

## THE FOUR HORSEPERSONS AT THE PASS

by Stephen B. Karpman

The well sublimated Anal Retentive personality of Freudian lore is attracted to public positions of control, where the excitement and impulses of other persons can be frustrated by bureaucratic sphincterism.

As the biblical Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse signaled the doom of the world, so do The Four Horsepersons at the (anal) Pass signal the doom of well intentioned creative ideas.

The four R's of obstinacy at political and bureaucratic levels — Revenge, Righteousness, Runaround, and Railroading — require skills well-formed beyond the piddling three R's learned in grammar school.

Let's grab our psychological proctoscopes and take a look:

1) **REVENGE:** Anal politicians don't like little squirts causing a big splash so they wipe them out in an underhanded way. They are thrilled by the elimination of dissidents, often by bearing down on them until they poop out. Outsiders who try to get into the inner circle are often blackballed or smeared.

2) **RIGHTEOUSNESS:** Bathroom bureaucrats, stuck for life on a toilet seat (a deep-seated problem), have an understandable desire to appear both clean and free. They clean up their image, whitewash the problems, do their paper work down at the county seat, and travel around a lot, all the while digging up dirt on the opposing parties who are made to look like assholes stuck in a mess.

3) **RUNAROUND:** Sometimes the public's insistence for results being produced is countered by a lot of hot air and a pile of crap. As the sphincters tighten, information is tucked away out of sight. This uptight behavior is followed up by issues being deliberately confused, postponed, or taken out of the hands of the initiator. In a nifty projective turnaround of a childhood problem, it is now the public that has to sit still in one place and wait a long, long time for satisfaction.

4) **RAILROADING:** Another way of controlling the gates and heading off someone at the pass is by railroading. Rather than holding back or stalling, work is whooshed through before anyone is ready for it. This smooth passage of an idea is a delight and pre-empts the anticipated stricture-structures that would hold it up. The favored work is railroaded into law, the unfavored work is railroaded into oblivion. People are congratulated for not giving the leader a rough time, as well as assisting in the smooth movement of government.

**REFERENCE:** Karpman, S. "Who's Zoo on Election Day?" *Trans. Anal. J.*, 1975, 5 (4), p. 396.

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