



Inside Ed's Head

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A False Shuffle and Cut (Good things are worth waiting for!)

Featuring: The Aronson Stripout The Affus-Gaffus False Cut

Before I begin, I must recount a story a friend of mine told me. He was watching the DVD *Sessions with Simon, Volume 1*. As he watched the conclusion of “Self control Lie Speller,” he was so flabbergasted, he just yelled out, “Nooooooo!” His wife became so alarmed she dropped what she was doing to come to his aid. There was nothing to be done for him—at least until he was able to regain his composure and watch the explanation.

In other words, Simon Aronson creates some amazing card magic. A magician performed his “Prior commitment” from *Try the Impossible* on *Penn & Teller: Fool Us*, and fooled them! That could have been me, or anyone else who reads Simon’s books. If you go to www.simonaronson.com, you can buy all of his books and tricks, make an appointment with the *Fool Us* staff, and win fame and fortune!

Three years ago, I asked Simon to allow me to write a description of his full deck false shuffle from *Simply Simon*. He politely declined, telling me that he was in the process of writing a new book that would contain an updated version of that shuffle, and he’d rather I not publish the old one.

That book turned out to be *Art Decko*, which I’ve only recently begun to read. I must say this is probably the first book where I learned something reading the Introduction! I’m up to page 80 so far, and if the rest of the book is as good as these starting pages, there’ll be enough material for an entire act.

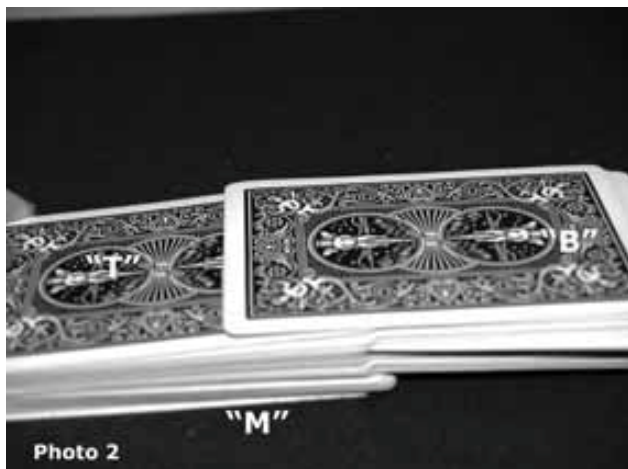
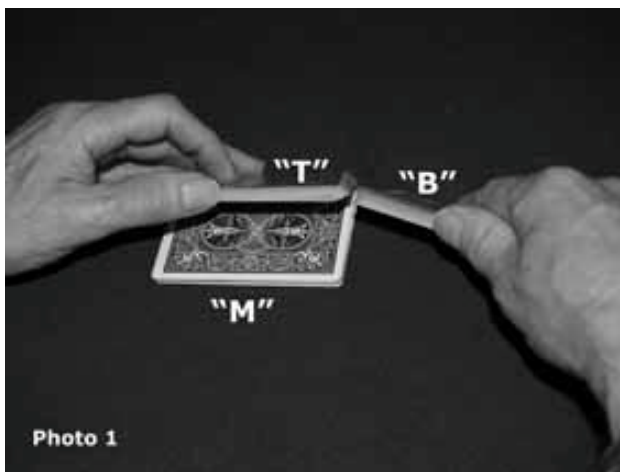
Anyway, *Art Decko* came out in 2014, so I figured I’d ask Simon if he’d give me

permission to teach the original sleight now. He immediately sent me an email agreeing. So without further ado—

The Aronson Stripout

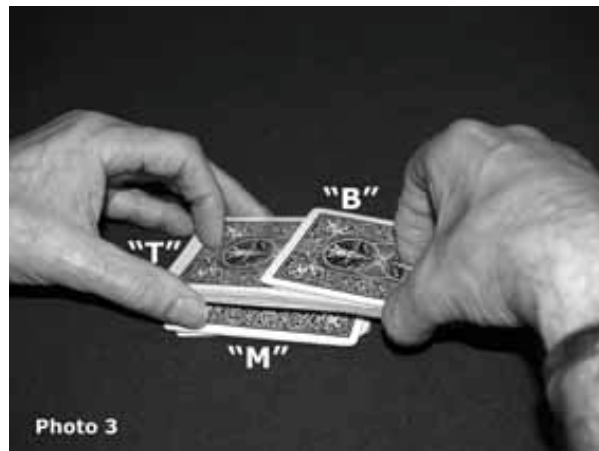
This might be the easiest full deck shuffle to learn and do deceptively that there is. This explanation contains the “basics” from *Simply Simon*. If you want the whole Megillah, go to page 65 and start reading. If you’re interested in Simon’s further refinements, buy *Art Decko* and look for “The Aronson Stripout 2.0.”

Start with the deck in front of you in normal tabled riffle shuffle position. Undercut about one third of the deck to the right (or cut two thirds of the deck to the left) and riffle the right hand portion into the *top half* of the left-hand section. Do this by just lifting up half of the left-hand packet as you begin the riffle. (Photo 1, riffling action greatly exaggerated to show that the middle section of the deck is *not* being shuffled.) Make sure that the top card(s) of the *right-hand* section fall last. (Photo 2, shows the relative positions of the cards after the shuffle.)



You’ll now reposition your hands to push the sections together, thumbs at the inner corners of each packet, fingers at the outer. Your left hand will just hold its cards in position; the right hand will start pushing the cards together. As it does so, the right thumb will lift the

inner end a bit so that the left thumb can get a break between the two packets it holds. Photo 3 is an exaggerated view of the situation as this is happening. In reality, the break will be no bigger than an eighth to a quarter inch. The break is at the inner end only, all should appear normal from the front. If you examine this photo, you'll see that the cards protruding from the right of the shuffled sections are those of the bottom third of the deck (Section "B"). The cards they're shuffled into are from the top third (Section "T"). All the cards below the break are from the middle (Section "M"). It's helpful that you understand this so you can keep track of what's happening as you learn.



Push the right-hand ("B") cards into the top cards until they're about a half inch of becoming flush. At this point, relax your grip with the left hand a bit, so the right hand can push its entire packet ("T/B") to the left, until the right end of the combined packet ("B") is even with the right end of the cards below the break ("M"). Your right thumb should maintain the break between "B" and "M." It will appear from the front that the cards have been squared; your left fingers will hide the leftjogged top section. (Photos 4 and 5.)



Your right thumb will adjust minutely so it can grasp packets "B" and "M" while maintaining the break between them. It will now move forward and to the right, simultaneously stripping the "T" from the "B" packet (Photo 6, stripout in process), and dropping



the "M" packet somewhat forward and to the right of the "T" packet, which is retained by the left hand, and does not move. (Photo 7.) The right hand continues moving away and to the right leaving the final packet, "B," tabled in a diagonal line with packets "T" and "M." The left hand has released packet "T" as the right hand has moved forward. (Photo 8.)



Now all you need to do is pick up packet "T" with the right hand, drop this on packet "M" pick up the combined packet and drop all on top of "B." Now just slide or lift the deck to the original starting position, and voila, you're done!

I should point out that there is nothing specific about this shuffle that makes a difference if you're right or left handed. It would be just as easy for a righty to cut the two thirds of the cards to the *right* and shuffle the bottom cards into the top half so they protrude from the left side and continue on from there. In this case, the left hand would end up stripping out sections "M" and "B," and the three piles would make a diagonal line to the left. As a matter of fact, this is the way I do it, but from a different starting position; instead of a tabled riffle shuffle, I begin this as a standard dovetail shuffle. The cards start off in my right hand, where I riffle off about a third of the deck onto the fingers of my left hand. (Photo 9.) I then raise my right hand so my left thumb will be able to reach over and take the right end of the packet.



(Photo 10.) These packets are tabled and I shuffle the left-hand packet into the top half of the right exactly as described above, except the *left hand* cards should be shuffled off last. (Photo 11.) The shuffle now proceeds in the mirror image of the initial description.

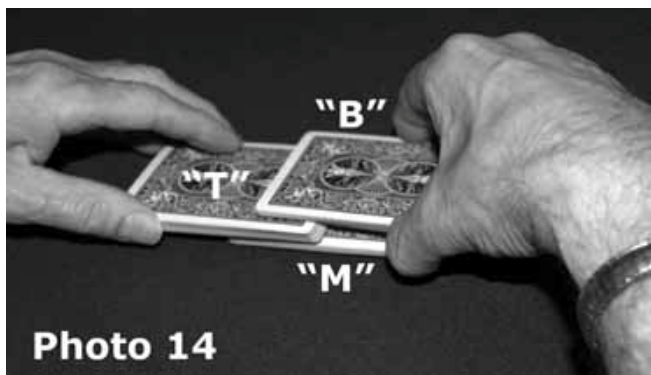


I do it this way because I believe a dovetail shuffle is a little less “professional” than a tabled riffle shuffle, and, with a little practice, can be done on a table without a mat,

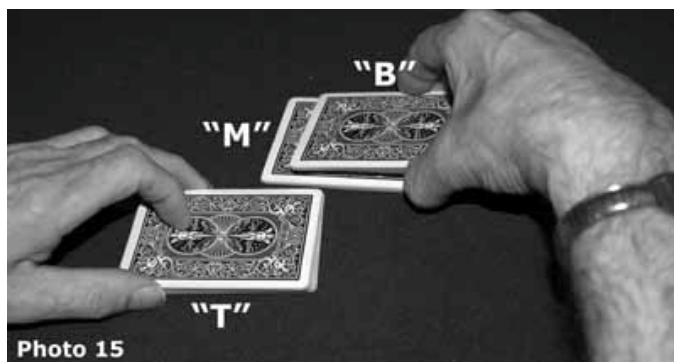
After this I perform a three packet false cut: “The Affus-Gaffus False Cut,” from Frank Garcia’s *Million Dollar Card Secrets*, p. 97. (It’s also in Roberto Giobbi’s *Card College, Vol. 2*, p. 391.) I use this cut because it’s a three packet false cut that harmonizes very well with the stripout sequence used in the false shuffle.

The Affus-Gaffus False Cut

Undercut about one-third of the deck (Photo 12), and cut it to the top, sidejogging it somewhat to the right. Your left and right fingers will hide this jog from the front. (Photo 13.) Don’t let go of this packet as you pause for a beat or two. Your left thumb lifts up about half of the leftmost section, allowing your right hand to take the top and bottom thirds (section “B” and “M” forward and to the right. (Photo 14.)



The bottom third (section "M") is dropped (Photo 15),



and then the right hand continues on the diagonal and drops the original bottom packet to the table. (See Photo 8, above.) The right hand then returns to lift the nearest packet, which it places on the middle packet. The combined packet is placed on the furthest packet, and all is then returned to the starting position. You've just finished a very convincing shuffle and cut sequence. Of course you can also mirror image this cut to do it "left handed" if you wish to remain consistent when doing a dovetail shuffle.

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