



Inside Ed's Head

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David Roth

(More Than a Coin Man)

Around 1990, I started taking lessons from David Roth. He'd come up to my office on 40th and Park and teach me stuff. I'll never forget my first lesson. David asked, "Do you like card stuff?" I said that I did.

He took out a deck of cards and completely fooled me with a variation of the Dunbury Delusion effect. He asked if I wanted to learn it—I did—so he taught it to me. The explanation left me even more amazed than the performance, for it contained a flawlessly executed bottom deal. I had *never* been aware of a bottom deal used in a *magic* trick. I thought it was a move used by the top tier card men to demonstrate their card handling prowess. Yet, here was the best coin guy in the world doing a card trick and executing a bottom deal!

With a bit of probing, David admitted he was very good with a deck of cards. I asked him why he never performed any card magic during his lectures or performances. He told me that he didn't want to be known as a "magician." Even at the top level, there were plenty of magicians to compete with. He wanted to be known as "The Coin Magician." He was then, and he will always be.

I had started writing this article to teach the first coin trick David taught me. I believe it's unpublished. I also think it contains some unpublished sleights, as well. Of course, a lot of time has gone by since then, so he might have taught this material to some other magicians, who used it in their lectures.

As I started laying it out in my head, I realized that it would require many photographs and a lot of detailed text that will be impossible to produce by my self-imposed deadline. Nonetheless, I will, eventually, get it into print. It's a people fooler and a magician fooler as well.

This month, I'll do my best to teach the card trick David taught me. Fortunately, I had recently started to keep notes about tricks I was learning. These notebooks eventually became the Magic Database™.

David Roth Teaches a Card Trick

David did *not* claim he created this trick. I have a vague recollection he told me the name of the person who taught it to him. I'm sorry I can't recall who that is or even if *that person* is the creator.

Effect

A card is selected, returned, and lost in the deck. The magician explains that he will cut some cards that will indicate what the card is and where it is in the deck.

The magician now cuts off a packet of cards and tells us the top card will indicate the selection's color. He turns it over and says, "This tells us the card is [for instance] black." Apparently, unbeknownst to him, this *is* the selection. He turns this card face down and deals it in front of the spectator.

He turns over the next card and says it indicates the selection's suit. He turns it face down and deals it on top of the card previously given to the spectator.

The magician explains that the next card's value will help him find the selection. He turns it over and uses its value to deal cards from the remainder of the deck. He points to the last card dealt and asks the spectator to name the card she selected. When he learns the selection is apparently on the table, he pauses a beat and turns over the last card dealt. It is, indeed, the selection.

Method

Have a card selected and control it to the center of the deck—with you holding a break over it. I can't recall David's way of doing this, I figure the best way would be to use a jog shuffle to get the card to the top, and then another overhand shuffle throwing off the top half of the deck to start, injogging the next card, and shuffling off. Lifting the injogged card as you push it flush, will get you your break.

After some preliminary patter, lift the cards above the break with your right hand, maintaining that half in an overhand grip. Your left thumb pushes the

top card of its packet about one-half inch to the right as you announce that it will reveal the selection's color. (You might reiterate that it will reveal the color and nothing but the color. You do not want the spectator to tell you whether you are right or wrong.) As you say this, look down at your hands. You implicitly hand to direct the spectators' gaze to the deck. Now, use the left side of the card in your right hand to flip the side-jogged card in your left hand, face up. (Photos 1 and 2. Note: On the day I was to take the photos, I ended up in the hospital. I will get then into the article as soon as I can. See the Afterword for an important fix for this problem.) As the card lands in the left hand, side-jog it to the right with your left thumb as you point out the color of the selection has been revealed. Let's assume the card is the Six of Spades. Be ready to quash any further commentary from the spectators.

You will now have to switch this card for the one below it while stealing the selection under the right-hand cards. The sleight David taught me to accomplish this is one I'd never seen before. He didn't have a name for it but later, I found it's a move of Jerry Hartman's, called the "Catch Switch."

As you have just side-jogged the face-up card to the right, your left thumb extends over most of the width of the left-hand cards. As you begin the switch, look the spectator in the eye as you continue your patter. The cards are no longer important and shifting your gaze helps sell the switch.

Use the right-hand cards to flip the side-jogged card over but this time, let the card land on your *outstretched thumb*. As the card lands, your right hand should carry its cards over the selection, so you can take it under the cards in your right hand. (Photos 3 and 4. See note to photos, above.) As soon as you steal the card, thumb off the top card of the left-hand packet onto the table.

Flip the (now) top card of the left-hand packet over with the right-hand cards, as you did before. Regardless of what the card is, you should say, "This tells me the selection is a ..." and name the suit that is the same color as the selection. As the first card was a spade, you should say "club." This assures that you'll be wrong when you need to be. Turn this card face down as before and thumb it on top of the first card.

Now, tell the spectators that the value of the next card will indicate the selection's position. Mention that the values of face cards are eleven through thirteen. Flip over the next card, and reiterate that its value will help you find the selection. Flip the card face down and add it on top of the two cards dealt previously. Place the cards in your left hand off to the side

and take** the right-hand's cards into your left. Now, deal the cards to the table, one by one, and do a bottom deal on the last card of the count. Ask for the name of the card. They tell you. Show the card. They turn over the cards you dealt and plotz.

Afterword

If you don't do a bottom deal, you can learn a surefire one, the LePaul bottom deal, on page four of the July 2013 issue of *Inside Ed's Head*. (<http://www.edhassmagic.com/edshead/EH-2013-07.pdf>).

At the point where you take** the cards from your right hand into your left, you have the perfect opportunity to get into position for the LePaul bottom deal. All you need to do is touch the face of the right-hand cards with your left middle or ring finger as you place the cards into your left hand. This will jog the bottom card slightly to the right, so you can take it into position for the bottom deal.

There is a problem here; you've told everyone that the last card dealt will be their selection. They're sure it can't be but they *will* be watching carefully while you count. I have a little dodge that helps make the bottom deal invisible. Start dealing the cards face up, with a stud deal#. Don't deal the cards directly in front of you; turn your body about 45 degrees to the right or left. When it comes time to deal the last card, pause for half a beat, turn back to center, and then deal the card face down in front of you or just hold on to it.

There's a way to reveal the card without a bottom deal. Let's say that the selection is to appear at the third card. Deal two cards and then stop. Lean toward the spectator, thumb over the top card about a half-inch, look down at it, and flick it with your right thumb. This should look very much like "Photo 1" on page two of the October 2020 issue of *Inside Ed's Head* (<http://www.edhassmagic.com/edshead/EH-2020-10.pdf>), except in this case, the cards are held horizontally, not vertically. You now can say, "All I know so far is your card is a club. Can you now tell us exactly what it is?"

** These refer to the same point in the routine, referenced in two different places for (we hope) clarity.

A deal made by turning the right hand palm down and taking the card with the thumb underneath and the fingers above. The card is then turned face up by turning the hand palm up as it is dealt to the table. Used in 5- and 7-card stud and other card games.

When she says “Six of Spades,” look up at her as you relax back in your chair and feign chagrin. As soon as you make eye contact with her, do the Bo-Top Change as described in the October issue.

If the card turned over is an ace, I’d use this move, rather than bottom dealing the first card.

Pause a beat or two and say, “Well, if you say the ‘Six of Spades.’ I guess this card will be the Six of Spades.”

It’s a good bet someone will be turning those face-down cards over, pretty quickly.

Since I am too black-and-blue to pose for card photos, I asked Harry Mandel, an excellent photographer and magician, for some help. He asked his son Zach to make a video of himself learning the routine. I uploaded it to my website—you can see Zach learn and teach here:

<http://edhassmagic.com/videos/rothcard.mp4>.

Final Thought

David’s passing is a huge loss to all of us. I know I’ll be going back to review his lessons and books.

I’ll mourn the man and the magic we’ll never see.

I’ll revel in what he left behind.

R.I.P.

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