



Inside Ed's Head

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Rock, Rock, Rock Around the Clock (Simon Says, "No Writer's Block.")

We've talked about "clocking" the deck before. (February and March .2017.) For those of you who are unfamiliar with the term, it means finding the value of a card removed by using a "system" to add the values of all the cards in the deck and subtracting that number from a "key" number to get the value of the card that's missing. There are several ways to approach this other than brute addition—in the trick by Paul Cummins. In the March issue, I described a rather easy method.

This month, Simon Aronson has graciously allowed me to use his trick "Two Minds and a Mate." from his book *The Aronson Approach*. (<http://simonaronson.com/thearonsonapproach.html>. If you can't find ten tricks you'll want to do in this book, you ain't hardly trying. Simon's other books are on the site as well—buy them all! I have.)

Simon eases the burden of clocking the deck by letting you know the *color* of the unknown card. This means you'll only have to clock the twenty-five remaining cards. You *will* have to deal with jacks, queens and kings, so I recommend you learn how to clock by casting out thirteens. (If you have no idea what I'm talking about, read the February issue of *Inside Ed's Head* for an explanation of clocking, and some proactive tips. <http://edhassmagic.com/edshead/EH-2017-02.pdf>)

There is a way to clock a deck by casting out tens. One of the most important discussions of how to do this is Harry Lorayne's *Epitome Location*.

(www.harryloraynemagic.com/store/p48/The_Epitome_Location.html)

Two Minds and a Mate by Simon Aronson

Effect

The magician claims that he will go the extra mile. Not only will he read the minds of two spectators, he'll add an additional climax that will prove his extraordinary psychic abilities. A spectator removes a card from a deck that's spread on the table, and hides it, sight unseen.

Two spectators think of a card. One thinks of a red card, the other, a black. The magician places two cards on the table. He asks the spectators to name their cards to make sure he's on the right track.

Announcing that all's well so far, he now says he'll try to remove the "mate" of the hidden card. He removes one card and tables it near the first two. After a brief recap, the magician shows he's successfully read the minds of the spectators. Then, the mystery card is removed from its hiding place and shown. The magician turns the final card face up, confirming his psychic powers.

Setup

Prior to performance, the colors are separated. You must remember which half is on top. You also might want to consider marking the corner of the top card of the bottom half, so you can tell exactly where the colors separate. (Those of my readers who might consider a deck switch or culling the cards into this situation might want to reconsider. The red/black separation is destroyed early in the routine. If you go to the trouble of separating a shuffled deck into red/black on the fly, I would suggest you use a routine that makes the most of this effort. Curry's "Out of this World," or Tamariz's "Neither Blind nor Silly," from *Sonata*, come to mind.)

Method

Give the deck some false shuffles that maintain the red/black condition. I don't use shuffles that are specifically red/black; I just undercut less than half the deck and do a jog shuffle or two. Since I don't want to draw attention to the order of the deck, I don't make a big deal of the shuffles.

Spread the pack face down on the table. Ask a spectator to your left to take a card from the spread and, without looking at its value, hide it somewhere. Note from which end of the deck he's taken the card. Let's assume it's black. (If you can't tell what color card he's taken, you should have a "Plan B" ready.) I often ask the spectator to sit on the card. Then, when it comes to the climax, I point out that instead of MIND reading, I'll now do some beHIND reading. (Obviously, one needs to know his audience well before engaging in this type of comedy. It ain't exactly fit for the Ritz, y'know?)

Close the spread and shuffle it for real; you don't want to leave a hint of the initial color separation. Tell the spectators that you will want them to each mentally select a card that is *still in the deck*. Additionally, as you don't want them to think of the same card, the spectator at your left (S1) will think of a red card and the spectator on your right (S2) will think of a black one. (You must have S1 think of a card that is the *opposite* color from the one that that was placed aside earlier.)

Face S1 and ask him to think of *any* red card. Tell him you'll now let him see the cards to verify his is in the deck. Lift the deck and start spreading it, backs toward you. Close your eyes and turn your head away while you do

this. Ask S1 to touch the face of his card if he sees it. (Of course, he will see it. We know that the missing card is black.)

When he touches the card, break the spread, keeping the touched card at the face of the right-hand section and show it to those assembled. Replace the halves together in left-hand dealing position, taking a little-finger break between the halves, below S1's selection.

You now turn to S2 and tell him you'll show him the cards in the deck and you want him to think of *any black card he sees*. You'll now grasp the deck at its upper and lower left corners with your right thumb and middle finger and turn the cards face up by rotating them book-wise, using the right side of the deck as an axis. This will cause a step to form at the lower right corner as the deck turns face up, letting you glimpse S1's selection. Square up the deck as you begin to address S2. Remind him that he is to think of any black card in the deck. You'll show him all the cards, so you won't get any hint if he stops you after seeing a particular card.

Lower the cards and begin spreading them so S2 and you can see the faces. Since, if you are right handed, S2 will be seeing the cards upside-down, you should spread rather slowly to allow him to get a good view of all the cards as they go by. This will also give you the needed time *to clock all the black cards as you spread them*. By the time you're done spreading the deck, you should know S1's card (from the glimpse) and know the *value* of the black card that was hidden initially.

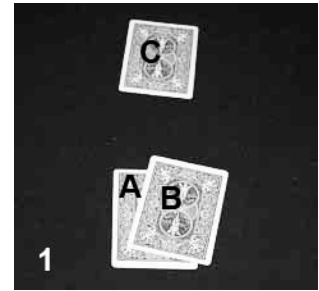
You now tell your audience it's time to read S1 and S2's minds. Hold the deck in front of you and spread through the cards again. I use this as an opportunity to clock the deck a second time, just in case. Simon doesn't bother; he's obviously much more confident of his ability to clock the deck than I am. When you come to S1's red, or a black card with the value from clocking the deck previously, upjog it and continue to spread through the deck, clocking it. If you've practiced clocking sufficiently, by the time you've reached the end of the deck, you should have clocked the same value for the hidden card both times. If that's the case, you're good. If that's not the case and you only found one black card with the value you clocked initially, you're still good.

If you found *two* cards that match your clocked value, pause and say, "I'm having trouble getting that other card. Please concentrate very hard." Now go through the deck and look for the black card with the value you got clocking the deck the second time. If you didn't clock a second time or if that was the wrong value also, just use your intuition and remove *any* black card you think might be correct. Place these cards face down, S1's red below S2's black.

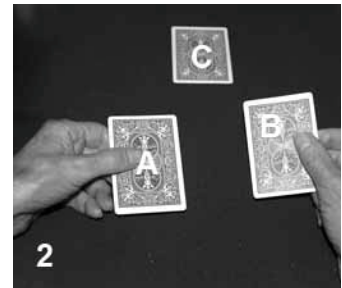
Indicate that the mind-reading phase of the trick is over, so you'd like S1 and S2 to announce the names of their cards. (Of course, remember the

card that S2 names.)

Now it's time to build up the impossibility of the next task—discerning the value of an unseen card that's been hidden from everyone's sight. Explain that every card has a mate: a card with the same value and color, but the opposite suit. You hope that your clairvoyant powers will allow you to zero in on the mate to the hidden card. Run through the cards, remove the card that S2 has just mentioned, and place it on the table in front of the other two. (Photo 1. A = S1's card, B = mate to hidden card, C = S2's card.)



You'll now switch the mate of the hidden card (the top card of the two you found initially) with S2's card, using a technique pioneered by Brother John Hammon. Pick up the two-card packet in front of you; take the top card in your right hand, the bottom in your left. (Photo 2.) *"First I read your minds . . ."*

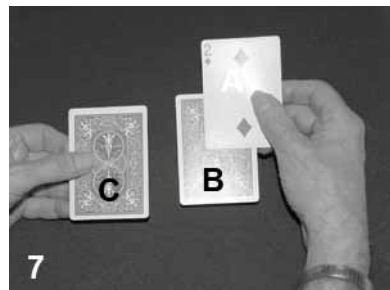
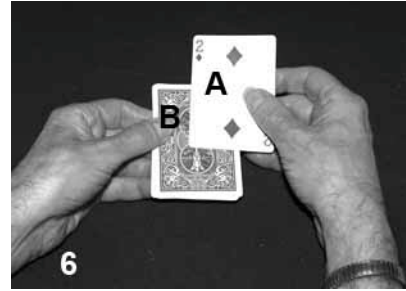
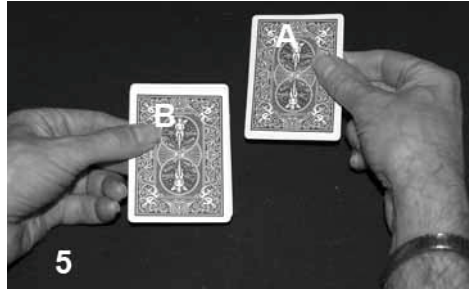


Use the left-hand card to scoop up the card left on the table, as you place the right hand's card on top of it (Photo 3, in transit)—squaring the packet between your hands as you lift it from the table. (Photo 4.)



In a continuing action, the right hand pinches out the bottom card and turns it face up, diagonally outjogged on top of the packet. (Photos 5 and 6, next page.) *" . . . finding **your** card . . . "* Grasp the packet in your right hand, pinch the bottom card into your left (Photo 7) turn it over and place it face up under the packet injogged diagonally backward (Photo 8)—*"and*

your card.” (Accept the accolades that result, then continue. *“But now, the question is—did I find the mate to the mystery card?”*)



Ask that the mystery card be revealed, turn over the card, in your hand and take your bows.

Afterword

OK, you might be wondering what you should do if you mess up clocking the deck and you know the mystery card won't match. When the mystery card is shown, drop the card you're holding back onto the deck and say, "Oh no! That's my nemesis card. It always tries to top me. Watch! I'll show you what I mean."

Pick up the card and apparently shuffle it, controlling it to second or third from the top and perform your ambitious card routine. Of course, you can use any other "out" trick that could feature a single card. (Ultra-Mental deck anyone?)

If failure is not an option, you could do what Mike Powers does. He has a cardcase cut so there is a "window" in its lower right corner. (Photo 6.) He has the spectator "hide" the card in the cardcase and then glimpses the index of the card before putting the case off to the side—no clocking necessary. And there are always marked cards!

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