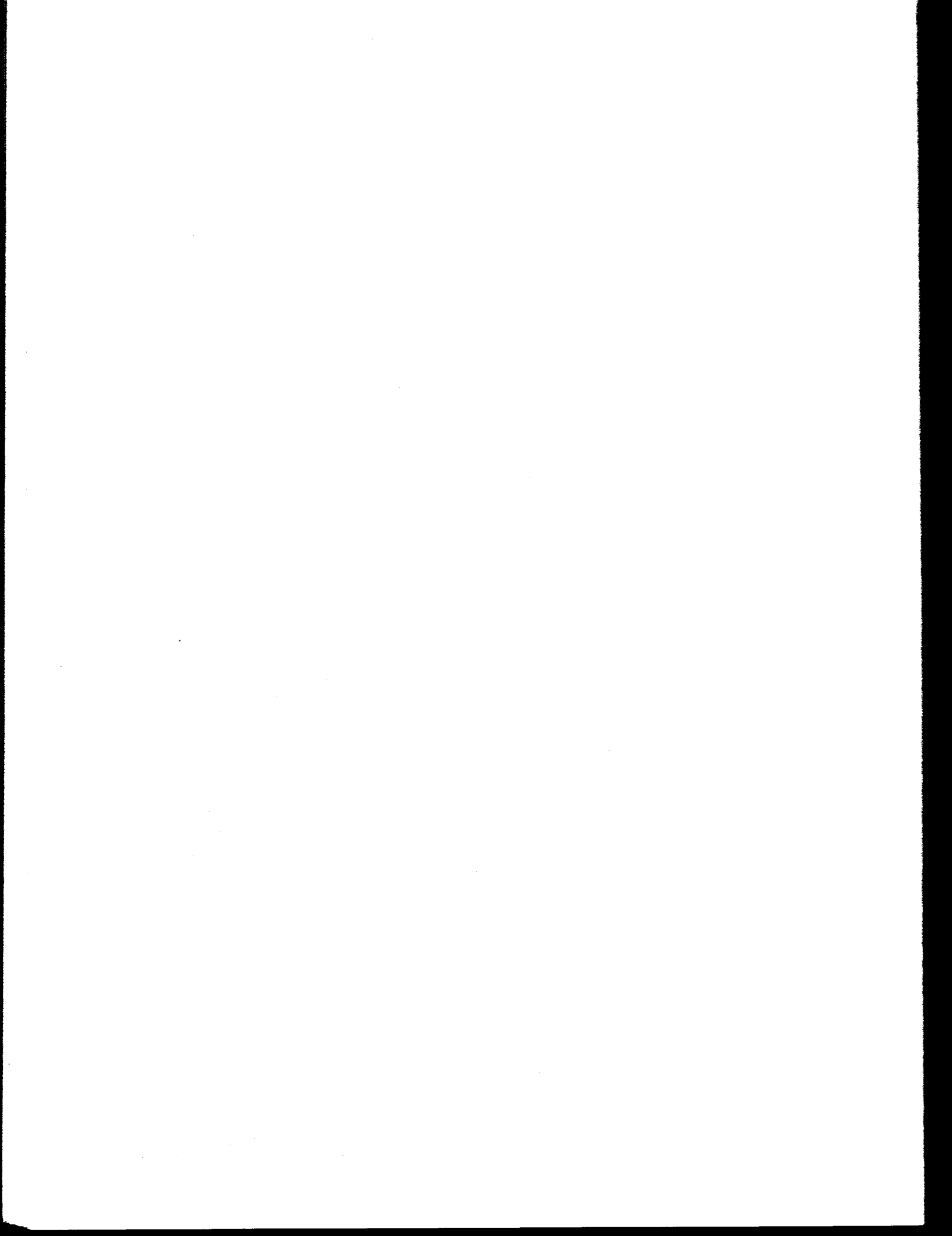
Now, the two halves are torn in quarters. The quarters are rubbed on the sleeve and then placed separately on the table. The magician touches his four right fingers to the tabled quarters and they instantly cling to his fingertips (phase IV).

*"Now, I know what you are thinking. You are thinking, 'Sure, he can do that with a single card. But can he do it with an entire deck.' Well, of course I can. Here, tear this into quarters for me and I'll demonstrate."* At this, the magician removes rest of the deck of cards from the card case and starts to hand them to a spectator. Then, changing his mind, *"No, let me try something different."*

The magician rubs the card case on his sleeve. The case is then placed against the wall where it clings (phase V). Finally, he rubs the deck on his sleeve. The deck is spread on the table. He picks up the spread in the middle and demonstrates that there is nothing supporting the pack. To further demonstrate the lack of support under the spread, he passes his free hand underneath the spread. To prove no support from above, he passes his hand over the spread. When he does this, the spread falls to the table for a humorous conclusion.

The Work. I will explain this by phase. You may wish to change the various phases around or eliminate one or two later. As will be seen, I am not always in a position to do the fifth phase. It is usually the one I omit. Also, if working on a smooth surface such as a table top, I sometimes eliminate the suspension of the spread.

Phase I. This phase consists of any rising card method which can be accomplished impromptu. You can use the rise described (but not credited) on page four of Jean Hugard's Card Manipulations under the title, "And Yet



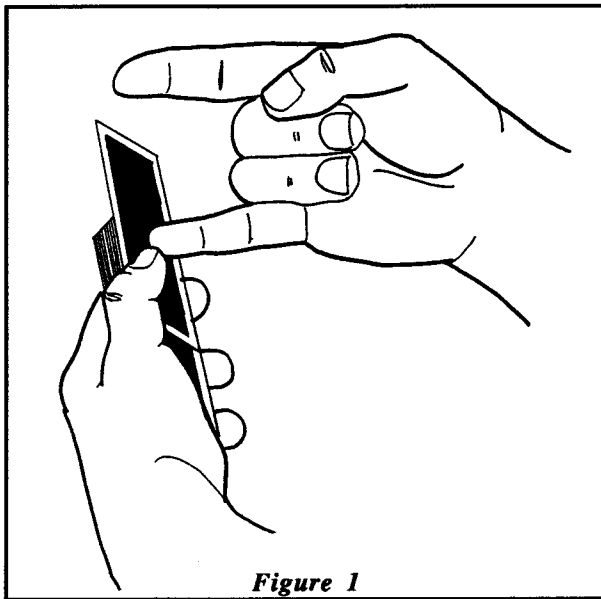


Figure 1

Again --- The Rising Cards.” This is an ancient version which uses the little finger to push the rising card up from the back as shown in **figure 1**.

To perform, hold the deck in the left hand in dealing position. The top card of the pack is the one you wish to have rise, apparently from the middle of the pack. Angle your forearm so that it brings the deck up in front of your chest. This action is referred to as “necktying” the deck. Close your right fingers into a fist, but extend your right forefinger as if pointing to something.

Rub the forefinger on the left sleeve as if charging it with static electricity. Touch the front (now upper) short edge of the pack. As soon as it touches the pack, lift it straight up 8 to 10 inches as if something should be clinging to it. Repeat the charging action on your sleeve and again touch the pack. Once again nothing happens.

On the third try, rub the finger vigorously on the sleeve and try it again. This time, as soon as your forefinger contacts the pack, extend your fourth finger so that the fingertip pushes against the top card. See **figure 1** again. Raise your right hand straight up. This time, the top card will rise, apparently clinging to the right fingertip. When the card is just about to clear the top of the pack, curl your fourth finger

back into the fist.

You may prefer the updated version of this which was published in chapter 26 of Paul Lepaul’s The Card Magic of Lepaul under the title, *An Impromptu Rising Card Effect*. The trappings are the same, but the fingering position is superior to the other.

While these are by no means the best impromptu card rises, they both fit this routine exceptionally well. Both of them have you rub your finger on your sleeve “to magnetize it” in order to cause the rise.

**The Tear.** The next two phases depend on this step. They, along with the fourth phase, are the most convincing parts of the routine. During the tearing of the card, you are also going to secretly put a “foot” in one of the halves. This foot is what does most of the work for you. I am going to describe the measurements exactly so you may want a ruler the first time through. It is not necessary for it to be exact, but if you start off with the wrong tear, the trick will never work.

Hold the card to be used face up between your hands as shown in **figure 2**. You are apparently going to crease the card down the middle to make the tearing easier. Actually, you are going to crease it diagonally.

Use the right hand to fold the northeast corner of the face up card over to meet the

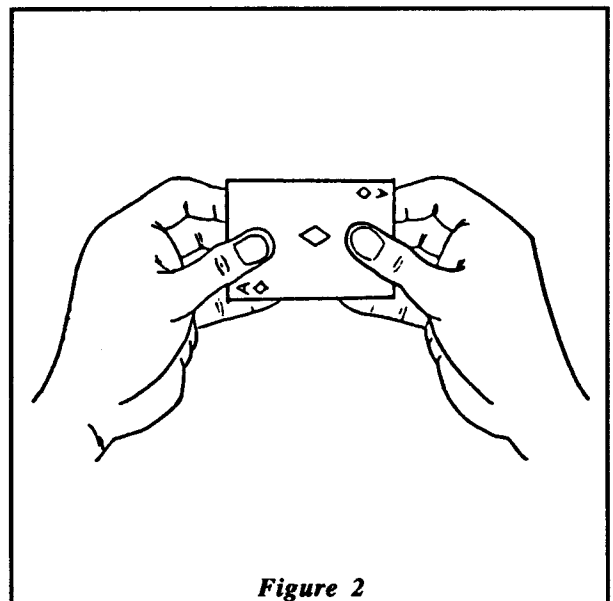


Figure 2

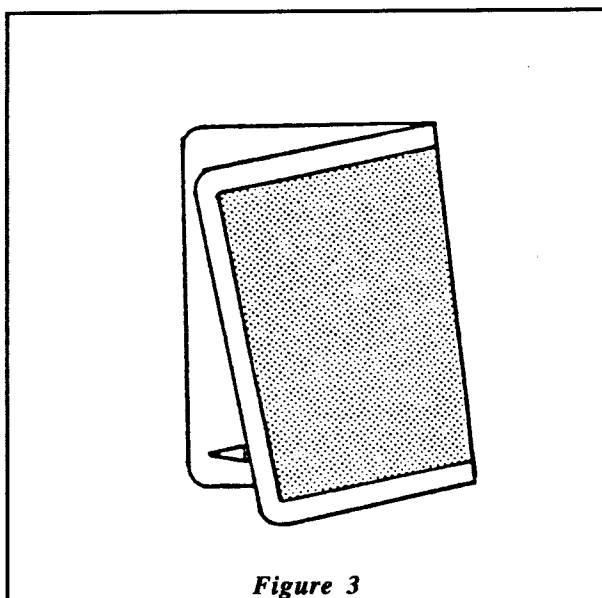


Figure 3

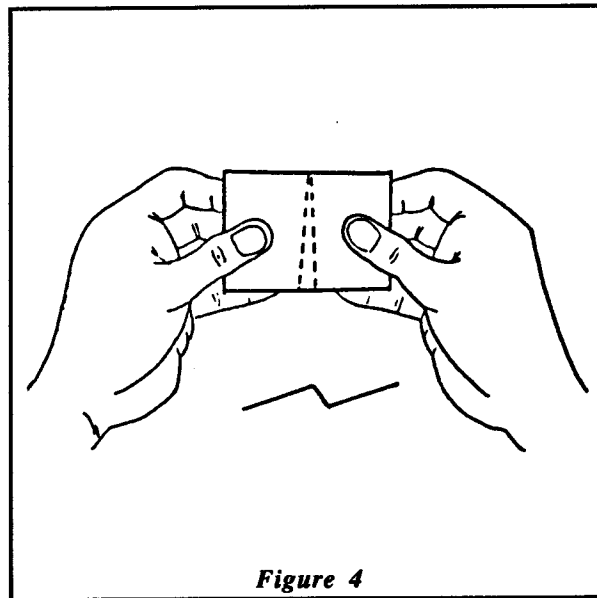


Figure 4

northwest corner. However, bring the northeast corner almost flush (less  $1/16$ th of an inch) with the left edge of the card, but five sixteenths of an inch below the northwest corner. Crease the card at this point. See **figure 3**. Although you are not making any secret out of what you are doing, your fingers and your patter cover most of what is happening.

Unfold the card in the following manner. Use your right hand to open up the lower face up half out to the right. The face down half remains stationary. You are now holding a creased card as in **figure 2** except that the card is face down.

You are now going to repeat the exact same crease you just executed, except that this time the card is face down when you start. While the actions are the same, the card being face down will create a different crease. Again you will use the right hand to fold the northeast corner of the card over to meet the northwest corner. Again you will downjog the northeast corner five sixteenths of an inch below the northwest corner. Crease the card at this point. Note that you are forming a separate crease using the same instructions as before. You are not reversing the original crease --- although that is what appears to be happening to the onlookers.

When you finish the crease, open the card back up face down. That is, you will bring the northeast corner back over to the northeast. If you have followed the instructions exactly, you will be holding a face down card with two diagonal creases in it. Both creases meet at the top center of the card and are approximately  $3/8$ ths of an inch apart at the bottom. This position is shown in **figure 4**. The left side of the card should be a mirror image of the right side except that the two creases are made in opposite directions. If this is not the case, go back to the beginning in order to save you a lot of time.

You are now going to tear the card down the first (leftmost) crease. Use the right first finger for support and to direct the tearing. If you aren't careful here, you will tear down the wrong crease. This is easy to do since both creases start at the same point. Be careful from this point on to keep the extra crease in the right half hidden. From this point forward, I will refer to the half with the crease or foot as the gimmicked half. Refer to the *Leftovers* section for the logic behind using this particular form of tear.

**Phase II.** Use your right hand to rub the gimmicked half on the left sleeve as if to pick up a static charge. Now, direct attention to the half in the left hand as you casually bring the

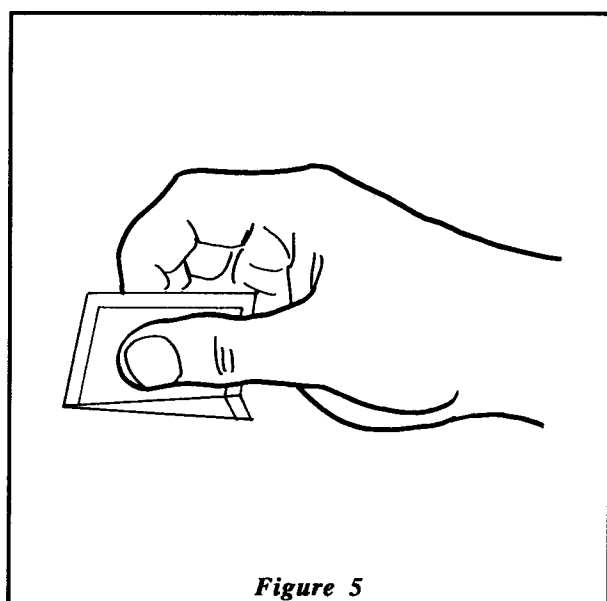


Figure 5

right hand (with the gimmick) down to rest on the table. The right hand's position is important and is shown in **figure 5**. Note that the torn edge of the card is resting on the table but the right fingers cover this.

Meanwhile, you are patterning about the virtues of static electricity as you rapidly rub the regular (ungimmicked) half on your right sleeve. This is apparently to pick up a static charge. While the left hand is occupied with this, the right hand is busy turning the crease in its card into a crimp. This is accomplished by pressing downward on the card so that the crimped part of the card folds inward and rests

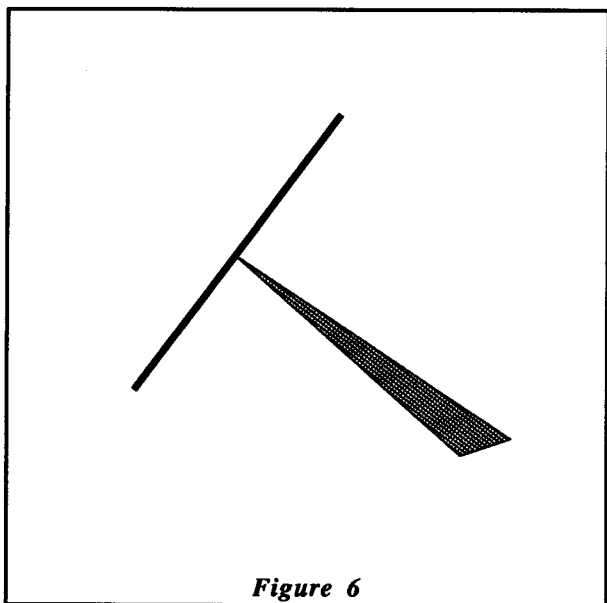


Figure 6

on the table top. This is a ninety degree crimp and the formation of this flap is shown in figure 6.

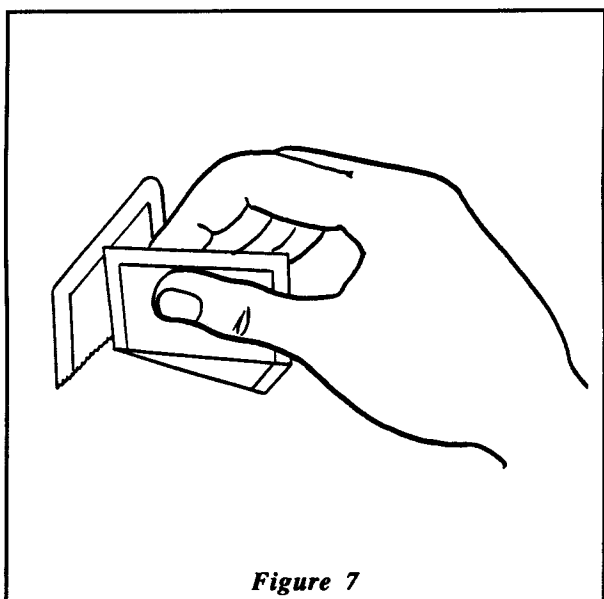
Bring your left hand to the table next to the right. Both cards come together to form sort of a house of cards out of the two halves. Do this by standing the right hand's card on the table and secretly releasing the right hand's grip on the card. Allow the card to settle or come to rest. This is to eliminate any rocking back and forth on the foot later. The angle of the gimmick is important to keep from flashing. You want it turned at a diagonal to keep the flap from flashing. A view of this position from above is shown in **figure 6**. If the card rocks, don't allow it to fall. Slowly rock it backward or forward as needed. Do not use a 'rocking-chair' action. It should be a simple motion, either forward or backward, not both. Once you have achieved this balance, you can lean the left half against it. To the audience, it should appear that you are trying to balance both cards against each other simultaneously. Actually, you are positioning the right half where it is self-sustaining, then lean the left half against it. See **figure 7**.

To achieve the suspension effect, all that is necessary is to remove the left half in as dramatic fashion as possible. You can blow it out of the way if you are careful. Or, you may prefer to just knock it over away from the gimmick. Let the gimmick remain standing as you pass the regular half over and around it in your right hand, as if to show that there is nothing holding it up.

During this action, the right hand transfers the ungimmicked half to a position where it is clipped between the right first and second fingers. The right fingers and the tear on the card should be pointing downward and the face of the half should be facing the audience. This position is important for the pick-up move and is shown in **figure 8**.

After you have let the suspension effect sink in on the audience, bring the regular half down to the table directly in front of the gim-

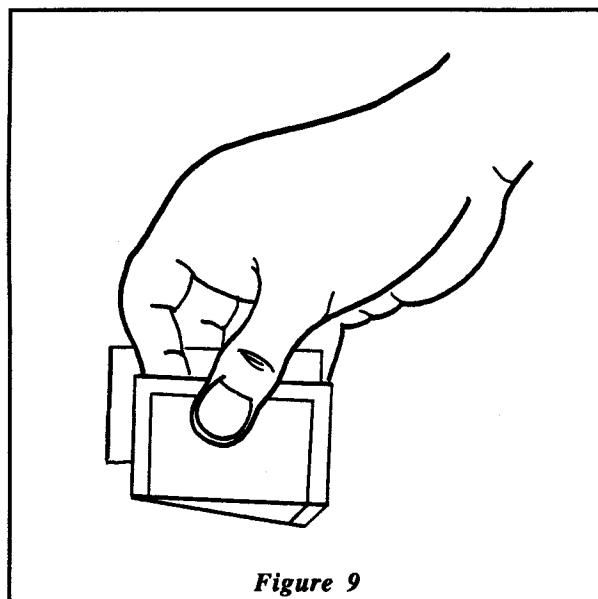
## TOPOLOGICAL EFFECTS



*Figure 7*

micked half. The right forefinger separates the two halves and the right thumb is on the back of the gimmicked half. In this position, it is a simple and quick matter for the right forefinger and thumb to pick up the gimmick from the table, being careful not to flash the flap. This pick-up move is shown in **figure 9**. The right hand immediately transfers the gimmicked half to the left hand where it is taken in the position shown in **figure 10**. The flap is pointing toward the left wrist.

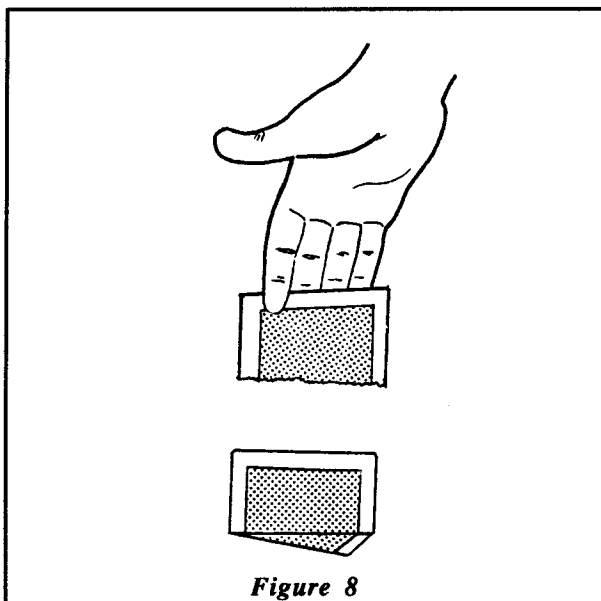
Phase III. After transferring the gimmick to the left hand, the right hand continues an upward motion to rub the torn edge of the



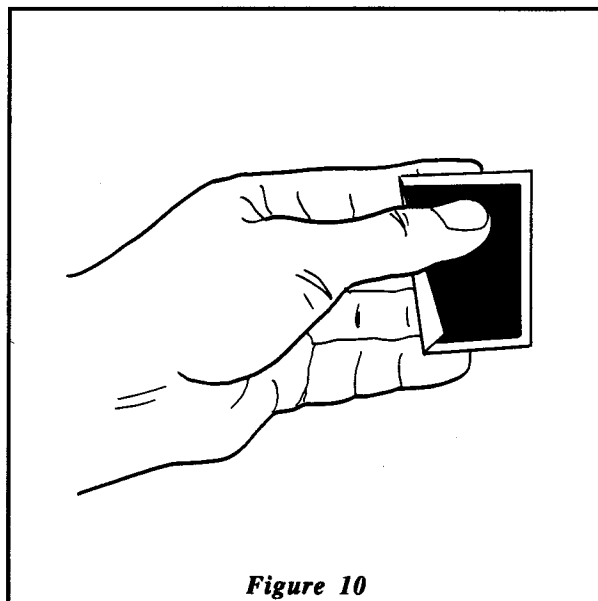
*Figure 9*

regular half on the left sleeve. As soon as it finishes, the left hand comes up to rub the edge opposite the torn edge on the right sleeve. After a couple of seconds, both hands return to the table to make the next house of cards.

Your left hand comes to rest on the table with the back of the hand facing the audience. The face of the gimmicked half is toward the audience while the flap is on the near inside edge. This time, the card is going to stand in a manner similar to the way a picture frame rests on the table. **Figure 11** will make the position of the two halves clear. Again, in this phase, the gimmicked card is allowed to balance first and



*Figure 8*



*Figure 10*



the regular half is merely leaned against it. The angle of the cards is important here also. The gimmicked card should be angled at about 45 degrees to keep the spectator from seeing the flap.

Once the house is made, pause a couple of seconds. Now, either blow or knock the regular half away to the right. The gimmicked half will remain suspended.

Pick up the regular half and wave it around the gimmicked half. As you do, position it in the same clipped position you used at the end of phase two. That is, clip it face outward between the right first (on back) and

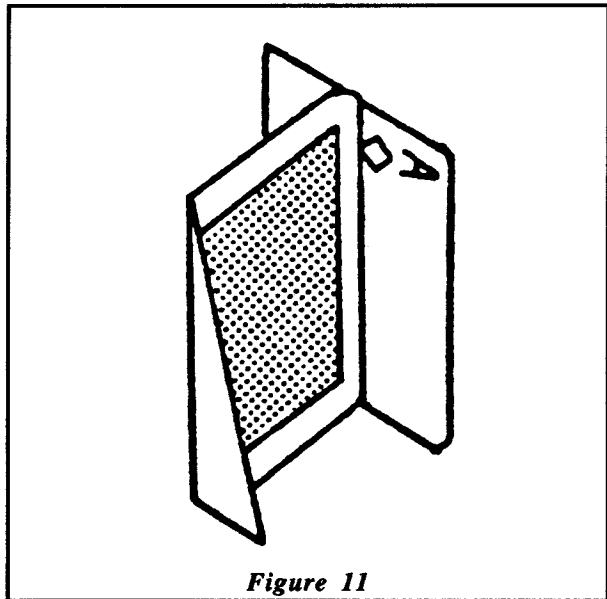


Figure 11

second (on face) fingers. Both the fingers and the torn edge are pointing downward.

Pick up the suspended half between the right thumb and forefinger as you did in phase two. Rotate the right hand so that both the fingers and the wide part of the flap are pointing upward. The torn edge is facing the right as shown in figure 12. You are now in position to tear the regular half in half again. Line up the middle of the half with the crimp in the gimmick. As you tear the regular half down the middle, you will also be tearing the flap off the gimmick, disposing of the evidence.

Your left hand now holds a half of the card (the formerly gimmicked half) as well as a

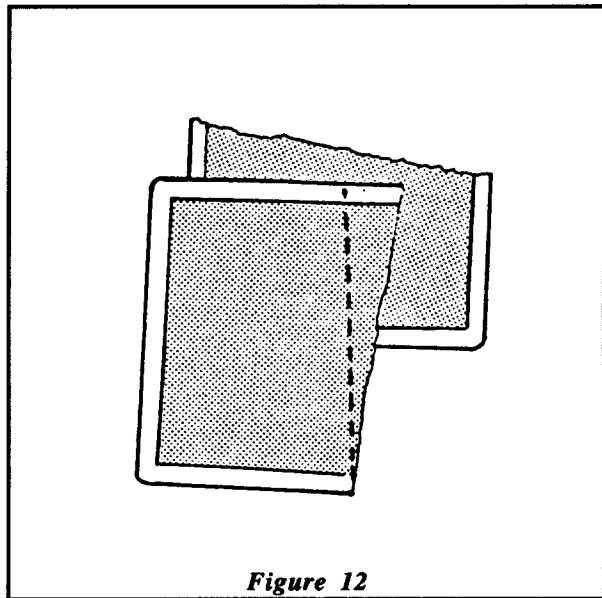


Figure 12

quarter of the original card. The right hand holds a quarter of the original card plus the flap which you tore off the gimmick at the same time you tore the ungimmicked half in half. You can now either lap the flap or fingerpalm it and dispose of it at your earliest convenience. Either way, drop the two quarter cards on the table face down. Now tear the remaining half in half again. Drop these quarters onto the table, also face down.

Phase IV. This is the easiest and prettiest of the displays. Pick up the four quarters and hold them in a stack between your right thumb and fingers. Rub them a few times on

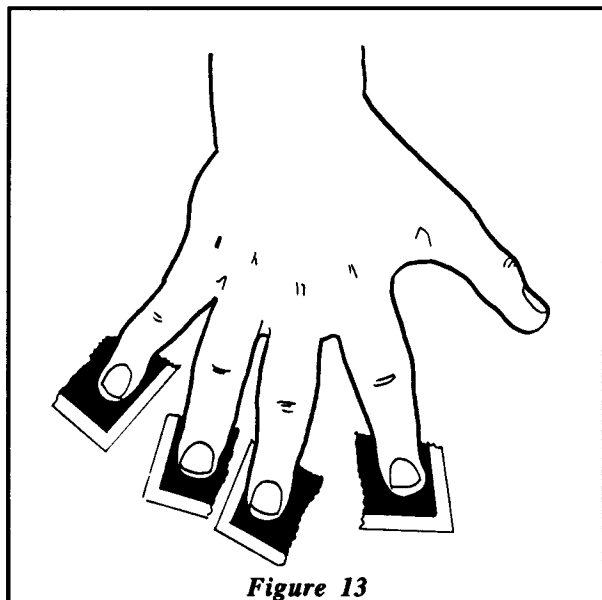


Figure 13

## TOPOLOGICAL EFFECTS

the left sleeve and then drop them on the table face down. Arrange them in a row parallel to the table edge. This is so that they will be easily picked up by the hand in the next step.

Rub the right fingertips (not the pads) on your left sleeve. *"It must be this massive amount of animal magnetism. It's a curse I have had since birth."* Now place the pads (not the tips) of the right fingers on the backs of the tabled quarters. The pads should come to rest comfortably in the middle of the quarters without adjustment. Press down firmly without appearing to do so. After a couple of seconds, lift the hand straight up. The quarters will cling to the pads of the fingers due to the natural moisture of the hands. See **figure 13**. There is also a partial vacuum formed when you push the fingers down hard. The air in the lines of the fingerprints is pushed out. This causes the cards to stick to the fingers.

Rotate the hand for all to see the faces of the quarters and to appreciate the impossibility of what you are doing. This also makes a pretty four of a kind display using only one card. See **figure 14**.

Do not let the quarters fall off your fingers. When you feel one of them starting to fall, rotate your hand palm up. In this position, you can balance the quarters indefinitely. I should also add at this point that gravity is the

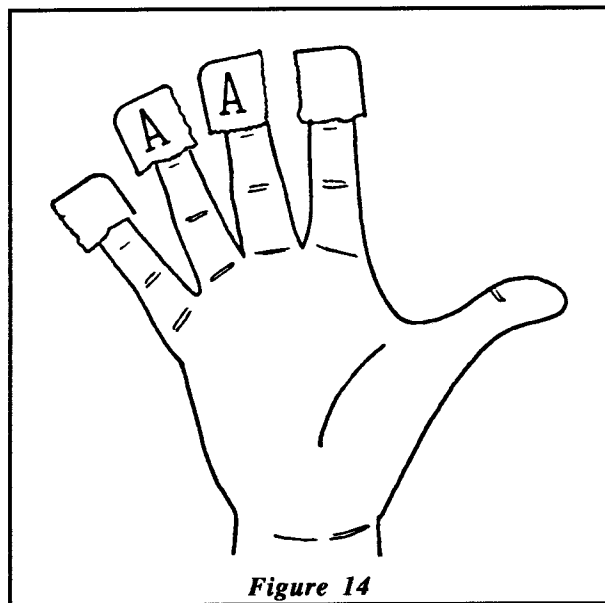


Figure 14

only thing holding them on your fingertips. Despite this, I continue displaying the balanced quarters as if this continues to be an impressive feat. For whatever reason, the spectators view this as a continuation of the clinging effect. Use it for a short interval and you will appreciate the impact.

To conclude this phase, use your left hand to pluck the quarters off the fingertips. Place them in a pile to the side.

**Phase V.** At this point, I offer to suspend the whole pack. I pick up the card case and rub it on my sleeve. I place it against the wall where it remains, suspended. This is because of a tacky substance sold at most office supply stores used to stick posters to the wall. This requires a wall which will hold the case. If possible, try out the wall before the show to ensure that it works with your gum.

This may seem weak and it would never play by itself. However, in the middle of a multi-phase routine such as this one, it is accepted as a continuation of a true (and improving) miracle.

**Phase VI.** This final phase requires a close-up mat, or at least a surface with some resistance. (A mat actually interferes with the phases II - IV. For this reason, bring the mat out immediately before this phase.) Pick up the deck and pretend to try to tear it in half. When that doesn't work, start to hand it to a spectator. *"Here, you tear the cards in half, and I will do the hard part."* This should get a laugh since you obviously couldn't tear the cards yourself.

*"I've got a better idea."* Rub the whole deck on your sleeve. You are going to execute a weird variation of the table spread flourish. Place the deck on the table in the middle of the mat. You are going to execute a lengthwise spread instead of the usual edgewise spread. With your thumb at the near short end and your fingers at the far short end, spread the deck in a forward direction for about eight inches. You want this spread to be as even as possible. But at the same time, you want to use only the bottom fourth of the deck in the spread.

Now, reverse the direction of the spread, pulling the cards back toward yourself (and on top of the previously spread cards) for about sixteen inches. You will use the middle twenty-six or so cards to accomplish this part of the spread.

Use the remaining (top) fourth of the deck to go forward again, back to the middle of the spread (about eight inches again). To summarize, you started with the deck in the middle of the mat. You spread the bottom fourth forward to the top of the mat. Then, you went straight back to the back of the mat with the middle half of the deck. Finally, the top fourth was spread forward again to meet the middle of the mat again.

Place your right forefinger on the very middle of the top card of the spread. Lift up on the long edges of each side of the spread. This puts a bend in the spread which increase its strength and provides support for what follows. If you made a reasonably smooth spread, you can lift up the entire deck. They appear to be suspended in air.

At this point, I follow with an old gag to climax the whole routine with a laugh. With the spread suspended in the air and turned so that the audience can appreciate it, I tell them that I will prove there are no wires holding the cards up. I pass my free left hand under the spread as if to prove this. Now, I make a sharp pass over the top of the spread as if to prove there are no wires above. At the same time, I release the right hand's grip on the spread, allowing it to fall to the mat. I immediately look toward the ceiling as if to figure out what happened with my invisible wires. This gets a laugh and always starts the applause.

Leftovers. I experimented for a while to come up with what I feel is the ideal tear for use with this effect. I originally made the tear using a narrow, "U" shaped foot. This worked fine on the gimmick, but left me with a prob-

lem on the other half. When the audience looked at the other half they saw an obvious chunk missing out of the bottom. If the chunk was missing out of that half, it had to be on the other half.

I also tried using a regular tear, straight down the middle. Then, I would make a slight diagonal crease to form the flap. However, this made one tear straight on one half and the other half diagonal. If the audience saw both halves there would be an incongruity which couldn't be reconciled.

This is the strong point of the above tear. The audience can see both halves plainly. Since both have a diagonal tear, the illusion is perfect. You will never hold the cards together to form a whole card --- so the audience will not have the opportunity to realize there is a missing slice.

Background. There are several one-phase card suspensions already in print. None of the ones I am familiar with are totally impromptu. You may wish to check out the September 1984 issue of *Genii* magazine which features a one-phase suspension by Christian of Vienna. This utilizes a gimmicked mat. John Mendoza's *The Mendoza Portfolio* ends with a routine of Brother John Hamman's which features a single card suspension, cleverly utilizing a thread setup. One more appears in *Darwin's Thumbtip Miracles* by Gary Darwin. The title of the book conveys the method of suspension. All of these use different methods and all are good in their own right. However, only the first of these has the potential to stand by itself (if you will pardon the pun).

Background. *Charged Cards* was originally published in Issue #10 of *The Trapdoor* (1985). The final phase featuring the suspension of the spread of playing cards is by Jerry Andrus. It was originally published in his *Curious Cards* (1975).

## THE TOY

Scott Robinson

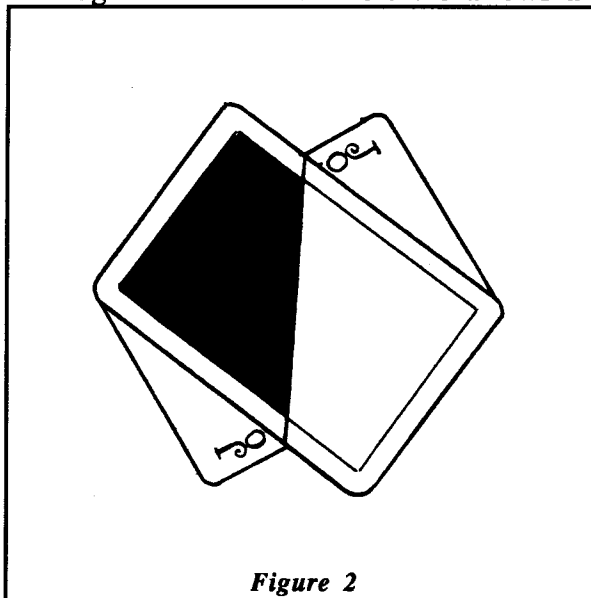
This topological card trick takes just a minute to perform. It has an entertaining and logical patter story as well as a visual punch. It also destroys two cards from the pack so you will probably want to use the jokers. They can be used again later for the same trick if desired.

**Effect.** The magician makes a toy rocket out of two playing cards. Explaining what can go wrong with the toy, he shoves one card through another. With a squeeze, the card repairs itself.

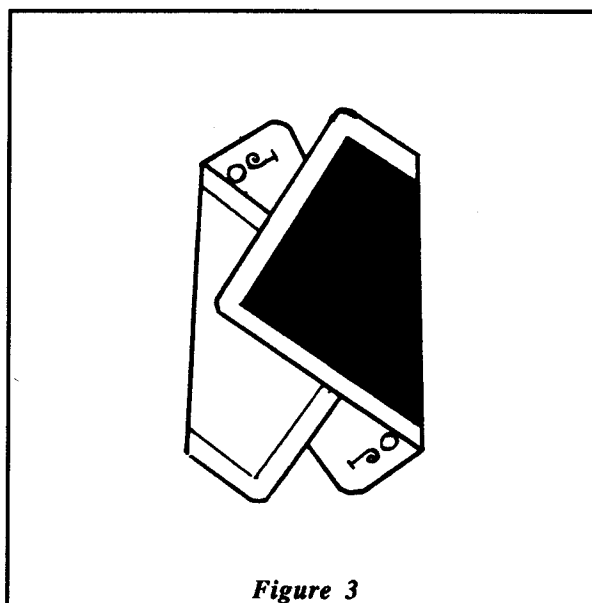
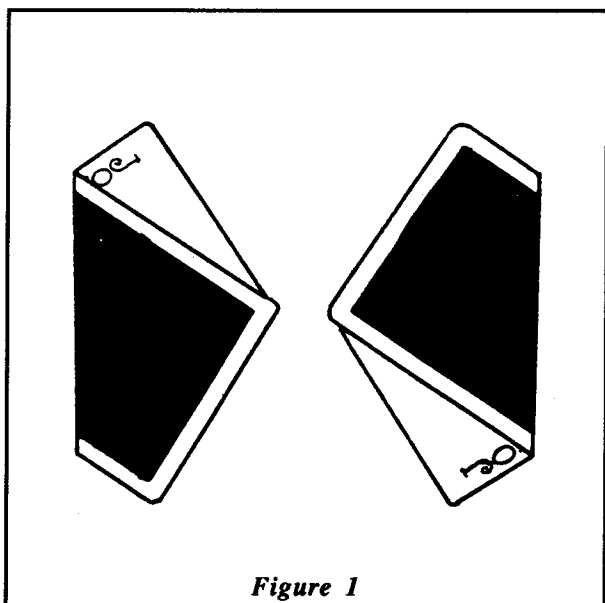
**The Work.** Fold two playing cards so that the non-index corners meet as shown in **figure 1**. This fold is easy to remember once you look at **figure 2**. This drawing illustrates that when the two folded cards are turned around and placed together, they look like two complete unfolded cards which have been cut in half.

Open one card (the left one in figure 1 this example) and insert the two non-index corners of the other card inside the fold of the first card as shown in **figure 3**. Note that both non-index corners of the right hand's card are

within the left hand's card. Hold the cards in the left hand as shown in **figure 4**. Now squeeze the edges of the cards where the arrows are



pointing with your right thumb and forefinger. The cards will form a rocket. (Okay, use your imagination... and **figure 5**.) If you will squeeze the edges on the other side, the rocket will reverse directions. That is because the non



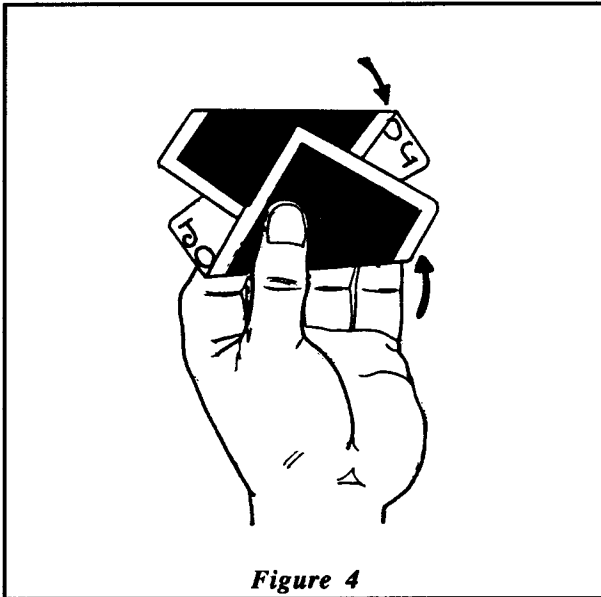


Figure 4

index corners of the card form the fulcrum around which the card can pivot. You can do this at will, each time causing the rocket to change directions.

During the course of the routine, you will take the cards apart and show the audience how to make the toy. You make it in the same way, emphasizing that one card goes inside the other. This will make it impossible for them to duplicate the effect later because you are now going to alter the arrangement slightly.

Hold the cards as shown in **figure 6**. This is your view and you are holding the cards in front of your face. To gimmick the toy, slide

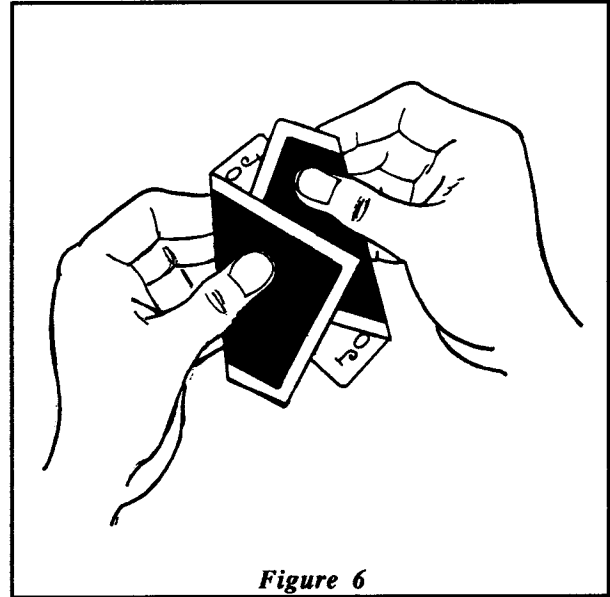


Figure 6

the right hand's card upward within the left hand's card. See **figure 7**. You want to switch the flaps nearest you. In other words, bring the flap nearest you on the right hand card up until it clears the flap nearest you on the left hand's card. This will enable just this flap to come outside the left hand's card. Since this occurs on your side, to the spectators it will appear as though you are adjusting the toy. They still think the right hand's card nests completely within the left hand's card. Actually, one flap of the two rests within the left hand's card.

You can hold the card in the left hand as before and demonstrate how the toy changes

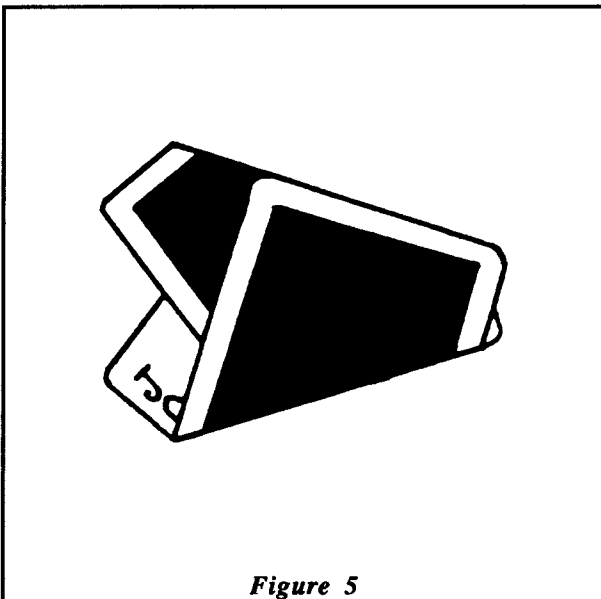


Figure 5

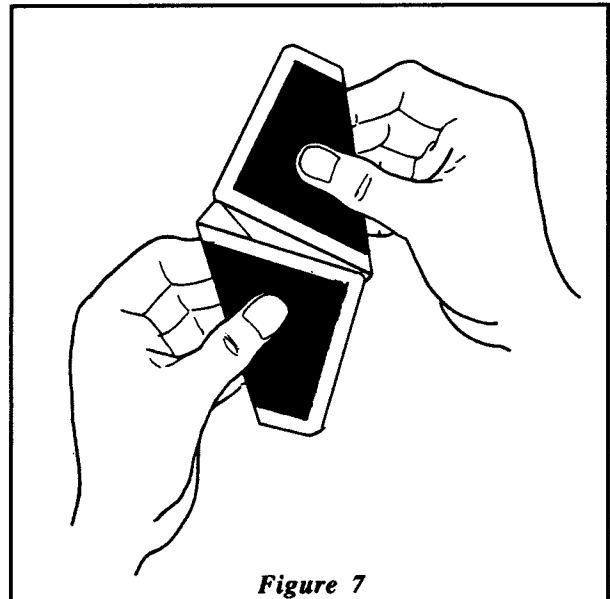
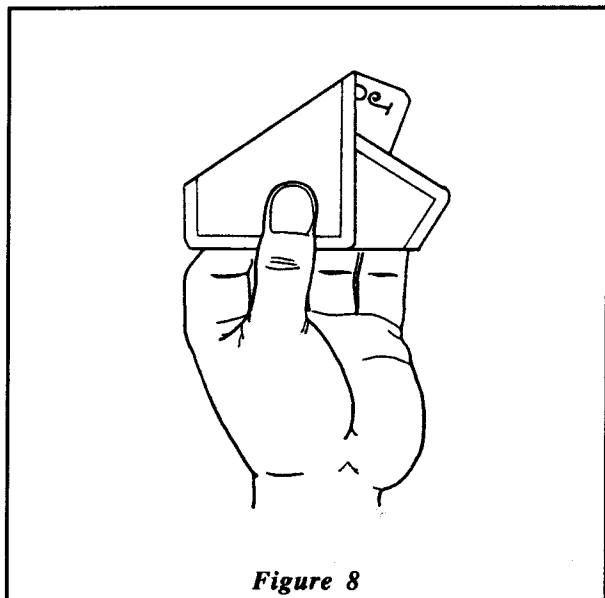


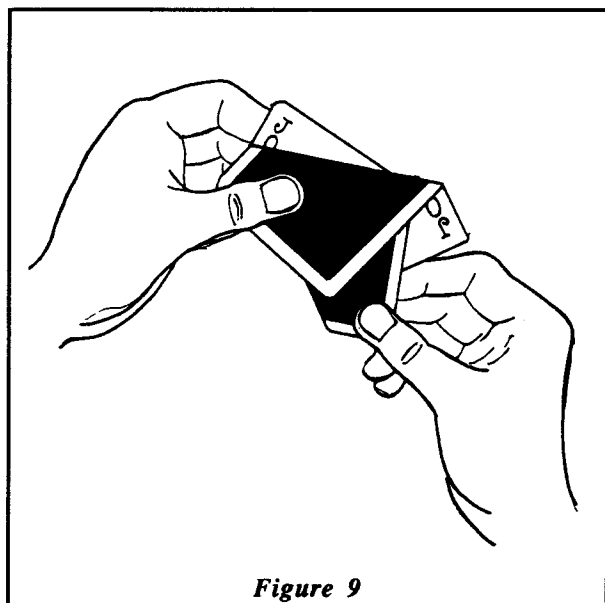
Figure 7

## TOPOLOGICAL EFFECTS

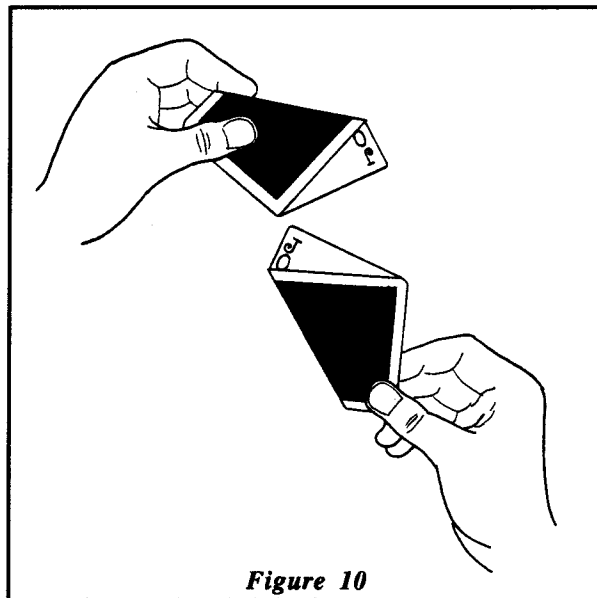


**Figure 8**

direction with just a squeeze of its end. When ready for the penetration, position the card exactly as shown in **figure 8**. If the folds of the rocket do not appear in the same relative positions as the folds in the illustration, the penetration will not work. The right hand should grasp the lower right corner of the rocket. With some force, push the right hand's card forward while holding the left hand's card firmly. As you push with the right hand, give the card about a ten degree clockwise rotation. The right hand's card will apparently penetrate through the card in the left hand. See **figure 9** and note the appearance of the penetration.



**Figure 9**



**Figure 10**

Move the right hand's card back and forth a few times to let the penetration sink in. Make sure they are viewing the cards from flat on. A view from the edge will ruin the illusion as they will see the card doing the penetrating is not in the middle of the other card. **Figure 9** shows how convincing the illusion is. The right hand's card enters the middle of the other card. It is natural for the spectator to assume it emerges from the middle at the back of the other card.

To restore the card, yank the right hand's card back toward you and clear of the left hand's card. See **figure 10**. Place it out of the way. Slowly squeeze the remaining (left hand) card as if doing something magical. Rub the fold between your fingers as if healing the nonexistent tear. Finish by slowly opening the card and showing it restored.

**Routine.** *"Do you have kids? I don't... but I have a lot of nieces and nephews. Each Christmas, I buy them all a gift and it costs a mint. So, I came up with a way to use two playing cards to make each child a gift."*

Take two cards and fold them in half diagonally. *"Let me show you what it does. Then I will show you how to make it."*

Insert one card into the other as shown in the illustration. *"It's a little space ship. Normally, a child would throw this away ... quickly."*

*But watch... it's animated. If it's going in one direction, with just a squeeze, it starts going in the other direction. If it's crashing... just a squeeze... and it's going back up again."*

During this patter, you move the rocket from left to right. Then switch the rocket's direction by squeezing the back end which aims the rocket in the other direction. Your left arm now moves the rocket in the other direction. Follow this with the rocket shown vertically, headed toward the floor. Bring your left hand down as if the rocket was going to hit the floor. When it is waist level, squeeze it, thereby changing its direction. Now lift it upward with your left arm.

*"Now I will show you how to make it. Fold two playing cards in this manner. Put one*

*inside the other. The way the cards are folded allows the rocket to change directions with just a squeeze."*

*"There is a problem with this. They are made out of cardboard. So, if you squeeze too hard, or do it too much, you will cause one card to go right through the other and ruin the toy."* Execute the penetration. *"But that's the great thing about this toy. Just a squeeze... and the toy fixes itself."* Complete the restoration.

**Background.** *The Toy* was originally published in issue #30 of **The Trapdoor** (1989). This was the core trick of a special one man insert featuring Scott Robinson. Scott developed this routine while "toying" with the possibilities presented by two cards held in the position shown in figure 2.

***"The worst thing about new books is that they keep us from reading the old ones."***

**--- Joseph Joubert (1754-1824)**

**(Mr. Joubert's new books are now old books.)**

## SEVERANCE PAY

*Scott Robinson*

**Effect.** The magician folds a playing card and a dollar bill. Placing the folded card inside the bill, the magician causes the card to penetrate through the bill.

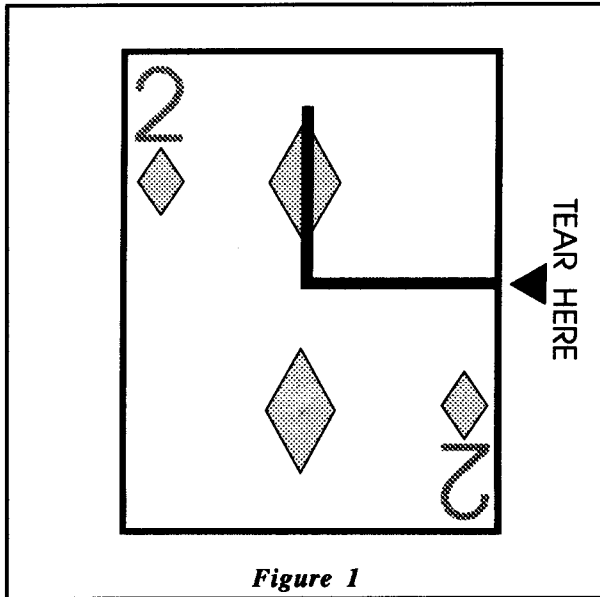


Figure 1

**The Work.** Prepare a playing card by folding it in half lengthwise in the middle with the back side out and then tearing the non-index corner of a playing card as shown in **figure 1**. After making the tear, refold the bill with the

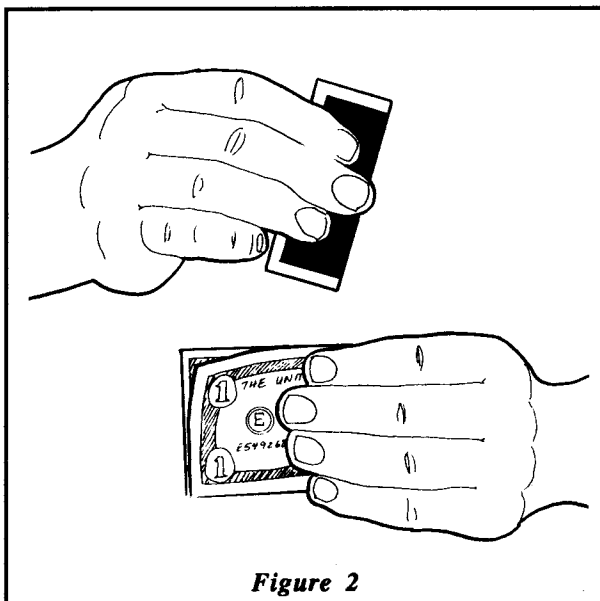


Figure 2

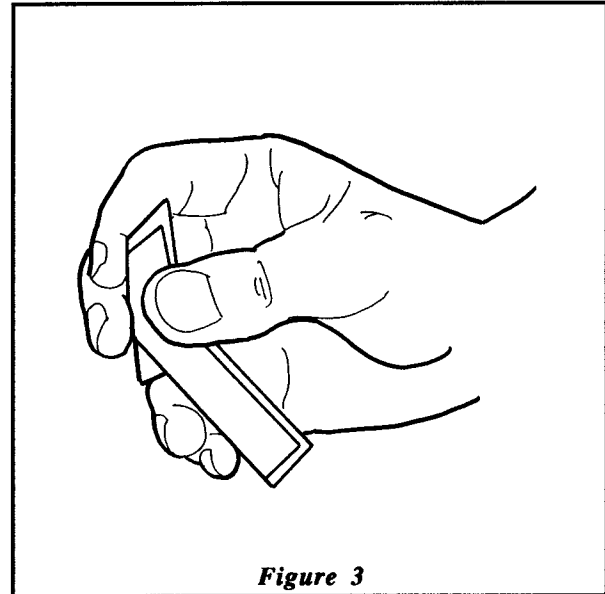


Figure 3

back out. Fold a dollar bill in half and hold it in the left hand as shown in **figure 2**. The right hand holds the card with the tear toward the spectators, hidden by the right first and second fingers. By pulling up on the near edge of the card, you can open up the loose corner as shown in **figure 3**.

Bring the bill up to your lips and blow as if you were emulating the action necessary to

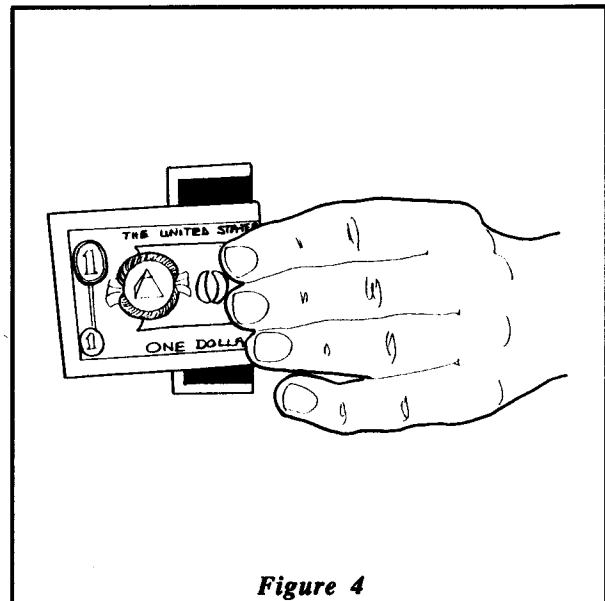
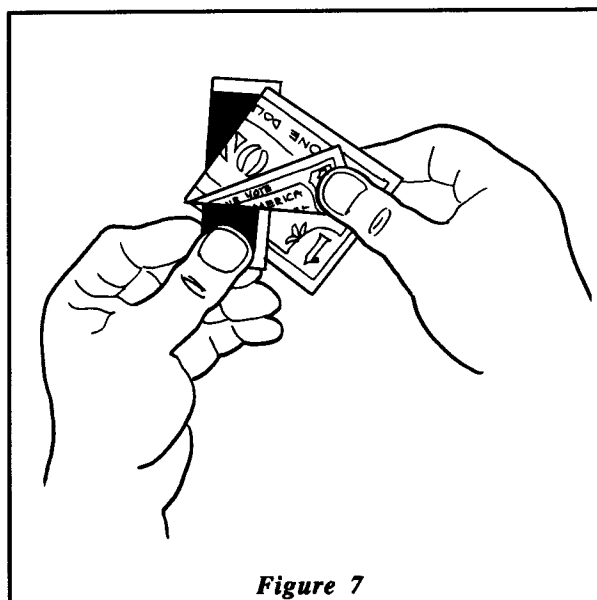
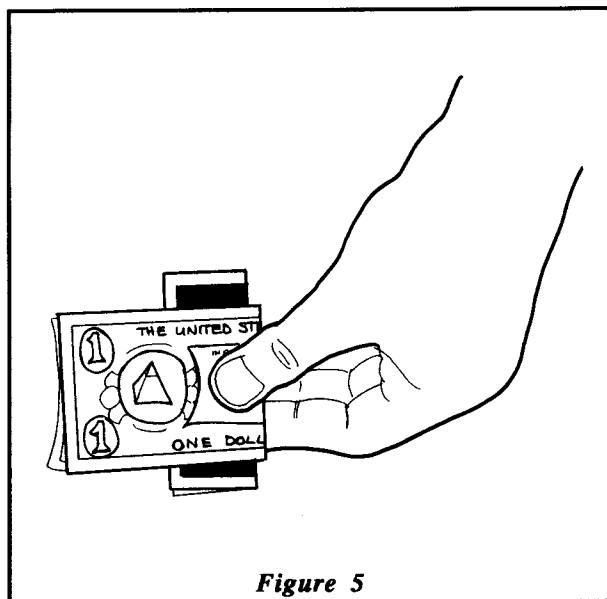


Figure 4





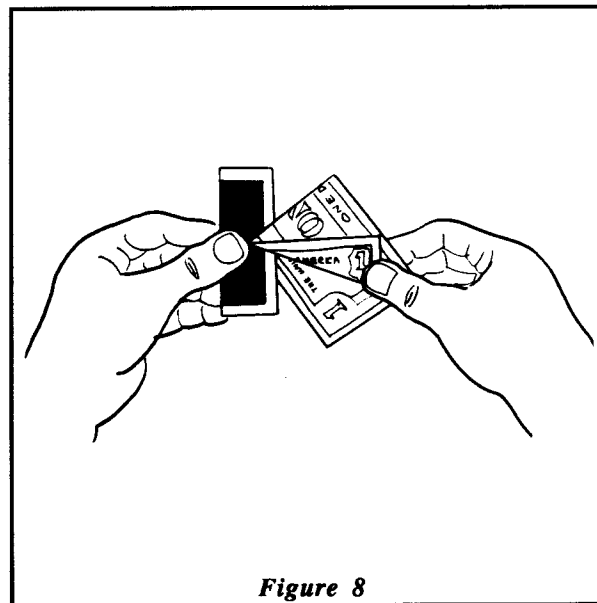
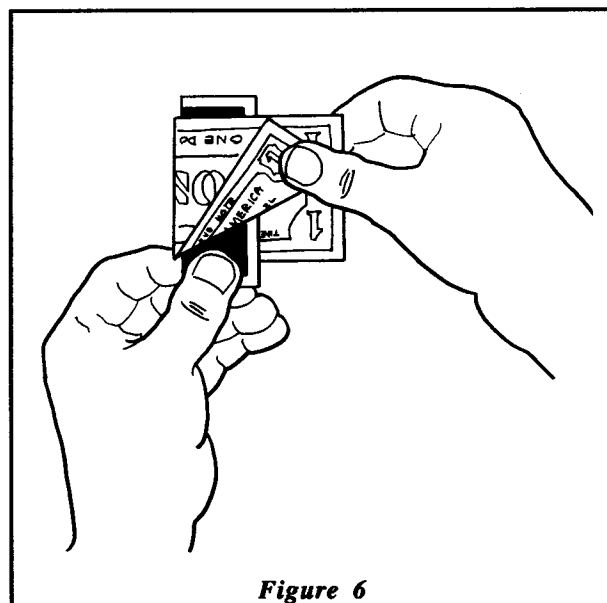
open an envelope. You are trying to convince the audience that you want some space between the two sides of the bill. Bring your right hand over to the bill and insert the flap into the middle of the bill while the rest of the card goes behind it. See **figure 4**.

Keep the edges of the bill and card toward the audience so they cannot see that the bulk of the card is going in above the bill. As soon as the card goes in as far as possible into the bill (it is limited by the vertical tear) turn everything over end for end. The audience's view of the result is shown in **figure 5**.

Fold the near edge of the upper flap of

the bill toward the spectator as shown in **figure 6**. By opening the bill in this manner, you confirm that the the card is actually inside the bill --- even though it isn't. Note how the left hand now takes possession of the card between the thumb and first two fingers. This needs to be a firm grip to keep the actions which follow from separating the flap from the card proper.

Holding the card steady, pivot the bill 45 degrees as shown in **figure 7**. Pause here for the audience to appreciate the penetration. This is the highlight --- spend a little quality time here. After about five seconds, you are ready



## TOPOLOGICAL EFFECTS

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for the finish. Pull the card on through the bill as shown in **figure 8**.

As you pull the card free of the bill, rotate both hands palm down. This is to hide the tear in the card from the audience's view. Hand the bill to a spectator. Take the card and tear it in half along the horizontal tear in the card. Open both halves enough to place one against the other so you can tear the two halves, the gimmicked half being torn along the existing tear. Hand the quarters to another spectator.

Background. This is Scott's ungimmicked

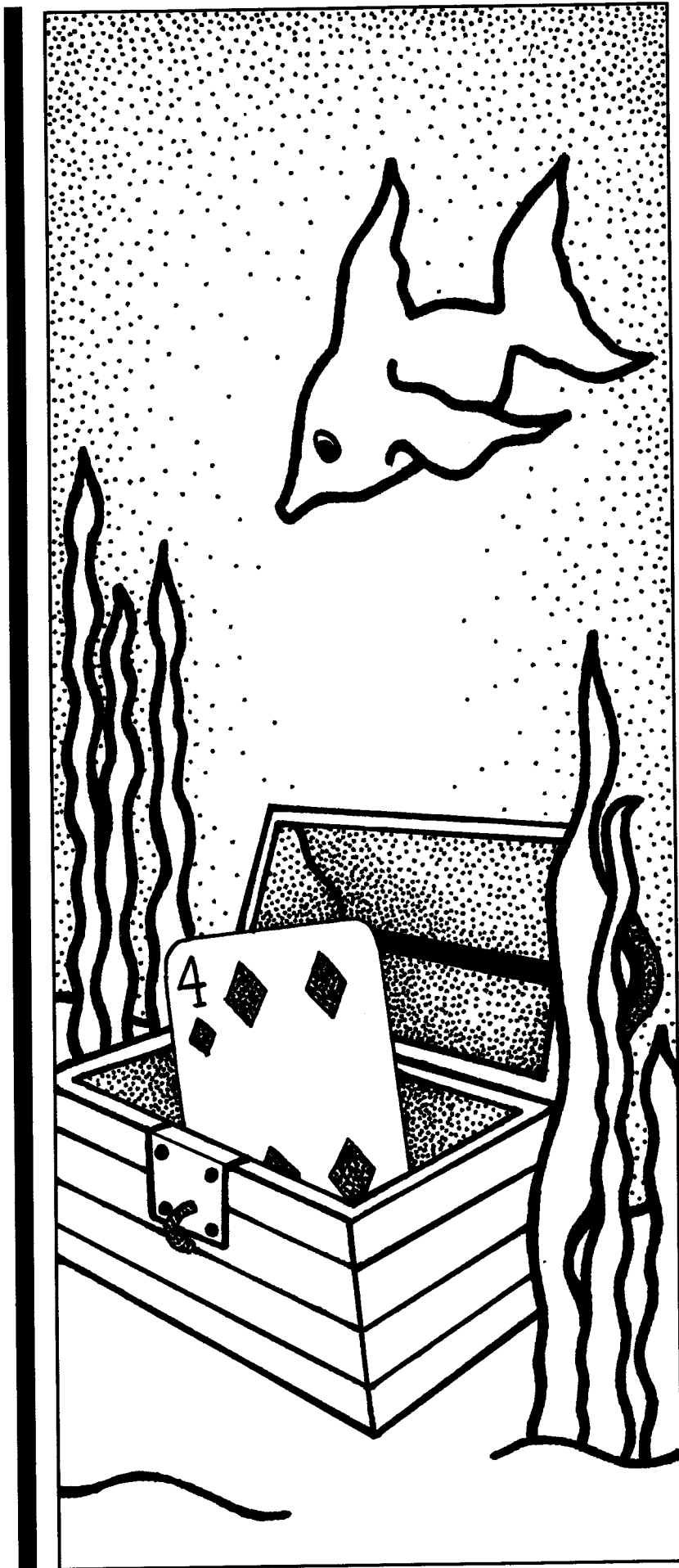
version of a previous trick of his which was published as *Billtration* in issue #13 of **Richard's Almanac** (1983). While the gimmicked version was originally credited to Tony Miller, this error was corrected in 1992 by Richard Kaufman when he published **The Collected Almanac**.

This ungimmicked version accomplishes the exact same effect as the original without the gimmick. If you saw them both in sequence, you wouldn't be able to tell one from the other.

*"I have found that NO MAGICIAN was ever able to get more of a MIRACLE effect with all his palms, passes, and sleights that I obtain with my humble Si Stebbins arrangement."*

*--- Julien J. Proskauer in the preface to How'd Ja Do That? (1934)*

# Impossible Locations



## THE OPTICAL LOCATION

*John Riggs*

You are about to read a very deceptive routine. It has several subtleties designed to throw off even the most well versed magicians.

**Effect.** The deck is cut into two halves and each is given to a spectator to shuffle. When both spectators are satisfied that their halves are thoroughly shuffled, they are asked to table their halves. A spectator is asked to turn one of the halves over and to riffle shuffle that half face up into the other face down half. Once again the deck is cut into two halves and the other spectator is allowed to flip the half of his choice over and shuffle it into the other half. The cards are thoroughly mixed.

The magician cuts the shuffled pack and spreads both halves on the table in separate spreads. Because of the mixed up shuffles, many cards are face up and many are face down. The magician asks that one spectator choose a card from one spread and the other spectator from the other spread. *"To make this difficult for me to determine your card, you may wish to select one of the face down cards."*

The spectators are asked to look at and remember their selections and return them to the other spread. They can each shuffle their respective halves. The two halves are then shuffled into each other. All this may take place while the magician's back is turned.

Despite the thorough shuffles, the magician spreads the pack on the table. He pushes one face up card forward. He flips the spread over and studies it. He pushes another face up card forward. These are the two selections.

**Preparation.** You must divide the pack into two halves. One contains all the even valued red cards and the odd valued black cards. Conversely, the other contains the odd valued red cards and the even valued black cards. The ace (1) jack (11) and the king (13) are odd values

and the queen (12) is even. Place one half on top of the other. For the sake of explanation, we will assume that the half with the odd valued red cards goes on top. Further, remember the bottom card of the top half.

**Performance.** Spread the deck face up on the table from left to right. Scoop up the left half of the spread, up to the separation between the two halves. Hand this half (the former top half of the deck) to spectator #1. Scoop up the remainder and hand it to spectator #2. Ask that each shuffle their respective halves. When they are finished, ask them to place them on the table. Turn to spectator #1 and ask her to turn either half face up and shuffle it into the other face down half. She can shuffle as many times as she wishes. Assuming she turned her half face up before the first shuffle, all her cards are face up and the other spectator's cards are face down.

Pick up the shuffled pack and hold them in the left hand as if you were going to deal them. You are going to do two things at once. With your right hand, lift the top half of the deck off to place it to the table. As you lift it off, rotate your left wrist in a clockwise manner until it is palm down. This wrist turn effectively (and secretly) turns the lower half over. It is done in an off hand manner and is covered for the most part by the upper half.

Both halves are placed on the table. If you have a soft performing surface, you can immediately make two spreads to show the mixed condition of the cards. Square them back up. Ask the second spectator to turn over the half of his choice. When he does, he is instructed to shuffle the two halves together. Because you secretly turned over the lower half before tabling the two halves, when they turn one of the halves back over, they have righted

the pack. In other words, the cards from the first spectator's half will still face one way while the cards from the second spectator's half will face the other. They may have turned the complete pack over but they did not change the relative positions of the original two halves. Assemble the shuffled pack.

Repeat the secret reversal as you cut the deck into two halves again. Spread the two halves on the table again in two separate spreads. Because you secretly reversed the lower half, one spread will have the even red cards and odd black cards face up. The other will be showing the odd red cards and the even black cards. Because this set-up is so subtle, it will not be noticed by the spectators.

Have spectator #1 remove a face down card from the spread nearest her. Have spectator #2 remove a face down card from the spread nearest him. After noting and remembering their selections, each spectator is to replace his or her selection in the other spread.

Have both spectators gather their respective spreads and shuffle them. Ask that they be placed on the table. Turn one of the halves over (they can choose which one) and then shuffle the two halves together. The cards can be shuffled as much as desired.

To reveal the selections, spread the pack evenly on the table so that you can see all the face up cards. For the sake of explanation, assume you are looking at the odd valued red cards and the even valued black cards (the original top half of the pack.) You can scan these face up cards looking for the card from the other half. That is, scan the red cards looking for an even valued one. If you don't see one, scan the black cards looking for an odd valued one. The odd card will be one of the selections. Slide this card out of the spread for the first

revelation. When finished, flip the pack over and look for the odd card among the even red cards and odd black cards. Slide the odd card out for the second revelation.

Leftovers. Note that both spectators took face down cards. However, at the end of the trick, the cards are facing opposite directions. This lends further credence to the face up and face down shuffles. Since they are now facing opposite directions, the shuffles must have been legitimate.

To present John's trick, I ask the spectator who chose the card which I will reveal first to grab my right wrist. I explain that as I pass my extended forefinger over the cards, I will (with my highly developed senses) feel an almost imperceptible twitch from the spectator when the finger points to her card.

Now I slowly pass my forefinger over the cards as I hunt for her card. This also covers the mental searching process. When I deduce her selection, I suddenly dip my forefinger down to touch her card. Because of the verbal set-up, this gets a humorous reaction. *"Whoa! Those of you who are not trained in physical reactions to visual stimuli may have missed that twitch. I almost did. For those of you who missed it, I will repeat it with his card, the second selection."*

I repeat the same presentation with the second spectator, but I don't get a twitch from him. *"Oh, your card must be face down. You can't twitch if you don't see it."* Now I flip the spread over (which turns his card face up) and continue. *"Let's try it again."* This time, his arm is almost removed from its socket as I sense the imperceptible "twitch."

Background. This was originally published in issue #44 of **The Trapdoor** (1992).

## LUCKY 13

### Steve Beam

I have used this trick to mystify magicians and laymen alike for the last fifteen years. Do not let its age fool you. It is more effective today than fifteen years ago because of a few recent modifications.

**Routine.** A card is selected, remembered, and returned to the pack. (Assume for the sake of description, they chose the ace of spades.) The magician turns to another spectator. *"I am going to let you be the magician today. Poof! You are a magician. It adds new meaning to the word, "empowerment." Now, make me look good. I want you to cut the deck in the middle, and cut to the selected card."*

Following directions, the spectator cuts the deck. The card where the spectator cut is (for example) a four. *"This magic thing is not as easy as it looks, is it? That's okay. Let's see if we can salvage your trick. Let's use the value of the card you cut to and count down four cards. When I turn over the next card, you can see you have found a mate to the card you cut to. That's a coincidence, but it's not a miracle. Let's try again."* The magician reassembles the pack, placing the four the spectator cut to off to the side.

*"Cut the pack again (whispering...) and this time, cut to the chosen card."* Again he cuts the pack, this time cutting to a jack. *"Everyone here can appreciate the fact that John is doing the trick the difficult way. He is going to cut to all the cards in the deck except the chosen card. Of course this will take a little more time, but I think John's friendship is worth oh, say... about two more hours. Let me see if I can pull this one out for you John."* Again the magician deals down eleven cards (jack equals eleven) and finds a matching jack. The magician puts the jack just cut to aside and reassembles the pack.

*"Wait a minute. Boy, you are good. You*

*didn't cut to the selection. Anybody could have done that. You cut to two indicator cards. These cards tell us the location of the selection."* Counting down to the sum of the two cut cards ( $4+11=15$ ) yields the selected card. *"John, take a bow. And while you're at it, take a seat. I don't like being upstaged."*

**Preparation.** There is a small set up of thirteen cards. This consists of thirteen cards, ace through king, from the top of the pack. The suits are irrelevant.

Have a card selected from beneath your thirteen card stack. Control this card to the top of the pack and your stack without disrupting your stack. (See the *double undercut* in the Glossary.)

**The First Cut.** Have the pack cut from right to left. Flip over the card cut to. This will be the top of the right half. Apparently, they have missed cutting to the selection. Pick up the former top half. Deal down to the location equivalent to the value of the card they cut to. If they cut to a three, deal three cards to the table. If they cut to a jack, deal eleven cards to the table. Turn over the next card, it will match the card they cut to. Flip this card face down onto the tabled cards. Pick up the tabled cards and place them back on top of the packet you are holding. Slide the card they cut to forward and leave it face up on the table. Finish by dropping the half you are holding (with your slightly rearranged stack on top) on top of the tabled half.

The selection will be located at a position one greater than the value of the card laying on the table now (the first card cut to). Remember this and you will understand the logic of what will follow.

**The Second Cut.** Place the reassembled pack on the table and ask that the spectator cut

the pack again. Turn over the card he cuts to with this second cut. Flip it face up on top of the lower half.

There are three options with the second cut. The second card cut to will either be the same as, greater than, or less than the first card cut to. The following paragraphs will address each of these options.

First Contingency. If the second card cut to equals the first in value, pick up the upper half and deal that number of cards off the top of the pack. Turn over the next card and it will be the selection. The patter line for this would be that they must be convinced of accuracy of that number since they cut to it the second time. *Let's try it again.* This is the least impressive of the possible scenarios and occurs less than 1/13th of the time.

Second Contingency. If the second card cut to is greater than the first in value, pick up the upper half and deal a number of cards equal to the second card cut to the table. Turn over the *next* card. It will match the second card cut to. This is quite a coincidence. Flip this card face down on top of the tabled packet just dealt. Pick up this packet and place it on top of the cards in your hands. Slide the second card cut to over near the first card. Drop the hand held packet onto the tabled packet and you are ready for the third cut.

To conclude the trick and find the selection, *I wonder if there is a reason you cut to these two particular cards when you had a completely free choice of any cards in the pack. I think I know the reason. Let's subtract the smaller number from the larger.* Deal a number of cards off the top equal to the difference between the two values. Turn over the *next* card. It will be the selection.

Third Contingency. If the second card cut to is less than the first in value, pick up the upper half. Subtract this smaller card from the first card cut to. Deal down to a number equal to the difference. Turn over the *next* card. It

will match the second card cut to. This is an interesting coincidence. Flip this card face down on top of the tabled packet just dealt. Pick up this packet and place it on top of the cards in your hands. Slide the second card cut to over near the first card. Drop the hand held packet onto the tabled packet and you are ready for the third cut.

The selected card is now located one card further down than the value of the first card cut to (which was the card of the larger value). *I wonder if there is a reason you cut to these two cards when you had a free choice of 52 cards. I may know the reason.* Thumb over a number of cards from your left hand to your right, counting but not reversing them as you do. Count up to a number of cards equal to the value of the first card cut to. Drop this packet to the table. Unknown to the audience, the selection is now on top of the remaining cards. Thumb over a number of cards from your left hand to your right, counting them as you do. Count up to a number of cards equal to the value of the second card cut to. Drop this packet on top of the tabled packet. Turn over the top card. It is the selection.

This dealing procedure gives the audience the impression that you dealt down to a location equal to the sum of the two cards cut to. Actually, you counted down to a number equal to the larger of the two cards cut to, plus one.

Background. This is one of a powerful breed of tricks known as contingency tricks. The ending depends upon the events which occur during the course of the trick. While your actions are determined by the events, the spectator will only be aware of a single effect, as if that is how you had intended it from the beginning.

This was originally published in my Card Tricks From Mount Olympus in 1979. However, the ending required a force and a false overhand shuffle for the final phase. The current method is far superior.



## DOUBLE DEALER

*Steve Beam*

**Effect.** A spectator shuffles a pack of cards. He cuts off about a third of the pack and counts the cards secretly to himself. He can do this with his back turned if he wishes. This causes him to arrive at a secret number, known only to him. He is instructed to riffle shuffle his packet into the remainder of the pack but to leave the packets telescoped. The magician picks up the elongated pack and riffles his thumb down the edge of the shuffled cards. He asks another spectator to stop him in the middle. All the cards are lifted at this point and the two face cards of the upper half are shown to two spectators, one on each side of the spectator who is remembering the secret number. One remembers the face card of the top telescoped packet. The other remembers the face card of the bottom telescoped packet. See **figure 1**.

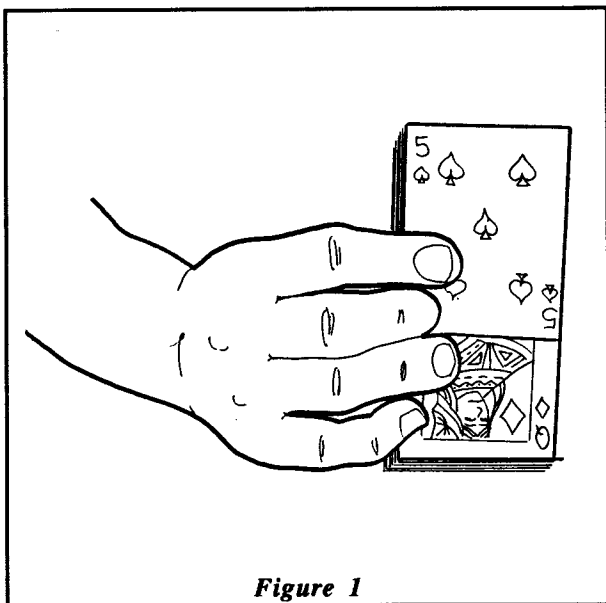
The top half is replaced on the bottom half. The two telescoped packets are split apart, the outer cards being placed on top of the inner. The packet is cut. The magician couldn't possibly know the location of either of the selections or the secret number the other spec-

tator is remembering. However, the magician sends the first selection to the secret number from the top of the pack. The second selection is magically sent to a position equivalent to the secret number from the bottom of the pack.

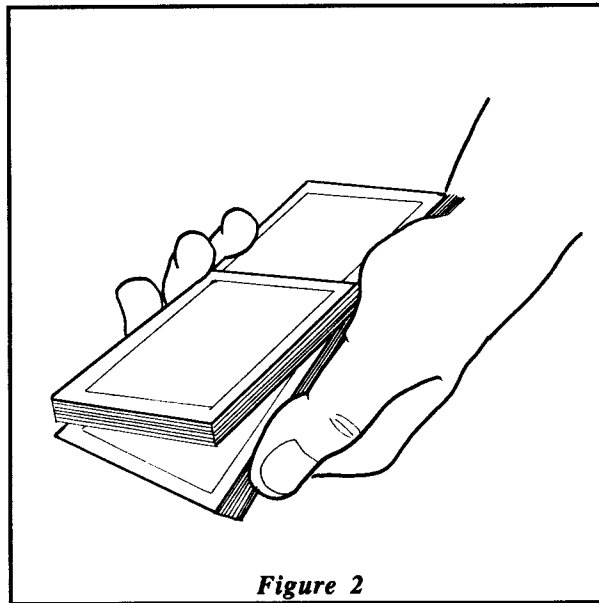
**The Work.** The first part is standard fare for riffle shufflers. Let us assume the spectator cuts off and counts seventeen cards. These cards are riffle shuffled into the others but not squared. Take the combined packet in the left hand in dealing position with the seventeen card packet nearest you.

Riffle down the far left corner of the outer packet for the spectator to call stop. See **figure 2**. When he does, your right hand lifts the packet as shown in **figure 3**, turning it end for end so the spectators can see the faces. Figure 1 shows the audience's view of the right hand's packet at the point when they are asked to remember the cards on the face. One spectator is asked to remember the top card, the other is to remember the bottom (not "lower") card.

Lower the right hand and place the right hand's cards on top of the left hand's cards ---



**Figure 1**



**Figure 2**

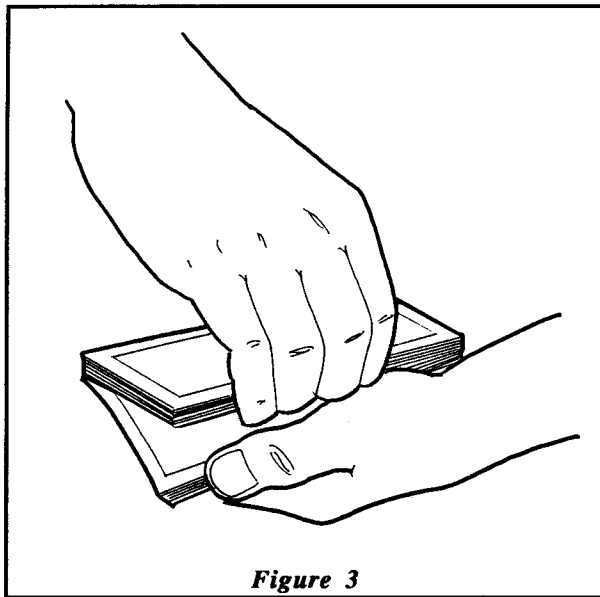


Figure 3

without rotating them end for end. Hold a little finger break at the near inner end. You are holding the deck in telescoped fashion, in dealing position in the left hand. You hold a break at the near end marking the spot where the cards were replaced.

You are now going to apparently mix the cards while retaining total control over them. Strip out the outjogged cards with your right hand and slap them on top of the pack. Now cut the deck at the break and complete the cut. The work is done for you. The first spectator's card (the one who took the upper card of the two) is now seventeenth (the secret number in this example) from the top of the pack. The second spectator's selection is on the bottom of the pack.

Ask for the name of the first selection and the secret number. Make a magical gesture which supposedly sends the card to that location. Deal sixteen cards (one less than the secret number) to the table. Take the top card into the

right hand as the left hand casually places its remaining cards on top of the tabled cards. Note that this sends the second selection to seventeenth from the face --- just by placing the sixteen cards just dealt under it. Ask for the name of the first card again. Turn the card in your right hand face up for the climax.

Ask for the second selection and repeat the magical gesture. Hand the pack to the person who selected the second card. Ask him to deal the cards to the table. *"But, you chose the bottom card of the two... so I sent your card to a position seventeenth from the bottom of the pack."* Build this up to make it seem more difficult than the first.

Count with him as he turns the deck face up and deals sixteen cards to the table. The seventeenth card staring him in the face will be his selection.

Leftovers. Think about the effect. You were able to send two freely chosen cards to a position merely thought of by another spectator. You couldn't have known the cards or the number. Even the spectators who selected the cards didn't know the secret number. Be sure as you design your presentation for this that it reflects these points.

Background. This is my addition to Karl Fulves's incomplete riffle shuffle control. Karl's control stopped with the location of the upper card of the two shown during the selection process. Since the bottom card of the two seen by the audience was automatically controlled to the bottom of the pack, it seemed logical to add the bonus revelation to it, heightening the effect. It is so bold that it has taken many magicians aback. This was originally published in Issue #32 of **The Trapdoor**.

## THE LOST KEY

*Steve Beam*

This strong item is based upon an effect by Charles T. Jordan. The original item was not 100% and relied upon estimation. This is surefire and strong.

Effect. The magician hands the deck to a spectator who cuts it in two and shuffles the two halves together. He is asked to remove a card from the middle of the pack, remember it, and place it on top. He then cuts the pack several times. The magician takes the pack back and immediately locates the selected card.

The Work. There is a small arrangement. Take all the diamonds out of the deck. Arrange them from the face: ace, two, three, etc. Place these thirteen cards in the direct center of the pack. In a 52 card deck, there would be 20 cards above the stack and 19 cards below. Note the top card of the pack (assume it's the ace of spades) and you are ready to proceed.

Hand the deck to a spectator. Ask that he cut the deck in two. When he complies, visually check to ensure he cut into your stack. If he cuts somewhere else, proceed with a different trick. Ask him to shuffle the two halves together. Watch the shuffle. If the top card remains the same, you know it's the ace of spades and that becomes your key card.

If the ace remains on the top, his selection is removed from the middle and placed on top of the pack (and the ace). After the spectator makes several cuts, you take the deck from him. Spread through the cards until you find the ace of spades. The card immediately above it is the selection.

If, during the initial shuffle, the spectator buries the ace of spades, you know that one of the diamonds is the top card of the pack. This is because he cut into your stack before the shuffle. Proceed as before. Ask that a card be

removed from the middle and noted. Have them placed on top of the pack.

You are going to ask that they cut the pack in a certain manner which will ensure that you can find the selection. Ask the spectator to cut the top fourth of the cards to the table. This is followed by the second fourth which is placed on the first fourth. The third and last fourths are dropped on top of the previous packets. The deck may now be cut using simple cuts as desired.

When you receive the deck back, spread through the cards starting from the face. Look for the first card in your stack, the ace of diamonds. When you find the ace, look for the next card, the two. While there may be cards between the diamonds, they should be in order. As soon as you reach a diamond which is out of sequence, return to the previous diamond. It is your key. The card immediately to the left of that diamond is the selection.

In other words, assume you find the ace through five of diamonds in that order. The next diamond you find is the jack of diamonds. Since this is the first diamond out of sequence, return to the last one which was in sequence, the five of diamonds. The card immediately to the left of the five is the selection

Leftovers. In the second example above, you use a key which you don't know to locate a selection you don't know. You have to determine the key to locate the selection. You don't know which diamond to use because the spectator could have cut any where in your stack before he shuffled. This could have sent any one of the diamonds to the top.

The shuffle seems to eliminate any chance of using a sure fire key. However, the cut before the shuffle is what guarantees the success of the key.

Background. This was an idea I had to convert the Charles Jordan's **Infallible Detection** (from page 65 of Collected Tricks, privately published by Karl Fulves in 1975) into a trick which was truly infallible. The original trick required a little bit of luck to successfully complete.

Then, in 1992, Dover Publications, Inc. released Charles Jordan's Best Card Tricks by Karl Fulves. Following *The Infallible Detection*, Karl presents his own "*Infallible Detection*" Notes. In this, Karl eliminated the element of risk but now the magician was required

to separate the pack for shuffling.

My solution doesn't eliminate all risk. It does require the spectator to cut into the thirteen card stack in order to **guarantee** success. If he does not, you can either have him cut again or you can ask him to complete the shuffle. If he completes the shuffle and leaves the top card intact, you can continue. If not, you should proceed with another trick, returning to this one at a later date with a spectator who knows how to cut evenly. Maybe one day there will be a law requiring all laymen to be card handling certified.

## A FINE MESS

*Steve Beam*

This location proves that if you give a spectator enough choices, he perceives that he controls the outcome. However, all the while, you have matters under control.

Effect. The magician asks the spectator to shuffle the deck. He then spreads it smoothly on the table. *"Slide out any card in the spread."* They do. *"I might have subconsciously influenced you to choose that particular card. I might have left it a little more exposed in the spread than the rest of the cards. Or, I might have positioned it at a location closer to you than the rest. To eliminate the possibility that the card you just slid out of the spread was forced upon you, I want you to note the value of that card."*

*"If the peeked at card is a five, you can count five cards in either direction, starting with the card you slide out of the spread. Peek at the new card you arrive at. Remember that card. It is your selection. Square the pack and return it. If the card you originally slid out is a court card, please replace it and slide out another card."*

The magician spreads through the cards and removes the selection.

The Work. When performing card magic, any piece of knowledge you can gain may help you to locate the selection. Never discount any piece of information, even if it seems trivial. This effect proves that it can help you to pull off a miracle.

If you read through the effect again, you will find that there is no way you could know the exact selection. However, if you pay attention to what the spectator does, you can know the value of the card he slides out. You simply count silently along with him. If he counts three cards, you know that he originally slid a three out of the pack.

If you'll watch which direction he counts, you will know whether his card is above

or below the jogged card. The last thing you should notice is the approximate location of the jogged card. Is it in the exact center, slightly above, or slightly below. The more information you have, the easier the conclusion of the trick. Let's assume that the spectator slid a card out of the exact center. Further, he counted three cards toward the top of the deck (starting with the jogged card as instructed). You have three pieces of information. You know the approximate location of your key, you know its value, and you know how many cards above or below the key the selection is.

Knowledge is power. If you happened to gain a fourth piece of information during the trick, you could make it even more impossible. Suppose that you noted the bottom card of the pack at the conclusion of the spectator's original shuffle. You could have the spectator cut the pack as many times as desired after noting the cards and squaring the spread. To locate the selection, simply spread through the pack looking for the original bottom card. Cut this card to the face of the pack. You are now ready to complete the effect and it is as if the cards had never been cut.

To find the selection, spread through the pack from the back to the front. Spread quickly to the approximate location of the key. There will be one of several situations at this point. The best scenario will be that there is only one card in the general area of your key which has the same value as your key. If this is the case, count three cards to the back of your key, starting with your key. The card at that position will be the selection. Reveal it in as dramatic a manner as you can muster. Do not act lucky. Act as though this is the only ending you ever intended.

Now let's deal with other possible sce-

narios. Assume that there are three threes located close to the area where your key should be located. As you are spreading from the back of the spread, pause when you come to the leftmost possible key. Count to the third card to the left (starting with the key) and you will have the first possible selection. Split the spread to the right of this card so that it becomes the face card of the left hand packet. Place the left hand's packet face down on the table. The first possible selection will be on the bottom.

Continue spreading until you come to the next key. Count to the third card behind (above) it and you will have the second possible selection. Remember this card. Split the pack to the right of this possible selection. Drop the left hand's cards onto the tabled packet. The second selection is on the back (top) of the remaining cards.

Spread through the balance of the pack until you find the third key. Locate the third possible selection by counting to it and remember it. Upjog this card and remove it from the spread. Place it face down on the table. Square the spread and place the packet onto the tabled packet.

Pick up the single card (third possible selection) and place it on top of the pack, protruding over the pack by about half its length. With apparent concentration, cut the deck and complete the cut. You will now have the three possible selections in the middle of the pack. The middle of the three cards will be protruding from the pack by about half its length.

Ask for the name of the selection. You are remembering the name of the outjogged card and the card immediately below it. If he names the outjogged card, emphasize the fact that you have outjogged a single card. Dramatically reveal it.

If he calls the name of the card below the jogged card. Call attention to the fact that you jogged a single card, your locator card. *"This card helps you to locate selections made by others. It is in the pack immediately above*

*another card. What is the name of your card again?"* Spread the pack and reveal the card beneath your jogged card.

If the spectator calls out the name of a card you don't recognize, you must assume that it is the card immediately above the jogged card. Reveal it by emphasizing how your "locator" card has found the card above it.

Obviously, if there were only two possible selections in the middle of the pack, you don't need an out for three. Use the method just described to control the two selections to the top and bottom of the pack. Remove an indifferent card to act as your locator. Since its identity is not important, you can turn it face up for the cutting sequence.

I have used a patter line for dealing with the two out option. I control one of the possible selections to the top and the other to the bottom. I then remove the jack of diamonds. *"This is Jack Diamond, the card detective. You may have read about him. He's a paperback hero, a real card. His job is to find selected cards."* I place him on the card case. *"He's on the case now."* After a couple of seconds, I place him halfway inside the case. *"He's looking into the case now."* After another couple of seconds, I hand the jack to the spectator. *"He's ready. Will you place him in the middle of the pack. Fine. But he likes to face upward."* At this point, I spread through the pack and execute the Prophecy move which sandwiches the jack between the two possible selections. (Bill Simon's *Prophecy Move* is explained in the chapter on Moves.) I ask for the name of the card Jack is supposed to locate. I then reveal either the card directly above or below the jack.

If, on the other hand, you have four possible selections, you ought to consider changing professions. However, you will still be able to locate the selections. Control the first two possible selections to the top and the bottom. Remove the third and fourth possible selections. Pretend to debate over which of the two cards to use. Cut one into the pack as described above. Leave the other face down on

## IMPOSSIBLE LOCATIONS

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the table.

The spectator names his selection. If he names the single tabled card, it is obvious that it is the selection since you have placed the other card of the two back in the pack. If they name either of the other three cards, you can reveal them as described above. It is now obvious that you have discarded the single card on the table. Your patter will help it to be even more obvious to the onlookers.

Multiple Selections. Having two cards noted would seem to make your job more difficult. However, it has the exact opposite effect. It virtually guarantees success. After all, you will no longer have to choose between two or three cards in the middle which have the same value as your key.

If two cards are slid from the middle, they both become your keys. If you can note the number of cards between the two keys, you narrow the number of possible outcomes significantly. For example, assume the first person notes a three and the third card above it. The second person notes a five and the fifth card

below it. Further, you note that there are six cards between the two keys and the relative locations of the keys. That is, which one is above the other. Assume the three is above the five.

You are no longer looking for any random three or five as your key. You are looking for a key which is exactly six cards away from a five. Further, the three is exactly seven cards above the five. (Six cards are between the two, plus one of the keys.)

Leftovers. Note that I ask them to discard the original card they slide from the pack if it is a court card. The reason is twofold. First, it becomes difficult to visually follow a count which exceeds ten. Secondly, if they replace the court card and slide out another close to it, you have one other piece of information. You will know the key's value, the key's approximate location in relation to the rest of the pack, the selection's location relative to the key, and the key's location in relation to a court card.

*"A miracle: an event described by those to whom it was told by men who did not see it."*

**Elbert Hubbard**

## LOCATOR SERVICE

### *Gary Plants*

Effect. A card is thought of by a spectator and later found by the magician in a very puzzling manner.

The Work. You will need a full deck of 52 cards without the jokers. Start with either a break or a crimp which will allow you to cut the pack into two sections. One should contain 27 cards, the other 25. Ask the spectator to shuffle the packet of 27 cards. When he finishes, instruct him to pull out a block of cards from the middle of the packet. Tell him to secretly count the number of cards in this packet and remember this secret number. Have him place this pile aside for the moment.

He can shuffle the remainder of the 27 card packet and table it. Instruct him to pick up the other packet, the one containing 25 cards. Instruct him to shuffle this packet. When he finishes, he should continue holding the cards. He is to deal cards onto the tabled packet in a particular way.

Ask him to look at the top card and place

it on top of the tabled packet. As he releases this card, he counts one. Have him repeat this with the next card to the count of two. He is to continue this until he reaches his secret number. Ask him to remember the card which falls at his secret number. However, he should continue past his secret number so that you do not know what it is.

He can stop dealing and counting any time past his secret number. When he finishes, ask him to shuffle the remaining cards he holds and drop them on top of the pack. Finally, ask him to shuffle the small packet of cards he originally cut off which contains his secret number. Ask him to drop these on top of the pack.

Despite the numerous shuffles and apparent disarray of the cards, the selection is now the 26th card from the top of the pack. You can reveal by the method of your choice. Or, simply take the pack and spread through it, tabling the 27th card from the face.



## LOCATOR SERVICE II

*Gary Plants*

Effect. Once again, under impossible circumstances a card is mentally noted by a spectator. The magician finds it.

The Work. Secretly note and remember the top and bottom cards of the pack. For the sake of example, we will assume the top card is the ace of spades and the bottom card is the ace of clubs. Riffle shuffle the deck as many times as desired without disturbing the top and bottom cards. This is accomplished cutting the pack into two halves. When shuffling the two halves together, start by releasing the bottom card (ace of clubs) first. Then, end the shuffle by allowing the top card (ace of spades) to fall last.

Hand the deck to a spectator. Ask that she cut a small group of cards from the middle of the pack. Instruct her to discreetly count these cards, yielding a secret number. Ask her to drop these cards on top of the deck and to (simple) cut the deck as often as she desires. Let's assume she drops twelve cards onto the top of the pack and then cuts the deck several times.

Ask her to start dealing cards face up onto the table. You want her to remember the card which falls at her secret number. So that you will not receive any hints relating to her

number or selection, you will turn your back on the proceedings. However, as you turn your back, remember the first card she deals.

She can deal as many cards as she wishes, as long as she remembers the one which falls at her secret number. When she finishes, ask her to pick up the cards she dealt and place them back on top of the deck and cut the deck a few times.

Turn back to face the spectator. Locate the card which was originally the top card of the pack, the ace of spades. Starting with the card behind the ace, count how many cards are between the ace of spades and the ace of clubs. These were your original key cards located on top and bottom of the pack. This will give you her secret number.

Now cut your other key card, the one you glimpsed before turning your back, to the top (back) of the pack. Count the secret number (12) back from the top of the pack starting with the key card as number one. The twelfth card in this example will be her selection. Remove it and place it face down on the table. Recap the impossible conditions and then ask for the name of her card. Allow her to turn it over and show it to the audience.

## UNCANNY Doug Canning

There is absolutely no explanation for this that fits the effect. It is a killer. A little advance (one time) preparation will pay you a year's worth of dividends the first time you floor the audience with it.

Effect. The spectator selects and replaces a card and shuffles the pack a couple of times. He returns the pack to the magician who pockets it. The magician removes one card at a time from his pocket as the spectator mentally (silently) spells the identity of his card, one letter for each card removed. On the last letter of the spell, the magician is holding the selection. Note that the deck was shuffled by the spectator immediately before the magician pocketed the pack.

The Work. This requires a "corner short." This is a "locator" card which is made by trimming less than a sixteenth of an inch off both of the non-index corners of a card. The curved blades of a nail clipper make it the ideal tool to accomplish this. When finished, the corners should be as smooth as the factory cut corners. A jagged cut or a tell-tale flat edge on a rounded corner will expose the gimmick. For the sake of explanation, we will assume that you will trim the three of diamonds. You should trim the card enough to allow the card to function as a locator but not so much that it exposes the condition to the audience.

In addition, you will "punch" eleven cards. This *punching* is accomplished by pressing a dried out ball point pen on the face of these cards while resting the back of the card on a soft surface such as a phone book. Push the point of the pen into the card within the outline of the number or the index pip. When done properly, you will be able to feel the bump from the back of the card although it will be invisible to anyone not looking for it. You will punch the following eleven cards:

three of clubs  
seven of clubs  
eight of clubs  
queen of clubs  
four of spades  
five of spades  
nine of spades  
jack of spades  
king of spades  
jack of hearts  
king of hearts

Setup. Place the three of diamonds and the eleven punched cards on top of the pack. The three is third from the top. The other cards may be in any order with the suits interspersed.

Performance. You will start by demonstrating what you will have the spectator do while your back is turned. *"I am going to turn my back and ask you to do a few things. First I will show you what I want you to do. Think of any number. To keep the trick from dragging, think of a dozen or less. For example, if you think of the number four, you will deal four cards one at a time onto the table."*

Demonstrate by dealing the top four cards to the table, reversing their order. *"Look at the last card dealt [the fourth card] remember it, and place it back on top of the deck. Now place the remainder of the dealt cards on top of the looked at card."*

After this demonstration, the three of diamonds, the corner shorted card, is on top of the pack. This was part of the purpose of the demonstration. Note that you will always use four cards for your demonstration if you start with the short card at the third position. (Use one more card than the location of the short card.)

Before turning your back, execute a

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quick false shuffle or false cut. This gives the spectator the impression the cards are mixed. This is important since you don't want him to mix the cards after your back is turned.

Place the deck face down on the table near the spectator. Turn your back and guide the spectator through your instructions as you did in the demonstration. After he has finished and the deck is squared, turn back to face him. Instruct him to cut the deck into two halves and shuffle the halves together. Have him repeat this shuffle a second time. He can then cut the pack and complete the cut. *"It is impossible for me to know where any card in the pack is, much less your specific card. But, I am going to let you help me."* (By the way, you are telling the truth. You do not have any idea where his selection is located.)

Cut the pack below the corner short so that it goes to the bottom of the pack. This returns your stack, along with the cards which were interlaced with it during the shuffle to the top of the pack. Of course this is the reason for the corner short in the first place. By riffling up or down the index corner of the pack, you can locate the short card. Cut the pack above the short card and it goes to the top of the pack. Cut below it, and it goes to the bottom.

(Note that you can substitute a breather crimp for the corner short as explained in the glossary.)

Place the pack in your right outside coat pocket laying on its long edge with the faces facing your body.

*"I will take cards one at a time from my pocket. As I do, I want you to silently spell the name of your chosen card. Each card removed will represent one letter in the spell. You are to spell the word "of" as in ace "of" spades. Say "stop" out loud when you have spelled the last letter in the card's name."*

Reach into your pocket and feel the index corner of the top card for the "bumps." If this card does not have any bumps, remove it as the spectator spells the first letter of his card's identity. Repeat the same procedure

with the next card and then the next, keeping a silent count of the number of cards you have removed.

The first card you come to with bumps on its back is the selection. Do not remove it. Instead, slide it out of the way until your count reaches the number twelve. You should come to the selection before arriving at the number twelve in your count. When you reach twelve, remove the selection with its back to the audience. The spectator will call stop. Dramatically turn the card toward the audience. It is the selection.

If you come to other "bumped" cards after the selection but before reaching twelve in your count, you can remove them from the pocket just like the normal cards. The bumps are invisible and therefore do not represent a threat to the secret of the trick.

Why. All of the punched cards spell with twelve letters. At the conclusion of the selection process, the spectator's card is directly under the key card. The shuffles intersperse random unpunched cards into the stack but they do not change the order of the stack. When the short card is cut to the bottom of the pack, all the cards in your stack that were dealt by the spectator before the selection are also cut to the bottom. This means that the selection will be the top most punched card and will be in the top twelve cards.

Leftovers. A funny thing happened on the way to the printers. Tom Craven (Kent, Ohio) called me (Raleigh, North Carolina) and described a trick which Doug Canning (Plano, Texas) had called him about. It was based on a trick by Stewart James (Courtright, Ontario) and was published in Stewart James in Print -- The First Fifty Years. The trick was self-working and a killer so Tom suggested that I might want it for this book. He cleared it with Doug and everything was all set. Doug did say to make sure I credited the Stewart James reference for his inspiration.

Six months later I had sent this book to the printers in Michigan. While they were

shooting the plates, I found the notes I had made which referenced the credit. I realized that I had left the credit out of the book which was currently at the printers. I thought that I would correct the credit when I received the galleys back. It would be a small, inexpensive change to make and the printers would only have to reshoot one page.

So that I could check the reference, I pulled out the 991 page James book and looked up the trick in question. Doug had completely reworked the trick both in props and in presentation. However, almost parenthetically in the last paragraph, Stewart alluded to the fact that the trick could be altered in handling. This alteration turned out to be the same thing Doug had invented. Doug obviously had not made it all the way through the description to the last paragraph. As a matter of fact, had it not been for Doug's insistence on proper crediting, I would not have discovered the problem. I'm not sure I ever made it to the last paragraph when I read the book.

Here was the situation. It was 9:00 p.m. I had four pages to replace in the galleys which had to be Federal Expressed out the next day in order to meet the publishing deadline. There were five options with the approximate cost following each.

(1) Print the trick "as is" and correct the credit in volume II. Keep in mind that I publish a magazine where this would not have seemed quite so far-fetched. (No financial costs, only costs would be in friendship of magicians I respect --- but this one was the financial favorite.)

(2) Pull the trick, leaving four blank pages in its place. To cover, I could place the word "NOTES" at the top of the page. (Nominal cost, other than in future readers who question an author's placement of notes in the *middle* of a book.)

(3) Replace Doug's trick with one of mine. I would still have had to reshoot the index, table of contents, and *Thanksgiving*. Then Doug's mother would have been upset when she

read the full page ads which I had already placed in the major magic magazines which list Doug as a contributor to the book. She would be upset that I didn't tell her about the change until after I cashed her check. (Costly, reshooting twelve pages and ticking off "mom.")

(4) Pull the trick and renumber the subsequent pages. (Very costly, reshooting approximately fifty pages.)

(5) Call Doug to see if he has something comparable to the original trick. (I use the word "original" as a synonym for "first"--- not as a description of the trick as it applies to Doug.) I had less than twenty hours to get it from him, write it up, proofread it, and ship it back to the printers in Michigan. All of this assumed that he had another self-working trick.

I decided the last option was the better of the choices. So, I called Tom and Doug. I found out that Doug had another great self-working trick that wasn't based on anything else. Tom faxed the details to me and I quickly wrote it up. By changing its name to "Uncanny" which is what I had called Doug's first contribution, I didn't have to redo the table of contents or the index --- all of which had already been shot by the printers.

There remained only one problem to solve. The description of the second trick only required two pages versus the original four. Then it dawned on me. By taking a little over a full page to explain all of this to you in this fashion, I was able to lengthen the description of Doug's trick to four pages and fill the void left by the first contribution. And all of this was done in a manner that would preclude you from realizing it, had I not just told you.

However, I am hoping that you share more than an interest in magic with Doug. I am hoping that you share his penchant for not reading the whole description of magic tricks.

If you share this wonderful trait with him, you will never realize that all of this text on this page and the top of the next is a ruse, a sham, and a scam. It is an illusion, which brings me to my last point. (I only needed one more

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point to get me to the top of this new page.)  
What better place to locate an illusion than in a book on magic?

Now that I have perpetrated this hoax that you hopefully will never find out about, I will mention that this is a great trick in its own right. It turns out that Doug has a lot of super material and I expect that you will hear more from him in the future (and I will not hear from Stewart!)

Finally, in case you are interested, this was originally called *Midnight Speller*. I couldn't call it that because I would have had to relocate the description to the chapter on spelling effects and now (thank God) I don't have the room or the necessity to explain to you how complex a process that would have been. And, by the way, the Federal Express man is at my door.

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*"Every calling is great when greatly pursued."* --- Oliver Wendall Holmes, Jr.

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## IMPAIRED

### *Steve Beam*

Magically sandwiching a selected card between two other cards is a standard plot in card magic. What follows is about as stunning a solution as you could hope for since it involves only a mentally chosen card.

**Effect.** The magician removes two jokers from the pack and places them face down in the pack. One goes near the face of the pack and the other is placed near the back. The face down jokers are left outjogged as the magician spreads through the face up pack. "*Think of a card between the two jokers. Got one? Great.*" The magician closes the spread and slowly squares the jokers with the rest of the pack. Asking for the name of the card, the magician riffles the pack. Spreading out the pack again, he finds the mental selection sandwiched between the two jokers.

**The Work.** This is an efficient sandwich as there are no moves and the root principle used accomplishes two different things simultaneously. You must construct a trick pack. Take 20 cards and arrange them from back to face in Si-Stebbins order or your favorite arrangement. (The Si Stebbins setup is explained in the previous trick, *Uncanny*.)

Treat the backs of these cards with roughing fluid. Take another deck consisting of all jokers and rough the backs of twenty of these. After the fluid dries, alternate face down jokers with face up arranged cards, starting with a face up card. This completes the roughed pairs. You are going to handle the pack throughout the trick so you should apply the fluid accordingly.

To these forty cards, add six indifferent cards on the face and another six on the back. Ensure that these indifferent cards do not duplicate any of the twenty cards already used in making this pack. Also, remember that this "roughed" pack cannot be viewed from the back.

Spread through the face up pairs and locate first and last roughed pairs. Remove the jokers from behind these cards and turn them face up. Insert them back into the same position in the pack. You are ready to perform.

Spread through the face up pack, keeping the roughed pairs intact. Remove the two face up jokers when you come to them. Turn the jokers face down and insert them behind their mates but leave them outjogged for about an inch. Spread through the cards and ask the spectator to think of a card between them.

Square the spread including the jokers and recap what has taken place. Ask for the name of the mentally chosen card and then riffle the pack for the magic to happen. When the chosen card is named, mentally discern the card which lies immediately above it in your sequence.

**Note.** Most people find addition easier than subtraction. This is why you arranged the cards in Si Stebbins order from back to face. You want to know the name of the card immediately above their selection. When they name their card, add three and shift to the next suit in the "CHaSeD" order. This will be the card immediately above the selection, your key card.

Carefully (but casually) spread through the pack, roughed pair by roughed pair. It will look as though you are thumbing the cards over quickly but individually, looking for the selection. When you come to your key card, slow down. Apply the pressure necessary to separate the back of your key card from the joker beneath it. The next card will be the face up selection. Continue spreading as you apply the pressure necessary to separate the selection from the joker beneath it. You have shown the face up selection to be sandwiched between the two face down jokers.

The audience assumes that the jokers at

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the end are the same two jokers you inserted at the beginning. The rough/smooth principle not only causes the original jokers to vanish but also produces the jokers which sandwich the selection at the conclusion.

Leftovers. I explained the concept above utilizing the jokers for ease of explanation. I think the effect is stronger using a pair of mates. For example, the red jacks. You would con-

struct the pack in the same manner except that instead of alternating the jokers with the Si Stebbins half, you would use twenty red jacks, alternating between hearts and diamonds. When you are finished assembling the pack, the face down cards are jacks of diamonds and hearts in alternating order. Then remove one of each suit to be your sandwiching cards.

## JINXED

*Steve Beam*

This effect requires the teaching of a false overhand shuffle. While this is technically considered sleight of hand, it was also the first sleight I ever learned. Since I learned it along with multiple variations at age ten, I do not feel that it should preclude the publication of this trick in a book with a self-working theme.

**Effect.** The spectator shuffles a borrowed deck of cards. He fans through the cards and remembers a card "near the middle." He cuts the deck a couple of times and deals it out into five piles. The magician fans the various piles out so the spectator can tell him in which pile his card resides. That pile is shuffled and the deck is reassembled and shuffled. The magician removes one card and places it face down on the table. He asks for the name of the selection. The tabled card is turned over. It is a five. The spectator is instructed to deal down to the fifth card and he will find his selection.

**The Work.** You never know his card until he tells you its identity. The effect is at least as strong as described above. But, there is a twenty percent chance that the card on the table is his card. It will take a few pages to describe the workings, but I think you will be rewarded with an effect which is worth the effort.

At first, you may feel that the effect is too risky. However, I will give various handlings which will permit the successful completion 100% of the time. First I will describe the basic concept.

Have the deck shuffled by a spectator. Have him fan through the cards and remember a card "near the middle," one of the middle twenty-five to be specific. While it is only psychological, you will find that most spectators think the closer they get to the middle of the pack, the more lost their card will be. For this

reason, there is no effort involved trying to get them to select from the cards you need them to use without appearing too particular.

At this point I have another spectator (simple) cut the cards and return the pack to the original spectator and ask him to cut them again "to make sure the card is really lost." The first cut sends his card away from the middle and the second cut sends it right back to the middle. In other words, the second cut nullifies the first. This cutting part is optional but is very strong for this type of trick. If you find the first cut is way off center, you can always reach over and cut the deck yourself, compensating for their variance.

If you do not feel comfortable with this method of selection, simply ask that the spectator cut the deck and either look at the bottom card of the cut off half or the top card of the remaining half. He then replaces the cut off portion and is ready to continue.

Instruct the spectator to deal the deck into five piles until the pack is exhausted. Pick up each pile and ask if his selection is contained within. If the answer is in the negative, cut the packet and return it to its position on the table. Repeat until you come to the packet with the chosen card. If the answer is positive, cut the bottom five cards to the top of the packet. Table the packet. Their selection will now be one of the two top or three bottom cards. Note that a quick riffle shuffle here would retain the location of the top and bottom stocks.

You will now reassemble the deck in a manner which retains the selection either as one of the top two or bottom three cards. Cut one of the indifferent piles and place one of the other indifferent piles in the middle of it. This combined pile is placed in the middle of another indifferent pile. This combined pile is placed in the middle of the last indifferent pile.



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Finally, this large pile (4/5ths of the deck) is placed in the middle of the chosen pile. This process should be performed as if you are trying to further lose the selection. It should be done quickly and casually. When you finish, the selection is still one of the top two or bottom three cards. A quick false cut or shuffle here would add to the illusion.

**The Shuffle.** Pick up the pack and hold it in your left hand in position for an overhand shuffle. Note the bottom card. Let's assume it is a five. Subtract one from five to give you your key number --- four. With your right hand, undercut half the deck and run four (your key number) cards individually onto the left hand's half. Outjog (see the instructions to the shuffle below) the next card, the fifth card, as you start your count over again at one. Run cards singly to the counts of two, three, and four. Finally, drop the cards remaining in your right hand on top of the left hand's cards. Undercut the cards beneath the outjog and place these cards on top of the pack. You have now rearranged the pack so that the five possible selections are at positions: fifth and sixth from the top and fifth, sixth, and seventh from the bottom. The five is the fifth card from the bottom.

**The Ending.** You still do not know which card is the selection. Even so, you are ready to bring the trick to a conclusion. State that you are going to remove a prediction. Lift the deck so that only you can see the faces. Spread through the first ten cards until you come to the card you remembered earlier, the five. Upjog this five as you note the two cards to the left of it. Commit these two cards to memory. For the sake of example, let's say that the two cards to the left of the key card are the queen and king of hearts respectively. You only have to remember them for about thirty seconds and you can now forget the identity of your key card since you are removing it. Place your key card face down on the table.

*"What was the name of the card you selected?"* If the spectator names your key card, you have a miracle. Tell the audience that

you predicted what the spectator would say. Instruct the spectator to turn over the tabled card. Act as if you knew that was their card all along.

However, suppose they name another card. Because of the shuffle, you are now prepared to use the tabled card to arrive at the selection. If their card is not the key card, it is one of the other four cards. They are now located at positions fifth and sixth from the top and fifth and sixth from the bottom.

You would either deal from the top or the bottom of the pack a number equivalent to your key or "prediction" card. At that point, you would either finish on the card at the number denoted by the key card or turn over the next card. You know whether to deal from the top or bottom because of the two cards you have committed to memory.

If they call out one of the two cards you are remembering, the queen or king of hearts, you would pick up the deck and hold it face up.

Deal down the five cards indicated by the "prediction" card. If their card is the fifth card, the queen, drop it dramatically to the table at the count of five. If their card is the sixth card, the king, deal five cards to the table, then drop the remaining cards on top of the tabled pile. They will be staring at their selection on the face of the deck.

Note that you do not have to remember the order of the two cards you commit to memory. Once they call out the name of their selection, instruct them to turn over the tabled card. If that is not it, you only have to know if it was one of the two you are remembering. If it is, all you need to know is deal from the face of the deck. Deal down until you see the card they just named. From this point, act accordingly. That is, either drop the card dramatically on their number or drop the pack on top of the dealt cards.

If the card they name as their selection is not one of the two you are remembering, pick up the deck and hold it face down. Their card is either at the position equal to the value of your

prediction card or at the next position. Deal five cards (your prediction was a five) face up onto the table. If you see their card is the fifth card, stop and table the deck. The trick is over and your prediction is correct.

If their card does not fall at the fifth position, that means it is at the sixth position. After dealing the five cards, ask them to repeat the name of their card. When they do, turn over the next card as if that was what you had intended to do all along. Your prediction was correct. You predicted how many cards you would have to deal until you came to their selection, the next card.

Finesse. When executing the jog shuffle, you have to run a number of cards equal to your key number (one less than the value of your key card) twice. If your key card happened to be a high valued card, this could be a cumbersome chore. For this reason, if the key card has a value of seven or more, I spell it.

Suppose the key card you glimpse on the bottom of the pack is a ten. During the course of the overhand shuffle, you would have to shuffle singly two runs of nine cards each. This is such a large number that it would be obvious that you were counting the cards. For that reason, use the number of letters in the value of the card. It is a ten which has three letters. Subtract one giving you a key number of two. You would now only have to run two banks of two cards singly during the shuffle.

At the conclusion of the shuffle, remove the ten and table it face down. If their card is not the tabled card, tell them that you are going to spell the value of the prediction card immediately before you reveal what the prediction is. Turn it face up. Spell to the third card from the top or bottom. Reveal either the third or fourth card as appropriate.

The Overhand Jog Shuffle. I will explain this shuffle using the example above. Your key card is a five which means your key number is a four. Hold the deck in overhand shuffle position. The position of your left first finger is critical to the shuffle and it should rest

along the outer edge of the pack. Cut off the lower half in the right hand ("undercut"). Use your left thumb to pull four cards squarely onto the left hand's packet one at a time. This is the first run.

Outjog the next card to the count of one. In other words, pull this card onto the left hand's cards so that it protrudes about a third of an inch over the far edge of the left hand's packet. The part of the card which protrudes is laying against your left forefinger and that is how you will locate the card later, by sense of touch.

Run three more cards singly on top of the pack in to a count of two, three, and four. These cards should be drawn in a haphazard manner to cover up the fact that one card is out of line with the rest. Finally, drop the right hand's remaining cards on top of all the cards in the left hand.

To complete the shuffle, your right hand approaches the pack from underneath with your thumb at the near edge and fingers at the far edge of the pack. The right second finger locates the outjogged card. You can do this without looking by the sense of touch. Simply locate the card which is resting against the left forefinger. You may find it helpful to curl your left forefinger in, opening up a slight break. This separates the outjogged card and the cards above it from the lower half.

Your right hand takes possession of the lower half and places it on top of the cards remaining in the left hand.

Leftovers. Your attitude is an important part of the presentation of this trick. When you place the single card face down on the table, you should do it in with surefire manner. If they name that card as their selection, confidently instruct them to turn over the tabled card. If they call out the name of another card, you should not act as though the tabled card is a mistake.

You do not want to make a sucker trick out of this. It is a contingency trick. In other words, what happens early in the trick dictates

what actions you will take during the latter part of the trick. Acting as if the tabled card is a mistake telegraphs this fact to the audience. It will then appear that your subsequent actions are efforts to make the most of what has happened. Since this is exactly what you are doing, you want to steer clear of it in the presentation.

In all contingency tricks (see *Lucky Thirteen*) it is important to act as if there is only one linear course of action which was predetermined before you started the effect. If they realize that there are several divergent possibilities, the trick becomes more of a clever process than a truly mystifying effect.

Background. This is my handling of an idea by Stuart P. Cramer which originally appeared in the 1936-1937 Winter Extra of Ted Annemann's *The Jinx*, page 182. His original was called *Les Cartes Par Hasard*. Not being conversant with French, I assume the "hazard" referred to in the last part of the name is the hazard of following the instructions as written. If you were to do exactly what the instructions said, you would be left at the end of the trick with puzzled spectators. They would not be puzzled by the trick per se. Instead, they would be puzzled by the magician who would finish the effect by revealing an indifferent card.

After controlling the four possible selections to the top two and bottom two cards of the pack, the reader receives the following instructions to conclude the trick. "*Put the*

*bottom card in the deck reversed, so as to be face up, palm off the top one, and put deck on table.*" While he doesn't explain how you are to secretly accomplish the maneuvers, the point is probably moot since as I explained above, these aren't necessarily the selections.

At one point in the instructions you are told to cut two cards from the bottom to the top of the pile containing the selection. In order for the trick to work, you must cut four cards from the bottom to the top. When only two are cut, you lose control of two of the four possible selections. This means there is a fifty percent chance of failure. For those of you who believe the cup is not half empty but half full, there is a fifty percent chance of success.

In the Cramer version, four piles were dealt and the selection had to be between the 9th and 24th cards inclusive. Increasing the number of piles dealt to five and adding an out for a fifth possible selection added an eleven card leeway to the selection process. In other words, the spectators could choose from a bank of twenty-five cards instead of just sixteen. Also, the above handling centralizes the stack so the selection comes from between the 16th and 40th cards inclusive. (Note that by increasing to six piles you can increase the selection bank from twenty-five cards to thirty.)

*Jinxed* was first published in issue #13 of *The Trapdoor* (1986).

## KILLOCATION

*Steve Beam*

Effects in which a volunteer merely thinks of a card and the magician subsequently locates the selection are among my favorites. This effect is an impossible location which leaves very little of what auditors refer to as an audit trail. This is truly an impossible location. However, since the method description is long, you may think of this as the impossible description. Stick with me and you will have a miracle in your hands. In this miracle, the spectator merely thinks of a card. The magician locates it in a fair and direct manner.

I have many different handlings for this. I will start with one which is surefire. After that, I will explore those which have varying elements of risk. Do not overlook those with risk. The impossibility factor heightens in direct proportion to the increase in risk.

**Effect.** The magician takes a borrowed and shuffled deck from the shuffler. Turning it face up and holding it from above in his right hand, he cuts about a third of the pack in to the left hand. He starts thumbing cards off from the face of the right packet with his left thumb. One by one he peels about a third of the pack onto the left hand's packet, asking a spectator to mentally select one of the cards he sees. The magician instructs the spectator not to give any sign that he has selected a card.

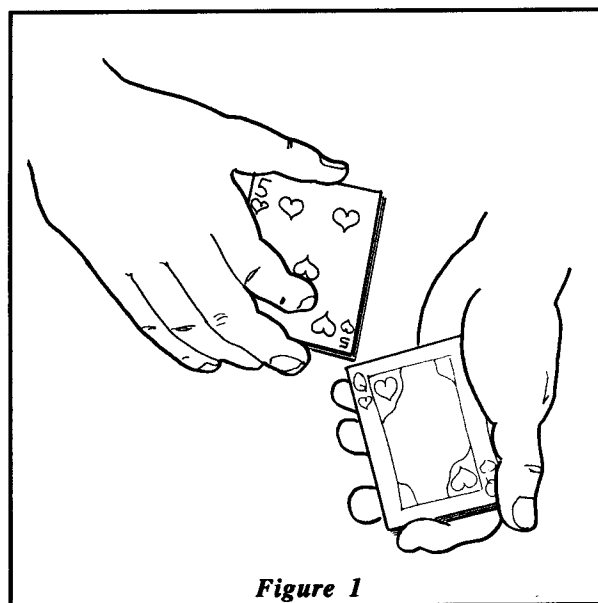
Closing up the pack and giving it a quick shuffle, the magician turns the pack face up. "I am going to make your card turn invisible. Can you see your card now?" Of course the answer is in the negative since the selection is in the middle of pack. "Then I guess I have succeeded since you cannot see your card. It must be invisible. I can take my applause now if you wish." The audience realizes that the magician is probably bluffing.

"Oh, you don't believe me. Allow me to show you." The magician fans the pack toward

the spectator. The selection is still in the pack and still visible. "Okay, well I guess you will believe me next time, won't you? Otherwise, there won't be any trick... kinda like now." The magician appears to be stalling for time trying to figure out what to do.

"Well, I still don't know the identity of your card because you are the only person in the world who knows it. But I don't have to know what your card is, only where it is." The magician removes a card from the pack and places it face down on the table. "This card is the key to the mystery. What is the name of your card?" The spectator names his card. "Please turn that card over." It is not the selection. "As I said earlier, nobody but you knew the identity of your card. But I knew the location as indicated by this card." The magician deals down a number of cards equal to the value of the tabled card. The selected card is at that location.

**The Work.** Take a face up shuffled pack in your right hand, holding it from above. Use your right forefinger to swivel cut the top third of the pack into the palm up left hand as shown in **figure 1**. Tell the spectator that you want



*Figure 1*

## IMPOSSIBLE LOCATIONS

him to think of one of the cards he sees but not to let you know when he has chosen a card.

Use your left thumb to peel cards into your left hand on top of the left hand's packet. Peel the cards singly, counting them to yourself as you go. Injog the sixth card slightly and remember it; but do not change the pace as you deal through the pack. The remaining cards, up to a count of fifteen, should be pulled onto the left packet so that they disguise the injogged condition of the sixth card.

After you transfer the fifteenth card, "Did you think of one of the cards?" This is asked as you drop the right packet on top of the left. If the spectator says he didn't select a card, simply square up and start again. If he did think of one, you are ready to proceed.

Lift up on the injogged card with your right thumb. Lift off all the cards above and including the injogged card. As your right hand picks up the upper half, the left thumb rotates the left hand's packet face down. You are now in position for an overhand shuffle. See **figure 2**. Run five cards from the right packet to the top of the left and throw the balance of the right packet on top of the left.

Here is your current situation. The spectator had a choice from a bank of fifteen cards. Five of these are on top and five are on bottom. The remaining five are in the middle,

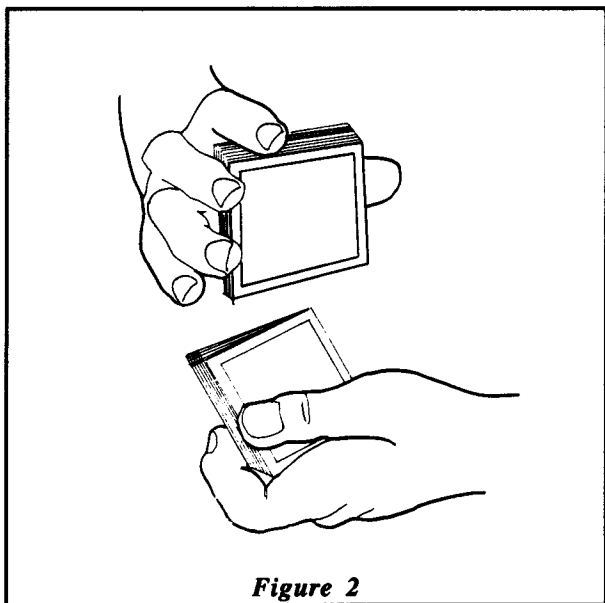


Figure 2

the lowermost of these being the key card you are remembering (the sixth card from the bank of fifteen). You must now narrow the possible locations for the selected card to one of the three groups of five. You will do this with patter and actions.

Turn the pack face up and hold it in the left hand in dealing position. "Is this your card?" There is a one in fifteen chance that the card on the face is the selection. If it is, you have located the selection. End the trick here as a miracle.

If the card on the face is not the selection, tell the audience that you will make the selected card turn invisible. Riffle the pack magically. "Can you see your card? No? Then it must be invisible." Pause for the response and then, "Here, I'll show you." Turn the deck face down in your left hand. Lift up the deck so that the faces of the cards are toward the spectators and the backs are toward you as you spread the pack from your left hand to your right. If the spectator's card is among the top five, you want him to see it. Usually he will let you know.

If he tells you that he saw his card, quickly spread through the pack and act surprised. "You saw your card?" The idea here is to convince the spectator that he didn't impart any useable information to you. You should appear that you only know that the card is somewhere in the pack. By spreading through the pack and then asking him to confirm what he told you, the effect on him is that he saw his card somewhere in the middle of the pack.

If he doesn't say anything during the top five cards, continue until you have spread about a third of the pack. This will mean that you will not yet have exposed the middle five possible selections. Ask the spectator, "Have you seen your card?" If he says yes, repeat the question from the last paragraph to convince him that he hasn't imparted anything to you and then square up the pack. You know his card is one of the top five. If he says no, say, "That's because your card is invisible."

Spread until you spread the middle five card bank. Continue slowly past these until you have spread a total of about two thirds of the pack. "Have you seen your card?" If he says yes, continue spreading quickly through the pack. Act surprised again that he has seen his card and square the pack. You know his card is one of the middle five card bank.

If he says no, you know his card is one of the bottom five cards. You can spread through to the five to confirm. I prefer to lower the spread as I get to the bottom ten or so cards. I continue spreading until I have spread through the complete pack, but he can't see the faces of the last few cards.

"As I said, your card is now invisible. I don't know what your card is. You are the only one who knows that. But I do know its location." Cut the deck so that there are two cards of the five possibles on top and three on the bottom. If his card is among the top five, simply cut three to the bottom. If it is one of the bottom cards, cut two to the top. If it is one of the middle stack, spread through the faces of the cards as if you are trying to locate the selection. Cut the pack behind the first card to the rear (left) of the key card. The selection will be one of the three face cards of the left half or one of the two rear cards of the right half. Place the halves on the table and riffle shuffle them together, ensuring the left half drops its bottom three cards first and the right half drops its top two cards last. No matter which situation originally occurred, the selection is now one of the top two or bottom three cards of the pack.

From here, you have simply to proceed into the overhand shuffle as explained in *Jinxed*. Briefly, note the bottom card of the pack. Subtract one from its value to arrive at a key number. If the bottom card is a five, subtract one for your key, four. If it is a number larger than a seven, subtract one number from the number of letters there are in the value. For example, if the bottom card is a queen, your key would be five letters minus one, or four.

Hold the deck in the left hand in posi-

tion for an overhand shuffle. Undercut half the pack, run your key number. Outjog the next card as you count one again. Run your key number again starting with this count of one. When you finish the running your key number, drop the remainder of the pack on top of the cards in your left hand. Undercut beneath the outjog and throw these cards on top of the pack. Square the pack.

You are now set up as you were in *Jinxed*. Assume the bottom card was a five. You have set it up so that the original top two cards are in positions five and six from the top. The bottom three cards are set up in a positions five, six, and seven from the bottom. Spread through the pack to remove the card which you will place on the table. Spread from the face and remove the card which was originally on the bottom before you started the shuffle (a five in our example). There is a twenty percent chance (one in five) that this is the selection. Just in case it isn't, note the two cards immediately to the left of the five as you remove it. See **figure 3**. Confidently table the five face down and ask for the name of the selected card.

Regardless of what card the spectator names, ask him to turn over the tabled card. If it is the selection, take your bows and act as if that is how you intended to end the trick. If it is not the selection, proceed confidently. "As I

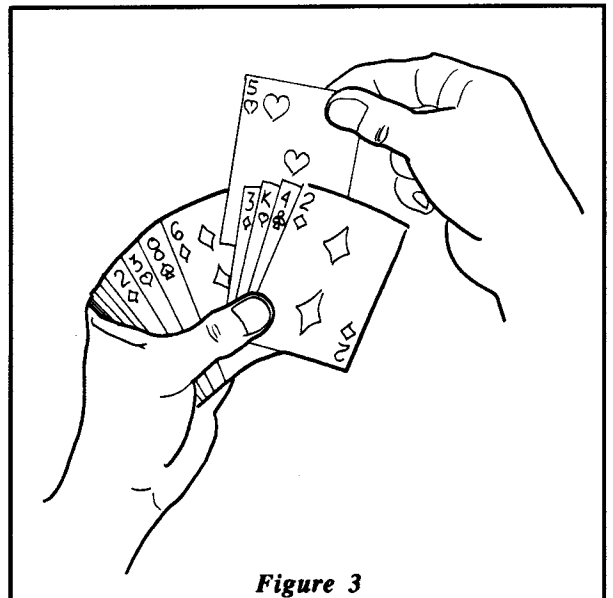


Figure 3

## IMPOSSIBLE LOCATIONS

*said, I didn't know what your card was, but I did know where it was located. This card tells us where."*

If he named one of the two cards which was to the left of the five when you removed it, hold the pack face up and count five cards to the table. Either hand him the fifth or the sixth card, whichever is his selection.

If he named a different card (one you did not note) his card is either fifth or sixth from the top of the pack. Hold the pack face down and deal five cards face up to the table. If the fifth card is his, hand it to him dramatically. If it is not, turn over the sixth card with a flair and hand it to him for the climax.

**More Impossible.** I have played with over a dozen ways of having a card selected to ensure it is one of the middle fifteen. After describing a few, I will give you the shuffle which locates the selection.

Have the spectator shuffle the pack and then cut it into three halves. The spectator then picks up one of the halves and thinks of a card in the middle. If he cuts fairly, there will be approximately seventeen cards in each packet. If he thought of any one of them at random, the odds are 15/17ths (88%) that he will choose one of the middle fifteen. If you further limit him by asking him to think of a card "in the middle of the packet" you virtually guarantee success. Then, have him sandwich this third between the other two thirds of the pack. His card is one of the middle fifteen.

Another method is to have a spectator shuffle the pack and table it. He is to cut off the top half, note either the lower card of the upper half or the top card of the lower half. Instruct him to return the top half to the bottom half and square the cards. You can visually tell whether he cut among the middle third of the pack.

The last method I will give is my favorite. I ask the spectator to step to the far side of the room. I instruct him to shuffle the pack. When he is satisfied, I ask him to look at the top card of the pack and then place it in the middle of the pack. Again, it is a simple matter to see

whether the card goes into the middle third of the pack.

**The More-impossible Shuffle.** Using any of the above three methods of selection, you don't know exactly where the selection is. You only know that it is one of the middle cards of the pack. Take the deck from the spectator and hold it *face up* in position for a overhand shuffle. Undercut the pack so that you have slightly more than half the pack in your right hand. Ideally, you should have 28 or 29.

(Note: If you used the spectator cut method, rather than undercutting 28 or 29 cards, attempt to split the pack at the same place the spectator did. This gives you about a 99.99% chance of success.)

Casually run five cards from the right hand packet onto the left and note the fifth card run. Drop the remainder on top of the pack. If you have followed the instructions, the selection should be one of the top five, bottom five, or middle five starting with your key from the face. Continue with the invisible card patter and locate the selection as explained in the surefire method above.

**Leftovers.** This works more than 99% of the time. It is worth the risk to me for the miracle which results when it runs smoothly. A few dozen practice tries will help you to build the confidence necessary to bring it to a successful conclusion.

This is a contingency trick which means that different events during the trick change subsequent events in the trick. That is, if there card is one of the top five, you handle it differently than if you were to find there card was one of the bottom five. Another example is the ending where you will either have placed their selection on the table or use the tabled card to locate the selection.

In a contingency trick, it is important that you always proceed with the next step as if it was what you had intended to do all along. If you pause to work out which contingency action you are to take next, you will telegraph your uncertainty to the spectator. Practice this

over and over until you feel comfortable with all possible outcomes. It is very simple to perform and only uses a simple overhand shuffle to deliver a miracle.

**Background.** This is a considerable expansion of Dai Vernon's *Out of Sight --- Out of Mind* from Lewis Ganson's More Inner Secrets of Card Magic. In Vernon's effect, the selection was from a bank of nine cards. A more complex jog shuffle was used to separate the three distinct groups which ultimately narrowed the selection down to three cards. A three card out was used to reveal the selection. There was a thirty three percent chance that you would end by double lifting to show the selection on top of a pile.

I wanted to change the effect in three ways. First, I wanted a much more free selection process than holding up nine cards one at a time for a selection. The 15 card selection bank made possible by the five card out brought this to reality. Second, I wanted a surefire ending which left no doubt that I knew their card while at the same time did not leave me holding a two cards as one. Third, I wanted a presentation

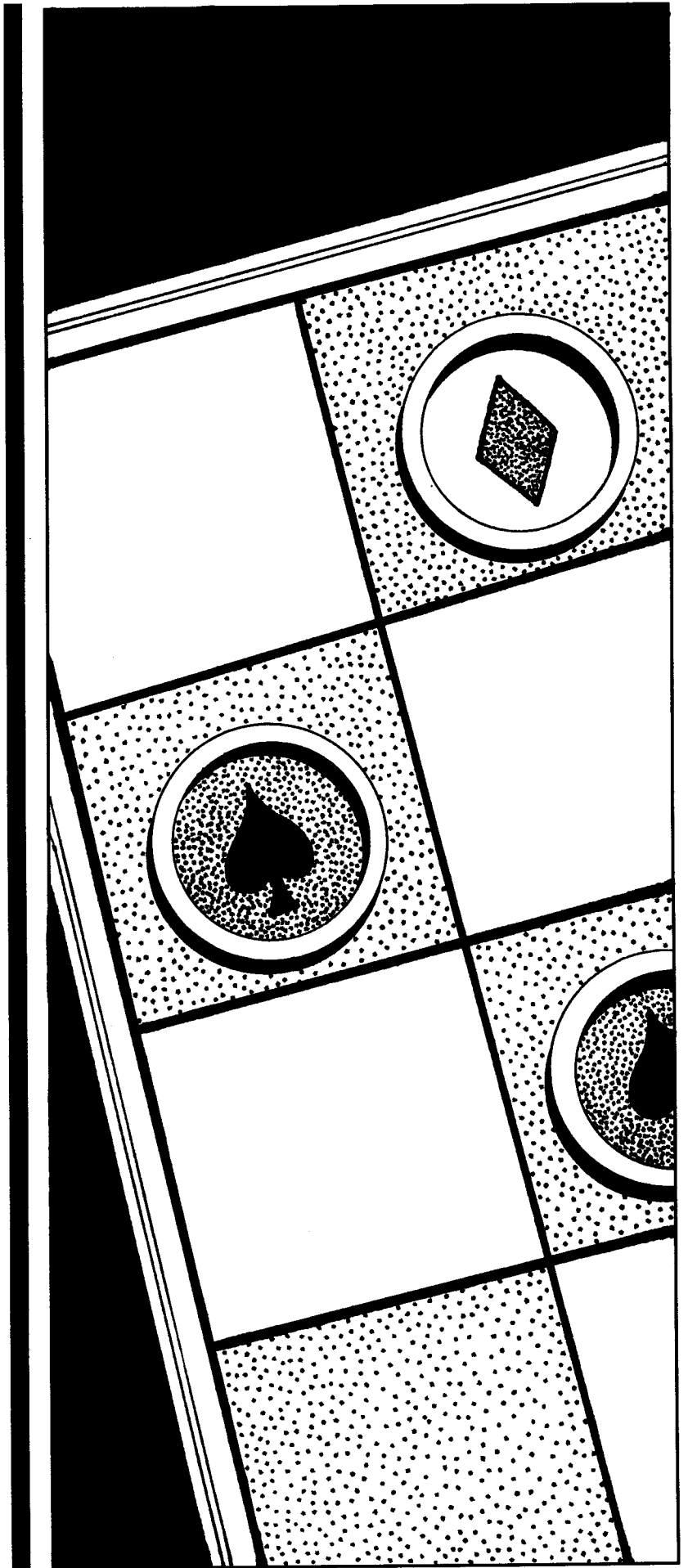
which disguised the narrowing down of the three groups. By telling the audience that the selection is invisible, they alert you to where their card is without feeling that they have imparted any information to you at all. In fact, they are more convinced you have no idea where the card is after it shows up unexpectedly when you thought it was gone. In the original, the magician asked if the spectator had seen his selection while he too was looking at the same cards. That tended to make the narrowing down process more obvious.

After devising the surefire solution for knowing the selection was among a certain fifteen cards, I experimented with the more risky versions which I use almost exclusively now.

The five card out is from issue #13 of **The Trapdoor** and was published as *Jinxed*. Do not overlook this as it can be used to reveal one of five cards (for more than five, refer to the issue) at any point when you have the selection narrowed down to small group. It doubles as a very convincing out.



# Moves



## BACKWARDS PROPHECY

*Bill Simon*

This is my backwards handling of Bill's original move which can be found in his seminal book Effective Card Magic (©1952, Louis

*Therewith* which probably would have called more attention to the move and its possibilities.

Goal. During the course of this move,

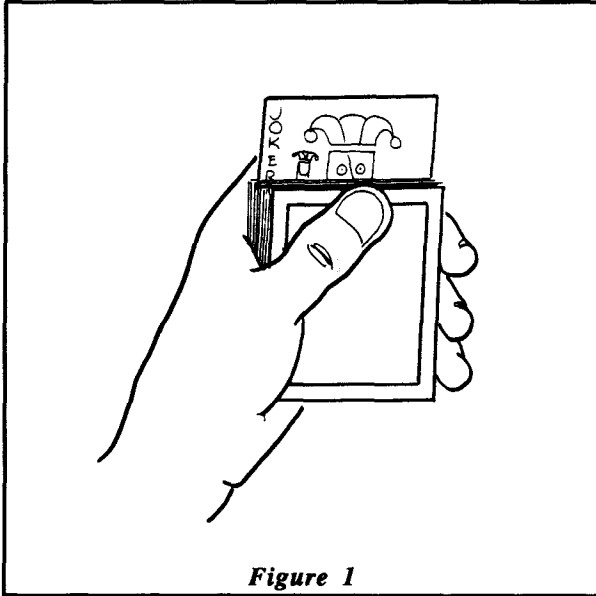


Figure 1

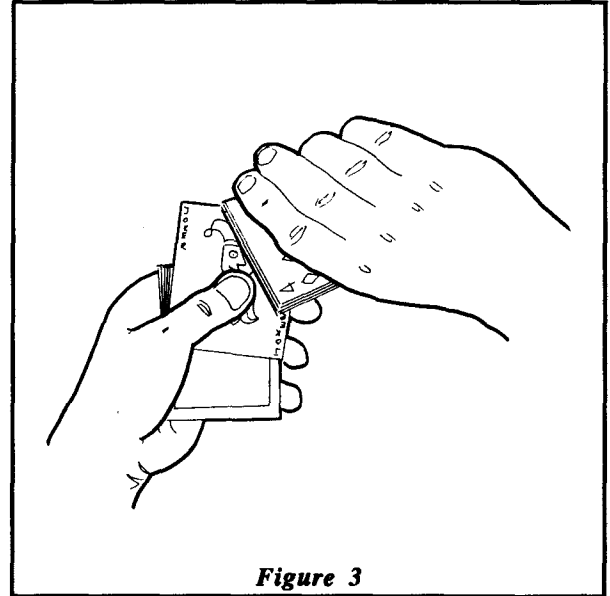


Figure 3

Tannen). I found it interesting that the move is hidden in a trick called *Business Card Prophecy* in a chapter called *Choice Tricks*. There is a separate chapter called *New Sleights And Tricks*

the pack is secretly cut. This is done while apparently turning an outjogged card over and replacing it in the middle of the pack.

The Work. Start with the deck face

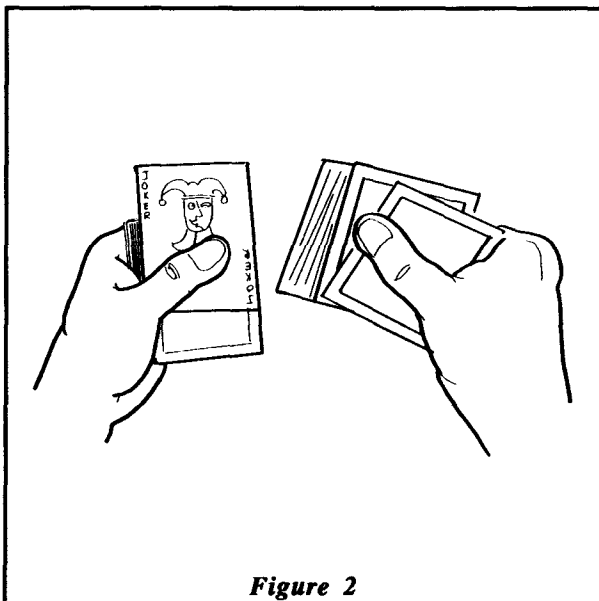


Figure 2

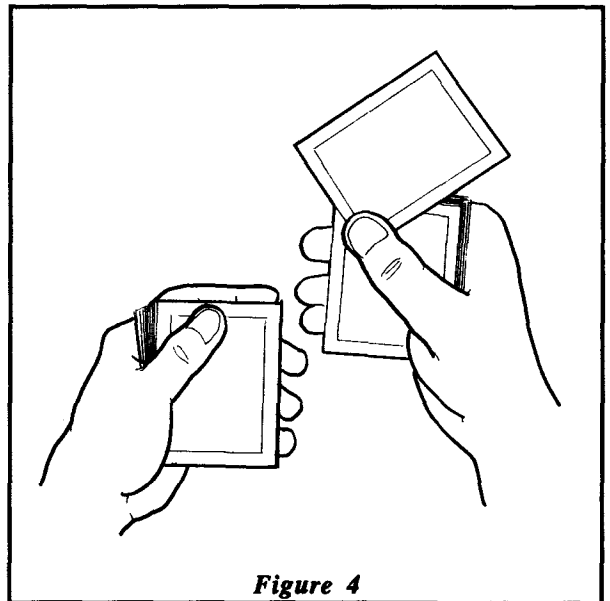


Figure 4

down in the left and a joker outjogged in the pack as shown in **figure 1**. Assume that you have a red ace on top and bottom of the pack. Spread through the pack from left to right. Split the spread above the outjogged card as shown in **figure 2**. Turn your right hand palm down so that you can take the outjogged card on the back side of the right hand's packet, clipped between the right thumb and the top of the packet. See **figure 3**.

Rotate your right hand palm up again, with your right thumb carrying along the joker. See **figure 4**. The action of turning the hand over is done overtly to show the other side of the joker. Pause for just a second for everyone to see the face. Then, place the left hand's half on top of the right, sandwiching the outjogged joker between the two halves.

Leftovers. Perform this move openly. The overt action of turning the joker over covers the covert mission of cutting the pack. The naturalness of the bigger movement covers

the hidden action. This is because the hidden action is hidden out in the open.

While I explained this starting with the joker face up, I normally start with a card inserted face down. This gives you a reason to turn it over, to remind everyone of the identity of the card they inserted.

If I was going to start with the card face up, I would execute the move for the apparent reason of turning the card face down. "*Oh, I meant for you to turn the card face down before inserting it.*" It then appears as though you simply turn the card face down in its existing location. Actually, the deck is cut in the process.

Background. The original handling of the move is in Effective Card Magic. Max Abrams' handling of the move appeared in the November 1992 issue of *Genii* (Volume 56, #1) under the title, *Controlled Prophecy* (sic). Jerry Hartman's handling appeared in Card Craft under the title, *A-D Indicator Force*.

## A CUT BELOW

*Steve Pressley*

This is a control by a good friend of mine who died last year shortly after publishing his first book, Endless Possibilities. Steve showed me this the last time I saw him and this is the first time it has appeared in print. It is a very easy control of a selected card to the bottom of the pack.

The Work. Hold the deck in the left hand in dealing position. Use your left thumb to riffle down the far left corner of the pack. Ask a spectator to call stop some time in the

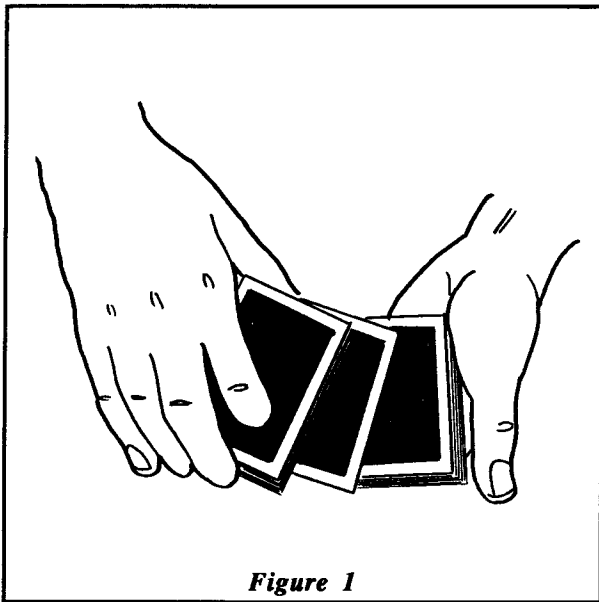


Figure 1

middle. When she stops you, lift off the upper half with your right hand from above. Show her the bottom card of the upper (right hand) packet while you secretly obtain a little finger break under the top card of the left half.

Bring the right hand's packet down where it apparently touches the left half for a fraction of a second. At that point, the card above the break is secretly added to the face of the right hand's packet. Immediately move the right hand half to the right as shown in **figure 1**.

As the face of the upper half moves over the left fingers, the fingers engage the face card of the half. The right hand continues moving its half to the right while the bottom card, supposedly the selected card, is pulled to the left.

When the card is pulled clear of the right half, the left thumb applies pressure from the top to keep it from falling. See **figure 2**. Place the single card on top of the right hand's half but diagonally outjogged to the left for about an inch. Clip the card there with the right

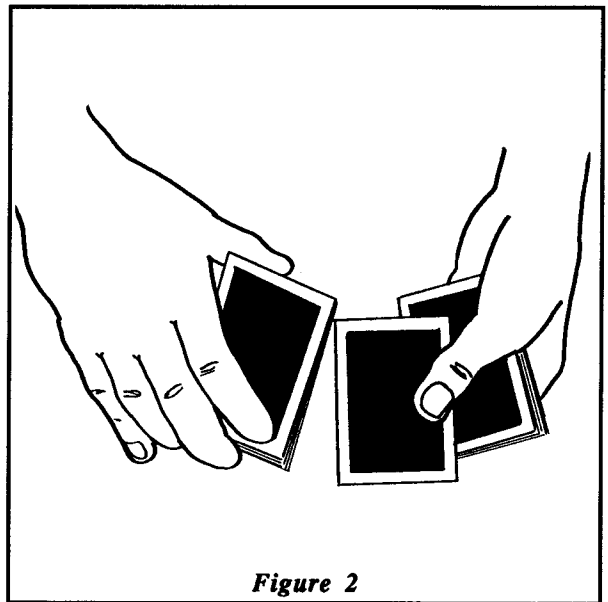


Figure 2

forefinger. Follow this by placing the left half on top of the right. This sandwiches an indifferent card between the two halves. The selection is on the bottom of the deck. Slowly square the outjogged card and you are ready to proceed with the revelation of the bottom card.

Leftovers. Steve also noted that you can control the selection to a position second from the bottom of the pack by getting a left little finger break under two cards instead of one. These two cards are added to the face of the right half and then the face card only is dragged

*STEVE BEAM'S SEMI-AUTOMATIC CARD TRICKS*

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off to the left as shown in figure 1. This allows you to flash the face card of the pack when you are finished. The selection will not show since

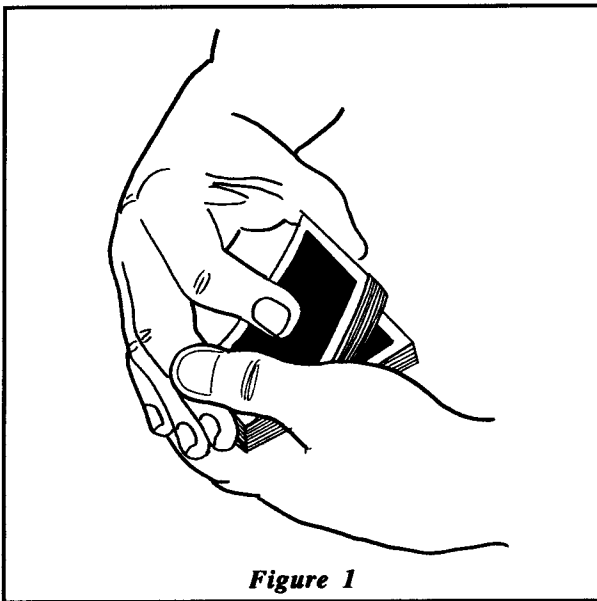
it is second from the face. Adding more cards to the break allows you to send the selection to any position close to the face that you desire.

## A CUT ABOVE

*Steve Beam*

This is my handling of Steve Pressley's *A Cut Below*. This controls the selection to the top or near the top of the pack instead of to the bottom.

The Work. Hold the deck in your left hand in dealing position. Bring your right hand over from above. Use your right thumb to riffle up the rear edge of the pack as shown in



*Figure 1*

**figure 1.** Ask a spectator to call stop in the middle of the pack.

When she calls stop, insert your left little finger into the break between the two halves. Allow one more card to fall from the upper half. Your little finger prevents this card from falling flush with the lower half. Immediately pick that card back up with the right thumb but keep a break between it and the rest of the upper half. This action takes less than a

second.

Raise the upper half with the right hand so the spectators can see the face card of the half. This will be their selection. Make sure their view is from head on so they won't see the break you are holding above the face card of the half. You are now going to emulate the actions described in *A Cut Below*. Bring the right hand back down to the left, secretly dropping the face card of the upper half onto the top of the lower half. Immediately pull the upper half to the right.

When the face card of the upper half passes over the left fingers, the fingers engage it and pull it to the left. This is apparently the selected card. Actually, it is an indifferent card. This card is removed from the face of the right (upper) half and held between the left thumb and packet as shown in figure 1 of *A Cut Below*. This card is now placed on top of the right half and the left half is placed on top of all. Square the deck. The selection has been secretly controlled to the top of the pack.

Leftovers. You can control the card to a position second from the top by allowing two cards to riffle off the right thumb on top of the left little finger after the spectator calls stop. Similarly, three cards riffled off will control the selection to a position third from the top.

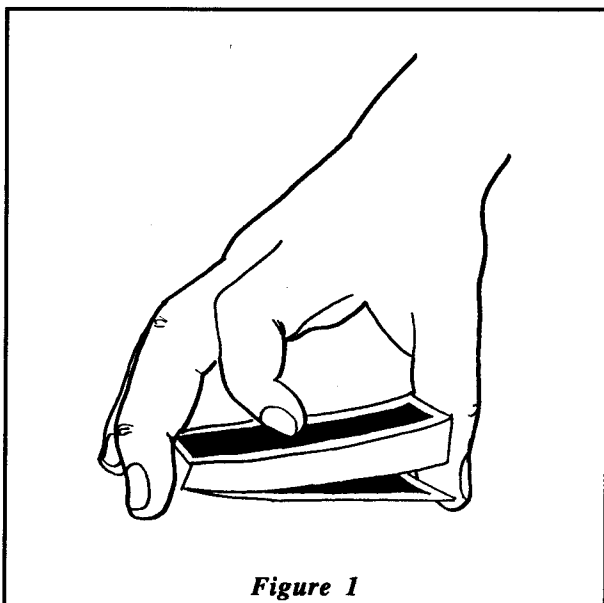
Finally, I should mention that this would be a good opener for an Ambitious Card routine which uses a freely selected card. Since you can control the card to a position second from the top, you are set to go into a double lift after the first "rise" has occurred.

## BOTTOMOUT

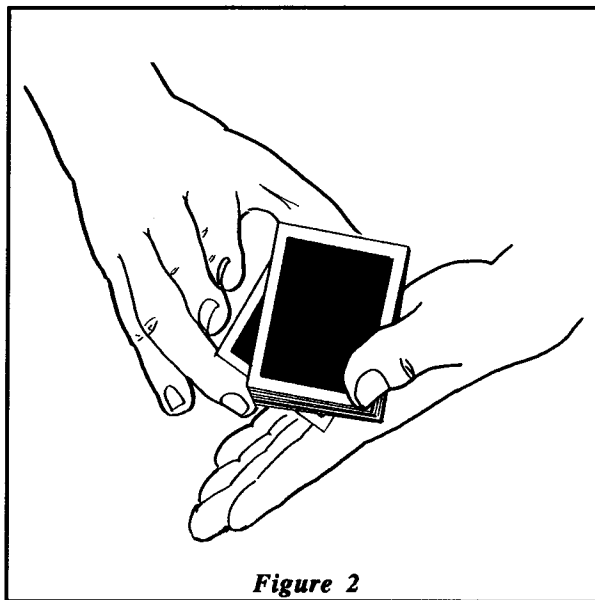
*Wayne Kyzer*

This is a simple force of the bottom card of the pack. In effect, the spectator asks you to stop somewhere in the middle of the pack. The card drops from the middle at that point onto the table. This card is the force card.

**The Work.** Hold the deck in the right hand from above and obtain a right thumb break above the bottom card as shown in **figure 1**. Riffle down the left outer corner of the pack and ask the spectator to stop you in the middle of the pack. When she stops you, use your right forefinger to swivel the top half of the pack, the cards above where you were stopped, into your left hand. Clamp the left outer corner of the top



*Figure 1*



*Figure 2*

half in the left thumb crotch as shown in **figure 2**.

Slowly pull your hands apart. As soon as you can cleanly drop the card beneath the break to the table, do so. It should fall squarely to the table. If the card spins around during this process, that means it engaged a finger or part of the hand. You need to practice this so that the card falls straight down to a position in the middle of the two hands.

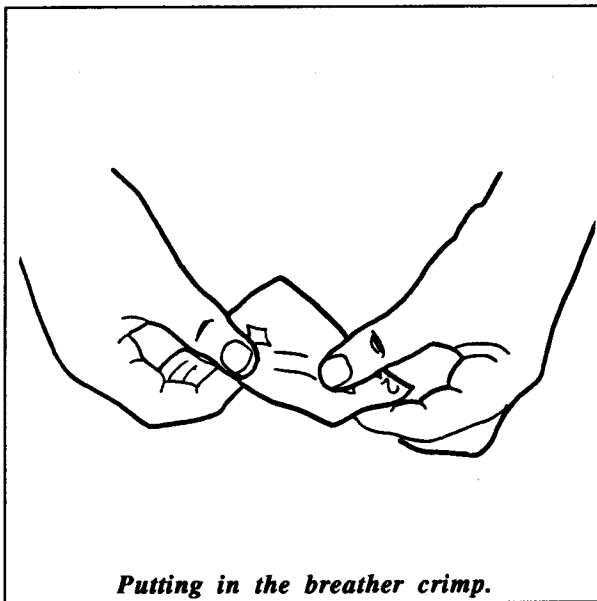
That's all there is to it. If the card drops cleanly, it appears to drop from the middle of the pack.

## GLOSSARY

**bottom of the deck** - The lowermost card when the deck is face down. The position of the pack, face up or face down, does not change which card is considered the bottom card. When the deck is face up, the bottom card is the card on the face of the pack.

**break** - a secret gap between cards, usually held by inserting the fourth finger so that it will not be visible from the spectator's point of view.

**breather crimp** - a card which has been crimped by placing two crosswise bends in a playing card as shown in the illustration. Unlike most crimps, the bends in the card are not detectable from the edge of the pack. To cut the pack at the crimp, simply lift up on the cards as you cut them. The pack will break at the crimp. Placing the the bends in the card with the card face up or face down dictates whether the pack will break immediately above or immediately below the crimped card.



**control** - (verb/noun) To bring a card or cards to a desired position secretly. For example, "*control the selection to the top*" means

to secretly relocate a selection from a known position to the top. The secret process which accomplishes this relocation is referred to as "the control."

**crimp** - secretly bending a card so that it can be located among other cards. The normal process is to cut the crimped card to the top or bottom of the pack. Most crimps are visible from the edge of the pack. However, the breather crimp is something that can be felt.

**cut** - The process of breaking the pack into several components and mixing them. A "simple cut" is when the pack is cut into just two parts and the upper and lower halves are transposed. A false cut is an action which emulates a legitimate cut but leaves the deck, or a particular portion, undisturbed.

The act of breaking the pack into parts is referred to as "cutting" the deck. The act of reassembling the parts is referred to as "completing" the cut.

**dealing position** - This is the manner in which one would normally hold the pack in readiness for dealing cards. Unless otherwise specified, it is assumed that dealing position refers to holding the pack in your left hand.

**double undercut** - a move invented by Dai Vernon where two undercuts are performed in succession. It can be used as a control or a false cut.

As a control. Assume a card has been selected. Hold the pack in the right hand from above with the thumb at the near short edge and the fingers at the far short edge. Use your right forefinger to kick or swivel the top two thirds of the pack over into the palm of left hand.

Instruct the spectator to replace his card on top of the packet in your left hand. When he complies, place the right hand's third on top of the left hand's packet and pick up a left little finger break.



Pause for time misdirection. Your right hand is free during this pause to do anything else. To proceed, your right hand takes possession of the pack again, with your right thumb taking possession of the break.

Release half of the cards beneath the break into the palm up left hand and transfer these to the top of the pack. Repeat this action, this time transferring all the cards below the break to the top of the pack. The selection is now on top of the pack and the pack is in its original order (with the exception of the card which was removed from the middle).

**As a false cut.** Repeat the above actions without removing a selection and you will return the entire deck back to its original order. The time misdirection is optional when this is used as a false cut.

**dovetail shuffle** - a riffle shuffle performed in the hands.

**effect** - The description of the trick as it appears to the audience. The effect section in this book is generally more detailed than in many card books. This is for three reasons. First, I think you should have a clear understanding of the product your efforts will eventually produce. This will let you know if it is the type of trick you wish to perform. Second, a clear understanding of the effect is necessary for complete mastery of the method. Finally, in my opinion, the effect on the audience may be affected by the presentation. Therefore, the effect is not complete without including at least a skeleton of the presentation.

**face** - the surface of the playing card with the identity of the card printed on it.

**injog** - a card which protrudes less than

a quarter of an inch toward the magician which is used to secretly mark a location in the pack.

**jog** - a card which protrudes from the pack which is used to secretly mark a location in the pack.

**outjog** - a card which protrudes less than a quarter of an inch away from the magician which is used to secretly mark a location in the pack.

**overhand shuffle position** - holding a deck in position for an overhand shuffle.

**roughing fluid** - a chemical compound which when applied to the surfaces of playing cards, erodes the smooth finish. When two surfaces of separate cards which have been treated are placed face to face, they do not slide easily over each other. When spread as part of a fan with untreated cards, the surfaces cling together and a conscious effort must be applied to separate the cards. This has the effect of hiding the rearmost card until the magician desires to separate the "roughed" pairs.

**stock** - a group of contiguous cards. The "top stock" refers to the cards on top of the pack. The "bottom stock" refers to the cards on the bottom of the deck.

**stranger** - a card from another deck added to the deck in use.

**top of the deck** - This is the uppermost card when the deck is face down. The position of the pack, face up or face down, does not change which card is considered the top card. When the deck is face up, the top card is the card at the back of the pack.

**undercut** - To draw out the bottom portion of the pack, usually in the act of cutting or shuffling the pack.

## ***LEFTOVERS***

I have always thought that reading technical material such as a book on card tricks should be accompanied by non-technical material to provide a break for the reader. Imagine my delight when I discovered that adding eight additional pages to a book does not increase the production cost. (I haven't yet decided whether it will increase the retail cost.)

Sixteen of the tricks you have just read were printed in one form or another in **The Trapdoor**. However, to get an accurate feel for the flavor of the magazine, you must sample some of the non-magic parts. One of the ways I divide technical material in the magazine is with each issue's subscription renewal section. Aside from the constant nagging for the subscribers to renew, there is usually some fun to be had in the delivery of the message. In the next chapter, you will find some samples of the messages.

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## CREDITING MAGIC

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Crediting magical ideas and concepts is an important part of our art. For this reason, I have reprinted the article below from issue #31 of **The Trapdoor**.

---

Occasionally in the past, I have found it necessary to turn my back on the commercial ways of our capitalistic system and turn over this section of the magazine to more important issues. This is one of those times. I am now leading you where many magazines fear to tread. I am moving toward the controversial topic known as crediting magic. You won't see wreckless abandon such as this in any of the slick sheets. Only **The Trapdoor** demonstrates the courage, not to mention the lack of other worthwhile items, necessary to attack the crediting of ideas.

I have often found that the best way to learn is by example. The examples I will use are of the form of the "word problems" you became acquainted with in algebra. I will present a scenario. I will then ask a question regarding the situation. You should decide upon your answer prior to consulting the correct answer which immediately follows.

**Test Question #1:** Don Morris and Steve Beam are having a card session. Don has an idea but left his deck in the other room. He borrows Steve's deck and demonstrates a dramatic new principle which will revolutionize card magic. For future magic historians, whose principle is it?

**Answer:** While Don did have an idea, he wasn't able to demonstrate it without Steve's deck which he had to borrow. This illustrates how Steve's input was critical. Without it, nobody would ever have had the opportunity to see the principle. Therefore, the principle belongs to Steve.

**Test Question #2:** Several weeks later Don and Steve are at it again. After the events described above, Don brings a full gross of decks of cards along with him. Don has an idea. He checks the ownership of the deck he is holding before demonstrating the idea. Steve was previously unfamiliar with the principle. Whose idea is it?

**Answer:** If you answered Don, you were clearly confused. While the ownership of the cards had been established prior to the demonstration of the idea, card ownership is not everything. Steve owned the close-up mat, the card table, and the folding chairs which were necessary for the demonstration of the trick. Without these mood items, Don wouldn't even have been thinking along the lines of card magic.

**Test Question #3:** A few weeks later, Don and Steve are sessioning again. They are over at Steve's house. Don has brought two gross of cards, a card table, two folding chairs, and a close-up mat. Don originates and demonstrates an idea. Who gets the credit?

**Answer:** While this resembles the first two questions to the untrained mind, it is totally different. If you chose Don, it is easy to see where you went wrong. However, these technicalities and details are all important when it comes to establishing credit for future historians and ignorance is no excuse.

Sure, Don technically had title to the cards, mats, tables, and chairs. But, so does everyone else who throws a sit down party. And, you don't see them asking for credit for Steve's card tricks, do you? Steve owns the house. Without the house, there would be nowhere to put the tables, chairs, mats, and 288 decks of cards. Besides, Don wouldn't have been thinking about card tricks if he were outside. It was 20 degrees Fahrenheit.

**Test Question #4:** Don invites Steve over to his new house for a session. Don provides

everything. He demonstrates an original idea. Who gets the credit?

**Answer:** Surely by now you have caught on and chosen the obvious answer, Steve. Steve found out that Don was buying a house, no doubt just to establish ownership of the card tricks developed within. Steve bought stock in the mortgage company through which Don bought the house. Since the mortgage company owns more of the house than Don does, and since Steve owns more of the Mortgage company than Don does, Steve owns the rights to the tricks developed within said house. Our German law firm, Sheister, Sheister, and Head assured us that this concept of law has stood the test of time and numerous court challenges.

**Test Question #5:** Would the answer to question #5 have been any different had Steve not owned 0.000001% interest in the Mortgage company?

**Answer:** No. Steve holds an option on the land which creates the throughway to Don's house which predates Don's title to Don's house. Without Steve allowing Don to cross Steve's property, Don would not have access to his own property. Then, he would have been forced to live elsewhere and session over at Steve's house. Consult questions 1 through 3 to see who gets the credit when the sessioning is done at Steve's house.

**Test Question #6.** This scenario occurs in a neutral third-world country, with props, tables, chairs, mats, and 800 decks of playing cards (all of which were shipped over by Don). Don provides all property, props, land, and throughways. He has purchased options on all ways in and out of the neighborhood. Most importantly, he has witnesses. He demonstrates an original idea. Who gets the credit?

**Answer:** Credit for the trick belongs to Steve. This is a foreign country and Don forgot to get witnesses that understood English.

**Test Question #7.** This next scenario occurs just weeks before Steve's mortgage company forecloses on Don's house. The foreclosure was made necessary because Don was trying to pay off all land he had bought in a third world country which just last week underwent a coup and financial restructuring.

Steve was back at Don's house. Everything was Don's, including the right of way which he purchased from Steve at an enormous price. Don demonstrates an original trick which is later published in **The Trapdoor**. Who gets the credit?

**Answer:** Of course, this was a "gimme". Since Steve owns the magazine, he decides who gets the credit for anything published within. And, since Don's copy of this particular issue will be lost in the mail, he won't know about it anyway. There's no point in mentioning Don, even under one of the staples as Steve usually does.

**Conclusion.** I hope this test has helped to clear up any confusion you may have had regarding the crediting of magic ideas. All too often novices try venture into this legal arena where one must be a lawyer (or at least a sheister) to compete. I sincerely hope that you will recognize high moral standards when you see them and will find **The Trapdoor** a worthy outlet for your material. Feel free to contribute all new principles and tricks to me. It is not even necessary that you include your name on the envelope or the contents. I like to make contributing painless and trouble free.

## BECOMING A PROFESSIONAL RESTAURANT MAGICIAN

---

Magicians are always trying to turn their hobby into a profession. This normally results from a desire to combine two of their favorite things: magic and money. However, the business side of magic is fraught with the corpses of those who tried and failed. For this reason, below I am reprinting an article from issue #28 of **The Trapdoor**.

---

More and more of the books and articles produced for magicians dwell on the business side of magic. Since you don't know the author personally, you have to be cautious with the advice provided. He may not be qualified to give advice and you could regret the consequences.

One of the questions most frequently asked of me is how much one should charge when performing close-up at a restaurant. This assumes that the magician is not working strictly for tips.

While there is no one perfect amount, I have researched the topic and have collected a few rules which should help you arrive at an equitable fee. I have put these rules in the form of an equation which will assist in your calculation.

The first number in the equation is the amount of money you think you are worth per week. It is understood that this figure is unrealistically high. The equation allows for the renowned magician's ego and will adjust it from fantasy to factual. It makes allowances for the type of restaurant, the caliber of the clientele, and the practicality of featuring a table-to-table magician. It also takes into account the types of tricks you would use in your act.

The number you are now thinking of provides a starting point. Adjust it by the amount provided with each question for each of your "yes" answers.

- (1) Are the napkins made of paper? Is the ketchup sealed in individual packets? Are the chairs connected to the table? Subtract \$5.00 for each "yes" answer.
- (2) Can you hear or see the cook from the lounge? Subtract \$5.00. (If he is seated beside you in the lounge, subtract \$25.00.)
- (3) Is anyone in the restaurant wearing a leisure suit? Subtract \$36.00.
- (4) Do you use the Ding Dong in your act? Subtract \$34.00.
- (5) Is the restaurant open all night? Subtract \$15.00.
- (6) Is there an all-you-can-eat special? Subtract \$8.00.
- (7) Is there an all-you-can-keep-down special? Subtract \$20.00.
- (8) Are the patrons dressed more nicely than the waiters? Add \$15.00 to your current number but add \$35.00 to your weekly dry cleaning bill.
- (9) Is there a paramedic on duty? Subtract \$4.00.
- (10) Did the manager ask you not to use card tricks? Add \$62.00.
- (11) Is the magician expected to "wait on" the tables as well as perform for them? Subtract \$50.00 from your current number but triple the expected income from tips.
- (12) Are there two large arches on the outside of the restaurant? Divide the current number by five.
- (13) Does the restaurant allow magicians to gather there? Subtract \$20.00.
- (14) Can you visit the facilities without leaving the building? Add \$35.00.

*STEVE BEAM'S SEMI-AUTOMATIC CARD TRICKS*

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- (15) Did they (the management) call you or did you call them? If they called you, triple your current amount. If you called them, divide it by three.
- (16) Are the "fresh shrimp" they advertise the guys sitting at the bar? Subtract \$20.00.
- (17) Do the patrons arrive individually and leave in pairs? Subtract \$18.00. Do they leave in triplets? Subtract \$25.00.
- (18) Is there a drive through window? Subtract \$9.00 and work on your stand-up material.
- (19) Are there any organ meats listed on the menu? Subtract \$22.00 and bring your own dinner.
- (20) Is there a men's room attendant? Add \$7.00. If he smiles at you, subtract \$15.00. But, if part of your job is tending to the men's room, you may keep the tips.
- (21) Is the health department rating below ninety percent of the maximum? Subtract fifteen percent of your current number and watch for unidentified floating objects.
- (22) Is the menu on the wall? Subtract \$15.00.
- (23) Are there any machines in the restrooms? Subtract \$34.00.
- (24) Does the restaurant feature mud-wrestling or wet tee shirt contests? Subtract \$15.00 from your current number, but add a \$75.00 cash-equivalent to the employee benefit package.
- (25) Are the mud-wrestlers or the people sporting the wet tee shirts men? Subtract a three dollar bill.
- (26) Is there a television in view of the dinner tables? Subtract \$10.00. Subtract another \$15.00 if the screen is larger than 25 inches.
- (27) Is the waitress addressed, "sweetie," "honey," "sugar," or other form of fattening substance? Subtract \$50.00.
- (28) Has the manager ever been interviewed by Mike Wallace? Subtract \$15.00.
- (29) Does the restaurant have a sign in front stating how many millions or billions they have served? Subtract \$6.00 and watch out for stains from the special sauce.
- (30) Does anything in the kitchen (other than the paid help) move of its own accord? Subtract \$20.00.
- (31) Does the average tip left for a waiter or waitress jingle? Subtract \$30.00.
- (32) Is the restaurant take-out only? Subtract the current number from the current number.

There you have it. The final number in the equation is your weekly fee. You no longer have to argue with the owner/manager. If he questions the fee, simply show him how you calculated it. A reasonable man will bow to this methodical approach. He understands that he stood a fair chance that you would have paid him if the equation resulted in a negative number.

I have personally used this formula successfully for the last three years. The manager is delighted. In fact, he says he would have closed the restaurant eighteen months ago if it hadn't been for the \$180 per week he gets from me. He is happy and I have the satisfaction of knowing that I work for money. I am a professional.

## HOW TO DEVELOP YOUR MEMORY GLANDS

---

A standard effect for magicians in the last several years has been to demonstrate incredible memory powers. Memory skills are usually supplemented with tricks which help the magicians appear to accomplish the impossible. The article below which I have reprinted from issue #37 of *The Trapdoor* was designed to capitalize on the relationship between "memory experts" and magicians.

---

Once again, I have decided to put my money grubbing efforts to one side in the interest of enhancing magical literature. I am turning over valuable money-making space in this issue to a topic near and dear to all those in magic --- education in an allied art. I am going to use this space to teach you how to develop your memory glands. That's right, after one reading and a few hours of practice, you too will be a memory expert.

Memory development is a science. It consists mostly of developing those glands which store your memory, the memory glands. These glands, located next to the cerebrum oblongata, are like muscles. The more they are developed, the stronger they will become. Practice the tricks below and you will be able to amaze your audiences, amuse your friends, and make enough money to renew your subscriptions.

**Effect.** The magician greets the audience as they enter the theater and introduces himself to all of them. Later, during the show, he asks that the entire audience stand up. As he remembers their names and calls them out, they are to sit down. He properly identifies all of them. This is a remarkable demonstration of a well developed set of memory glands.

**Method I.** Start by trying to associate as many names and faces together as possible. You may find it useful to associate a spectator's face with someone famous. For example, assume one of the spectators looks like our 32nd president, Abraham Lincoln. Just link "Abe" with the spectator's face. During the show, when you forget the spectator's name and call out "Abraham Lincoln," he will gratefully acknowledge the compliment. After all, who wouldn't want to be Lincoln? (The only exception I have encountered to this was an unshaven, female spectator.)

**Method II.** Another helpful hint is to tie their name together with a numeric memory jogger. Assume the person's name is George. Convert each letter in the name to its numeric equivalent. A=1, B=2, C=3, etc. In this case, G=7, e=5, o=15, r=18, g=7, e=5. Now, assume these numbers (57) and cast out the nines yielding 3. A one digit number is easy to remember. When you are later asked to identify the person, simply reverse the process.

Start by casting then nines back in. This will give you 57. Now break this number back into its component parts 7,5, 15, 18, 7, and 5. Be sure you do this so that the numbers are in order. Loudly proclaiming someone's name is "roeegg" may not impress your audience. Now convert these numbers back to their alphabetic equivalents.

Note that these memory tricks will help you impress everyone with your ability to perform such complex mathematical equations so quickly (not to mention your ability to cast back in the

nines). However, suppose you are asked to identify someone and you don't remember their key number. Don't fret. Now we come to the real secret of this course. This is the part they omit in all other memory courses.

Unbeknownst to the audience, the magician can read. Having been exposed to magicians in the past, this subtlety will go right past most spectators. When you are stuck with a particularly difficult face to identify, simply steal a glance downward at his or her name tag. After sufficient time has lapsed for apparently difficult mental gymnastics (such as casting back in nines) loudly proclaim, "*Your name is George.*" Wipe your brow and proceed with the next one.

For particularly astute audiences, you may wish to add this subtlety to throw them off the track. As soon as you glimpse the name from their name tag, follow with "You may wish to cover your name tag before I attempt to remember your name." Later they will recall that you asked them to cover their tag **before** you remembered their name. This is a real convincer.

**Method III.** The next time you have a party at your house, try it without the name tags. Rapidly reel off 50 to 100 names to demonstrate your big set of memory glands. It will be months before any of them realize that they are all friends of yours and that you already knew their names.

Even with this method, there is a need to allow for brief memory lapses regarding your friends' names. If you are asked to identify someone at your party that you don't know, you have two choices.

(1) Accuse the interloper of being a party crasher and throw him or her out. A sample of this type of patter may sound like this. "*I don't care if I am related to you, you were not invited to this party Mom!*"

(2) Look the unnamed person in the face. "*You will notice that you do not have a name tag on, and therefore, I am unable to consult it to recall your name. Is that correct?*" They will reply that it is. "*I might add that even if you had a name tag on, I would ask you to cover it before I tried to recall your name.*"

Now, having lulled them into a false sense that they are dealing with an honorable man, "*By the way, if you did have a name tag on, what name would be on that tag?*" They will answer. "*Very good George, and you may sit down.*" Rapidly proceed to the next person in the audience.

**Method IV.** This last demonstration of your memory is the most important. Have you remembered to check your mailing label for your expiration? This is issue #37. If your label says, "Expiration = #37" then this is it. Think of this as a friendly reminder from a (person who you pay to be your) friend. Don't forget. Send that renewal check in today.



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## ADVERTISEMENT

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One of the powerful sleights for a card cheat or card magician is a deck switch. This is the secret switching of a shuffled pack for another pack which has been preset in a known and beneficial order. This phony advertisement from issue #23 of **The Trapdoor** is one way to handle the resulting problem of having the switched in pack being noticeably cooler than the pack which was switched out.

---

This issue, instead of hawking the virtues of a magazine you are already paying for, I thought I would advertise a new product of which I am very proud.

The *Blowhard Deck Warmer* is what all the "in" card workers are using this year. The cold deck syndrome is a problem all deck switchers must face at one time or another. No sooner do you switch in your short-cornered, rough/smooth, marked and crimped Svengali for a borrowed and shuffled deck, when some spectator oversteps the boundaries of good spectatorship and says that the deck is suddenly cooler than it was a moment ago. This is caused by the fact that a deck which is handled tends to be warmed by the hands of spectators. (And, warm-handed spectators have big mouths.)

This ancient problem is now solved with this high-tech device. Don't you be caught squeezing the deck between your thighs to keep it warm. This device was designed specifically to keep the deck you want to switch in warmed to the proper temperature until needed.

"*But is it powerful?*", you ask. It comes with a dozen free fuses for your fuse box. "*But will it really keep a deck warm?*" Sure. Just adjust the flame to the desired level. But, you ask, "*Is it simple and safe to use?*" Of course. Would a magic dealer sell you something that wouldn't do what the advertisement said? And, since safety is a major concern, it comes with a special pair of protective goggles which are tinted so they double as luminous card readers. Won't you be the talk of the card table when you walk in and sit down sporting a pair of these high tech goggles?

Besides, even if the goggles don't completely work, your vision should return in four to six weeks (or most of it anyway). And who cares as long as you look good in them?

Finally, substituting your favorite dove for a deck of cards in the warming compartment, the *Blowhard* can be used to cook dinner during months when the shows aren't coming in regularly. It even comes with a forty page gourmet dove cookbook titled, **Empty Them First**. When was the last time you received so much value from your magic dollar?

For verification of the U.L. Listing, just call 202-555-2121 and ask them if they have the *Blowhard* on one of their lists. As a matter of fact, the *Blowhard* is on more government agency lists than any other electric appliance. This is truly a sign of quality.

Price - \$1250.00

Shipping Weight - 450 pounds

Optional crotch and leg hair protector - \$825.00

Solarcaine™ (optional but highly recommended) - \$15.00

Order today before *The Blowhard* is added to yet another government list which will no doubt increase the price.

**Trapdoor Productions - Where quality isn't just a word. It's a noun.**

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## ***“THANKSGIVEN”***

I would like to thank the following people, without whom, for one reason or another, this book would not have been possible:

Those friends who have generously allowed me to publish their magic have already been credited throughout the book. Without them, this book would be significantly thinner.

Michael Beam  
Doug Canning  
Tom Craven  
Stewart James  
Wayne Kyzer  
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Martini  
Gary Plants  
Steve Pressley  
John Riggs  
Scott Robinson  
Allan Slaight

Wayne Kyzer, John Riggs, Scott Robinson, Henry Pettit, Tom Craven, Don Morris, and Michael Beam have allowed me to bounce “just one more idea” off them so often that by now they should realize I never mean just “one more.”

Steve Pressley, who left us too young just last year, was a friend and an inspiration. I miss having a talented friend whose judgement I trust who was just a local phone call away.

Lisa Weedman is responsible for the art work which brightens the pages of **The Trapdoor** and this volume. She is able to take ideas and sometimes the lack of ideas, and convert them into art. While I illustrate the hands, she is responsible for the eye catching graphics which give the material a personality. Presentation is not only the most important part of magic, but one of the most important parts of explaining technical material.

My wife Dawn has watched thousands of card tricks during the last twenty years. So, why does she still have trouble remembering the difference between a club and a spade? Could it be... intentional? Magic was never the same for her after she saw where the sponge balls went when they disappeared.

Casey and Michelle, my little girls, still ask to see card tricks, not realizing that asking isn't necessary. They have a certain minimum number of card tricks they have to watch before they get the keys to the car for the first time. (Jim and Marilyn gave me the car keys twenty years ago to keep from having to watch card tricks.)

The subscribers of **The Trapdoor** have subsidized for the last ten years the affliction I contracted 25 years ago. Without them, I would have been stuck with hundreds of identical issues of the magazine. They have helped to make this hobby which has gotten out of control, much more fun and rewarding.

*There is just as much pride of achievement in fooling an audience with a Si Stebbins pack which requires little practice to use successfully, as there is in amazing them with some trick based on a 'side-steal,' 'pass,' 'back-palm,' 'bottom-deal,' or any other sleight which may require years of practice to perfect."*  
---Julien J. Proskauer in the preface to How'd Ia Do That? (1934)

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