shuffle-bored



Simon Aronson

This book is affectionately dedicated to my parents,

ANNETTE and ARNIE,

who encouraged me in my continued shuffling,
long after they might rightfully have been bored.

FOREWORD

I never thought I would write an entire book about one effect. I knew, that particular evening when I finally put the two component parts of Shuffle-Bored together, that I had stumbled upon something good, something really startling -- but even then I didn't appreciate the special impact this effect would have on an audience. I began to do Shuffle-Bored for a few of my magician friends and for laymen, and with each performance I came to recognize that this was the trick they remembered.

Maybe it was the strict challenge conditions: the performer never touches the cards. Maybe it was the purity, almost starkness, of the effect: the magician straightforwardly knows what could not logically be known. Maybe it was the complete absence of any conceivable method: there are no sleights or moves, nothing extra, no "clues" from start to finish -- just a pack of cards which the spectators themselves continually shuffle. Maybe it was the simplicity and directness of the procedure: each step aims at further randomizing the cards -- there are no extraneous, discrepant, illogical, suspicious or false actions, no outs, excuses or equivocations. Maybe it was the apparent effortless quality with which the miracle is accomplished: the performer himself can relax and enjoy, and almost be part of the audience. Maybe it was the extent of audience involvement: the spectators are in total control and participate throughout, so their reaction is not just a passive puzzlement, but a kind of "wit's end" wonder at the impossible result they have wrought. Perhaps it is the juxtaposition of all these elements together, that brings Shuffle-Bored close to the "miracle" class.

As I experimented further with variations and explored some of the principles underlying the effect, I realized the potentialities were impressive, both for new effects (see, for example, "Color Discernment", "Selection Shuffle-Bored", or "Prediction Shuffle-Bored"), for new routines (e.g., "Delayed Location Effects") and for different methods ("Controlled Shuffle-Bored"). Even for the armchair magician who never performs, the flexibility, depth and efficiency of the Cancellation Combination carries a fascination and intrigue in its own right. I realized that Shuffle-Bored deserved a book of its own.

I guess it's expected that an author will be proud of his creation, but he may also be a bit enamored with it. So, you be the judge.

Simon Aronson - September 1980

SHUFFLE-BORED

THE BASIC SHUFFLE-BORED EFFECT

<1> A deck of cards is shown and placed on the table in front of two spectators. One of the spectators cuts the pack into three piles, and each of the spectators takes one of the piles, leaving the third pile remaining on the table. Each of the spectators shuffles his packet. Each now removes a bunch of cards from his own packet and exchanges these cards with the other spectator. Each spectator takes the cards he has just received and turns them face up, and then shuffles them into the remainder of his own face down packet; the result is that each spectator holds a packet containing face up and face down cards. One of the spectators now reassembles the entire pack. Either of the spectators next cuts the deck into two piles and turns one of the halves over, thus further randomizing the face up/face down mixture of the cards; these two halves are shuffled together by the spectator.

Throughout the entire effect the performer has not touched the deck, or any of the cards. Now, without any questions, outs, ambiguities, moves, and still without ever touching the cards, the magician announces how many cards are face up in the shuffled deck. The spectators count and separate the cards, and the magician is found to be 100% correct.

THE SECRET

The method of accomplishing Shuffle-Bored is actually a combination of two distinct principles, operating together. The first principle is a special mixing procedure which I call the Cancellation Combination. This is a sequence of cuts, exchanges, and shuffles which appears to (and actually does) totally mix the deck into a seemingly random face up/face down situation -- but, if the deck is given one further cut, all of the earlier reverses and turnovers can be secretly and completely nullified and cancelled. The second principle is a partial deck stack of thirteen cards in the center of the pack, which instantly and automatically communicates to the performer how many cards have been cut off. The Shuffle-Bored procedure is designed so that the spectator himself unknowingly does all the work, both in making the final cut and turnover that completes the Cancellation <2> Combination, and in flashing the face card of the stack that keys to the performer the number of cards that are reversed. What is ingenious is that both of these actions happen simultaneously -- but to the spectator it appears to be merely a further step of hopelessly mixing and randomizing the condition of the deck.

Don't worry if the foregoing explanation seems a bit cryptic or hard to follow. In a moment, I'll explain the entire effect step by step. I just wanted you to have upfront a brief outline of the underlying modus operandi, which will be of some help in following the steps of the effect.

THE SET-UP

From an ordinary deck of cards, remove 13 cards, one of each value from Ace through King, with the suits and colors well varied. Arrange them in sequence, with the Ace on top and

the King at the face. Put 20 of the remaining cards on top of this stack, and put the final remaining 19 cards below the stack. You thus have a full deck of 52 cards, but positions 21 through 33 inclusive are secretly stacked. If you think of the Jack as "11", Queen as "12", and King as "13", you have a sequence of key cards in the center third of the pack, each of which will automatically key its exact position (and thus the number of cards cut off) by simply adding "20" to its value. For example, if you cut into this sequence and, say, a "4" is the face card of the cut portion, then you've cut off 24 cards (20 + 4); if a Queen is the card cut to, then you've cut off 32 cards (20 + 12), etc. Because of the varied suits, and because the cards above and below the stack are truly random, the deck can be spread face up in front of the spectators without fear of the stack's being noticed.

THE PROCEDURE

1) Invite two spectators to assist you, and have them sit next to each other at a table. (It's important that they have a convenient place where they can easily and comfortably do their shuffling). It's helpful, though not essential, if you choose two spectators whose ability at shuffling you've noticed earlier, and who seem to feel comfortable with a deck of cards. Try to pick someone who knows how to riffle shuffle.

2) Bring out the deck, and, if you desire, do whatever preliminary false or controlled shuffles you like, just so that, when you're finished, the secret stack winds up in correct position at 21 through 33 in the deck. (See my comments later under "Preliminaries". Frankly, if you handle the cards casually, openly and without guilt, I see no particular need for "proving" the absence of any pre-arrangement). Spread the cards in a wide ribbon-spread, face up across the table. Without directly saying so, you're letting the spectators see that all of the cards are facing the same direction, and that they're not in any particular <3> order. Close the spread, and table the pack face down in front of one of the spectators, for example, the one on the left. (For convenience, let's call him "A", and the spectator on the right "B".) Explain that, during the entire experiment, you won't come near the deck or touch any of the cards.

3) Have Mr. A cut the deck approximately into thirds. To facilitate this, and make it easy for me to keep track of which third goes where, I ask A to *"Cut off about 2/3 of the pack"*, gesturing towards my right to indicate that the upper 2/3 is to be placed to the right of the remaining packet. Continue, *"Now, cut off about half of that pile"*, pointing to the larger pile, and gesturing again to the right, to indicate that half of the 2/3 pile is to be cut off and placed to its right. You now have a row of three piles which, reading from right to left, are the top, middle and bottom portions of the deck. The bottom third of the deck (at the left end) remains in front of A, the center third, containing all or most of the stack is in the middle, and the original top third is at the right, closest to B.

4) Ask each of the spectators to *"take your pile and shuffle it"*. As you say this, gesture towards the two end piles, indicating that each spectator is to take the pile closest to himself. The center pile is thus left on the table.

5) When both spectators have finished shuffling, continue, *"I want each of you to remove a bunch of cards from your shuffled pile ..."*; pause, and wait until they've done so. If you want, you can comment on the freedom they have: the "bunch" can be small or large, it can be all

from one place or from different parts of their packet. When they're ready to proceed, continue, *"Now, hand the clump of cards you've just removed to each other"*. Let them both do so. (Note that I ask them to remove a "bunch", or a "clump", or a "handful", or a "few" cards and exchange them. The exact language isn't important, but the idea here is to avoid saying "a number"; you don't want to make this into a mathematical or counting trick, or give any suggestion that arithmetic, or formulas have any relevance here. The point is that no one, neither you nor they, have any counting to do.) Depending on how adept in handling the cards your spectators appear, you may want to adjust the handling here slightly, so as to make it easy for the spectators to follow your instructions. For example, you might have the spectators table their packets before they remove their "bunch" of cards to exchange.

6) Once the two spectators have each received the exchanged "bunch" from the other, continue, *"Now, to really mix-up the deck, I want each of you to take the cards which you just received and turn them over so they're face up"* -- pause here, until the spectators have complied with this instruction -- *"and now shuffle those face-up cards into the rest of your face-down pile"*. Let them do so. If the spectators use a riffle shuffle on the table, <4> there's not much chance that they could misunderstand what you've asked; if they happen to overhand shuffle, you may want to keep an eye on them, just to make certain they don't inadvertently turn over their entire pile during their shuffling. The point is simply that the cards they retained should stay face down, and the cards they received in exchange should stay face up; within that limitation, they can shuffle and cut their piles as much as they like.

Note that you have much leeway in this whole procedure for emphasizing the complete randomness of it all. I frequently have the spectators do the initial shuffling of their piles (step 4) and the exchange of portions (step 5) under the table, or in their laps, so that I cannot be accused of seeing anything. If you feel confident that the spectators can follow your step-by-step directions, you can do the entire steps 4, 5 and 6 with your back turned. While it is essential that the procedure be followed correctly, it is in fact a rather simple and straightforward procedure which raises no ambiguity and causes no confusion, and it offers much flexibility for you to demonstrate the total freedom and many choices the spectators have in cutting, shuffling, and exchanging their cards.

7) Once the spectators have completed their shuffling, have the piles put down on the table in front of the spectators; it doesn't matter if the top cards of these piles happen to be face up. Emphasize that both piles now have a random number of face up and face down cards, and that no one knows how many cards are which way. Have the entire deck reassembled, by first gesturing to B to replace his pile onto the center pile (which has remained on the table throughout), and then by asking A to put those two combined piles on top of his pile. While your gestures and attention should be offhand and casual, you do have to make certain that the party who got the original top third replaces his pile above the center stack, and that the spectator who started with the original bottom portion has his pile replaced at the bottom.

8) Turn to B, and say, *"Earlier, I asked A to cut the deck into a few piles. Now, I'd like to have you cut the deck in half."* Let B do so. Note that B actually has a great deal of leeway as to where he cuts, since all you care is that he cuts somewhere within the undisturbed portion of the stack, which will occupy (roughly) the middle third of the deck. Your patter requesting that the deck be cut "in half" insures that the cut will be in the desired area.

9) Point to the top half just cut off, and continue, *"To really mix up the cards, I want you to take the cards you've just cut, and turn that entire pile upside down"*. Let B do so. Since the cut was made into the stack, which was face down in the deck, in turning this entire top half over, there will now appear a card face up on top of this portion; this will be one of the cards from <5> the 13 card stack and it will be your key. Casually note and remember its value, as you continue *"now just shuffle that half into the other half"*. Have B do so, preferably by riffle shuffling the two halves together on the table, and have him square up the deck. (If you like, you can have the deck cut, and even shuffled some more, so long as no further reversing of any cards occurs). If you want, you can turn your back while B spreads the cards to satisfy himself that the cards are in a hopelessly mixed face up/face down condition.

10) Strange as it may seem, even though the spectators have done all of the handling, you are now ready for the climax, for despite all the cuts, exchanging, reversing and shuffling, you now know the exact number of cards face up in the deck: just add "20" to the value of your key, and that will be the number of cards face up!

The particular revelation you use should, of course, be tailored to your own presentation, but make sure the audience realizes the sheer impossibility of what you're going to do. I usually adopt an "X-ray" presentation, and say something like, *"After all that cutting, mixing, exchanging, and turning the cards upside-down, it would be impossible for anyone to know just how many cards are face up or face down. But actually there are two ways to find out. One way, the normal way, would be for you to deal through the cards one at a time and separate them, and count how many face up cards there are. The second way, the magical way, is to use X-ray vision on the deck, and count the face up cards during the X-ray. Watch!"* Stare intently at the deck, and then dramatically announce, *"The X-ray indicates exactly 23 cards face up. Now, to check if I'm right, why don't you use the normal way, and deal the cards and count the ones face up"*. The spectator takes the deck and does so, counting aloud as he deals each face up card. The whole audience should be expectantly watching, and silently counting along, and as the end of the dealing is reached, impossible though it seemed, you are found to be 100% correct!

The above ten steps set forth the basic procedure for accomplishing Shuffle-Bored, and if you want to stop reading this book right here, you've got all you need to know to fully and effectively present Shuffle-Bored, as one of the most mind-boggling effects in card magic. But there's a lot more that can be done with the principles underlying Shuffle-Bored, and many variations and embellishments that can be made to the basic effect. These are discussed in the following sections, and for ease of reference, whenever I talk of varying or modifying something, I'll refer back to the particular step in the above 10 procedural steps.

PRELIMINARIES

<6> As mentioned, at the beginning of Shuffle-Bored you may prefer to do a false shuffle or cut, or some other action which creates a sense in the audience that the deck is being handled haphazardly, and that the particular order of the cards makes no difference. Obviously any full-deck control could be used, but since the stack only involves 13 cards, there is much leeway for actually giving a legitimate shuffle to the remaining cards without disturbing the stack. Here are a few suggestions for false shuffles or other alternative ways of getting into the Shuffle-Bored condition:

a) Start with the 13 card stack in order, but at the bottom of the pack. Now the top three-fourths of the deck (39 cards) can be freely shuffled, cut, and mixed with each other, either by an overhand shuffle or a riffle shuffle, just so long as the bottom stack is retained intact. After such preliminary shuffling, finally commence an overhand shuffle, running 9 cards singly off the top, and throw the balance of the deck on top. Again commence an overhand shuffle, this time running 10 more cards singly off the top, and throw. You have now shuffled a total of 19 cards beneath the stack, so the stack is in proper position at 21-33. (Obviously, this could be reversed, by starting with the stack on top, and doing the overhand shuffles with the deck face up -- just shuffle a total of 20 cards above the stack).

b) You could prearrange the deck by starting it in Shuffle-Bored condition, and then giving it a couple of reverse faros. When you're ready to perform, give it two faros, which will bring it back into starting condition.

c) Start with the 13 card stack at the bottom of the deck, and do a few tricks which don't use all of the cards. Since you can use the top 39 cards, there is much leeway for choosing among your favorite small packet or partial deck effects. Finally, perform some effect which involves (or at least permits) counting of the cards, so that at its finish, you're left with some cards on the table, whose number you know or can quickly count. (For example, after a poker deal, there might be some poker hands left on the table, and you know there are five cards per hand; or a "cards across" effect; or the 21 Card Trick; or a layout effect -- anything that permits you to easily know or calculate or count the cards). As you gather up the cards at the conclusion of that effect, just secretly count and take 19 cards and replace them on the bottom of the deck, beneath the stack, and then replace any remaining cards on top of the deck. The deck is now set up for Shuffle-Bored.

d) There are a number of other excellent card effects which involve a similar stack of cards with their values in sequence, frequently of one suit (for example, Marlo's "Perfect Stop Trick" or "Diamond-Cut-Diamond"; or Lorayne's "Lazy Man's Card Trick"; <7> or Solomon/Aronson's "Stop Perfecting Triumph!"). It's quite easy to routine a series of card tricks so that one of those effects precedes Shuffle-Bored, and that way, the necessary stack is already in operation in the deck. All you have to do is work out the transitional steps or actions that would be needed to reset the stack in proper order after the effect, and place it into position for Shuffle-Bored.

e) You can mark off the beginning of the stack by crimping the first card, the Ace. That way, you can let the stack float at different positions throughout the deck, so long as it itself remains intact; when you need it, just cut it to the top, and then place 20 cards above it, as described above. (A crimp of the bottom King in the stack would conversely facilitate cutting the stack to the bottom. Then, shuffle 19 cards below it.)

You can use your own combinations of overhand shuffle controls, riffle shuffles, cuts and crimps to devise whatever opening procedure you feel comfortable with, or you can start right out with the deck already set. The important thing is for it to appear that the order of the cards doesn't matter really; I frequently explain in my opening patter that, for this card trick, it doesn't matter what the particular cards are at all, that we're simply going to be interested in only one thing: whether a card is face up or face down. I then begin by showing that all the cards start

face down, and proceed from there. If you handle the cards casually, there's nothing in the effect that should call the audience's attention to any possible pre-arrangement.

THE CANCELLATION COMBINATION

One of the intriguing features of Shuffle-Bored is that, even when you know the secret, it still seems amazing that it really works. How is it that the initial exchanges and turnovers can all be completely nullified, totally erased, in just one cut? Naturally you don't need to understand why or how the Cancellation Combination works in order to be able to present the trick, and so, if you want, you can omit reading this section until some other time. But I think that if you take the trouble to understand the underlying displacements that are accomplished by the Cancellation Combination, you'll be well rewarded, because there are some eye-opening ideas that can be put to good use either in variations of Shuffle-Bored, or in creating totally new effects. So, let's try to see what this Cancellation Combination really is.

Frankly, it's rather difficult to explain or conceptualize, and perhaps the easiest way for you to see what's happening within the various portions of the deck is for you to try the entire procedure a few times, slowly, following where the various cards are put, and seeing what gets turned face up and what remains face down. After you've done this a few times, think about what actually is happening.

<8> The first thing to note is that, since we're really only concerned with whether a card is face up or face down, the separate shuffles, cuts, and re-assemblies of the piles don't really make a difference in the end result, since they don't actually alter a card's face up or face down condition. The only moves that make a difference are those instances where the cards are actually turned over, and this happens only twice in the entire procedure. In step 6, each of the spectators turns over the bunch of cards he has just received in exchange for the ones he gave, and in step 9 the entire top half (already containing some cards face up and some face down) is turned over. The essence of the Cancellation Combination is that step 9, generally speaking, "undoes" whatever step 6 has done.

Let's get more specific about just how the Cancellation Combination operates, so that you'll be able to adapt it to your own particular uses. To start out, without doing any cutting of the deck, just imagine the pack as being divided into three layers, a top third, middle third and bottom third. (And remember in our example, Mr. "A" gets the bottom portion and Mr. "B" gets the top third). At the outset, all 52 cards are of course face down. As a result of step 6 of the procedure, two "groups" of cards will become face up as follows: a portion of the cards from the top third (namely, those cards which B gives to A) will wind up face up in the bottom third, and likewise a portion of the cards from the bottom third (i.e., those which A gives to B) will be turned over so they are face up in the top third. Except for those two groups, at the end of step 6, everything else still remains face down. Steps 3 through 7 of the procedure are designed so that all of the turnovers and exchanges of cards occur solely in the top and bottom thirds; at the end of step 7, when the three piles have been reassembled together, the middle third remains undisturbed, and entirely face down.

In the next step, when the spectator cuts the deck "in half" (step 8) he's cutting into the middle third, which means he's always cutting off more than the entire top third. Now, when this

cut-off half is itself turned over in step 9, try to visualize what is happening within the deck, in connection with what has already happened before. Because the entire top third is contained within this top "half", this entire top third will itself be turned over as part of the turnover of the top half, and, if you think about it, this simultaneously accomplishes three things:

(i) it turns face down all the cards that happen to be face up in the top third. (These will be the cards which A gave to B, and which originally came from the bottom third). The net result is that each and every one of the cards which made up the original bottom third will now be face down again, either because they still are in the <9> bottom third and never were turned face up, or because if they were turned face up when exchanged, they have now been reversed again;

and

(ii) it turns face up all of the remaining face down cards from the original top third. The net result here is that each and every one of the cards which made up the original top third of the pack will now be face up somewhere in the pack, either because they were turned face up in step 6 (and still remain face up, since they're in the lower half of the deck), or because they're now being turned face up, since they are still in the top third;

and

(iii) it turns face up all of the cards that were positioned between the top third and the place where the halves are cut at step 9. (These will be the upper portion of the undisturbed middle third; the lower portion of the undisturbed middle third remains face down, as part of the bottom "half" of the deck).

If you step back for an overview of the whole deck and take a moment to analyze the above three things that have been accomplished you'll see that, in fact, the original top third plus the upper portion of the middle third (just up to the position at which the halves were cut at step 8) is now face up, and all the rest of the deck (i.e., the lower portion of the middle third, plus the entire original bottom third) is now face down. The individual cards may be spread out randomly within the deck, but all the face up cards are the ones that were the original upper half of the deck, and all the face down cards are the ones that comprised the original bottom half of the deck. Or, to put it another way, if you imagined the deck as being a deck of "number" cards starting out in perfect sequence, with "1" as the top card and "52" as the bottom card, and if you imagined, for example, that at step 9 the "key" card cut to and turned over happened to be, say, "24", this would tell you that cards numbered "1" through "24" (inclusive) are spread face up in various points of the deck, and that cards numbered "25" - "52" are all face down, spread throughout the pack. The Cancellation Combination has operated so that the net result is simply to cut off approximately half the deck (at the position denoted by the key card), and turn it face up! All the rest of the turnovers have been cancelled out!

The above analysis reveals a few corollaries of the Cancellation Combination which have immediate application to variations of the Shuffle-Bored effect. First, by somehow "controlling" which card is cut to in step 8, we could actually <10> control the outcome, i.e., could control

exactly how many cards wound up face up. Second, as the "number deck" example makes clear, since all the cards from positions 1 through the Key, inclusive, will wind up face up, and the cards from positions beginning right after the Key through 52 will remain face down, we can apply this principle to retain a secret prior division, or grouping, of cards within the entire deck. The entire deck could be stacked, and after the entire Shuffle-Bored effect, despite all the cuts, exchanges of packets, turnovers, shuffles, etc., the top half of the full-deck stack would be facing one direction, and the lower half of the full-deck stack would be facing the other direction. Both of these ideas will become clearer in the discussions contained in the next two sections.

I fully appreciate that the explanation given in this section is pretty heavy reading, and it may take several re-readings, working through the text slowly with cards in hand, before you really "get it". As mentioned, for those who aren't particularly theoretically inclined, and are only interested in the practical applications, don't worry: you can entirely dispense with this particular section, and still use every other idea in the book. I just wanted to spend a moment on this detailed analysis of what is happening within the Cancellation Combination, because I think it's one of the more clever and more subtle principles to be introduced into card magic.

CONTROLLED SHUFFLE-BORED

Try a simple experiment. Take an ordinary deck of 52 cards, fully shuffled and without any 13 card stack, and crimp the 26th card from the top. Now run through the complete Shuffle-Bored procedure yourself, with all the cuts, exchanges, turnovers, etc., just as described in the basic effect, except that, at step 8, where the spectator cuts the deck in half, cut the deck at the crimp, so the crimped card becomes the bottom card of the top half. Now continue on with the rest of the procedure, and after all the shuffling is done, you'll find that there are exactly 26 cards face up. This is simply an example of the Cancellation Combination at work. Moreover, there's nothing special about using position 26; it will work with any position. If you started by crimping the 23rd card, you'd wind up with 23 face up cards; if you crimped, say, the 29th card, you'd finish with 29 cards face up.

This suggests an obvious variation of the original Shuffle-Bored effect. Just pre-set a crimp at a known position in the deck, and present the effect for the spectators as described -- but, when the three piles are re-assembled in step 7, make it seem as though that is the end of the mixing procedure. (The cards really do appear, and are, pretty randomly mixed at this point). Then, as an afterthought, approach the deck for the first time, saying, *"Let's really make it tough. We'll mix it once more!"* As <11> you say this, you casually cut the deck in half (at the crimp) and immediately ask one of the spectators to turn over the cut off cards, and shuffle the halves together. If you point up the spectator's actions, and continue to emphasize how he's making it more and more randomized, people may even forget that you cut the deck once. Even if they notice, it seems like a natural thing to do: everyone else is helping turn the deck topsy-turvy, and you're doing your share too. Finally, proceed as in the regular effect to discern the number of face-up cards.

The obvious advantages of doing Shuffle-Bored with a cut at a pre-set crimped card are two: first, you eliminate the need to set up or retain any stack, and second, you know the exact outcome before you begin. By eliminating the stack, the effect becomes practically impromptu, since you can pre-set a crimped card at a desired position right in front of the spectators' noses,

by just silently counting cards during a spread or fanning action, or by using a faro-check. The elimination of the stack also allows the deck to be shuffled much more freely, even by the spectator, because the crimp can be "placed" after you retake the deck following the shuffle. Knowing the ultimate outcome of how many cards will be face up opens up avenues for all sorts of other effects, such as predictions, or using the apparently "random" number of face up cards to determine some other outcome.

The big disadvantage of performing a version of Shuffle-Bored with a pre-set crimp, instead of the stack, is that it imposes a new restriction on the procedure: at step 8, instead of allowing the spectator to cut the pack, the performer must cut to insure that the cut will be exactly at the crimp. (You could take your chances by allowing the spectator to cut, since he will frequently cut at the place of least resistance, which is the natural break or air-space caused by the crimp; if he misses, you could always replace the cut, and do it yourself a second time.) This is, undeniably, a weaker procedure and eliminates the "impossible" condition of the performer's never touching the cards.

This is a trade-off, and each performer will decide for himself whether or when it is worthwhile to sacrifice the "hands-off" condition. Personally, I use both procedures, depending on the performing circumstances, the surrounding effects, who my audience is, and so on. There is a time and place for each version, and room for much variation of opinion and personal taste. (My friend Dave Solomon, one of the country's most creative and subtle cardmen, feels that, when performing for magicians, the "pure" hands off version is potentially more susceptible of reconstruction and figuring out -- precisely because there are no moves or handling to obscure the modus operandi. When Dave presents his handling of Shuffle-Bored, after the cards have been fully mixed by the spectators, Dave takes the deck himself and continues with the Marlo sequence of false shuffles from "But What About My Number?" (see page 25), which <12> looks like more mixing, and makes it hopelessly impossible for a cardman to backtrack through it all!). Try both the stack version and the crimp version a few times, and develop your own tastes and opinions on the matter; you'll find that either version still presents an overpowering effect.

There are other ways of "controlling" the outcome of Shuffle-Bored, either with or without a crimp, once the performer allows himself to handle the cards to "assist in further mixing". Instead of using a crimp (or other marked card), you could use a known key card at a known position. Then, at step 8, you could take the deck to give it a cut, and simply riffle up in the area of the key until you spot your key, and cut at that point.

If you want to control the exact number of face up cards, but still want to give the spectators' maximum participation, you can build further upon the basic stack method. Suppose you want to end up with, say, 24 face up cards. Just present the basic Shuffle-Bored effect, with the stack and with the spectator's doing the cut at step 8. Suppose the stack reveals a "9" when turned over, telling you that there are now 29 cards face up. To get your desired outcome, you can quickly calculate that you'll need to turn 5 of the face up cards face down (29 minus 24 = 5). Now, re-taking the deck to "further mix" the cards, you can do a few riffle shuffles during which you can accomplish the desired reversals. Anyone familiar with Marlo's riffle shuffle techniques and block transfer work should find this a fairly straightforward exercise to work out.

One final variation of using a crimp will allow you to eliminate the stack, and yet still know the number of face-up cards, even though this outcome really is free and not controlled. Start with a known crimped key card located at position 26. Proceed as in steps 1-7 and let the spectator himself cut the deck in half at step 8, but watch the edge of the deck so you can see whether he cuts above, below, or if you're lucky, right at, the crimp. Now continue with the basic procedure, but this time you perform the turnover of one of the halves, and the shuffling of them together, with the following slight variation: (i) If the spectator cuts below the crimp (so the crimped key is within the upper half, turn this upper half over, and riffle shuffle the halves together, but as you let the last few cards riffle off, watch in the turned-over top half for the known key. The key will be face up, among the last (now uppermost) 5 or 6 cards, and when you see it, just silently count how many cards lie above it in that half. Since there are only a few cards, and you're riffling them with your thumb, you can instantly count (even "sight count") the number of cards. (These are the cards which the spectator cut "below" the key). If you "add" this number to 26, you'll know the number of face up cards in the deck. (ii) If, on the other hand, the spectator cuts <13> above the crimp (so the crimped card is face down near the top of the lower half of the deck), you simply need to get the reverse information, namely how many cards are above the crimp in the lower half. Again, as you riffle the halves together, just let the last few cards of the lower half riffle off singly, so you can sight the crimp and count the cards in that half that fall after it. (If you prefer to look for the face of the known key, instead of watching for the crimped edge, there is a simple alternative handling, when the spectator cuts above the crimp, thus leaving the known key face down. At step 9, instead of turning over the top half, just turn over the lower half and riffle them together. Now the known key will be face up, among the bottom few cards of this half, and you can just riffle the cards off the bottom singly, counting them, until you see the key. Take the number of cards including the key itself (not just the cards below it) and add it to 26, and you'll get the exact number of face up cards in the deck. This is just using the Shuffle-Bored principles in reverse, working off the other end of the deck!) This last variation is a very efficient and subtle way of accomplishing Shuffle-Bored, without the necessity of any stack, and yet still allows the spectator to do all the cuts, and practically all the shuffles.

[**Note 1994**: In his book Trendsetters (1990), Harry Lorayne published his handling of Shuffle-Bored in a trick entitled "The Equalizer", p. 171. In light of the foregoing Controlled Shuffle-bored section, I was surprised that Harry explained he was trying to eliminate the stack and make the effect impromptu. His solution -- coincidentally -- was for the magician to secretly learn beforehand (by counting) the color division at a known point in the deck; the performer then cut the deck into two halves at that known point, thus forcing the ultimate face up/face down result and the color mix. I wrote Harry and pointed out the similarities with what I had already offered in "Controlled Shuffle-bored". Harry acknowledged that, although he had seen my basic stack version performed and explained by a fellow magician, he never actually read my manuscript; therefore, when he published his handling, he was unaware of my original impromptu, no stack versions.

Despite a certain amount of reinvention, Harry's version is certainly worth reading, and contains some helpful suggestions. For instance, Harry points out that the process of exchanging and reversing the packets (in steps 5 and 6) can be repeated several times, which adds to the feeling of randomness. Harry also dispenses with the triple cut (step 3) and moves my second cut (step 8) to the beginning, which speeds up the presentation.]

DIVIDED DECK SHUFFLE-BORED

Let's try another experiment. Separate the red cards and the black cards in a deck so that all the reds are on top and the blacks are on the bottom, and crimp the lowermost red card, i.e., the 26th card in the deck. Now run through the entire Shuffle-Bored procedure, but when you cut the deck in half in step 8, cut at the crimp. You already know from the Controlled Shuffle-Bored section that this will result in 26 cards face up (because the cut was made at the original 26th card), but if you check, you'll find that not only are there 26 cards face up but all of them will be red. (And naturally all of the face down cards will be black). This is a simple and clear demonstration of how a pre-set divided deck can retain its separate groupings (here red/black) throughout the entire Shuffle-Bored procedure. Note that we're not saying that all the cards will retain their same order, because that's not true. The face up cards are all red, but among themselves the red cards have been mixed up, and are in a different, shuffled order from the particular order they started in at the top of the deck. What has been retained is the divided deck, i.e., divided into reds and blacks, and this can be a very useful tool either for effects in which the divided grouping is itself a secret, e.g. in location effects, or in which the division itself is revealed as an extra climax, e.g., a color separation.

The above example of a red/black division is presented only because it is the most obvious way of illustrating the retained divided deck principle, but such a color division has limitations. Since it is so immediately visually apparent, a color division <14> does not lend itself to any kind of "secret" retention, because as soon as the cards are spread the spectators will notice the grouping. This could be effectively disguised by using some other less visually apparent division of the deck, e.g., odds/evens, or subtler, odd black cards together with even red cards in one half, and the reverse, the even blacks plus the odd reds, in the other.

This divided deck concept is not tied to the use of a crimp, or to any controlled cut, or to a division of the deck into two equal groups. The basic "retained group" principle being explained here is that, wherever the cut of the deck is made at step 8, all the cards above it in the original deck will be grouped together, and all the cards below it in the original deck will be grouped together. For example, if you set up your divided red/black deck again, but this time crimp, say, the third card down in the black portion (the 29th card), then after the entire procedure is finished there will be 29 cards face up, containing all 26 red cards plus the top 3 black ones; the remaining 23 face down cards will be all black. You can of course dispense with the crimp entirely, without changing the application of the divided deck concept. For example, set up a divided red/black deck, and incorporate the basic Shuffle-Bored stack of 13 sequential values at positions 21-33. (This simply means that the values Ace - Six will be red cards at the bottom of the red half, and then the top seven cards in the black half will continue Seven - King, made up only in Club or Spade cards.) Now if you run through the Shuffle-Bored procedure, letting the cut at step 8 be made freely by the spectator, you'll find that the value of the key card will now tell you not only the exact number of the face up cards, but will also tell you the exact mix of reds and blacks. For instance, suppose a "4" showed up as the key when the top half were turned over in step 9; this indicates 24 cards are face up, but since you know that the top 26 cards were red ones, you also know that all of the face up cards are red and the 28 face down cards include 2 reds (the red 5 and 6 from your stack, since these were the lowermost red cards) plus all 26 blacks.

The most sophisticated, practical and efficient application of this divided deck principle is in combination with a memorized deck. The memorized deck lends itself perfectly to divided deck Shuffle-Bored for several reasons. First, the arrangement or grouping of the cards is fully disguised, since it actually is a random arrangement; only you know the memorized order, and to the rest of the world there's no pattern to discover or discern. Second, you aren't limited to a division of the cards into two equal 26 card halves. The basic division you're operating with is simply low/high (as measured by the "stack-numbers" of your memorized positions), and this division can be made at any point in the deck. Wherever the cut at step 8 happens to be made, your key card (be it 22, 26, 31 or whatever) automatically becomes the dividing point for the separation between "low" and "high" cards, and all the cards in your memorized stack up to <15> that number will be in one group, and all the cards in your memorized stack after that number will be in the other group. Third, a memorized deck does away with any need for setting up the 13 value sequence stack, because such a stack is already contained in your memorized order -- you already have memorized keys at positions 21-33! (Indeed, for anyone who uses a memorized stack regularly, you'll find that it is better for Shuffle-Bored than the basic 13 sequential values. The memorized stack is more disguised, and its scope covering the middle of the deck is broader, since it runs before position 20 and after position 33).

Up to this point I've explained the divided deck principle in more general or conceptual terms, but it is certainly not of theoretical interest only. As mentioned earlier, there are a number of concrete, practical applications either where the divided deck is a secret tool, or where it is itself revealed as an additional climax. I'll expand on some of these uses in the following four sections.

DELAYED LOCATION EFFECTS

Consider "standard" location effects where the modus operandi is that, unbeknownst to the spectators, the deck is secretly divided into two groups, for example, odds/evens. The performer will be able to locate a selection which has been chosen from one portion of the deck and replaced into the other portion, because it is the only card that doesn't "belong" in its resulting replaced group. This basic principle has been used for centuries in card magic, and its success and fooling quality depends on how subtly the separation of the deck into groups can be accomplished and retained, and on how free the choice and replacement of the selection can be made to appear. Although the principle is well-known, both to magicians and even laymen, it still is a regular "fooler" when the divided nature of the deck is well-disguised and when, through apparent shufflings or other actions, the spectator has been lulled into believing the deck has been randomized and couldn't be pre-arranged. Shuffle-Bored with a divided deck is a perfect vehicle for retaining such a secret delayed set-up, because throughout Shuffle-Bored the spectators themselves have continuously shuffled the cards. More specifically, suppose you started with a deck secretly divided into odds/evens, with the 26th card crimped. You could present the entire Shuffle-Bored effect, using the controlled cut version explained earlier where you cut at the crimp. At the climax of Shuffle-Bored you announce that there are 26 cards face up, and the spectator deals through the deck and separates the face up cards into a pile, counting them as he does, and finds that you're exactly right. You stop there, having completed Shuffle-Bored, and reassemble the deck by putting one of the separated piles back on top of the other. (You can even have the spectator himself reassemble the deck). Now, you're set to present your favorite location, using all the subtlety and casualness you can muster. You should fool everyone, because

it's almost inconceivable that <16> any set-up could still be present at that point. If you use a memorized deck, then you can totally forget about the crimp and present the basic Shuffle-Bored effect with the spectator freely doing the cut at step 8. Now when you complete Shuffle-Bored, you literally have never touched the deck throughout all the shuffling -- yet the deck is still separated into a "low" stack number and "high" stack-number grouping, ready for your most diabolical location. (For more information on the concept of "retained relative grouping" within a shuffled memorized deck, and for some specific location effects that can be used here, see the entire chapter on memorized deck magic in my Card Ideas book).

If you don't use a memorized deck, but still want to eliminate the crimp and the controlled cut, it can be done, with just a bit more finagling. Just start with a divided deck that still permits you to include the 13-value stack at positions 21-33. (You can't use just a simple odd/even division, because you'll need both odd and even values for the individual positions in the stack. You could make a slight modification to the odd/even division, by just varying it as to the six or seven cards that would be out of place; if you make these cards all the same suit, they can be easily remembered. If you use the subtler division, where one half includes, say, the odd red cards and the even black cards, and the other half includes the reverse of these, then the 13 value sequence at positions 21-33 can be made without any problem, and without altering the separation into halves). Then present the basic Shuffle-Bored effect using the stack, and when the effect is over re-assemble the two piles. Now, you'll be back in the necessary divided condition for your location effect, except for just a few cards that might be in the wrong half. However, it's easy to find these few cards and return them to their correct half in the act of re-assembling the deck and straightening out the cards, because you will already know exactly how many cards are out of place, in which half they are, and their values. For example, suppose your key showed an "8", indicating 28 cards face up, which you reveal at the climax. Since your division of groups was into 26 card halves, you'll know that there are two cards (28 minus 26) out of place, and that these two cards are contained in the face up half, but should be moved back into the face down half. You'll also know (because of the 13 card stack) the values of these cards (in this case, they would be a "7" and the key, an "8") so it's a very simple manner to quickly find these cards and move them back into their proper half, and then go on with your favorite location effect. Note that if the key shows less than a "6", indicating less than 26 cards face up, the same reasoning will apply, but in the opposite direction, i.e., it just means you'll have to move a few extra cards back into the face-up group, but again, you'll know exactly how many, and their values. (You'll find that, as the spectator deals and separates the cards at the climax of Shuffle-Bored, you can usually watch and notice where the few misplaced cards lie). In any case, it's a relatively easy matter to re-set your divided deck, especially since the spectators have no indication that any set-up could be involved at that point.

COLOR SEPARATION REVELATION

This next variation of Shuffle-Bored is a logical extension of the divided deck notion, but, frankly I think it's a bad effect and I recommend against its use. I'm describing it here only because, once someone's familiar with the basic divided deck ideas already discussed, it's just a short step to come up with this idea, and I'd like to have my opinions already on record and out in the open. First let me discuss the effect and then give the reasons for my bias.

The effect, simply stated, would be that you perform Shuffle-Bored and announce, at the climax, *"There are 26 cards face up"*. But then you continue, *"but more than that, not only have you turned up exactly 26 cards, but incredible though it may seem, you've actually separated out the red cards from the black ones! Take a look."* The spectator does so, and finds exactly 26 cards face up, all of them red. All the face down cards are black. The method is simplicity itself: just start out with the red cards separated out, at the top half of the deck, with the bottom red card (26th card) crimped. Perform the version of controlled Shuffle-Bored where at step 8 you casually cut at the crimp, and then let the spectator do the turnover and final shuffle. The result is automatic, and you can then reveal the complete color separation.

Now, why do I think that's a bad effect? I must admit that the initial reaction of the spectators is certainly amazement; not only did you know just how many cards would be face up, but you somehow magically produced the impossible outcome of separating the colors. But the weakness of the effect is that the outcome is so impossible that it gives the method away. The initial, immediate reaction of the audience may be surprise, but the very next step is the logical conclusion to which the spectator will be drawn: somehow the magician controlled how the cards finally came out. And this is the main thing you don't want the spectators ever to think about Shuffle-Bored. Once you plant the notion in their minds that the entire result, after all that mixing, could still have been "controlled", that all their free cuts, free shuffles, free exchanges, etc., were for naught -- then forget it; you've just destroyed the "magic", and have relegated it to a mere puzzle. The spectators may not have any idea how you managed to nullify all their actions, but they know you did, somehow -- and that in itself is giving away the essence of the Cancellation Combination. By revealing that you can cause each and every card to wind up just the way you want it, that is tantamount to announcing "No matter how freely you may think you're mixing the cards, I've got a way to cancel out your actions and substitute my pre-planned result." Sure, it still is a good puzzle, maybe even impossible to figure out, but it's a puzzle nonetheless; and the difference between performing miracles and presenting puzzles is what our art is all about. There is a world of difference between a spectator's not knowing how something's <is> done versus his knowing that it can't be done. (Just think about what place in history Moses or Jesus would occupy if they had presented "brain-teasers".)

The beauty of the basic Shuffle-Bored effect is that, as the shuffling and mixing continues, it seems absolutely certain that the performer has no control over the outcome and the result is entirely at the will and whim of the spectators. The climax of Shuffle-Bored should support this assumption. Your magical ability is not in controlling the outcome; it's in knowing the results of an (apparently) uncontrolled outcome, under circumstances where its impossible that you could know. There is a real difference, especially in the way people will think about the effect after it's over.

The above point of view has application to many other effects in magic beyond the scope of this book, but the general point can be stated succinctly: don't try to squeeze an extra climax out of an effect, if, in doing so, the extra climax itself reveals, or points the way towards, the method of accomplishing the main effect.

So much for philosophizing. You may still be intrigued with this color separation idea, and may wonder whether there is a way of utilizing it for an additional climax without leading the

spectators any closer to the "real works". For those who want such a combination, consider the next section.

COLOR DISCERNMENT

Suppose you could present Shuffle-Bored, completely as set forth in the basic procedure without the performer ever touching the deck, and at the end could announce, *"My X-ray vision tells me there are exactly 23 cards face-up. My X-ray vision further tells me that 13 of these face up cards are black, and the remaining 10 are red. Take a look"*. The spectator checks, and finds you're on target on all points. Note that there is an important difference between this effect and the preceding Color Separation. Here, the outcome (13 black and 10 red) does not seem controlled, forced, or unusual; it's apparently a random and natural result of the spectators' mixing, just as is the total number of face-up cards. What seems impossible is how you could know these numbers.

The method, however, is straightforward and actually cleaner than the preceding Color Separation, because here you don't need a controlled cut. The only modification to the basic effect is a bit more pre-arrangement of the deck, because you'll need to know (l) how many reds and blacks there are among the top 20 cards, and (2) the way the reds and blacks are laid out among the 13 card value sequence in the middle. The best way to explain it is to give you a concrete example of one possible pre-arrangement. First, arrange the 13 card value sequence, but do it in alternating colors, beginning with a red card for the Ace, i.e., <19> the 2, 4, 6, 8, 10 and Q will be black cards, and the rest will be red). Now take any 12 black cards and any 8 red cards, shuffle them together so their color mix looks random, and put this pile of 20 cards on top of the 13 card stack. Finally put this combined 33 card set-up on top of the remaining 19 cards, and square up the deck. You're ready to perform, exactly according to the basic procedure.

As usual, because of the stack the value of the key will tell you the number of face up cards. You'll be able to "discern" the color mix contained within these face-up cards because the pre-arrangement gives you all the information you need. Just think about one color, say red, and you'll see what I mean. You know that among the top 20 cards there are 8 reds, and immediately after the first 20 you'll be adding one more red card each time you hit an odd-numbered position (21, 23, etc.). So if there were 23 cards face-up, this would mean 10 red cards (8+2), and of course that leaves 13 black cards. If there were 30 cards face up, 13 would be red (8+5), and the rest, 17, would be black.

Obviously you can vary the color mix and pre-arrangement to suit your fancy. There's less to remember, for example, if you start by using 10 reds and 10 blacks to make up the initial 20, and the calculations are a bit quicker. I happen to prefer skewing the color mix to 8 and 12, because it somehow seems more "random", at the end if the final number of reds and blacks isn't the same, or just l apart. Use any arrangement you want, but make sure that the top 20 cards look well mixed, so the whole deck can still be spread face up at the outset. (If you use a memorized deck, you'll already know, or be able to mentally count, the exact red/black mix of your deck up to any given position).

Finally, note that the Color Discernment set-up still allows for some casual shuffling, because the top 20 cards can be fairly mixed among themselves, as can the bottom 19 cards.

SELECTION SHUFFLE-BORED

This effect is an outgrowth of the discussion in the earlier section on Delayed Location Effects. Here, instead of using the divided deck concept for a subsequent location effect, the location is combined into the Shuffle-Bored effect itself, to produce an extra climax.

I've experimented with a variety of ways of having the selections made, and then having them returned to the opposite half of the deck, and have decided that the following procedure is the simplest way of accomplishing the desired result and is in keeping with the overall premise and appearance of Shuffle-Bored.

<20> The effect is exactly that of the basic Shuffle-Bored effect, except that after step 6, when each of the spectators has completed the shuffling of the exchanged face up cards into his respective pile of face down cards, you pause and state, *"Now obviously each of your piles is pretty well jumbled up, with some cards face up and some face down. I'm going to turn my back, and while my back is turned I want you to spread the cards in your hands (or on the table) just to verify that they really are mixed. And, to make matters even more challenging I want each of you to select any <u>one</u> of the face down cards in your pile and turn it over so it's now face up -- and <u>remember</u> <u>that</u> <u>card</u>."* Be sure the spectators clearly understand the instructions, and then turn your back while the spectators comply. (It makes no difference if a spectator removes his face down selection from one part of his pile, and replaces it face up at a different position; all that matters is that the face down card gets turned face up.) When they're finished, have the spectators square up their respective packets, as you turn around to face them again. Now continue to have the deck reassembled pursuant to step 7 and proceed with the usual procedure in steps 8 and 9. Now, believe it or not, you're set not only to do the normal Shuffle-Bored revelation but also to find both of the selected cards!

As mentioned, the divided deck concept is used, and the memorized deck is the cleanest way to illustrate the methodology. If you start with a deck in memorized order, and run through the above procedure, you'll see how easy the location of the two selections actually is. Go back for a minute and review how the memorized deck automatically sets up as a divided deck, with the key card being the dividing point. All the cards with stack-numbers lower than and including the key card wind up face up (these are the "low" cards), and all the cards with stack-numbers higher than the key (i.e., the "high" cards), wind up being face down. Well, after following the selection procedure described above, if you look through each half of the deck you'll be amazed to find one card in each half which is "out of place". All the face up cards will be "low", except for one "high" card -- and that will be one of the selections (it will be Mr. A's selection, the fellow who started out with the original bottom third of the deck). And if you look through all the face down cards, they'll all be "high" except for one out-of-place "low" one, and that will be Mr. B's selection. The very action of the spectators themselves, in choosing their selection by turning a card face up, has unbeknownst to them automatically displaced their selection into the opposite group in the divided deck! (Moreover, this selection procedure will have a "zero" effect on the total number of face up cards. Because there are two selections, each one made from the opposite half of the pack, they cancel each other out.)

<21> The only thing that remains, after revealing the number of face-up cards for the regular Shuffle-Bored ending, is to conclude by locating and revealing the two selections. Since all you have to do is run through each half and locate the one non-belonging card, it's child's play, and you can devote your entire attention towards devising the most entertaining and mystifying presentation for this revelation. I'm partial to the following revelation, since it stays with the basic condition of the performer's never touching the cards. When I announce that there are, say, 22 cards face up, I request the spectator to check, and ask him to deal the cards, separating the face up ones into a pile as he does and counting them aloud. Everyone is listening intently and following his count, but as he deals, I just look at the face up cards as they're dealt, and watch for the one non-belonging "high" card. When I see it, I remember it, but say nothing. When he finishes the count, confirming that my x-ray has worked, I continue, *"But somewhere in this shuffled, confused deck there are two selected cards. Let's see if we can find them. I want you to take that pile"* -- here point to the face down cards, the half that hasn't been dealt or counted -- *"and deal them face up. Both of you watch the cards as they're dealt, and if either of you see your card, then just think the word 'stop'. Don't say anything, and don't blink or make any tell-tale signs, just mentally think 'stop' if you see your card."* Note that you talk as if either or both of the selections might happen to be in that face down pile, but of course you already know that only one selection will be there. Have the pile dealt face up, and watch for the one non-belonging card (the one "low" number among all the "highs"). When you see it, immediately call out "Stop". It will appear as though the spectator's mental command was translated magically into your verbal command, for you will have amazingly stopped on the first selection. Turn to the second spectator (the one whose selection hasn't been discovered yet) and tell him, *"It seems mindreading is very successful here, so let's push our luck one step further. Instead of dealing any more cards, just put the entire deck aside and merely think of your card"*. The spectator will very likely have forgotten that you ever actually got a look at the other half of the deck, and he'll be curious how you could possibly find his card. Look him straight in the eye, and in your best mind-reading manner, announce the name of the card you previously learned from the face up half. You've successfully found both selections, and have never once touched any of the cards!

Two final comments should be made for those who want to experiment with other variations of Selection Shuffle-Bored. First, if you don't use a memorized deck, you can still work out an analogous handling for some other divided deck set-up, e.g. odds/evens, by following some of the procedures discussed in the Divided Deck section; I think you'll find, however, that the memorized deck offers the most flexible and fooling handling available. Second, if you want, you could vary the selection<22> procedure by reversing the instruction: that is, after step 6 you could just as easily ask each spectator to spread his cards and mentally think of any one of the face up cards he sees. Then have him turn the card he's thinking of face down, and square up his pile. The result will still be the same. However you proceed, I'm sure you'll find Selection Shuffle-Bored to your liking.

PREDICTION SHUFFLE-BORED

Those with a flair for mentalism may be intrigued with the possibility of making a prediction effect out of Shuffle-Bored: the spectators would be given the (apparently) total freedom of mixing the cards afforded by the Shuffle-Bored procedure, and the performer would then reveal that he had predicted beforehand the ultimate mix of face up/face down cards.

Certainly the most obvious approach would be to use one of the methods already discussed in the Controlled Shuffle-Bored section where, by interceding either in the cut at step 8 or the shuffle at step 9, the magician actually does control the outcome to a predetermined result. I think this would be a weak approach, for several reasons. First, prediction effects inevitably lead the spectator to consider the question of whether the predicted event was somehow forced or controlled, and such speculation in this case would be correct; thus, for reasons similar to those discussed previously in connection with Color Separation Revelation, I do not want the spectators to dwell for long on the possibility that the mixing procedure was not completely fair. Secondly, in presenting mental-type effects, it is of increased importance that the circumstances, the "test-conditions", be natural, fair and totally aboveboard; the Controlled Shuffle-Bored procedures generally sacrifice the impressive "hands-off" condition.

An alternative, and in my opinion preferable, approach to Prediction Shuffle-Bored would be to employ an index containing thirteen different predictions. The first prediction would read, "There will be 21 cards face up and 31 cards face down'; the second prediction would read, "There will be 22 cards face up and 30 cards face down'; and so on for each successive prediction, covering the outcomes indicated by each one of the cards in the 13 card stack. This would allow the use of the basic Shuffle-Bored effect, with the final result actually not being controlled and with the hands-off condition: the performer would simply take out and exhibit the correct prediction as soon as the key card was known at step 9. Since there still is some further shuffling to do thereafter, as well as the spectator's dealing to check the result, there is ample opportunity to obtain the correct prediction swiftly and unobtrusively, and leave it on the table, where the spectator may mis-remember (or can be lulled into believing) that it was placed far earlier than it actually was. Those mentalists who are sophisticated in dealing with certain prediction switching devices (chests, boxes, clips, envelopes, etc.) might want to start by showing a prediction at the outset, and then later switching it for the correct prediction from the index, after the key card is glimpsed.

The above method, needing only 13 possible "outs", is eminently practical, but in my performances I have added one further refinement that cuts the necessary number of predictions by half. I only use 7 predictions, setting forth the seven alternative outcomes represented by the first seven key cards (values Ace-Seven). As long as the key card shows one of those seven values, I proceed exactly along the lines described above, but if the key is higher than a "7", i.e., shows an Eight-King, then I simply add one final instruction while the spectators are shuffling. After step 9, when the spectators have shuffled the reversed top half into the lower half, I simply add, *"And now, to give the cards one final mix, turn the entire deck over, cut the cards in half, and shuffle the two halves together again!"* The spectators comply, and as far as they can tell, they're simply randomizing the cards even further; they have no notion that this last instruction was not part of the intended procedure all along. But the net result is that the resulting nature of face up and face down cards now falls within one of your seven predictions. The spectators have turned over the entire deck, so whatever was face up is now face down, and vice versa. (For example, suppose the key shows "10", indicating 30 face up and 22 face down; by adding this last instruction to turn over the entire deck and shuffle once more, you've reversed the situation to 22 face up cards and 30 face down, which is covered by the same prediction that you'd use if the key had been a "2"). By using this discretionary final turnover, your seven "predictions" can cover 14 possible outcomes. I find this addition dispenses with the need for any special or cumbersome index, because between my pants and jacket, I have at least seven different pockets;

I thus can load the predictions one to a pocket in a known order, and then instantly without fumbling remove the correct prediction.

One final approach to Prediction Shuffle-Bored should be noted, and that is the use of a nail-writer or other similar secret writing device. Shuffle-Bored is especially well-suited to this kind of prediction method because the entire prediction can be written out in longhand, with only the number left blank, e.g., "There will be exactly __ cards face up, and the remainder of the deck will be face down". The key gives you the value to fill in the blank some moments before the actual counting of face up cards is done, so by the time the counting is finished, the prediction will have already been completed by the nail-writing; no further writing is done at the tell-tale moment of the climax. Those familiar with Marlo's "Bold Prediction" (Cardician, p. 147) will find it makes an exceptionally good combination with this version of Prediction Shuffle-Bored, since the Marlo billet allows the prediction to be folded.

<24> For those who like to carry a good thing too far, it should be clear that, using multiple predictions and the procedures detailed under the Color Discernment section, you could also predict the resulting mixture of reds and blacks.

Finally, I should mention that if you're going to present Shuffle-Bored as some form of experiment in mentalism, there are subtler and more devious uses than as a straight out prediction effect. My own bias would be to use it in connection with some other mental effect where a one-ahead principle is needed, because Shuffle-Bored is a clever and undetectable way of getting advance information of the ultimate outcome, way in advance of when the audience thinks you could possibly know the result. For example, there are a number of triple prediction effects, using a one-ahead principle, usually with a force as the third item (e.g., Grant's "Citation", Fetsch's "Mental Epic"). Instead of using a force, you could set the scene at the beginning of the effect by having two spectators thoroughly shuffle a deck of cards (using the basic Shuffle-Bored procedure), and then commenting *"Now with all that mixing, there's no way that anyone could tell how many cards happen to be face up in the deck. Just hold onto the deck, and we'll come back to it later."* Now, because of the key you secretly know the outcome, and you can use that information to give you the necessary head start for the rest of the one-ahead procedure. I think you'll find this kind of application of Shuffle-Bored to be a more sophisticated use of its potential in mental-type effects.

BACKGROUND AND CREDITS

The starting point for Shuffle-Bored occurred a couple of years ago, when David Solomon showed me an effect in which two spectators agreed on a secret number, and each reversed that number of cards in separate piles of cards. The deck was reassembled, and the magician gave the cards a few shuffles. The performer was then able to apply his "X-ray vision" to the deck, and discern exactly how many cards were face-up and what the secret number was.

David liked the effect, but felt that the need to have the spectators agree on one number between them was a weak point. Dave asked me to work on the possibility of doing the effect without the spectators' having to both use the same number. The problem intrigued me, and I worked out the procedure which ultimately became the Cancellation Combination. This enabled me to present a radically different version of the effect David had shown me, which was cleaner

and far less restrictive on the spectator's choice of cards and their shuffling actions. It also enabled me to leave practically all the shuffling, cuts, mixing and turnovers in the hands of the spectators, except for one final cut which had to be made by the performer. I thought that it would be great if I could eliminate that one cut, because then I'd <25> have a card trick in which the performer never touched the cards. The implementation of a value sequence stack (a concept which had been put to good use previously in a number of popular card effects) in the center of the deck solved this problem, and hence was born Shuffle-Bored.

Since that date I have experimented with a number of variations of the basic effect, most of which are contained in this treatise. Throughout all this development I have had the benefit of continued discussion with, and criticism, input and suggestion by, David Solomon, and Dave certainly deserves much credit for helping shape my ideas and improve the final effects.

Having now finished writing this book, I asked David where the original effect stemmed from. He explained that what he originally showed me was his variation (previously unpublished, and included here in the Appendix for completeness) of Ed Marlo's effect "But What About My Number?" (which appeared in Charles Hudson's "Card Corner" column, Linking Ring, July 1974), which in turn was an improvement on Hudson's effect "Reversification" published some months earlier ("Card Corner", Linking Ring, January 1974). And in that effect, Hudson refers for his inspiration to a mathematical principle which he first saw in an earlier (unnamed) Hummer effect. And so it goes on.

I am a firm believer in giving the appropriate and proper credit to the inventors, the creators, and the inspirational sources in magical literature. The general plot for the Shuffle-Bored effect certainly derives directly from the above cited sources, but the addition of the challenge condition of doing the entire effect without touching the deck is mine. The application of a center stack to Shuffle-Bored was arrived at independently by me, but I find that a note in the Hudson effect also mentions a comparable use of a stack of a few cards. A red/black separation was used in Solomon's effect for the limited purpose of learning a "secret number" which the spectators had previously chosen; the idea of secretly retaining a divided deck throughout the shuffles, and the various applications of this divided deck concept described in this book, are mine. The Cancellation Combination, which allows for the complete freedom in the spectators' choice of any number of cards, and the minimal amount of restrictions on the shuffling, as far as I can tell is original with me. All of the variations of Shuffle-Bored contained in this booklet are mine, except where noted.

SHUFFLING OFF

This final section is just a place for me to offer a few concluding, unrelated remarks about Shuffle-Bored.

First, here's a technical note for those super-cautious readers who might be concerned about making certain that, at step 8, the spectator does cut into the stack. If in exchanging their clumps of cards at step 5 one of the spectators had given the other a substantially greater number of cards than he received in return, then the position of the entire stack in the deck may be moved upwards or downwards slightly. This rarely happens, and makes no difference when it does, just so long as the cut at step 8 is made within the stack. Since the three piles are on the table in step 7

before they are reassembled, you can quickly eyeball them to estimate if they happen to be particularly disproportionate in size; if so, just adjust your patter accordingly, when instructing the spectator to cut off his pile in step 8. You can easily say *"Cut off slightly more (or less) than half"*, and this will insure that the cut falls within the stack.

One other technical refinement may help comfort those who might conceivably worry that the spectator will see or discover the stack. At the end of the effect, when the spectator runs through the deck to count the face up cards, the first few face up cards he comes to will probably be in descending numerical order, since they will be the remnants of the stack. The spectator will not notice this, since these cards are of varied suits and are separated by face down cards, and the spectator's attention is pre-occupied with counting how many face up cards there are. If, however, you're still worried that this vestige of the stack could be noticed, an additional instruction after step 9 to "cut the cards" will bury these sequential cards inconspicuously in the middle of the pack. Alternatively, you could reverse the climax by revealing the number of face down cards in the shuffled pack -- that way the spectator's entire attention will be riveted on dealing and counting the face down cards, and the face up cards will be discarded and ignored.

Second, don't underestimate the utility of the discretionary final turnover of the deck discussed earlier on page 23; it can be used with advantage in other variations besides Prediction Shuffle-Bored. The ambiguity of working from either side of the deck is not apparent to the audience, since they have no alternative to compare it with, but it can greatly facilitate searching for other cards during a riffle shuffle, or cutting down the number of cards you need to alter in some of the Controlled Shuffle-Bored versions, or guaranteeing that you get more (or less) than half the deck in some of the Divided Deck Shuffle-Bored effects.

Third, let me emphasize that Shuffle-Bored is not, and should never be presented as, a mathematical or counting or "pile" type trick. Although some of the descriptions and explanations in this book may sound mathematical or complicated, the presentation and appearance of Shuffle-Bored to an audience involves no math, no counting, no think-of-a-number, no transfers of "particular numbers" of cards. The only time a "number" is ever even mentioned is at the climax, when you announce the result and the spectator counts the face up cards to see that you're correct. The entire mixing procedure should be presented as though the number of cards being exchanged, or turned over, or shuffled <27> doesn't matter at all -- because it really doesn't. Present it as a free, casual way of two spectators hopelessly jumbling up the deck, just as their caprice or whim directs -- and then hit them with your revelation.

Fourth, let me mention that, despite all the variations and alternatives I've discussed, my personal preference is for the basic Shuffle-Bored effect just as it's described at the beginning of this book, without embellishment. I've explored these other avenues because I wanted you to realize the potentialities Shuffle-Bored has to offer. I also realize that other performers' tastes may be different than mine, and your circumstances may offer just the right setting or opportunity or counterpoint where one of the variations can be used to its best advantage. My intuition, however, tells me that the basic effect by itself is so strong, so streamlined, so clean in effect and so impossible in appearance, that any additional climax or extra procedure tends to detract. We're clearly in the realm of aesthetic judgments here, not arguments, but I wanted you to know my bias.

Finally, let me say a personal word on the value or worth of the "secret" of Shuffle-Bored. I have held onto this effect for some time, reserving its performances mainly for lay audiences. The reactions and responses it has received, especially from thoughtful or intelligent audiences, has been staggering. Those few magicians to whom I have demonstrated Shuffle-Bored have been impressed and fooled, with its directness and the absence of any apparent method. I mention this not to brag or be immodest, but as a way of emphasizing I'm releasing this effect to the magical fraternity with the hope that you'll guard the secret, and not spread it around to the first amateur who comes along seeking lessons. Since this is a marketed item, I'd like to personally request all of you to refrain from photocopying this manuscript. I would also not appreciate someone's re-describing or putting the secret in print elsewhere, under the guise of some alleged minor improvement or variation. But, with those caveats said, I do want to encourage you to make use of Shuffle-Bored in your own performances, whether professional or hobbyist. I think you'll find it a powerful addition to your act, one which, when combined with your own presentational skills and personalized finishing touches, can help create in your audiences the sense that they've just witnessed a bit of <u>real</u> magic.

APPENDIX

<28>David Solomon's variation of Ed Marlo's
"But What About My Number?"

1) Begin with the deck secretly separated into reds and blacks, with the red half on top. Separate the pack into three approximately equal portions, either by dribbling off cards and having the spectator call 'stop', or by simply cutting the pack. Ask a spectator to think of any single digit number.

2) Hand the spectator the original bottom third and request that he reverse a number of cards equal to his mentally chosen number. Emphasize that they should be reversed together in a group, at about the middle of the packet, and that the spectator should not look at which cards he reverses. When finished, the packet is replaced on the table.

3) Hand the spectator the original top third, and request that he do the same thing, again using the same mentally chosen number.

4) Reassemble the deck, making sure the portions go back together in the same original order, i.e., top, center, and bottom. Now the performer executes five riffle shuffles, as follows:

5) First Shuffle: Right hand cuts the uppermost 26 cards (splitting the deck perfectly where the colors meet at the center) to the right, and turns this (red) half face-up. Riffle the halves together, letting the top three face-down cards from the left half fall last.

6) Second Shuffle: Undercut the lower portion to the right and turn it over. Riffle shuffle, block transfer the top three cards from the left-hand portion onto the right-hand portion, and then strip out (this is the only false shuffle among the five). Immediately, as you complete the strip out, turn the left-hand section over.

7) Third Shuffle: Simply shuffle the two halves together.

8) Fourth Shuffle: Turn over the entire deck, cut it in half (preferably so one half has a face-up card on top, the other a face-down card on top, for contrast) and shuffle the halves together.

9) Fifth Shuffle: Repeat step 8. (The fourth and fifth shuffles together are camouflage, and after them, the deck remains in the same face up/face down condition as existed after the third shuffle.)

10) Using an X-ray presentation, announce that there are 23 face up cards. As the spectator separates and counts the face up cards to check this, the performer secretly counts the number of red cards which show face up; this will equal the spectator's mental number, which can then be revealed as you choose.

11) For variation, two spectators can be used, as long as they both use the same number.