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CREEPS AND ASSHOLES

(I loved this article when it came out and I love it today. For my birthday this year, my girlfriend tracked this down on microfiche and printed it at the local public library. I transcribed it so that it could be brought into the world of the Internets. Enjoy !)

Creeps and Assholes: Character is Destiny

All Eastern Europeans are assholes, and so are all Slavic tongues. The largest creep population in the world is Oriental... Cats are creeps, dogs are assholes.

By Susin Shapiro

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Hey you, you've spent the last decade exploring your inner nature and I'm bored. Drop all the human potential drive—psychodrama, t'ai chi, kundalini yoga, bioenergetics, acupuncture, tantra sex therapy, isolation tanks, and yarrow sticks. It's time to face the facts and ignore your feelings: you are either a creep or an asshole, and that's that. All human nature is torn between this dynamic, precarious polarity, and no amount of self-stroking can ever cover it up.

Think about it. Which one are you? If you are hedging an answer, you are a creep. Assholes know right away who they are. If you are reading this aloud on public transport, you are an asshole. If you take my word for this without finishing, you are a creep. If you have already written your mad dog letter to the editor, you are an asshole.

Do you have a nickname? You are in an asshole. Do you keep a budget? You are a creep. Do you crack your gum in public? You are an asshole. Do you do the crossword puzzle in the john? You are a creep.

As should be plain now, I am in asshole. However, I will be diligent in my efforts to remain objective, and attach no moral judgments, good or bad, to either. But stand warned: as an asshole, I am likely to bludgeon you over the head with firmly biased opinions that reflect favorably on all other assholes. But I confess, as a closet creep, I will insinuate conclusions

and manipulate your emotions to my advantage. I will give away secrets (asshole) and conceal others (creep), and thereby prove that an androgynous ideal can be reached with a fair amount of discipline (creep) and fervor (asshole).

Creeps emit no odors, assholes need dental floss after every meal. Creeps have managed to quit smoking and know how to remove mayonnaise from silk shirts. Assholes run into the water without testing its temperature. Creeps stick funny things in the hamburgers before cooking, assholes put ketchup on scrambled eggs. Creeps are chronic kvetches, but manage to outlive everybody; asshole say nothing and expire at awkward moments.

The personality traits associated with assholes includes: sadism, ferocity, bellicosity, excess, external reactions, paganism, concreteness, proximity. Creep traits: masochism, meekness, sinister gazes, pallor, internal reaction, social, abstract, sublimation, absence.

Assholes are psychotic while creeps tend toward schizophrenia. Assholes do not believe in medication, creeps do not believe in Medicaid. Assholes tap their feet constantly, bite their cuticles, pick off scab wounds, and contact poison ivy. Creeps never mention VD, drink instant soups, use pre-moistened towelettes, and wrap up their chewing gum before depositing it in the trash.

Creeps suffer anorexia, migraines, and allergies; assholes break bones, and develop skin rashes. Asshole deaths are car crashes, heart attacks, gunshot wounds, flamboyant suicides, leaping out of buildings, malaria. Creep deaths are poisoning, floating face down in the Hudson, bubonic plague, and cancer.

The chemistry between creeps and assholes is an exhaustive subject that demands more than a mere knack for naming your own condition. Investigations into the opposite types could begin with astrology, although any person even vaguely influenced by astrology is an asshole, regardless of how creepy the psychic sciences are. All fire and earth signs are assholes; all water and air signs are creeps.

It is easier to fall in love with a creep—ambiguous, mannerly, cooperative, and coy—than with an asshole—nosy, vocal, edgy, and raw. But assholes are noted for their loyalty and fidelity while creeps are either coquettes or impervious.

Assholes will ring your doorbell unannounced at any hour of the day; creeps fret over whether or not you get their phone messages. Creeps always apologize; assholes get their feet inside the cheeks. Creeps will wait for the exact nadir of your confidence, even if it takes five years, and then pounce with minute accusations dating back to the first time you met. Assholes blow up and five seconds later do not recall insulting you. Assholes never remember birthdays, creeps never forget if someone looks at them cross-eyed.

If you nag an asshole during dinner, sex that night will be great; if you nag a creep, s/he will punish you by not achieving orgasm. (Or they will go into the bathroom during dinner and masturbate.) Assholes will embarrass you by wearing T-shirts with any old thing written on it; creeps are tucked, tapered, untouched by stains and hanging threads.

Malice and envy are creepy; temper tantrums are the acts of assholes, as are baiting, teasing, haranguing, and name-calling. Assholes argue, curse, spit, and sulk; creeps are snide, snotty, snobbish, and spiteful. They conduct smear campaigns and rely on innuendo and insinuation (or insinuos). Assholes are provocative and controversial; creeps are modest, judgmental, and do not make waves, at least where you can see them.

It is harder for asshole to pretend s/he's a creep—refined, sardonic, mysterious—than for a creep to fake an asshole act—the stag or pajama party, bowling tournaments, group trips, or therapy—because covertness is unknown to most assholes while directness is anathema to creeps. For that reason, creeps give better criticisms, assholes pay better complements.

Creeps also send thank you notes and invitations; assholes send chain letters and envelopes filled with unspecified drugs. Assholes carry cash and prefer large denominations; creeps have checking accounts, credit cards, piggy banks, and change purses.

All radicals, astronauts, lawyers, cleaning ladies, salesman, bartenders, waiters, barbers, lumberjacks, drivers (truck and racing car), farmers, nymphomaniacs, and criminals who get caught are assholes. All chess players, accountants, hippies, cooks, chauffeurs, butlers, ushers, stockbrokers, electrolysis, magicians, seamstresses, mathematicians, and doctors are creeps. It is possible to function in a creep job if you are an asshole, or vice versa. We will come across more of this phenomena later.

Entertainment draws assholes like moths to match. All singers, dancers, circus jugglers, trainers, acrobats, and clowns are assholes; ditto actors, TV panelists, emcees, and comics. Notable exceptions are Johnny Carson, Steve Martin, Emmett Kelly, and Pat Boone.

Normally, all political and military leaders are assholes; while appointed officials (Kissinger) are creeps. Throughout history, Andrew Jackson, Teddy Roosevelt, Jack Kennedy, and Lyndon Johnson have held their own against creeps like Woodrow Wilson, Herbert Hoover, Richard Nixon, and the ultimate presidential creep, Millard Fillmore. Generally, assholes are responsible for war, although creeps play a major role, however privately. (All puns are asshole jokes.) Lonely assassins are assholes, but creeps who specialize in torture, blackmail, sabotage, and the penultimate creep calling, espionage, are extremely crafty and dangerous. All dictators and military lions are assholes: Alexander the Great, Napoleon, Patton, Fidel, Idi, Hitler, Westmoreland. Eisenhower was a creep who performed an asshole function.

Baseball, soccer, and hockey players are assholes, as are the sports themselves. Skiers, pole-vaulters, shot-putters, wrestlers, and referees are assholes. Football, basketball, tennis, golf, and swimming are creep sports, but include a number of assholes, with their characteristic disregard for rules, have broken in: thus, Jimmy Connors, Ilie Natase, Mark Spitz, and Joe Namath. In football, strategy is creepy—especially as practiced by Tom Landry—but rolling around in the mud is strictly an asshole activity. Coaches are creeps. Notable exceptions: Woody Hayes. The born-again Redskins are creeps, while Vince Lombardi was an all-time asshole. You can see from this how well-suited Chris Evert Lloyd, Pete Rose, Bjorn Borg, Dave Schultz, and Jean Claude Killy are to their respective callings. As boxing is the penultimate asshole profession, Mohammed Ali is a credit to his kind. The ultimate creep games: chess and poker.

The ultimate asshole games: three-legged races and pin-the-tail-on-the-donkey.

All humor writers are assholes, while Woody Allen, like Eisenhower, makes the crossover from the creep camp. Novelists are creeps, poets are assholes, and reviewers are creeps with asshole jobs. Proust should pose no problem: neither should Norman Mailer, Ezra Pound, D.H. Lawrence, Erica Jong. Shakespeare wove superb descriptions of both: Hamlet and Lady Macbeth are only two of the creep chronicles in the Bard canon: Iago and Lear speak well for the assholes.

Filmmaking is mainly a creep calling, requiring as it does sensitivity and the ability to move masses, mountains, and moguls. But a large number of households are attracted to its expressive aspects, where a vision either coherently gathered or sensationally slapdash is often enough to guarantee a public platform for rant and froth: Altman, Scorsese, Lucas, Coppola, Godard, Hawks, Lang, and Griffith were all assholes. Creeps include Bresson, Renoir, Rohmer, Truffaut, Hitchcock, Malik, Penn, Schlesinger, and all the B directors who do the creepy crawlies like *Dawn of the Dead* and *Halloween*. All Third World and Eastern European directors are assholes: Sembene, Solas, Forman, Makavejev, et. al. (exception: Satyajit Ray).

Picasso, Dali, and Van Gogh were not only assholes in their work, but in their lives as well. Miro, Klee, Duchamp, Magritte, and Matisse hold up the creep end admirably. Andy Warhol's ties to tinned soup are sure-fire creep, while Jackson Pollock's phantasms must be considered from the point of view of an asshole. Primary colors are assholes; muted pastels are creeps.

Sensitive singer-songwriters, take your pick, are creeps; heavy-metal bozos are assholes, moog mood electronics are creep signatures (ultimate creep: Eno), and all blues, soul and R&B singers, regardless of handicaps, are assholes. Frank Zappa is really a creep dying to be in asshole, and Lou Reed is a flagrant asshole yearning for decadent creepitude. Ultimate asshole—Elvis; ultimate creep group—Beatles.

Beethoven, Bach, and all opera composers are assholes. Mozart (possible borderline), Chopin, Strauss, and Handel are creeps. String quartets are creepy, so is chamber music. Jazz is played exclusively by assholes. Big-band orchestra leaders are creeps. Liberace is an asshole; Lawrence Welk is a creep.

People from the South and West are assholes, while those from the North and East are creeps. The Northeast, which prides itself as the crux of all cerebral activity, is haute creep, while Cowboys and Ku Klux Klansmen are archetypal assholes.

All Eastern Europeans are assholes, and so are all Slavic tongues. The largest creep population in the world is Oriental. (The sole exception is the Tokyo designer who recently started growing and marketing square watermelons.) Canadians and Europeans are creeps; Germany is full of assholes. Russians, Africans, South Americans, and Indians, east and west, are assholes. Now Latin America and India are special cases—the populace is indigenously creepy, but, due to enduring the harshest of government repressions, they're currently assholes. Scandinavia is creep-heavy; Australia's aborigines are assholes.

Cuisine from hot climates tends to be asshole in taste, while cold countries rely heavily on high consumption of creep foods (definition to follow). Creeps are always on special diets, calories and carbohydrates counting, while assholes tend towards gastronomic excess (nothing-in-moderation is an asshole aphorism; an apple-a-day is a creep coda). Many creep foods, from tangerines to walnuts have an outer covering which must be laboriously peeled away in order to arrive at the succulents. Most creep foods require spoons. Cereals, soufflés, puddings, mousse, crêpes, quiches, and casseroles are creepy foods—no self respecting asshole (itself a contradiction) would eat anything beaten to purée. Assholes need fingers, while creeps are responsible for the big C's: cutlery and cuisinart. All aphrodisiacs are asshole foods: asparagus, caviar, eel, garlic, lobsters, oysters. Spaghetti, which is impossible to eat without looking like a buffoon, is asshole food. Broccoli, cauliflower, any food that smells bad while cooking is asshole food. Foods containing a goodly portion of pits and squish are asshole foods. Avocados are problematic and belong to the borderline caste.

Asshole drinks are beer, bourbon, and brandy; creeps are keen on cocktails: gimlets, sours, daiquiris, Harvey Wallbangers, and pink squirrels. Creeps also like martinis and are quite rigid as to their preferences for the olive or the twist. Cheap wine is normally drunk by assholes; Pouilly Fuisse is drunk only by people who can pronounce it, usually college educated creeps. More creeps than assholes die of alcoholism.

Cats are creeps, dogs are assholes. A cat would never dream of yelping with joy at the sight of its master, of licking strenuously the hand that feeds it, of lifting its leg in a public place. A dog would never consider the advantages of solitude and high places, the mileage to be gained from sneaking around on padded paw, or going for the eyes of an assailant. Cats do not like to make mistakes, marking them as creeps, while dogs are competitive, feisty, and emotionally sloppy, the sure signs of an asshole.

Next week: Fears, fantasies, fetishes, and philosophies of creeps and assholes. Do assholes have more fun? Do creeps make more money, or do they pay less taxes? How many assholes

does it take to screw in the lightbulb?

P.S. For the record, and maybe even the screen rights, I thank Patricia Dryden—herself no stranger to creepdom—who gives good muse and is a cofounder of the Counter Attack of Creeps and Assholes, CACA to you.

#Susin Shapiro #Village Voice #creep #asshole #long reads #wall of text
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