



Inside Ed's Head

July 2012

One Way or Another (I'm Gonna Find Ya)

Last month I mentioned that I had some one-way deck tricks for you. These tricks are in the "Impossible Location" genre of card tricks. In other words, they use a method that will fool most magicians.

These tricks can stand alone if you wish, but as they aren't particularly flashy, I would suggest that they go in the middle of your performance. Perhaps after you've done some other locations, you might offer one of these as an explanation of how your mindreading ability helps you divine the card that the spectator has picked.

When using a one-way deck, before you attempt a trick that involves a spectator shuffling the cards, do a trick where the spectator shuffles the deck that DOESN'T rely on the one-way feature. If she shuffles cards normally, you'll know that you can continue with one-way deck tricks. If she disturbs the orientation of the cards as she shuffles, you'll obviously have to forgo your one-way deck tricks.

Mexican Joe Doesn't Live Here Anymore

In the book M.I.N.T. Volume I, Ed Marlo has a baffling trick called "Marlo's Mexican Miracle." (p. 253). I tried all the magicians I showed it to five or six years ago. It uses a deck prepared with the "Mexican Joe" crimp. (See Vernon: More Inner Secrets of Card Magic, p. 60.) As much as I like this trick, I wouldn't want to use this deck for an entire performance. Instead, a regular one-way deck will fill the bill perfectly. Bicycle League back cards work well here, as you can see the entire back of the cards as you deal them.

(Please don't think the Mexican Joe Crimp isn't worth investigating. After reading the following trick, imagine you can cut directly to the spectator's card, or glimpse it, etc.)

Describe this to your spectator as an experiment in "thought duplication," or "sympathetic movement," or some other eloquent term. Take out your deck of one-way backs OR faces. Tell the spectator that you want her to watch what you are doing carefully, because she must do exactly as you demonstrate.

Start dealing the cards face up with a stud deal, into a pile on the table. (The stud deal turns the cards end for end; a good thing when you are using a one way deck.) Stop the deal after seven or eight cards (remember how many). Mention to the spectator that she's to remember the card on top of the face-up pile when she stops. Then she's to place the rest of the cards face-up on top of the face-up cards, and then turn the deck face down. Take the cards remaining in your left hand, and turn them face up BOOKWISE onto the tabled packet, square it, and turn the pack face down.

You now REPEAT the explanation, dealing out the exact same number of cards as before. You must do this for two reasons: you want the spectator to handle the cards in the exact same manner you demonstrate; and you want to get all the cards facing the same way again. (This is why you should remember how many cards you dealt the first time. Of course, if you do forget, the one-way backs should let you proceed correctly, anyway.)

Give the deck to your spectator, and then, almost as an afterthought, tell her to shuffle the cards. (This is where magician's eyes pop open.) After she shuffles the cards, turn your back, and tell her to deal the cards as instructed, remember the card she stopped at, etc.

Take back the deck, and start to deal the cards face-up, as you previously demonstrated. Don't appear to be concentrating on the cards; focus on the spectator. After all, you are trying to give the impression you are reading her mind, or duplicating her behavior. You might have her hold your left wrist as you deal or you could hold hands and deal the cards from a tabled pack. As soon as you see the orientation of the card you are about to deal change, you know that the card currently on top of the face-up pile is the card your spectator is remembering. Announce that fact, and receive your well deserved applause. Now, drop the remaining cards on top of the face-up pile bookwise, and you're ready to repeat.

Mexican Joe Breaks Into Tears

Don't do this next trick unless you're willing to take responsibility for the complete mental breakdown of any magician you perform this for. (It's safe to do this for laymen; they think we can do miracles anyway.)

Do the lead in for "Mexican Joe Doesn't Live Here Anymore," but before you turn your back, mention to the spectator that to keep things from taking too long, you'd prefer that he not deal more than ten to fifteen cards. (Most magicians will do this naturally, so if you want to take a chance, you can ignore this caveat.) After he shuffles, deals, remembers a card, etc, tell him that he can give the deck another riffle shuffle. (This will make a magician's head spin around 360 degrees.)

Take the deck FACE UP in your left hand. If you're using one-way backs, begin to stud-deal them face down. If you're using one-way faces, you just have to start looking through the deck. The first card you see with its orientation reversed will be the selection. Remove it, and blow your spectator's mind.

OK, now you're thinking, "That's pretty damn cruel, but since the deck has been shuffled, and the reversed one-way cards are now dispersed through the deck, you're out of ammo."

Well, maybe not quite yet. If you're using one-way faces, a skillful cull will allow you to segregate and reverse the "wrong-way" cards. Instead of removing the selection and displaying it, place it face down on the table, saying, "This might be it." Now continue through the deck, culling the rest of the reversed cards, as you occasionally put one of them on the table, saying, "... or maybe this one?"

There are some people who are very good with the "Hofzinsler Spread Cull." This would work very well here. So would Larry Jennings' "Wedge Cull." A relatively easy way of doing the cull would be to down-jog the cards as you come to them. After you've spread through the deck, strip out the down-jogged cards, and cut them to the top. Now all you need to do is reverse the culled cards, and you're back in business. (Disclaimer: I've never tried this in front of people.)

I've never done any trick that requires culling more than four cards. I do think this is worth trying; please let me know how it works out if you try it.)

From Your Heart to My Mind

Roberto Giobbi has a section in *Card College 3* about “outs” you might use if you somehow fail to find a card. He tells his readers that they can use a Dai Vernon trick, from *Inner Secrets of Card Magic* to give them an out if they run into a problem. This trick, “Emotional Reaction” (Page 7), uses a key card to enable the magician to divine a selection the spectator is only “thinking” of. While playing with this trick, which is really quite good, I realized that the way the cards are handled enables us to create a minor miracle with a one-way-faces deck.

Explain to your spectator that you wish her to THINK of any card. She's to spread through the deck until she sees her card, and separate the deck at this point with her card on top of the left hand section. She's to place the right hand cards face down on the table, and place the left hand cards over her heart while she concentrates on the card. Finally, she's to place her cards back on the deck and square it neatly.

As you're explaining this, you must demonstrate exactly what you want her to do. Hold your one-way faces deck face-up in your hand. Spread through the deck a little bit until you come to a conspicuous card, which you point out to the spectator. Leave this card at the face of the left-hand cards, and place the cards in your right hand face down on the table; the long sides towards you, parallel with the table edge. (Your right hand rotates 90 degrees counter-clockwise as it places the cards on the table.) Hold the left-hand packet of cards to your heart for a little while. Finally place the left-hand cards on top of the packet already on the table, and square it. (Your left hand will rotate 90 degrees CLCKWISE, as it does this, so the top half of the deck is now reversed on the bottom half.) Now, you must repeat this explanation, so the spectator knows exactly what she must do, and you must stop at the same card, so you can get the deck all in the same direction.

Of course, it's easy to find the selection. As you spread through the face-up deck it will be the first one with its orientation reversed.

If you wish, you may add one more wrinkle to this trick. After the cards are squared, you can have the spectator cut them. Once that is done, you will find two places in the deck where the orientation changes. Here's how you handle it. As you run through the deck, when you come to first reversed card, remember its name, and continue spreading the deck. When you come to the card where the orientation changes again, withdraw it from the deck face down; don't allow anyone to see it. Announce the name of the FIRST card. If you get a positive reaction, take your bow and replace the card you are holding back in the deck, without showing it.

If she says it's not the card she's thinking of, ask for its name. When you get your answer, turn the card you're holding face up, and say, “Oh, you mean this one?”

Absolutely, positively, my last word on one-way decks (For now)

Despite how effective the first two tricks are, I know there are people who wouldn't consider preparing, or using, a gaffed deck. Well there's still a way to do these tricks. You can make an ungaffed version of one-way faces by using “Pointer Cards.” These are the twenty-two cards that have an asymmetrical layout of pips on the face. They are the Aces, Threes, Fives, Sixes, Eights, and Nines of clubs, hearts, and spades, plus all four Sevens.

Now you can do the two “Mexican Joe” tricks, with the following caveats: the spectator can’t shuffle in advance, nor can he deal more than twenty-one cards. If you want to go this route, the best way would be to use “Mexican Joe Breaks Into Tears.” Since the deck is shuffled after the selection, it should still be rather mind boggling.

That’s it for now. I’m not really sure what’s coming up in the next two months, but Darryl has agreed to let me use one of his incredibly great tricks for the October issue. Keep reading!

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