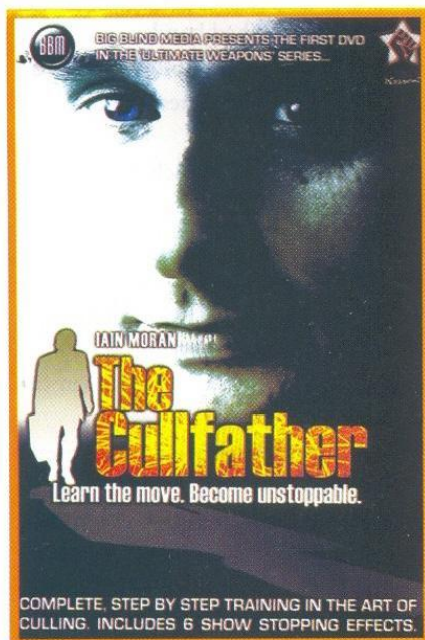


The Cullfather by Ian Moran



To be honest, I am not really a big card guy, but that said culling is one of my favorite card techniques; you can use it to do a ton of fun things like forcing a card, controlling a card, as an out, et cetera. So when I got this DVD I was pretty excited to see what kind of instruction would be offered by the relative new comer BBM and Ian Moran, who is featured in the video as the Cullfather.

First off, the over-all value of the material is top notch. From a pure information standpoint, I think they did a great job in putting it together and presenting it to you and I as viewers. It is broken down into thirteen lessons, which comprise Part 1, and then there are six effects taught in Part 2 on a single DVD.

The lessons themselves are clear and easy to follow along and consist of the following:

The first one is how to cull a single card. In Lesson 2, Ian covers common mistakes, which are helpful to anyone who is learning Culling for the very first time; I liked that they'd take the time to include that kind of teaching. In Lesson 3 you'll learn culling to a specific location, which leads right into how to cull from awkward positions, Lesson 4. I think Lesson 5 is worth the entire DVD—that's how to cull multiple cards. The ideas and possibilities inherent to having this ability are virtually limitless. Many of my friend, who are far better with cards than I, have made this very point to me in the past long prior to picking up this DVD. In Lesson 6 more mistakes are covered. Controlling via culling and forcing are covered in Lessons 7 and 8 respectively. Forcing is something I do all the time but hadn't really ventured into using culling as a method. This lesson piqued my interest and so I took several days to work on it and then tried it out for the first time

on one of my trusted friends—just in case I screwed it up. It went over without a hitch and he wasn't the wiser despite having a pretty strong working knowledge of magic. I figure if you can learn one good thing from any DVD then it is worth the investment. Look at it like this, if you pay a pro for lessons you'll walk away with one or two things to practice until your next lesson. DVDs can help fill (but not replace) that need in one's development as a magician. But I digress.

How to set up using culling is found in Lesson 9 and my favorite—how to cull two cards next to each other is covered in Lesson 10. If you want to learn how to switch by using culling, you can watch Lesson 11. And the final two lessons, Culling as an Out and Culling Face Down Cards are numbers 12 and 13.

The effects include Aces on High that is super clean, a Dream Card, Funny Business, Quantum Sandwich, Ace Orgy, and Concrete Sandwich—all obviously accomplished using culling.

My only real critique is that it appears to have been shot with a low-end consumer video camera or when they rendered the final product they downgraded it for some reason. I tend to watch it on everything from my HD widescreen LCD television (I am somewhat spoiled) to my PC, but it looked the same. Even when I shrank the video down on my PC in the hopes it would clear things up—it didn't. Sadly, it is slightly blurry and fuzzy throughout and is reminiscent of watching amateur Youtube videos shot with webcams atop a teenagers monitor. My feeling is that if you're going to bill yourself as a "New Force in Magic Media" then you should up the ante, not lower it. And at a whopping \$35 for the video, that applies all the more I am afraid. But that all said, it is a good instructional video and I am looking forward to seeing future products from these guys. If you'd like to get a copy for your own, please check out www.bigblindmedia.com or contact your brick and mortar shop and give them the support they need to survive. If you have none local, there are plenty of real shops that also have a web-presense and are competitive with the web-only shops that have no real overhead. That's my plug for the importance of supporting these guys; it was a shop that got me interested and I'd love to see the rising generation have a local hang out they can be involved in too. If you are a dealer, you know the drill: Murphy's has pretty much everything you'd want to sell, this DVD included. —James L. Clark