



Inside Ed's Head

Written by Ed Hass

Edited by Sal Mannuzza

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The Spectator Reads Your Mind (Don't Worry; It's Only a Card Trick.)

Last Month I taught the concept of "clocking" the deck, a way of finding the value of a card that's been removed from the deck. I posited that if you could narrow the card that's been removed from the deck to a spot card of one particular color, clocking just those nineteen cards is literally child's play; all you have to do is add the values of the spot cards of the color in question, casting out ten as you go along, and subtract the total from ten to find the value of the card.

Sal thought that sounded like a boring trick. After seeing TAPALACK, he agreed that the right presentation makes this a "fantastic" trick.

Paul Cummins created this trick and graciously gave me permission to use it, as long as it's not available to laymen. The password protection for this link is my best effort to meet Paul's condition.

I added some patter so you only need to clock *spot cards* to make the trick a little easier, and voila, you need no sleight of hand to produce one of the best reactions you can get in a mind-reading effect.

TAPALACK By Paul Cummins

Effect

You tell the spectator the two of you will do a mind-reading trick together. The spectator looks at any card (free choice) and loses it in the deck. You do the same. You now give the deck back to the spectator and ask her to read your mind and find the card which you just selected. She's to table it face down in front of herself. You then read her mind and table a card in front of yourself.

The selections are named, the cards turned over and the spectator will end up smiling ear to ear.

Method

While you read the method, I suggest you follow along with the presentation Paul uses on the following YouTube video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BNbh4p3uZ84>

The method used for discovering the spectator's card is a simple, albeit well disguised, key card. (First published by Dai Vernon in his *Inner Secrets of Card Magic*, "Emotional Reaction," p. 7. It's also in Roberto Giobbi's *Card College 3*, p. 564, under the "Lost Card" heading.) A fine point to note is Paul's presentation allows you to find an easy-to-remember key card as you explain the procedure. (Paul says that he *always* uses the same key card so there's one less thing he has to memorize as he performs this trick. It seems like a small point, but considering all that goes on during this trick, it's well worth considering. It's an easy task to get a known key card in the somewhere in the middle of the deck before starting.)

You know in advance that you will be asking the spectator to select a red card, so do the following: Hold the deck as you demonstrate what the spectator and you will do. Tell her to spread the cards in front of herself and stop when she sees *any* card she likes. Spread through the cards as you speak, looking for an easily remembered red card. When you find one, break the spread so that card is at the top of the right-hand cards. Place these cards face down on the table. Your key card is on top.

Show the face of the card at the bottom of those in your left hand, indicating it is the card you would be thinking about. Hold the deck against your chest and remark that she's to concentrate on her card while she hides it from you. Now tell her that she should then cut the cards and lose her packet in with the others. You now replace the cards you are holding in the *center* of those on the table by lifting about half of the tabled cards with your right hand, placing the left-hand cards on top of the tabled cards, and then placing the right-hand cards on top of all. Your key card is still on top of the deck.

Before you give the pack to your charming spectator, tell her that you don't want to inadvertently select the same card that she does, so she should select a red card and you'll select a black one. Give her the deck and guide her as she selects a *red* card. After she completes the selection procedure, lift half of those on the table to mimic the replacement you used earlier. Her selection is now directly *above* the key card you have memorized earlier.

Take back the deck and begin to spread through it, ostensibly to find a selection for yourself. Instead, spread through the deck until you see your key card. The next card will be her selection. *Memorize it thoroughly*; you have some work to do before you'll reveal it. Spread five or six cards past her selection, break the deck at that point and table the right-hand cards. Pretend to memorize the face card of the left-hand portion. *Don't pay any attention to this card*. You don't want to confuse yourself. Cut these cards, and then lift off a small packet from those on the table and replace your cards as before. Her selection and your key card are relatively out of the way near the top, so if you later forget the selection, you'll have another shot at it later.

At this point, I modify Paul's script a bit. I add the following: "Since you've never read minds before, I decided to make things a little easier for you. Picture cards are very difficult for beginners to receive because they all look pretty much the same, so I haven't thought of a picture card."

Hand the deck to her and say, "OK, I'm thinking of a black spot card. Please take it from the deck and place it face down on the table." You're likely to get an interesting reaction.

When she does this, take back the deck and make a comment that it might take you longer to find her card than it took her to find yours. You'll now begin to clock the *black* cards, in order to find the card that she's removed, so you can later claim it as yours. Run through the black spot cards, casting out ten (as explained last month). When you get a final total, subtract it from ten to get the *value* of card on the table. Spread through the deck one more time to ascertain the exact card she's tabled; then remove the *red card* the spectator is thinking of. (It should still be near the top of the deck, next to your original red key card.) *Don't forget the value of the black card that you ostensibly selected!*

The finish is now at hand. Ask the spectator to name the card she is merely thinking of. You'll get an amazed reaction when you turn the card you are holding to show that you've read her mind. Then say, "The card I was thinking of is the [name of card you just clocked]. Did you get it?" She'll turn her card over with a reaction that is both amazed and triumphant.

You really should try this effect—until you see the spectator's reaction for yourself, you're unlikely to understand how strong this is.

In case you are wondering about the name of the trick, it's the first initials followed by the last initials of four magicians, all of whom have worked on this plot: Ted Lesley, Alan Ackerman, Paul Cummins and Al Koran.

Some Notes About Paul Cummins

I first learned about Paul when I bought his book/lecture notes *from a shuffled deck in use*. [Capitalization is Paul's] I liked his material a lot; he is not the type of magician who will shy away from sleight of hand when it helps create a wonderful mystery.

I encountered his material again in works by James Swain and Joshua Jay. He has several tricks in Joshua Jay's three-volume DVD set, *Talk About Tricks* (where I first encountered TAPALACK). His trick "Count On It," from Swain's *21st Century Card Magic* is well worth looking up.

To advance his effects, he teaches some very useful sleights. I especially liked his "Directly From the Spread Bottom Deal," "Visual Retention Bottom Deal" (Yes, I think the bottom deal is a remarkably useful but underutilized card sleight. See *Inside Ed's Head* 7/13) and his "No Lap Packet switch."

If you want to learn more about Paul, check out his website:
www.fasdiu.com.

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