

Tedious Tuesday...

For almost two thousand years Christians have spoken of The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse; War, Famine, Pestilence, and Death. Sure, they served the purpose throughout the centuries, but there are threats which are more frightening: Mediocrity for one. I suppose that Mediocrity wasn't given a very big part in the Apocalypse because, well, an accountant in a high priced suit brandishing a solar powered calculator just doesn't pack as much punch as the others do... but we digress. The time has come to revise The Four Riders and make them more contemporary.

Think of Death for instance. Who really considers death much today, except for Dr. Kevorkian of course. It's not like the average life span is twenty years of age anymore. In fact the life expectancy for most women born today is about four times that. Besides, if you do fear death there is always the option of cryogenic freezing. Even if it doesn't actually work just think of all the great gag ice cubes your relatives will have access to. Old Uncle Fred never got that kind of reaction out of people when he was alive.

Then consider War: Sure in actuality it's a horrific experience, but those who aren't involved in it have become the viewing public and the whole thing has turned into a media blitz ("the revolution will be televised"). The world doesn't care who lives or dies as long as they're photogenic. War is a game to us now; if you go down to any arcade you'll realize that. Even our forefathers thought so. Remember the Civil War? The first battle that was fought was surrounded by a lot of wealthy society members from Washington picnicking on the outskirts of the battle field. They came to eat a little potato salad and watch some of their boys fry up a little Billy Reb. Sure war is hell, but as long as you have enough buttered popcorn and Jujubes, you'll never have to worry about it.

On top of that, WWII proved that war is profitable. Hell, if it hadn't been for Hitler, the world wide depression of the 1930's would have continued for a great deal longer than it did. Not only does war employ people in the construction of weapons of destruction, but it cuts down on excess population, thereby raising the standard of living. Its a win-win situation!... as long as it's not you who has to die; and in the case of governments, those who are in charge are never on the front line.

Maybe that's what should happen. Think of the entertainment possibilities. It would be like the Olympics. "Live from Geneva: George Bush of the United States versus Saddam Hussein of Iraq in seven rounds of Shoots and Ladders!"

Famine? The American public has something to fear from famine? Lack of nutritional value I can understand, but famine? What's with all those programs like Weight Watchers and Jenny Craig ("Want to be famished or just look like you are?")? With all the waif-like models and the apparent coolness of eating disorders, it seems more like people like the idea of Famine more than they fear Him. Sure, if he showed up on your door step you'd freak, but if he marketed a weight loss program, people would love it.

And Pestilence? Well this one I have to agree is pretty scary, even today. Although most modern vermin are a lot larger and show a liking toward three piece suits and small boys. The largest concentrations of vermin can be found in Washington D.C., large corporations, law offices, hospitals, car lots, and those cheesy road side diners. In many ways, it's hard to distinguish between vermin and those who worship Mediocrity. Pestilence is enough to make one uneasy, and perhaps even enough to make one consider moving to the country, but is it really big enough to fear?

No, Hell is much more subtle. Mediocrity, Indifference, Apathy - those are the ones you really have to watch out for.

