Example 2
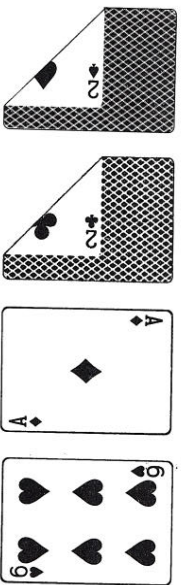
Suppose there is $80 in the pot, and you have two pair. You are playing draw poker, and you bet $10, which we will assume is all you can bet. Your single opponent has a *four-flush* — that is, four cards to a flush. The question is — are you rooting for him to call or fold? Naturally you want him to do what is most profitable for you. The Fundamental Theorem of Poker states that what is most profitable for you is for your opponent to make the incorrect play based on complete information about both hands. Since your opponent is getting 9-to-1 odds (his $10 call might win him $90) and is only about a 5-to-1 underdog to make a flush, it is correct for him to call because a call has positive expectation. Since it is correct for him to call, following the Fundamental Theorem, you are therefore rooting for him to fold.
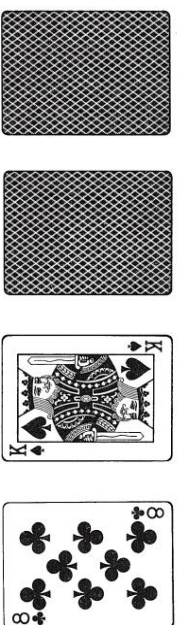
This sort of situation comes up frequently. You have the best hand, but your opponent is getting odds good enough to make it correct to call if he knew what you had. Therefore, you want your opponent to fold. By the same token, it is correct for you to chase when you are getting sufficient pot odds. If you don't chase, you are costing yourself money and, therefore, making money for your opponent.

Example 3

Since it is correct for your opponent to call when he is getting sufficient pot odds, you can sometimes make an opponent fold incorrectly by showing more strength than you actually have on an early betting round. Suppose in seven-card stud you bet with:

An opponent calls with:

You are fairly sure he has kings. You now proceed to make a pair of 6s on board, and you bet. Your opponent will almost certainly fold a pair of kings since he is afraid you have made aces up.

Some people might say, "Well, wait a second. Why don't I want my opponent to call as long as his pair of kings is worse than my two small pair?" The answer is that if there are cards to come and your opponent is getting proper odds, you do better to win the pot right there. A pair of kings versus two smaller pair needs very short odds to justify a call. Since your opponent would have been correct to call, you gain when you make him fold.

Example 4

In razz, a seven-card stud lowball game in which the lowest hand wins, we can see another example of showing more strength than you have to make an opponent fold incorrectly. Let's say your opponent has