



Inside Ed's Head

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The World's Greatest Ultra Mental Deck Routine? (Careful—Heads Might Explode!)

A few weeks ago I was reading Harry Lorayne's *Special Effects*. Near the end of the book he teaches a force called "Switch!" Its mechanics are such that the selected card is left face down in the middle of a face-up deck. When I saw this configuration, I immediately thought of using this sleight in conjunction with an Ultra Mental (Invisible) Deck.

Unfortunately, Harry recently gave me another trick to print here, which I've been saving for later in the year, and I don't want to bother him again to get permission to teach "Switch!" Fortunately, there's another, well-known, force that can serve the same purpose, so I'll use that one instead. I do recommend you check out *Special Effects* if you get the chance. It's a hell of a book.

Effect: A spectator, using a deck that has been "in play" for several effects, chooses a card and leaves it, unseen, face down in the face-up deck. The magician points out that there has been another deck on the table since the beginning of the set. He asks the spectator to remove that deck from its case, and verify that there is a single face-down card in that deck. The spectator removes both of the face-down cards—they match.

The magician says he'll go a little beyond what has just been seen. He asks the spectator to shuffle the deck again. Taking the deck back, the magician explains he will now reverse another card in that deck, and leave it cased on the table to preclude any further manipulation.

One of the spectators is now asked to call anyone he knows and have that person name any card in the deck. The cased deck is now opened, and the one card found reversed is the one just named.

The spectators' heads all explode, leaving an unsightly mess for the host to clean, and an incredible story for *The National Enquirer*.

Method: You'll need three decks for this miracle: two regular decks (with jokers removed), preferably of contrasting colors or design, and an Ultra Mental (Invisible) Deck that matches one of the regular decks. (For now, assume it to be red deck.) In the regular red deck, reverse a known card about a quarter of the way from the face. (So it will be found quickly.) Case this deck so that it will be face up when it's removed from the box.

Place the Invisible Deck on your chair prior to performance. I find this type of preparation for a deck switch is always very easy to do amidst the initial hubbub accompanying preparations for a meal; either at home, at a friend's house, or in a restaurant. Regardless of the occasion, you'll need to do a deck switch; if you don't perform seated, read my final thoughts about how to accomplish the switch.

When you're ready to start, take out both decks, place the prepared red deck aside, remove the blue cards from their case and begin your set. It's important that the spectators get a chance to handle/shuffle these cards during the performance. At the appropriate time, get the duplicate of the reversed card in the red deck to the top of the blue deck. The easiest way to do this is during a trick where you are looking for a selected card.

You're now going to teach the spectator how to do Ed Balducci's "Cut Deeper" force on themselves, leaving one face-down card in an otherwise face-up deck.

Tell the spectator that he's to lift up some cards from the top of the deck, turn that packet face up and place those cards, still face up, on top of the deck. Demonstrate this by cutting off about a third of the cards on top of the deck and dropping them face up on the deck.

Now tell them that they need to cut into the face-down part of the deck, and flip **all** the cards above that point over, and back on top of the deck. To emphasize the "cut into the face-down part" explanation, you might even spread the cards into the middle of the face-down section before you flip the cards over.

Spread the face-up cards into your right hand and point out that the next card is below a random number of face-up cards. Take that card under the face-up cards in your right hand. (Photo 1.)



Flip the left hand's cards face up, and place them under the cards in the right hand. (Photo 2.) Emphasize that this process has left a single unknown card face down in the middle of the deck.



Pull this card out of the pack, turn the rest of the cards face down and place your force card back on top, being very careful not to flash its face. It now would behoove you to perform a brief false shuffle or cut.

Give the deck to the spectator, and carefully guide him through the procedure you just demonstrated. Be sure to emphasize the random number of cards he cut on two occasions. Have him square up the face-up cards and place the deck on the table.

Point to the red deck. Mention that you went through the exact same procedure earlier in the day, and that deck contains an unknown face-down card. Ask the spectator to open the case and remove the deck. (If he happens to hold the deck face down, make sure he turns it face up.) Have him go through the deck, remove and table the face-down card, and verify it's the only such card in the deck. Have him do the same with the blue deck.

Have the spectator turn both cards over—Miracle #1!

Say you want to go one step further. Give the red deck (it matches the Invisible Deck) back to the spectator. Ask him to be sure that all the cards are going the same way once again and then to shuffle it thoroughly.

Take the cards back and explain that you are now going to reverse a card in the deck again so that no one can possibly know what the card is. Take the deck under the table and avert your eyes, explaining that there will be no way anyone can see the card about to be reversed. Next, take the red card case under the table, case the deck, drop it in your lap, and pick up the Invisible Deck. Drop this on the table in front of you, saying you are leaving it in the box so there can be "no funny business."

Ask one of the spectators with a cell phone to call someone you could not possibly know. Ask that person to name any of the fifty-two cards in the deck. When this is done remove the Invisible Deck, and put the "only" reversed card face down on the table, in front of the person with the phone.

Put the Invisible Deck back in the case and begin to recap what has happened. Have the face-down card turned over. During the pandemonium that ensues, you can switch cases again. As an afterthought open the box, remove the cards and put the named card back on top. Double-cut it to the bottom and lap it. Re-case the deck. (I suggest, if you're doing this at a friend's house, leave the deck behind.) Later on, you'll have ample opportunity to pocket the Invisible Deck and the lapped card.

I do suggest you end the trick with the following statement. "If you ever run into another magician, ask him if he can do the trick where you shuffle the deck, have a card reversed without seeing it, call your aunt who names a card. You then remove the deck from the case, find the only reversed card, and it's the one your aunt named. My friend [your name here] did that trick for me!"

Final Thoughts: If you're short of time and/or want to do this as a "one-off" have the force card in the blue deck in a position where you can easily palm it off or lap it. Give the deck out for shuffling, and when returned, get it back to the top. (I use a Gambler's Cop [*Inside Ed's Head* 10/12 p. 6] to hold out the card, load it to the bottom when I get the deck back and double cut the card back to the top while I am pattering.) It's imperative that the spectator is "certain" that the reversed card in the blue deck is arrived at entirely by chance.

If you are doing this standing up, start with the cased Invisible Deck in your right rear pocket. After the spectator has shuffled the red deck, have them put it into the case and hand it to you. Tell them you'll reverse a card in the deck so no one can see you do it. Place the cards behind your back, dumping the deck in your left rear pocket as you apparently reverse the card. Retrieve the Invisible deck from your right pocket, and continue with the trick as written.

I'd like to make one last observation about the psychology involved in this routine. In the first phase of this trick the spectator opens a box and finds a reversed card in it. He then shuffles the deck and a reversed card is put into it again. Now when you open the box and remove a single reversed card, you are just saving time, there's no difference from what he did earlier. There's certainly some chance that he might never remember that you opened the box the second time.

This, to a magician, is a bit lame. Have the spectator phone his favorite aunt, have a card named, and it's found reversed in the deck—big deal. You might be wondering why I'm writing an essentially self-working trick.

I saw a guy pull out an Ultra Mental Deck on *America's Got Talent*. Howard

Stern called his mother, who named a card which was found reversed in the deck. The panel went wild.

(http://agt.wikia.com/wiki/File:America's_Got_Talent_2015_Aiden_Sinclair_Auditions_4)

I believe the Ultra Mental deck is one of magic's greatest props. I think we owe it to Joe Berg to do more than to pull out a deck and say, "Think of a card."

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