



Inside Ed's Head

September 2014
Some Essential Moves
(And Some That Are Just Damn Good)

Featuring:
Steve Draun's Midnight Shift
The Erdnase Color Change
The Berg Top Palm
Multiple Card Break

Last month I mentioned I'd teach my Ambitious Card routine in this column, but I can't yet. For the last rise in the routine, I make the card rise face up. Since the spectators will most likely be burning my hands, the sleight I use has to withstand severe scrutiny. I use either Steve Draun's "Midnight Shift" from Richard Kaufman's *Secrets Draun From Underground*, or the Erdnase color change. I'll use this column to teach these moves. (Plus another couple you might want to know about.)

Steve Draun's Midnight Shift

Steve Draun is good. He is **#!%#\$** good. He is so good that watching him work might make us consider taking up a different hobby. But we shouldn't despair; he's released a lot of instructional material that might eventually make us as good as he is. You can find his work on www.stevedraun.com. If you click on the "Movies" link, you can download a short video of him performing this move (and several others). After seeing him do it, I'm sure you'll want to learn it yourself. Steve also graciously consented to let me teach the move in this column. So don't let us down—learn the Midnight Shift.

The move starts with the deck in left-hand mechanic's grip; you're holding a pinky break above the card you wish to bring to the top.

Your right hand takes hold of the deck with the thumb at the rear, and the second finger about an inch from the upper left corner—the other fingers next to it. The right thumb is **not** in Biddle grip position; it lies rather flat against the deck. The lower left corner of the deck is in the crotch of the right thumb. The right index finger is free—its main job is to add extra cover and not get in the way (Photo 1, next page). As the right hand covers

the deck, the left index finger curls underneath (Photo 2).



Photo 1



Photo 2 (Bottom view)

Turn to the left and bring your right hand to somewhat above waist level. The deck is vertical, facing the audience.



Photo 3 Audience view

Your left fingers will now move lower, and to your left, so the top (long) end of the lower half will move downward until this half is horizontal, face up. These cards move until they are **lower than** the vertical top half (Photo 4 - 6). The horizontal half is then pushed to the right so it goes **underneath** the vertical cards (Photo 7).

Please note: In order to have these photos taken, I had to extend my arms straight out, to allow photography over my left shoulder. This made it impossible to hold my right thumb against the deck properly. The explanation in the text is correct. These photos illustrate how the two halves are exchanged.



Photo 4



Photo 5



Photo 6



Photo 7

The left thumb will now push the upper side of the top half to the right, which will pivot the lower end to the left. This will enable the left fingers and thumb to squeeze the two halves of the deck together. (I find the left thumb more or less pulls the former top half onto the other half as the fingers push the lower half up to it. Photo 8 -- 9).



Photo 8



Photo 9

As the cards are coalescing, the left hand turns 90° counter-clockwise (looking from the top of the deck), and points the outer short end of the deck upward. The right hand moves to take the deck out of the left hand in Biddle grip, thumb on top, fingers on the bottom. The left hand turns palm up, and the right puts the deck back into left-hand mechanic's grip. (Photos 10 - 12.)



Photo 10



Photo 11



Photo 12

You should try to make these latter actions look like you're doing a counter-clockwise all-around square. If you've done it right, that's all the audience will perceive.

This move is invisible when the audience is viewing from the right. When they're directly in front of you, you have to be very careful to keep all the visibility windows closed. Careful analysis with a video camera is the best way to determine what you can and can not get away with when people are burning your hands. It's important to note that if you use this move as a card control, the simple misdirection of conversing with your spectators should be all that you ever need. Do the pass when they are looking at you—it'll work.

The Erdnase Color Change (A.K.A. Houdini Color Change)

In the context of my routine, "The Borgia Cards," this move has some strengths and some weaknesses, but it's a very startling move and should be in the working repertoire of all card men. One of the best places to see it in action is on the DVDs, "The Very Best of Jay Sankey."

For the purposes of this explanation, we'll start with a face-down card on top of the deck and a face-up card second. The deck is in a deep mechanic's grip (the deck is a bit further back in the hand than normal). Place your right hand flat on top of the deck so that your pinky contacts the top card at the upper right corner.



Photo 13

Push the top card forward about an inch, the left index finger at the outer end of the deck remains in contact with the outjogged card.



Photo 14



Photo 15 (Right hand removed.)

The heel of the right hand should now be able to make contact with the face of the second card. Draw this card backwards via friction. (As the card moves backwards, the base of the right index finger can also make contact with it, facilitating the backward move.) The back of the top card should start to become visible as the right hand moves backwards. (Photo 16.)



Photo 16



Photo 17 (In progress, right hand removed)

As soon as the second card clears the top card, move the right hand forward again until the face-up card is square with the deck. At the same time, pull the (now) second card flush with the deck with your left index finger. Lift

your right hand up, and the transformation is complete.



Photo 18

Note: The deck should be in relatively good condition. If the cards stick together when you attempt the sleight, you may inadvertently move more than one card to the top, ruining the change.

The Berg Top Palm

The following sleight has nothing whatsoever to do with The Borgia Cards, but it's a useful move. I believe most people are generally unaware of it (I only heard of it recently), and I'd like to share it with you. You use it to palm multiple cards from the top of the deck. (You may remember from a previous column that I passed by tricks that required the palming of multiple cards from the top, now I don't have to.)

The deck is in a modified mechanic's grip. The left thumb is cocked at the side of the deck; the ball of the thumb is touching the side at the upper right corner. You are holding a break under the cards you want to palm.



Photo 19

Place your right hand over the deck, holding it at the back with the thumb, and the front with your middle and ring fingers. Your pinky goes to the **side** of the deck, at the upper right corner. (A Biddle grip, except for the right pinky.)



Photo 20

Using lateral pressure with your left thumb and right pinky, move the cards above the break forward a bit—a quarter of an inch is plenty. Add a little more leftward and downward pressure with the right pinky, and the cards will virtually pop into position in your right hand. If they don't do so on the first try, a little more experimentation and practice should make it happen pretty soon.

Getting a Break Under Multiple Cards

There are many tricks where you need to get a break under several of the top cards. Usually the trick's creator comes up with ways that allow you to take a break smoothly, but this is not always the case. Sometimes you need to take a squared deck and get a break under three or more cards without any visible "moves." Using a pinky count, as Darwin Ortiz recommends, is a perfect way to do it, but I've never put in enough practice time to do the move. I use a thumb count instead. Here's how.

Start with the deck face down in the left hand. Place your left thumb at the upper left corner to bevel the deck to the right. (Photos 20 - 21) Keep your thumb at this corner as you turn your hand palm down. (Photo 23)



Photo 21



Photo 22 (Thumb moved to expose bevel)



Photo 23

Attempt to attract attention elsewhere with a gesture, or by handling an object on the table with your right hand. While doing this, riffle off the required number of cards with your left thumb.

Return your right hand to the deck in a palm-up position, and take it from

underneath, in Biddle grip—thumb at the right side, fingers at the left. In doing so, pick up the break with your right thumb.



Photo 24

Now turn your right hand to the normal palm-down position, and you're good to go.

Next month (really!): The Borgia Cards.

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