

CARD TREKS II: *THE ADVENTURES CONTINUE*



by Roger Golde

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Ring 122 would like to thank Roger Golde for allowing us to publish his book Card Treks II here. This book on card magic has remained unpublished for way too many years. Thanks also to Alan Wassilak for his wonderful illustrations and his hard work in scanning the original work making it possible for us to make this work available to you. This is a work in progress and we will post the pages as they become available to us. We hope you enjoy it as much as we have.

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PREFACE from the Illustrator

By way of explanation:

In 1981, Ray Goulet's Magic Art Book Company published Card Treks by Roger Golde, illustrated by Mike Tucci. The book was subtitled "Special Effects with ordinary cards" and "A journey into unexplored spaces of the universe-in-a-pack."

In 1988, with Mr. Tucci no longer available, I was commissioned to draw the illustrations for a sequel to this book, appropriately entitled Card Treks II – The Adventures Continue. Events in the commercial magic scene shifted gears around this time, and the second manuscript was never published.

Mr. Golde has very generously offered the material in Card Treks II to the members of I.B.M. Ring 122, via its Web site. This unique feature will be presented on the site in serialized form, "launching" a few "adventures" as a group from time to time. There are fourteen adventures in all, some of them linked to each other but also worthy of consideration as separate units of study.

Those of you who are interested in intermediate card magic will find some stimulating notions and presentations to study and practice. Even if you are not a committed card magician, you might enjoy seeing how Roger's creative mind works, and draw inspiration from that. The writing style is breezy and witty; the instructions are easy to follow.

One final word:: the illustrated title headings of each chapter, which feature a little space-suited character created by Mike Tucci for this series, follow the whimsical style established by Mr. Tucci in the first volume, working in collaboration with Roger Golde and publisher Ray Goulet.

Fasten your seat belts and enjoy the ride.

Alan Wassilak

March 201

Introduction

COUNT DOWN

This second volume of Card Treks continues in the same spirit as the first. The title echoes the name of the famous TV series and movies in which Captain Kirk and the starship Enterprise carry out their mission to boldly explore new parts of the universe. Now the universe-in-a-pack may be small, but it holds many delightful adventures for the devoted explorer and his onlookers.

"Treks" is meant to suggest pathways down which you can travel and from which you can branch off to create your own "special effects." In this second volume the space age theme is captured by a number of special flourishes and effects which involve cards or packets flying through the air. After all, why should a pack of cards remain tethered to the terra firma of your hands in this age of space shuttles?

As with the first volume, this book is not for the beginner, yet expert finger-flinging is not required. All the effects can be mastered technically with relatively little practice. No gaffs, trick cards or complicated pre-arrangements are required.

I have not written up anything which is merely a slightly different handling of an effect already published many times over. To the best of my knowledge none of the material has been in print before. I have tried to give credit wherever I was aware of another magician's contribution. But the literature on card magic is immense. As in the previous volume I apologize in advance for unwittingly presenting something already written up in a 1932 issue of Jinx Magazine or the like.

Have fun adventuring into the new spaces presented here. If you enjoy doing something a little different, I guarantee your audience will too. Now let's blast off!



The Ultimate Technological Breakthrough in Take-a-Card

We all know what a Take-a-Card effect should look like if we could perform true magic. The spectator would hold the cards in his own hands; pick out one and shuffle it back into the other cards without the magician at any time touching the cards or even coming near the cards. Well, now you can do exactly what has just been described. This should certainly be worth more than the price of this book, especially if you're looking at a second-hand copy or if you borrowed the book from a friend.

All right, enough hype. A more pregnant point is if you don't learn how to be absolutely out of control you will be missing a key piece of the next effect--a truly great effect that is certainly worth more than the last piece of equipment you have left sitting unused in your magic case.

Of course one way to meet the conditions stated above would be to insist that the spectator handle the cards face up. You might want to use this gambit as a gag to embarrass (and probably lose) your magician friends. The other approaches to this effect have usually involved a one-way back pattern plus a prescribed handling of the cards causing the selected card to be reversed end for end. In all the methods I know of, however, there is considerable room for spectator error, i.e. he may not end up reversing his card in following out your instructions. My "technological breakthrough" follows the same pathway, but there is almost no way the spectator can foul things up.

First select a pack with an unobtrusive one-way back design. For extended thoughts on this subject take a look at "No Way One Way" in the first volume of Card Treks. Hand the spectator a bunch of cards which have been set with the back patterns all facing the same way. Then have the spectator follow this set of vital instructions:

1. Ask the spectator to fan the cards with the faces toward him so he can make a selection.
2. So there can be no mistake or a change of mind, have the spectator pullout the card of his choice

halfway up from the fan.

3. Tell him he can change his mind if he wishes. If he does get back to step two with another card sticking halfway up in the fan.

4. Now have him grab the card with his free hand (Figure 1) and place it face down on the table in front of him. As he is doing this be sure to tell him not to close up the fan but leave it spread open. It is vital for the next step that the fan stay open.

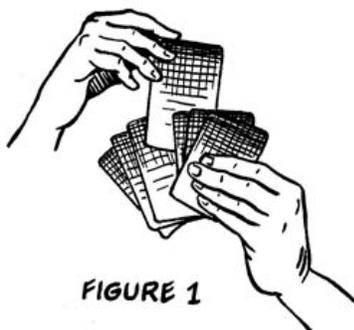


FIGURE 1

5. Next have the spectator place the open fan, face down, over his chosen card to conceal it completely from prying eyes or can openers or anything like that (see Figure 2). If you see the spectator is laying down the fan sideways, just ask him to turn the fan so it faces the same way as the card it is covering so it completely covers it.

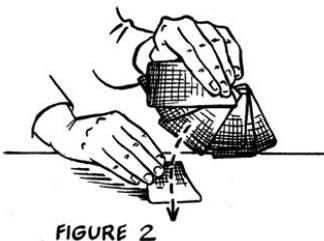


FIGURE 2

6. Then have the spectator square up the fan with the chosen card below leaving everything on the table. Point out that the chosen card has been kept well out of sight, but you do know that it is on the bottom of the pile.

7. So ask the spectator to give the cards a few cuts, and then a good overhand shuffle. Note that a riffle shuffle of a small bunch of cards is rather difficult. Thus the suggestion of an overhand shuffle here is very natural. Actually in most cases a riffle shuffle won't reverse the backs of any cards either, but there is no point in taking the risk.

That's it! If you try the sequence yourself, you may not even realize that the chosen card has been reversed. From here on it should be easy to control and uncover the card in any one of a thousand dazzling ways to the

complete consternation of your audience. Personally I follow up "Absolutely Out of Control" with "Prime Time Miracle" described next.

TIP: If the spectator places the chosen card a bit to his left, he will find it easier and more natural to replace the fan in the desired position as described above. This assumes of course the spectator is holding the fan in his left hand. Also notice that there is an apparent justification for each step of the procedure. Since you are watching exactly what the spectator is doing you can make sure no problems occur. I find they never do!



I thought about calling this the ultimate multiple out because it looks like a multiple out and isn't. That's why I have absolutely fooled every magician to whom I have showed this, including a few well known ones who shall remain nameless to protect their reputations (and my well being). One magician, however, would have figured it out because I am using his principle--an idea buried in an old issue of Pallbearer's Review. To date I have never seen anyone use this principle for anything, and it is real dynamite. Oh yes, the one magician's name is George Sands.

Okay, you have just had a spectator chose any card from a packet of 11 cards "Absolutely Out of Control." [See Adventure 1.] You can use any other devious method you wish, but you must end up knowing where the chosen card is by looking only at the backs. This means you should use a one-way back approach or else control the card to a known location. Remember, though, that much of the miraculous nature of this effect derives in part from a situation in which the spectator has no idea of where his card is in the packet, and cannot believe that you know either.

You deal the cards face down in a clock-like circular arrangement. Obviously with 11 cards you cannot form a perfect clock, so don't bother to try. As you deal out the cards notice where the chosen card (back) falls. After the deal move the card next to the chosen one out a bit from the circle to mark unequivocally where you will start your count. By "next" card I mean the card dealt next after you have dealt the chosen card. Normally you would be dealing out the cards clockwise, so the "next" card would be the next one counting clockwise. If the chosen card falls last, the "next" card would be the first one you dealt. (In the accompanying diagram, the card labeled "D" is the chosen card. "E" has been set slightly outward.)

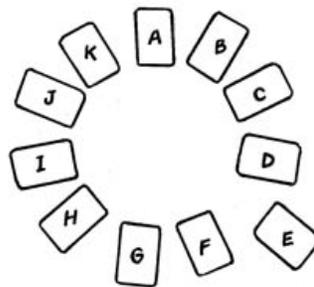


FIGURE 1

As you push out the "starting" card, try to find some logical reason for picking that one (without making a big deal of this, since no one knows what you are going to do anyway). For instance the starter card is very likely to be sort of facing the spectator or you. If not, the card is then facing someone else who can be described as a "neutral" party, i.e. an unbiased place to start.

Next ask the spectator to choose freely any number from one to eleven. Make clear this is a free choice. The number he picks is the number to be used. No adding or doubling or whatever. You can even explain that the number will be used to count off cards. Ask the spectator if he wishes to change his choice. You can pretend to be forcing him to take a particular number. For instance, "Nobody takes 6. You really want 6. That's ridiculous. Why do I get all the oddballs? Are you sure you don't want to change?"

Of course only you know that it doesn't matter which number is chosen. And even you won't be sure why it doesn't matter even after you try the trick out on yourself. As you will see a bit later, the effect does not play out as nicely if the number 1 or 11 is chosen. So in these cases do try to get a different number chosen. If you get some stubborn SOB who clearly views this as a piece of "challenge magic," go ahead with the number 1 or 11.

Here is the way you count no matter what number is selected. Start the count with the card you moved out a bit and count to the selected number and turn that card face up. Continue counting again to the same number starting with the next card, and again turn face up whatever card you end on. Continue in this fashion until you are left with one face down card. This card will be the chosen one, and what is more it will be exactly in place to be counted to with the spectator's number from the last card you turned face up.

Let's use a specific example to be sure you understand the counting procedure. Imagine the eleven cards are laid out face down and lettered on the back as in Figure. Suppose the chosen card is at D and thus the card jogged out is E. (See diagram.) Further suppose the number chosen by the spectator was six. You start counting on card E as one, F as two, G as three, H as four, I as five, J as six. Then turn J face up. Now count to six starting with card K and ending on card E which you turn face up. Count again to six ending on card K which you turn face up. Note that you include all face up cards in your count. Thus the count continues, and you turn the cards face up in this order: J, E, K, F, A, G, B, H, C, I. Card D is the only one remaining face down and it is exactly six from card I the last one you just turned face up.

Suppose the spectator picked the number four. You would again start counting on card E and turn up the cards in this order: H, A, E, I, B, F, J, C, G, K. So again card D is left to be the last one turned up. Try this with a few other numbers to convince yourself that it always works. It's fun to fool yourself every once in a while isn't it?

If for some reason you do not wish to use 11 cards you can use this same principle with 13 cards or 17 cards. In fact the principle works with any number of cards that represent what mathematicians call a "prime" number. Thus you now understand what has been bugging you for the last few pages: namely, why in tarnation this effect was called "Prime Time Miracle." A prime number is a number which cannot be divided evenly by any other number than 1 and itself. Thus 2, 5, 7, 11, 13, 17, 23, etc. are all prime numbers (although I don't recommend trying this effect with two cards).

I have found that 11 cards is just about the right number for two reasons. It is easy to approximate a clock face layout, and the counting proceeds rapidly enough not to bore the audience (never mind yourself). In fact I generally hate counting tricks, but the counting here takes no more than 15-20 seconds because the cards are all laid out. You can count rather rapidly once everyone understands what you are doing.

Before you start counting make clear what is going to happen. Or you can pretend that the card will appear on the first count of the chosen number. When you fail you go ahead and try again--and fail, and so on until it finally dawns on the audience what is going to occur. Personally I don't use this gag approach much. I just count without saying much of anything, and let the audience slowly realize that the spectator's card is not appearing, and will be the only one left face down on the table.

The "miracle" is that the spectator picked a card "absolutely out of control." No one knows where the card is, including you (until you deal out the cards). After the deal the spectator still has no clue of where his card is. Then the killer is that he picks any number he wants. You better believe this is one effect that comes off as real magic to the layman and completely confounds any know-it-all magicians.

TIP: When I deal the cards out I usually contrive to reverse a few backs at random just to make sure some eagle eye does not tumble on to one part of the secret. You will find it very easy to turn casually a few of the cards as you deal them out in the different positions around the circle because your hand is turning to different angles. Please don't make a "move" out of these end-for-end reversals.

THE AMAZING AEROBATIC PACK



"And now ladies and gentlemen, in the center ring we feature the world famous aerobic pack. For those of you who aren't sure what I'm talking about, remember that no less a man than Webster himself defines 'aerobatics' as the art of performing with an airplane spectacular feats such as loops or rolls. (Isn't it amazing the types of useless information one picks up watching magic?) What I have here is a special, very highly trained pack of playing cards. Not many of you realize that tucked away in the hills of Virginia is a secret academy engaged in teaching playing cards of all back colors and denominations a variety of tricks and stunts -- maneuvers needed for self-protection from irate gamblers and perennial gin rummy losers. Also taught are the means for attack (if provoked) by faddish gaming equipment such as marbles, lettered tiles, or chess-like pieces which are constantly seeking to undermine the long reigning supremacy of card packs in the kingdom of games.

"This particular pack was caught in several compromising positions by the Academy officials and expunged from all official Academy records, but not before this deck learned some of the more advanced and devilish moves offered in the advanced courses. When this pack was then forced to earn an honest living in the harshly competitive everyday world, I was able to strike a reasonable bargain. The deck would provide a brief daily demonstration in return for my providing it with the daily stimulation of certain esoteric riffles and flourishes known only to me. I also threw in the promise of an occasional treat of fanning powder.

"How would you like to see this pack perform before your very eyes the death defying behind-the-back, loop-the-loop somersault which ends with a landing all together in one piece on the tiny palm of my hand? I can tell from the deafening silence that you are speechless with anticipatory excitement. So here goes. Remember, you asked for it!"

At this point you place the pack of cards into the card case which has been lying unobtrusively on the table or in your pocket. Close the flap and take the card case in your right hand, or whichever hand you throw with. Throw the case up behind your back so it comes down in front over your left shoulder where it can easily be caught with your left hand (See Figure). Now back to the patter.



"Well, don't say I didn't warn you. Cheating is an important part of the true art of deck self-defense, and the old instructors at the Academy are well versed in many forms of trickery and deceit.

"Okay, okay. I know that some of you still feel this little demonstration wasn't worth what you paid for it. Since most of you didn't pay anything I'm not particularly worried about giving you a refund. It's just that I don't want to risk the chance of your bad-mouthing this act and upsetting my special little pack which has a very sensitive disposition despite its seemingly hard plastic-coated exterior.

"So here is the real thing which required years of onerous discipline and self-denial at the hands of the zen deck masters. Watch! You'll only see it once -- in a lifetime!"

You now proceed to do exactly what you did previously, except that you do not place the pack of cards in the case. Believe it or not you can easily learn to do this without having the pack fly apart all over the place. It is simply a little known fact about a deck of playing cards that when tossed properly it tends to stay together. Most people don't know this, because who goes around throwing decks in the air?

To witness the principle, take the deck and just throw it a few inches in the air right in front of you. It will stay together almost no matter how you throw it. But it helps if you try to throw the pack like a knuckle ball, that is, so it does not turn over or rotate very much. I find it easiest to hold the pack with my thumb on top and my fingers on the bottom. Then I move my whole arm down a bit and then up as I release the pack. Try to release the thumb and fingers at the same time to minimize the rotation of the pack.

Use exactly the same technique for throwing the pack behind your back. Don't worry about making it somersault. The pack will naturally turn over some way at least once. Even if it doesn't, nobody will really care. The spectators will be too amazed that cards don't end up all over the place to pay much attention to anything else. Of course you do have to be able to throw the pack behind your back and catch it. Just practice with the pack in the case until you get the hang of it. One little tip is to put your throwing hand 'way around your back and then move it up to release the pack. That is, don't release the pack while your right hand is still in front of you or at your right side.

Obviously you can use the gag part of this flourish by itself if you wish, until you develop sufficient confidence in doing the real thing.

Here is a last word of warning. Elsewhere in this book is an effect entitled "Ambitious Boomerang" followed by another use of the same sleight called "Boomerang Paintbrush." Please don't use those effects in the same

show with the Aerobatic Pack. First of all the effects are a bit similar insofar as they involve throwing one or more cards in the air. More importantly, the Aerobatic Pack effect suggests that you have the ability to throw more than one card in the air and have them stick together. No need to let this astounding feat of skill become an inkling in the spectators' eyes of how you might use such skill for real trickery.



A long time ago in a faraway land I learned a rather interesting gambling bet. The odds looked like they should be 50-50 when in fact they were 100-0. Many years later I learned from a Karl Fulves publication that the premise behind the gambling bet had a principle with a name: the "Omega Principle." A few variations on the principle were outlined in the Fulves manuscript, but I started playing with the principle and discovered a number of further possibilities, many of which I have never seen in print. Perhaps my thoughts here will motivate you to uncover even more intriguing options.

The principle itself is very simple and, dare I say it, self-working. But as you will see, there are opportunities to add some other kinds of artifice if you desire. The nifty thing about the principle is that you will baffle yourself with it at first. Then you can use the principle as a gambling bet or as a demonstration of uncanny control or predicting the future. The choice is up to you and the needs of the occasion.

I'll start by describing the basic gambling bet just as I first learned it. Then I will proceed to the other variations. All of the variations utilize a small packet of red and black cards arranged with the colors alternating. You may use any number of cards providing you have the same number of reds and blacks. Typically I use a packet of 18 or 20 cards. This size packet is just large enough to make the odds seem interesting, but not so large that showing what has happened becomes boring.

The spectator cuts the packet as many times as he wishes. The spectator now takes the top card and inserts it face up anywhere he wishes in the packet. The cards will then be turned up two by two. Naturally the face-up card will be part of one pair (either back-to-back or face-to-face). You propose this bet:

A: If the face up card is the same color as the other card in the pair then the spectator wins.

B: If the face up card is not the same color as the other card then you win.

This seems like a fair bet, yet amazingly you will always win. If you want to understand more clearly how the principle works, take a small packet of say 6 cards alternating in colors, and work with the packet face up to see what is going on. Obviously cutting the packet doesn't change anything, nor are the spectators supposed to think it does. In fact the seeming fairness of the bet depends on the spectators knowing that the cards do alternate, and therefore the odds seem even that the face up card will end up next to a red or a black card.

Suppose the top card of your 6-card packet is black. Place that top card to the second position. Now the top pair is still red-black and so are the remaining two pairs. Okay, place the top black card in the third position. The pairs are still all red-black. Place the top card at any other position and you will easily see the same result occurs due to the fact that pairs are being removed from the top.

In essence there are only two types of position the face-up card can occupy: that is, an even-numbered position or an odd-numbered position. Both types of position result in the face-up card being paired with a card of another color. Now let's move on to some other unexpected properties of the Omega principle.

1. Remove the top card and place the 2nd card face up anywhere in the packet. Now the odds are still 100% that the face card will not be the same color as the other card of the pair.

2. A seemingly slight change in procedure causes a totally different result. Remove the top two cards of the packet. Now if the former top card is placed face up in the packet, it will always be the same color as the other card with which it is paired off. But if the original second card is used it will never match the color of the other card in the pair.

Obviously in this variation you end up with an odd number of cards in the packet, and the bottom card will not be part of a pair. This makes no difference to the effect, but clearly you cannot allow the face-up card to be placed at the bottom. And you can explain to the audience why. There would be no pair, and thus the bet or prediction would make no sense. Several of the following variations also end up with an odd number of cards, and so the same caveat applies.

3. In the original version it doesn't matter whether you use a card from the top or from the bottom of the packet. In both cases the colors won't match. If, however, you discard the bottom card and use the next-to-the-bottom card, the colors always will match.

4. In Variation 2 if you remove the two bottom cards (instead of the top two) the results are exactly opposite. That is, if you use the original bottom card as the face-up one, it will never match. If you use the original next-to-bottom card it will always match.

If you are getting confused as to what procedure causes what, don't worry. The results are all summarized on a chart at the end of all the variations.

5. Let's make things more interesting by having the spectator take a card from the remainder of the pack and add it to the alternating packet. The Omega Principle still functions, but in reverse. If the color of the added card is the same as the top card of the packet, then you are guaranteed a match. If the added card is not the same as the top card, then there will be no match.

Thus you can have a spectator openly pick a card of either color from the pack, and you will always know the result, provided you know the color of the top card of the packet. You can learn this bit of information by casually looking at the top card as you toy with the packet, or you can use any form of clandestine "glimpse" move with which you are familiar. By the way, looking at the color of the bottom card tells you what the color of the top card is, in case you hadn't thought of that approach.

What do you suppose will happen if you place two cards face up in the packet? Well, things get really interesting -- and just as predictable.

6. Suppose you take the top two cards of the packet and place them together face up anywhere in the packet? What happens is you get no matches. What if you place them separately in different places in the packet? Believe it or not you still get no matches, as long as the order of the face-up cards stays the same. Of course sometimes in this variation the two cards will end up being paired with each other, but so what? There will still be no matches.

Here is what I mean. Suppose the top card is red and the second card is black. When you turn them face up, the black will be the top one of the two face-up cards. As long as you place the black card in the packet above where you place the red card, then there will be no matches.

By the way, if you use the bottom two cards, the results will be exactly the same.

7. If you reverse the order of the top or bottom two face up cards, then you reverse the outcome of variation 6, that is there will be two matches. Note that this variation works only if you place the two cards into separate parts of the packet. You cannot correctly predict the outcome if you place the two cards together. Sometimes there will be two matches and sometimes none, but there will never be just one match.

8. A close variation could be done by adding two cards of different colors chosen from the pack and added to the packet. Just remember that the top face up card must be the opposite color from the card on top of the small packet.

9. If you insist, you could use the top and bottom cards of the packet -- but in this case, you must reverse the order of the two cards before placing them face up in the packet. For example, if the top card is red and the bottom one is black, when you turn them face up the red one must be on top of the face-up black one.

10. The last variation is really an old riffle shuffle principle and not part of the Omega Principle, but it seems to be. So it is included here as a logical wrap-up for the series of bets. Cut the packet in two portions making sure that the face (bottom) card of each portion is of a different color. Then riffle shuffle the two packets together or let the spectator do it. (The shuffle does not have to result in an exact weaving of the packets.) When you then turn up the cards in pairs, no pair will match in color.

I developed a slightly different version of this variation. Cut the packets so that a card of the same color is at the face of each packet. Then turn one of the packets face up and again riffle the two packets together. Once more there will be no pairs that match in color. Notice that this last version seems to fit better with the previous procedures of turning one or two cards face up.

Obviously you will not want to utilize all these variations, please! Put together a short routine of your own choosing. I usually start with turning just one card face up a few times; move on to some of the two card variations; and finally end with the shuffling of the two packets together face up and down. Try to construct your routine so that sometimes the colors match and sometimes they don't. I also like to work in some chance for the spectator to tell you what to do, e.g. whether to take a card or cards from the top or the bottom.

The bets or predictions or demonstrations of control can and should be repeated since the first few times could have resulted by chance. Don't overdo the repetitions, however, or the thing begins to look like some automatic principle is involved (which of course it is). I would also suggest not letting the spectator do everything, even though you could allow that. If the cards never touch your hands, and the spectator merely follows instructions, the thing again begins to look to automatic.

Now for the long awaited table which summarizes the variations and their outcomes for easy reference in constructing your own routine. (See Omega Table.)

Now you probably know more about the Omega principle than you ever wanted to. But just so you don't think I have covered all the variations, I'll leave you with one to think about. What happens if you take and add two extra cards of the same color and place them face up anywhere together or separately into the packet? The result is once again perfectly predictable. See if you can find the outer limits of Omega.

OMEGA TABLE

<u>cards(s)</u>	<u>color</u>	<u>order</u>	<u>placement</u>	<u>match</u>
top or bottom	-	-	anywhere	none
2nd from top (top discarded)	-	-	anywhere	none
2nd from bottom (bottom discarded)	-	-	anywhere	yes
extra (or top or bottom two removed & one replaced)	same as top not same	-	anywhere but bottom	yes none
top or bottom two	-	same	anywhere	none
top or bottom two	-	reversed	separately only	two
top and bottom	-	same	separately only	two
top and bottom	-	reversed	anywhere	none
extra two	red and black	same face down as top two	anywhere	none
two portions of packet	different color on bottoms	-	riffle shuffle	none
two portions of packet	same colors on bottoms	-	riffle one packet face up into other face down	none



Haven't you always wanted to put a rubber band around a deck of cards; hold the deck flat on your hand and then have the deck slowly move forward and then turn completely around all on its own without any visible source of power? Of course you have! If you had known this astounding feat was to be revealed in this book, you would have bought the book long before this, right? [Or looked it up on this site – Webmaster]

Well, even if you haven't always wanted to do this, then at least you'll admit it would be nice knowing that it can be done; and as long as you're reading this book you might as well get everything you can out of it. So run to your local delicatessen and procure the right kind of rubber band and follow along with the band in hand, or else you won't have a clue what is being talked about.

Oh, yes; I guess I should mention the mysterious source of power involved, although the title of this adventure offers more than a hint. It comes from that miracle of modern technology, the rubber band – which I am told often has no rubber in it, and I have never been able to get the twang to sound very much like a band; but no matter. The thing more or less works with almost any kind of rubber band that fits snugly (but not tightly) around the length of a deck. Personally I find the movement works best when using a band that is about 3-1/4" long (in its unstretched condition, naturally) and about 3/16" wide.

Place the band around the deck running from front to back lengthwise. Actually the band doesn't run or move at all. It just sits there, but you know what I mean. I find it helps if you slant the band a bit so it is more to the right at the front and more to the left at the rear. (See Figure 1.)



Now hold the deck from above with the right hand. Place your left middle finger under the band near the inner end of the deck. The nail of your middle finger is touching the face of the bottom card, and the band more or less runs through the crease of your middle finger at the first knuckle. Then place your left index finger next to your middle finger, but outside the band. (See Figure 2).



You are next going to rotate (in place) those two fingers 180° so that the palm side of the middle and index fingers are now facing (or touching) the bottom card of the deck. This rotation sort of wraps the band in a curious way around the fingers. (See Figure 3.) Then slide the two fingers forward toward the outer end of the deck. At this point you can place the palm side of all your left hand fingers against the bottom of the deck and hold the deck in place with your left thumb on top -- which allows removing your right hand so everyone can see that things look perfectly normal (assuming that they think holding a deck of cards in your hand with a rubber band around it is normal). Figure 4 shows what things would look like if you peered over the front end of the deck to look at the bottom.



Let me explain what should have happened as you moved your two left hand fingers forward. The bottom piece of the band should have been stretched (a good deal) from the rear of the deck to where it is entwined around your fingers at the front of the deck. If you now release the pressure of your left thumb you will find that the deck moves forward and a bit out toward the right. As the deck approaches the tips of your fingers it begins to rotate in a clockwise direction. Eventually you can cause the deck to rotate close to a full 180° so that the inner end is now at the outer end. (If you have a one-way deck, you will be able to notice immediately the fact that the pack has turned around,) Please make sure you tilt your left hand a bit forward and

down so that the fingers on the bottom of the deck are out of sight.

Well, that's it. It's up to you to figure out why you would ever want to do this. I suggest it would help if you planned to move on to some other effect which required that the deck have a rubber band around it. There is one avenue you might want to explore which involves getting a chosen card under the deck and under the rubber band after you have set up the deck to move.

Set the deck up to move and then with your free hand just place an extra card underneath the pack and then square up the whole contraption. When you let the deck do its thing, you will find the bottom card is naturally left behind. There is a strong illusion, however, that the bottom card slid out of the deck. At a little distance the card actually appears to be coming out of the center of the pack. You can sustain the illusion by grabbing the deck at the end of its journey with the right hand as you move the chosen card away with the left hand.

The only issue is how to get that chosen card under the pack. You could of course arrange for a loud explosion to distract the spectators or resort to that time-honored gambit of saying, "Oh, look at the birds," as you look up yourself (although this doesn't seem to work too well when performing indoors). The best I have been able to come up with is this. Palm the chosen card off the top of the deck and leave it in your lap. Place the band around the deck and get your hands near the edge of the table so that the near end of the deck projects inward over the edge. Pick up the card in your lap in gambler's cop position except held by the middle finger instead of the index. In this position you will find your index and middle finger are free enough to sneak up under the deck. (See Figure 5.) Insert your middle finger under the band and do your thing as you move the deck first a bit back and then up and forward over the table. By the way, you'll find you need to use your thumb to help get your middle finger under the band, but all of this is well hidden because it occurs under the table (and deck). Obviously some engaging line of chatter is needed to distract attention from your momentary futzing, even if it is invisible.

And remember a band in the hand is much less messy than a bird!





"Ever try to throw away a boomerang?" An old line. "But serious folks, boomerangs are coming back. The twist is they have taken on a modern space age veneer. Yessir, these boomerangs have personality traits. I know that's hard to believe, but after all I'm told that computers can get cranky, especially those reputed to be blessed with artificial intelligence. Anyway, the card boomerangs I use are very "ambitious." I guess it's a sign of the times -- yuppies and all that."

Such idle palaver is by way of introduction to what I believe is a revolutionary (if you'll pardon the pun) discovery: namely, that it is mere child's play to throw two cards as one as a boomerang. I can't throw a double if my life depended on it except in boomerang form. I never even thought of trying it until recently. Any time I had seen someone throw two cards as a boomerang, the cards had separated in mid-air. Then the finger flinger caught one of the cards in each hand right in the middle of the half-deck held in each hand. So I never even tried to boomerang two cards because I knew I would just feel bad.

And then one day...

You don't believe how easy the double throw is? Just take two cards right now from anywhere, although it's probably easier to take them from the top of the deck. Throw them with any classic single card boomerang move. The one I use is to grab the card(s) with my right index finger at the outer left corner, my right thumb on top, and my middle finger on the bottom about one inch from the left side and one-half inch from the outer short end of the card(s). Then I curl my fingers toward my wrist and flip my fingers back up releasing the card (s) with the right index finger pulling in a bit to generate the spin. (See Figure 1.)



FIGURE 1

Note that there is no need to crimp or bend or squeeze the cards. The cards, however, must be well squared as they are thrown. You'll find the cards stay together whether thrown face up or face down, whether the cards are from a new deck or an old one. There is only one problem: if you catch the cards with either hand, they tend to split or come apart slightly. As long as you don't try to catch the cards you have a sensationally deceptive move.

I spent many hours trying to figure out how to avoid having to catch the cards, but failed to come up with any realistic solution. Instead I came up with a reasonable way to catch the cards while avoiding the embarrassment of everyone seeing there are two of them. The procedure involves catching the cards with both hands instead of just one. This looks quite acceptable, and can be done even if you are holding the deck in the left hand as you would naturally do after picking off a double.

More specifically, place the little finger edge of the right hand against the fingers of the left hand which are holding the deck. (See Figure 2.) You will find that no matter how the double lands when you catch it, you can easily square it up if need be. Square it up against one set of fingers or another, or even the deck. Most of the time I can get the cards to land something like what is shown in Figure 3.



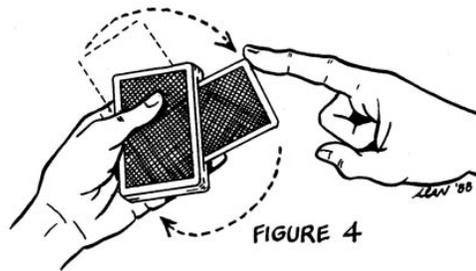
FIGURE 2



FIGURE 3

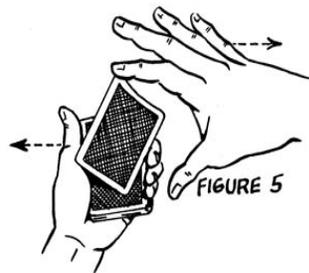
Here is how I work this spacey sleight into my Ambitious Card routine. I turn over a double on top of the deck using my favorite method of the day, and replace the double face up on top of the pack out jogged about one half inch. The outjog should be sufficient for you to get the double into position for the boomerang throw. I throw the boomerang double, catch it and quickly turn it face down, and then immediately thumb off the top (single) card. You don't have to rush to turn the double face down, but you don't have to wait all day either. After all, the spectators have already seen what card it is and seen it spin in the air; a brief glance is sufficient to confirm that nothing has happened to the card.

Sometimes I like to pull the top single card off with the thumb of my left hand (almost as in a Biddle Count). Such a move seems to justify better having turned down the card first. In any case I then place the card diagonally into the left outer end of the deck so that the outer left corner of the deck touches approximately the middle of the back of the [so-called] ambitious card that is sticking out. Next I do the well-known flourish of taking my right index finger and placing it on the outer left corner of the protruding card. I use that index finger to pull the card around the front end of the pack and the right side of the pack as the card itself rotates. (See Figure 4.) This fancy way of placing the ambitious card back in the middle of the pack somewhat simulates the spinning motion of the previous boomerang toss. At this point you can mention that the ambitious boomerang always zooms back to the preeminent position from whence it came, i.e. the top of the heap



To demonstrate that this has happened, I first run my right index finger up the left outer corner of the pack. In order to clear the way for doing this you will have to move your left thumb tip out of the way and hold the pack firmly between the left fingers and the fleshy heel of the hand just below the last joint of the thumb. I find it helps to use my right thumb at the inner left corner of the pack as a brace to help allow my right index to riffle up the cards.

As my right index finger approaches the top of the pack, I stop when just the top card is held by the finger tip. Now I move my left thumb heel just a bit to the left so that the top card is free to swing out a bit (clockwise) with my left middle finger acting as the pivot. (See Figure 5.) From this position I pull sharply to the right with my right index as my left hand fingers move to the left. In essence this is the world's first two-handed way of throwing out a card in spinning (sort of) boomerang fashion.



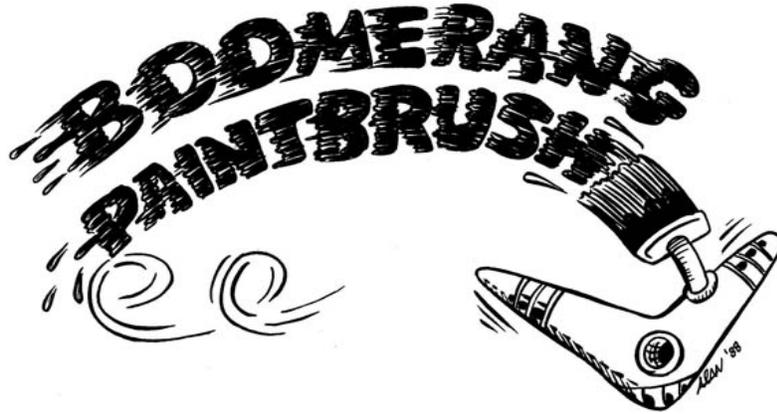
Finally, I catch the single card in approximately the same fashion as for the previous double, and then turn it over slowly with as much humility as I can muster at the time.

In brief, you boomerang the double face up. Turn it face down and place it in the middle of the deck with a rotating flourish. Then appear to riffle it up to the top where you spin it once more as a face-down boomerang (although part of the face may be visible to the spectators). Thus another miracle of modern space age technology has been demonstrated. Of course I usually go on with the more earth-bound elements of my Ambitious Card routine, and urge you to do the same.

TIPS:

If for some unearthly reason you do have trouble with the cards coming apart in mid-flight, just add a bit more spin and/or don't throw them quite so far up and away.

One last thought in case you haven't already tried it: the boomerang maneuver seems to work equally well with a triple as with a double. So you could zoom the triple; put a single in the middle; then riffle up to a double and spin it out face down; catch it and turn it face up; and then follow with an exact repeat starting with the double as described previously. I leave it to you to find a more spectacular use for this last bit of the "real stuff."



I'm so partial to the concept of the boomerang double that I can't resist including one more effect using this devastating but simple-to-master sleight. The idea is that you take a card, boomerang it; slide it over another face-up card; and then remove the boomerang card to show that the other face up card has completely changed.

Here's what to do. Take a shuffled deck and turn it face up toward you so you can casually spread a few cards from the bottom of the deck. Check to see if the second and third cards from the bottom are sufficiently different in color and/or value to make an effective change. If not, just cut the deck until you get a good contrast between the new second and third cards from the bottom.

Next, double lift the bottom two cards from the deck which is face up. Hold the deck so the spectators can see what you're doing (except for the double, of course). Explain that the double card is a special kind of boomerang paintbrush. Let's suppose the top card of the double is the queen of clubs. Proceed to boomerang the queen of clubs (double) face up and catch it as suggested in "Ambitious Boomerang," except that you do not turn it over face down. Just square up the double (if need be), release your right hand, and hold the double with the thumb of your left hand against the face of the deck. Then grab the double from above with the right hand thumb on the near short edge and fingers at the front edge. Leave the right index finger free, however, so you can use it to point out the card now visible on the face of the face-up deck, say the four of hearts, the card originally third from the bottom.

Simply slide the queen (double) over the four of hearts. With no apparent movement, let the card behind the queen of clubs flip off the thumb and fingers [on to the four of hearts]. Then slide the queen back to reveal that the four of hearts has changed, say to the six of spades.

As a final flourish, I like to boomerang the queen again (no longer a double) into the air as I wax eloquent over the artistic abilities of the queen. If you know the move of flipping open the deck to catch the queen as it returns, that fits very well here too. Obviously you could arrange the cards at the beginning so that you make the change between two cards of the same value that differ in color. Or you could have a spectator choose a card, return it to the deck, and then control it to a position second from the bottom. Then turn the deck face up and do the boomerang paint job, causing a random card to turn into the spectator's choice.

I think you will come to like this offbeat color change especially because it is completely angle-proof with no need to worry about the tendency for your hand to look unnatural as it is palming a card -- a requirement for most other color changes.



In Dai Vernon's *More Inner Secrets of Card Magic* there is a marvelous card trick entitled "The Trick That Cannot Be Explained." The basic reason the trick cannot be explained is that it depends on a wide variety of multiple outs--so many outs that they cannot really be listed or explained. In homage to this classic bit of card magic I dedicate this slightly different and not nearly as brilliant a conception.

If the truth be told, this trick is really a gag--most of the time. Just occasionally it can turn into a mind boggling bit of true magic. The basic notion is this: the spectator selects a card in a way that absolutely defies any possible sort of control. The card is returned to the deck and the spectator cuts and shuffles the deck in such a way that the chosen card is truly lost. The magician asks for the name of the chosen card, then takes the deck and proceeds to turn up cards one at a time until the chosen card arrives right on cue. Your audience, however, will be far from amazed. Rather, the spectators will be doubled over with paroxysms of laughter. Those who are merely whimpering will be thinking about to whom they can show this trick tomorrow in the office.

Let me explain this gag in its crudest form and then add a few refinements that can frequently turn it into real magic. The idea is that when you are handed the deck you have absolutely no idea what card was chosen nor where it is. Since this is not a miracle, but just some magic, you ask for the name of the chosen card. You now turn up the cards one at a time face up as you say whatever comes into your head about finding the chosen card. For instance you say, "You chose a card, the seven of hearts; and here it is--the very card you selected -- freely from the pack -- and replaced anywhere -- you liked.

Get the idea? You turn up one card with each word until you arrive at the chosen card. The more cards you have to turn up, the more words you keep on saying until everyone understands the gag. The more cards you have to turn up the funnier this bit gets.

If you want to try for a bit of real magic, here's how to go about it. The gag nature of the trick becomes your ultimate out -- which is why the trick was titled as not needing to be explained. That is, everyone will know how it is done and not give a damn. The fact of the matter is that almost anyone can keep rough track of where a card travels during a series of cuts and shuffles. To make it even easier, let me suggest the following procedure. Have the card returned about a quarter of the way down in the deck. Ask the spectator to do this or else hold the deck in your hands open at a point roughly a quarter of the way down. Then ask the spectator to cut the deck about in half and complete the cut. Then have the spectator cut the deck in half and give the two halves a good riffle shuffle. Then have him cut about a quarter of the deck from top to bottom; or you can do this yourself. In most cases this will leave the chosen card somewhere in the first 10-20 cards of the deck.

Use any other sequence of cuts and shuffles that leaves the card not right at the top but somewhere in the top half of the pack. There is no reason you can't handle the cards a bit, otherwise the trick (if it really works) will

look too good and focus too much attention on the words you are saying.

Now invent any patter you want that could be stopped every few words and still make sense. Here is one version that I have been using:

The ___/ of ___/ was it / your card / you chose / by yourself / here / and lost/ by shuffling / and cutting / the deck./
Look / carefully. / It's found / by dealing / the deck / of cards / down. / It appears / magically / right here / as I
stop / dealing / right now.

This patter allows you to stop at any of the slashes and sound like that was to be the end of what you were going to say. There are 43 words in the above patter, and if you haven't come to the card by then, it won't really matter. Just keep talking. Turn over the top card before you say anything just in case it is the chosen one and you have a true miracle on your hands. The funny thing is that most spectators will not realize the gag nature of what you are saying for quite a while if you play it straight for some twenty words or so. The odds are very good you will hit the card by then if you have roughly controlled it to somewhere in the top half of the deck.

The suggested patter comes to a natural close about every two words. If you turn up the chosen card on the first of the two words, just finish the phrase by saying the second word. Most people won't even notice the two words for one card. For instance, suppose the card turns up on the ninth word which is "you." Simply complete the phrase by saying "chose", without turning over another card.

You can also increase your odds of a "hit" by saying each word slightly after you have dealt the card. In this way if the card turns up just after you have completed a phrase you don't have to say anything more. Also by seeing the card a bit ahead of the word, you can alter the inflection of your voice to make it sound like you really meant to end what you were saying (the instant you see the chosen card turn up). All of this is easier to do if you deal the cards in a slow and deliberate -- but not funereal -- tempo.

Another variation is to secretly learn the name of the chosen card by forcing or glimpsing it. Then let the spectator completely lose it (more or less) in the deck, and go into your patter. Even if the gag nature of the denouement becomes apparent, your audience will still be puzzled as to how you knew when to stop, because you never asked for the name of the card. With this variation you can turn up many more cards without the gag becoming apparent. Naturally you'll have to change the patter so it doesn't start out by naming the card.

Once you play with the patter idea you'll find your own favorite short phrases to string together. Fool around with this one. You'll have fun, and often pull off a bit of truly baffling magic.



Here is a little something that does absolutely nothing -- except look pretty. The absolutely nothing it does leaves the pack in the same order it was. If you insist, it's just another false cut, but it does have considerable aesthetic appeal and more importantly it's mine, all mine. (I think.)

Curve your fingers gracefully and grab (as opposed to clutch) the pack from above with the right hand. At the inner end place your left thumb at the left side and your middle finger at the right side, with your index finger lightly touching the bottom of the pack. Cut off about one half the pack, swinging the bottom half gracefully downward while maintaining contact between the two halves of the pack at the outer end. (See Figure 1.)



FIGURE 1

Continue rotating the bottom half between the left thumb and middle finger until it is face up. The middle finger of the right hand can help a bit by pushing down at the (now) inner end of the bottom half as it swings face up. When the bottom half is fully face up let the inner end and left-hand side drop to the left hand palm. (See Figure 2.) The easiest way to get the packet in the proper position is to release the left thumb slightly

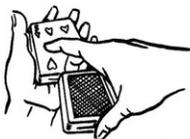


FIGURE 2

Now slide the right-hand half (top half) of the deck forward over the half in the left hand until it is completely over the bottom half, Then rotate the right hand to your right (clockwise) as if the two halves were hinged along their right long side. (See Figure 3.) The movement is like opening a book from the back. The half pack is held just by the right thumb at the inner end and the right middle finger at the outer end.



FIGURE 3

Both halves are now face up with the right hand half resting lightly on the left hand finger tips. With the left thumb, push down the outer left corner of the left hand half. This causes that half to be levered up so there is room to slide the right hand half underneath, which you proceed to do in a flowing continuation of the preceding rotation. (Figure 3.) As you slide the right hand half underneath, do not let go of it. Also use the right hand half to begin to pivot up, from beneath, the left hand half. By the time the right half is fully flush, both halves of the deck should be vertical with what was formerly the left hand side of the pack now laying against the left palm.

Continue turning the whole pack face down, letting it rotate between the right hand thumb and middle finger. When the pack is completely face down, square things up by lightly running the right thumb and middle finger along the inner and outer ends of the pack. As you do this, the right side of the pack squares itself by butting up against the inside of the curved left hand fingers.

There you are, back where you started, having injected a moment of cathartic contrapuntal convolutions into the otherwise seamlessly pedestrian existence of your spectators. The sequence of moves should be smooth and flowing, but as a guide you might count “one, two, and three” to get the feel. On “one” the bottom half rotates face up. On “two” the top half rotates face up. On “and” the top half is slid under the bottom half as both halves are turned face down. On “three” the fingers square up the deck.

Note that this cut can be done starting with the pack face up, but you must leave out the final turn of the pack back to face up because the same card that was there when you started will be staring you and your viewers in the face. For the same reason you should not repeat the face-down sequence for a second time no matter how entranced you believe the audience has become with your poetry in motion.



"Here is a strange bunch of cards. As you can see each one has a face on the front, and this one has a back on the back. In fact they all have backs, which makes it much less confusing if you're playing a game where you need to know the backs from the fronts. Of course you'll notice that just as the fronts vary in value, so not all backs are created equal. That is, this last card here has a different back from all the other backs which makes it easy to recognize this queen from the back as well as the front. Come to think of it I once had a friend like that.

"Well anyway, when you take one of these other spot cards and rub its back against the back of this odd card -- I mean it's not actually such an odd card from the front, it's just a bit queer from the back -- why all of a sudden, this other spot card now has the odd back. And this is not such an odd occurrence as you might expect. It happens all the time in our big cities. There are a million odd backs in the naked city, or is it that there are a million naked backs in the odd city? Anyway, as you can see we now have a lot of odd backs which don't look so odd now because they all match the back of the queen. There is probably a moral in all of this: something like don't judge a book by its back, although that doesn't sound quite right, does it? Maybe it's more appropriate to say, it's all in the eye of the beholder, for as you can plainly see, the queen still has an odd back -- thus maintaining her individuality amidst all the intense contemporary pressures for conformity. Here endeth the sermon (on the mount?) for today."

If you fear the above patter is treading on thin ice for some of your audience, just use any other card with an odd color back. Then you can recite some story about football players, or just point out that the backs are all changing color to match the odd back, while finally the original odd back has also flipped its color in order to remain the odd back. Now that I think of it, talking about odd football players may get you in just as much trouble as using the queen's gambit.

As you have by now deduced, this effect is essentially a version of the Wild Card theme except it is the backs of the cards which go wild and therefore you can appreciate the extreme cleverness of the title for this effect. More importantly, the trick can be done with no gaffed cards. All you need is one card of a different back color from another deck and a small bunch of cards from the kind of deck you ordinarily use.

For the sake of the description, suppose you are using blue-backed spot cards and a queen with a red back. I usually use five spot cards although the effect can be done with a larger number of cards if you are willing to risk inducing a certain amount of tedium. At no time, however, do you call attention to the number of cards involved.

Start with the queen somewhere in the middle of the five spot cards. Hold the packet face up in the left hand and spread them casually to the right without reversing their order. After you have pushed the queen into the right hand, just spread the remaining cards in the left hand by pushing them out with the left thumb, but don't actually take them into the right hand. You do this spreading without clearly revealing exactly how many cards are involved. Nobody will pay much attention to the number because nobody really knows what you are doing--and may not care for that matter, but they soon will.

Reassemble the two parts of the packet, except place the right hand cards beneath those in the left hand. Thus the queen is at the rear of the face-up packet. Now do the well-known Bro. John Hamman Flustration Count to show all red backs. That is, hold the packet from above in the right hand with the thumb at the inner end and the fingers at the outer end. Peel off the face card with the left thumb and turn the right hand packet over as you do this to show the red back. The action fits the palaver about cards having backs on the back.

When you pull off the fourth card into the left hand, hold a little finger break and Biddle that card back beneath the right hand cards as you pull off the fifth card. This leaves you with a double in the right hand, i.e. the queen with a spot card behind it.

As with the previous cards, turn over the right hand to show the supposed back of the queen which will show as a blue back because of the double. Then place the double queen to the rear of the cards in the left hand and turn the whole packet face down. Hold the packet face down in the left hand. Turn the left hand palm down showing the bottom card, and slide that card off the face with the right thumb and index at the right end of the card. As you do this, rotate the left hand back so the packet is face down underneath the spot card you just slid off. Any other way of getting the bottom card face up on top of the packet without revealing its back will also do just fine.

The first face-down card on the packet is actually a spot card although the spectators believe it is the odd-backed queen. In fact the queen is the second face-down card. Rub the back of the face-up card against the back of the next card in your most provocative style and then show the transformation of the face-up card's back which now matches the "odd" back.

Lay the transformed card face up on the table. Execute the same sequence with two more cards. Try using a different but nonetheless sensual way of rubbing each card so as to keep your audience appropriately aroused. During these transformations, it is a nice touch occasionally to let the top (supposedly) odd backed card slip a bit to one side to show some of the back of the next card below since it is still the color it is supposed to be. This bit of business is a very strong convincer that the backs of the cards are really changing.

When you come to the fourth card, get it face up on the top again without showing its back. Do your rubbing thing and show the transformation, but then replace the card face up on top again. You explain, "It's just a matter of placing the two backs in contact. The rubbing was just for fun." (Let the audience guess whose fun was involved: yours, theirs, or the queen's.) Then buckle the bottom card and place the face-up card(s) as a double on to the table. As you do this, give a wrist turn to the queen remaining in the left hand so that the back is not seen.

Now you are prepared for the spectacular finale in which the wild card has struck back and maintained its individuality by still remaining a horse of a different color (which suggests a whole other theme for your patter).

I can't resist crowing about a few niceties of this routine. No duplicate cards are used, but the wild card's face remains the same throughout. Also the wild card always seems to be in the position it is supposed to be in. I love using the odd back of the wild card as the convincer during the routine that the other backs are really red, before changing to blue. Truly there are no discrepancies to cover as long as nobody pays attention to the exact number of cards involved.

I do caution you not to set up this packet trick in front of the audience using cards from a pack already on the table. Remember that the cards start out being a different color (supposedly) from what they really are. Such a discrepancy is likely to be picked up by even the somewhat somnolent members of your audience. So just make up a packet with the appropriate cards and keep them in your pants pocket. Naturally you will have to bring them out of your pocket to perform the trick unless you are wearing cellophane see-through pants -- in which case chances are you won't need to do any magic to be the focal point of the party.



Here is a marvelous little fillip I saw John Carney do. It made my week in L. A. He claims it comes from somewhere or someone in Japan. As far as I know it has not appeared in print. [This was written close to 25 years ago; by this time, perhaps it has appeared elsewhere, but that is an uncertainty at the moment. – Webmaster.] There is a bit of a knack to it, but I don't think it will take you long to be whirling away.

Take a single card in your left or right hand. (The explanation assumes the left hand is being used.) The whirl works with the card either face up or face down. For starters you may find the move a bit easier if the card has a slight bend in it from end to end, although I find the move works with no bend in the card at all. The bend should be up, that is the ends of the card should rise up slightly while the middle is a bit depressed. Never trust a card with a cheerful middle, I always say. Let's suppose your card is face down.

Hold the card with the thumb on top and the middle finger on the face. (See figure 1.) These two fingers should be holding the card approximately at the center. If you lift your thumb, the card should balance on the tip of the middle finger. Try it to be sure when you are learning this. Be sure it is the end of the middle finger that is against the bottom face of the card, not the side of the end of the middle finger. You will see why in a minute.

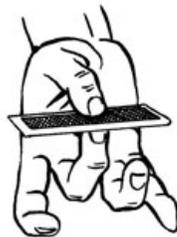


FIGURE 1

Put your thumb back on the top center of the card. In addition place your left index finger on the face of the card next to the middle finger. Your index finger should be gently touching the side of the middle finger just a bit to the left of the middle finger tip. Again it is the tip end of the index finger that is touching the card -- not the side or inside of the index finger.

Now rotate the card a bit clockwise by pushing with the index finger on the bottom of the card. The card will rotate from about the twelve o'clock position to about two o'clock and the index finger will straighten out so the inside (palm side) of the index fingertip is now against the card. (See Figure 2.)



FIGURE 2

Put your thumb back on the top center of the card. In addition place your left index finger on the face of the card next to the middle finger. Your index finger should be gently touching the side of the middle finger just a bit to the left of the middle finger tip. Again it is the tip end of the index finger that is touching the card -- not the side or inside of the index finger.

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FIGURE 3

With a little effort you can get a card to spin in each hand. I use this as a flourish once during the last phase of the "Slow Motion Color Assembly" elsewhere in this book. That is, during the follow-the-leader part of the effect I lift off one card from each packet, twirl them, and then turn them face up to show the colors have changed to match the new leaders.

When you get this one going it really feels good and is fun to do. It looks much harder to do than it is. To lift a phrase from a pop song of a few years back, now "you've got the whole whirl in your hands."



All right, so it's just another false cut, but it looks terrific. You'll enjoy doing it, and the spectators will be so entranced by the packets flying through the air they will never suspect you would go through all that just for purposes of a false cut.

The cut relies on the property of a packet of cards to cling together when thrown gently into the air, much the same principle used in "The Amazing Aerobatic Pack" described earlier. Here is what you do.

Hold the pack from above in the right hand with the thumb at the rear and the first, second and third fingers at the front. The right index finger is about three-quarters of the way to the left of the front so that it can hook down and lift up about half the deck. The maneuver is exactly that used in the beginning of the well-known swing or swivel cut. (See accompanying figure.) Instead of placing the top packet into the left hand, you are going to throw it into the air to be caught by the left hand. The way to throw it is to rotate your right hand with the pack so that the left long side of the pack faces the ceiling. This represents about a quarter rotation since the pack started with the backs of the cards facing the ceiling. As you make this rotation you gently dip the right hand down and then move it up as you release the top half. The rotation of the hand (and pack) causes the packet to flip face up ready to be caught (or grabbed) by the left hand. It will take you about two minutes to get this working. If the packet flips over too far, don't rotate your right hand quite so much.



Now fling the remaining half of the deck over to the left hand with the same rotational motion so it lands face up as well. Much to your surprise you will discover you now have the deck in the same order you started with except it is laying face up in your left hand.

You can do the same Finagle Fling starting with the pack face up, if for some bizarre reason this pleases you more than doing it the other way. Obviously you can follow the face-down version with the face-up version, although I recommend only doing one or the other. I do want to point out that you should not do the face-down version twice in a row since the same card ends up showing on the bottom each time.

The Finagle Fling can be done as a small, graceful, casual gesture. Or you can make a bigger thing out of it by having the packets fly through more space. You won't find it any harder if you think about dropping the packets rather than throwing them higher. Here is what I mean. Move your right hand up further before you release the packet during the throwing motion. Thus the packet released flips over and essentially falls down to the waiting left hand. If you try to throw the packet up higher you risk losing control of the packet turning over. After you are more familiar with the move you will find you actually can toss the packets up a bit higher as well, before letting them drop down to the other hand.

If you like to show off a bit, be aware that the Finagle Fling can be used for a double or triple cut instead of just, a single cut. That is, your index finger can bite off a third or fourth of the deck each time and fling three packets over instead of just two. Personally I think the double cut looks sort of nice, but I find the triple is too much and loses some impact.

There is one other variation which sometimes increases the astonishment of the Flying Finagle. The way I have described the move so far involves flinging the packets in a kind of Lawrence Welk rhythm of one-and-a-two. Instead, try flinging the second packet as soon as possible after the first packet. Thus just after the first packet is caught the second packet will be falling through the air. Since it is difficult for anyone to watch two things at the same time, your audience will follow the first packet and not really see the launch of the second packet. So somehow the second packet seems to be flying through the air more magically. It's not a big deal but an interesting variation which you may enjoy using.



“Would you believe it, folks? I'm going to throw this pack high into the air. It will split asunder into two separate packets while in mid-air. Each pack will do a half flip, and the card chosen at random and thoroughly lost in the pack will gracefully flutter out and lazily drift downward onto the table as I catch one half of the deck in either hand. All right, here goes. Wish me luck. I almost did it the last time. If the tension is too unbearable for some of you in the audience, my assistant will pass among you and blindfold you if you wish. I would blindfold myself, except that I've never really seen this thing work; and if it should, I would hate to miss it. Well, enough stalling. One, two, three, hup! And there you have it, friends: a Soaring Split with a Fabulous Flutter. Remember, you saw it here last.”

The amazing thing is that you are now going to learn how to do exactly what is described above, and it won't take you more than a few minutes to master. First, have a card chosen and replaced, and control it to the bottom of the deck. I enjoy using the Ovette Master Move (also called the Kelly Bottom Placement) because I get to use it so infrequently and I find it very deceptive. But use your favorite undetectable control.

Hold the pack from above with the thumb at the rear and the first, second and third fingers at the front with the index finger about three-quarters of the way over to the left. Essentially you are going to start the well known swing or swivel cut.

Oh yes, one other preparation is needed. Get a thumb break above the bottom (chosen) card. The easiest way to do this is just to let one card flip off the right thumb as you are holding the pack. You could of course also use a little finger pull down. (See figure 1.) Anyway, back to the modified swing cut. You dip your right hand down and then move it up as if you were going to throw the pack up in the air -- which, in fact, is what you are going to do.

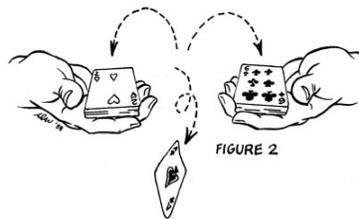


FIGURE 1

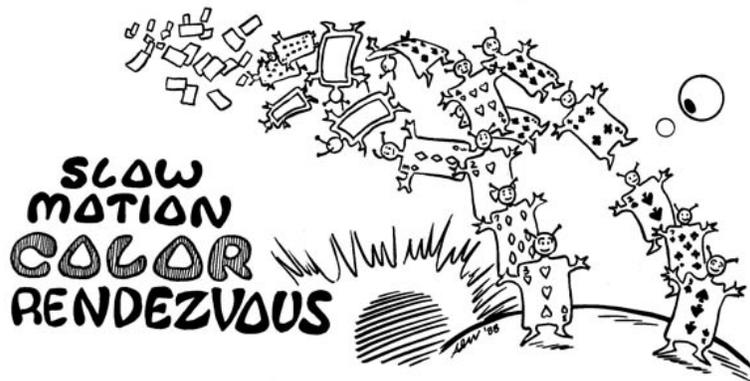
As you dip your right hand, the index lifts up about one-half of the pack. As you lift your hand up, you rotate it a bit so the left-hand long side of the pack is almost facing the ceiling. The movement is very close to that described previously for "The Flying Finagle Fling Thing." In this case, however, you let go of everything. That is, throw the separated packets and the bottom card (separated by the thumb break) into the air gently, but all at once. You will be astonished to find that everything happens just as described in the opening hype.

The first time you try this don't throw the cards more than six to seven inches into the air. Later on, as you gain confidence, you can throw the packets higher or at least let them drop further before catching them. Try to release everything at once by just removing your fingers. It is sort of like flipping a knuckle ball -- that is, you don't want to impart much spin to the packets. It takes very little motion to cause the two packets to flip face up. The chosen card flutters out because of the thumb break, and flutters down because you don't catch it.

Meanwhile the two packets tend to separate with one to the right and one to the left, making it very easy to catch one packet in each hand. (See figure 2).



Please do explain in great detail to the spectators what they will see before you do the Soaring Split. This is one occasion where explaining things beforehand works to your advantage. So many things happen so fast that much of the impact will be lost if the audience isn't well briefed. Also, by telling them what they are going to see, you make it very easy for them to tell their friends exactly what you did -- even if they elected for the blindfolds, in which case they can really say they saw you do something, "out of sight."



I have always enjoyed the Oil and Water effect, but felt a bit silly talking about oil and water. The reds and blacks don't seem particularly good symbols for oil and water. I mean if the oil is black you are left with red water which you don't see too much of these days except out of rusty faucets. And if the reds represent oil you would have to do the whole effect with a Chinese or Russian accent, and still be hard put to explain what the "black" water is doing there.

After great soul searching I came up with the highly creative notion of asserting that the colors simply preferred the company of their own kind. The premise is just as ludicrous as the "oil and water" one, but it seems more acceptable to spectators who I suppose sense some profound analogy with real world phenomena such as cliques, racial discrimination or national chauvinism. No doubt the spectators consider themselves far above such petty behavior, but revel in seeing such primitive attitudes displayed among more lowly objects such as playing cards.

Not content with this breakthrough in the presentation of this classic, I felt impelled to go further. Usually the routine presents the same kind of separation performed three or four times, albeit using a different sleight each time. I thought to myself if these damn colors are really sorting themselves out, why couldn't we see this happening along the way instead of merely witnessing the end result? So I devised an approach which has two stages in it instead of just one.

In the first stage the colors have separated a bit while the second stage shows the colors completely separated. This allows repeating the effect and making it slightly different by leaving out the middle partial assembly phase. Then I cloak the final repeat in the form of a pseudo-explanation which doesn't even look like it's the same trick--because it isn't, it's a version of the classic card routine Follow the Leader.

I claim not much credit for the last two phases since there must be at least fifty methods in print for accomplishing Oil and Water or Follow the Leader effects. I also cannot credit each move since I have no idea where I first learned them. I have, however, chosen reasonably simple, visual approaches that cause the results to occur so quickly that the audience cannot believe any real manipulation could have taken place. I have also avoided any method involving extra cards, primarily because there are so many good methods which don't require this. I do believe the slow motion effect and handling are original.

Start by alternating eight face-up spot cards R,B,R,B,R,B,R,B. As usual, pick similar appearing cards so that slight discrepancies which occur in the Elmsley counts and other maneuvers are less apparent. Spread the face-up packet out from your left hand to the right hand without changing the order, i.e. to show the alternation. Place your middle finger of the right hand from underneath on the back of the 5th card from the face of the packet (a black card). At the same time place your left thumb from above on the face of the 4th card from the face of the packet. You will now turn your hands palms down as you turn the cards face down while separating the cards into two packets of four cards each. As you do this you exchange the 4th and 5th cards by pulling to

the right with the right middle finger and to the left with the left thumb. At the conclusion of this maneuver the left-hand packet face down from the top is R,B,R,R. The right-hand packet face down from the top is B,B,R,B.

Replace the right-hand packet below the left-hand one. This is not a move. You are replacing the bottom packet where it should rightfully be, except for the switched card. Comment as you do this about having two packets of four cards which are alternating pairs of red and black. As if to further demonstrate this, square the packet and lift off the top two cards to show them as one red and one black. Replace them without changing their order to the bottom of the packet, but buckle the bottom card so that the pair is replaced just above the bottom card of the packet. Remember in doing the buckle not to bend your left index at the outer end of the cards. Simply press firmly with your thumb on the outer left corner of the packet and slide your left index finger slightly toward the inner end of the packet, causing a break to develop along the right side of the packet.

Turn the packet face up and look pleased as you discover that the cards are now separated into pairs of two blacks and two reds from the face of the packet like this: RR, BB, RR, BB. Turn the packet face down and deal off the top four cards face down on the table, second dealing on the fourth card. I don't do a super second deal, but I find it easy to do an acceptable one with a small packet of cards because my right index finger can come to the outer right corner of the packet to act as a brace for the right thumb to pull out the second card. This is not as elegant as a pure strike second deal, but looks perfectly fine with a small packet.

Turn the packet remaining in your left hand face up and do an Elmsley Count to show four black cards. Leave the last card on the front of the face up packet. Perform the same count with the packet on the table to show four red cards, and again place the last card face up on the face of the packet. Then assemble the packets. The order of the packets doesn't matter, but for instructional purposes suppose the reds are placed face up on top of the face up blacks.

Turn the whole packet face down and deal the top card (without showing the face) face down on the table. Tilt the packet face up to show a red. Pull it out and place it face down on top of the first card. Continue like this alternately dealing from the top and bottom of the packet. What is nifty is that you can casually show (almost) all of the cards actually alternating in color as you place them down. Call out the color of each one but simply do not show the face of the first and last cards -- a procedure which should not tax your memory too greatly.

Deal the first four cards of the face down packet one at a time on the table, thus reversing their order. Remind the audience that this is the same procedure you did before, and that you will dispense with the intermediate phase of the rendezvous since they have already seen that (and besides you have a plane to catch). Again turn the packet face up in your left hand and perform an Elmsley Count to show four reds, but this time place the last card to the rear of the packet. Exhibit the packet on the table in similar fashion, also placing the last card to the rear of the packet. Leave both packets face down and let us assume that the red packet is to your right, the black packet to your left.

Now you are ready for the final phase of the routine in which you purport to explain the effect. Take an extra red and black card from the deck and place them in front of the appropriate packets as color markers. I do this because both I and the audience don't seem to be very good at remembering which color is where. As you place these marker cards remind yourself and the spectators which color packet is where by lifting up the whole packet and showing the color of the bottom card.

For my pseudo-explanation I usually patter about the red-black phenomena being much like political parties these days. You have the Republicans on the one hand and Democrats on the other. And the parties have supposed leaders -- the marker cards. If you are working for the liberal crowd you can make a big to-do about one or more of the marker cards being female (queens). [Remember, this text was originally written in the 1980s -- Webmaster]

I continue, "The party members follow the leader." (Turn up the top card of each pile which will match the leader colors.) "But even if you switch leaders," (switch the two face cards in each leader pile) "nowadays it doesn't make that much difference to the people in the parties." (Turn up the top card of each pile to show it now matches the new color of the leader pile). "And of course these days an awful lot of voters switch parties in the twinkling of an eye without it making much difference" (switch the position of the two face down piles and turn up the top card of

each pile to show they still match the leader colors).

For the last switch you have to use a bluff move. I use the Doc Daley switch of two cards as I cross my hands, but this maneuver seems difficult for many people to learn and do convincingly. Instead I suggest you use one of these:

A. Diagonally exchange the face up right hand pile (black) with the remaining face down card on the left. Now turn up the two remaining face down cards which will match the face up piles to their left.

OR :

B. Switch the two leader piles by crossing your arms. Leave your arms crossed and move them down to the remaining face down cards. Pick them up and as you turn them over let your arms uncross so that the card picked up with the right hand ends up on the new right hand leader packet and similarly for the left hand.

"You see, it doesn't really matter much these days who is where. It all comes to pretty much the same thing."

It also doesn't matter much that this explanation has very little to do with the Oil and Water effect because you will find the spectators nodding in agreement with your profound political observations; and in their heart of hearts they really didn't expect you to explain the color separation anyway.

One last tip is to be sure that during the routine you continually describe just what colors are where and whether they are together or alternate etc. You have to keep saying phrases like, "Remember the cards in each pile were alternating red and black, right? And now you see they are all red." The impact of this routine depends as much on these continual reminders as on the fiendishly clever moves and results.

Most tricks are over in a minute or so. With this routine you can easily spend a fascinating five minutes -- and you don't even have to have anyone take a card. You and your audience will have probed the Twilight Zone of political parties and color rendezvous in outer space!

After word

Well I suspect you've recovered from flying along with me for all these card trek adventures. Maybe you even found something you might actually use or adapt. If not I hope you at least had a few chuckles along the way from the palaver accompanying the various effects.

My deepest thanks go to Alan Wassilak and Jim Canaday for their good work in getting all the drawings and text on to the website. If you feel like giving me any feedback, please do!

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