

## POWER - ITS USE AND ABUSE (1)

excerpted and adapted from  
**THE OTHER SIDE OF POWER** by Claude M. Steiner, Grove Press, NYC

Claude Steiner lists 4 levels of awareness about controlling others: The cold-blooded, the hothead, the innocent, and the cooperative.

The **COLD-BLOODED** or conscious manipulator, is completely aware of using power plays. These often include psychotherapists, salesmen, doctors, politicians, lawyers, organizers, and bosses. When these people meet resistance, their response is deliberate and systematic; they either escalate or withdraw to a safe position to wait for a better opportunity for their advantage.

The instinctive or **HOTHEAD** type grew up in an environment in which power plays were used frequently and freely, and they learned to use them accordingly. Their use of power plays is semiconscious, not necessarily deliberate. When they meet resistance they often lose control and escalate and wind up getting less than what they wanted. Children of hotheaded types often want to get away from their parents, but, knowing nothing else, they repeat the same patterns of power plays with spouse, workmates, friends, and their own children.

The **INNOCENTS** do not seem particularly aware that power plays even exist. They try to get things innocently by asking for them, expect to get them, and often do. They are surprised when they discover the extent to which some people power play to control others.

The fourth type, or **COOPERATIVE**, rejects the use of power plays due to a conscious decision based on a belief that it is better to cooperate than to compete and power-play to achieve what they want. They know power plays exist, know how to use them, and how to stop them, and know how to respond cooperatively. They, too, are a powerful, effective minority and often are defectors from the ranks of conscious power players.

When these four types of power players--the cold-blooded, the hothead, the innocent, the cooperative--meet, this is what happens:

**HOTHEAD MEETS HOTHEAD (UPROAR).** The relationship between two hotheads is usually one of escalation or uproar. They often like or dislike each other strongly. If they are falling in love the honeymoon period is one of suspended power plays. After the honeymoon comes the reality of competition and conflict.

**HOTHEAD MEETS INNOCENT (SUBJUGATION).** Typically this is the relationship between men and women, since men are most intensely trained in the use of power plays, while women are trained to be accepting and eager to go along with what men want. The hothead systematically gets what he wants with the innocent going along until eventually, years later, reality dawns and dissatisfaction and anger eventually overwhelm the innocent. At that point the hothead cannot understand why the hereto compliant and satisfied partner is suddenly becoming bitchy and unwilling to go along. He may escalate his power plays, eventually using violence or threats of violence, and subdue the innocent, who now is no longer innocent and mad as hell!



OPINIONS AND FEELINGS ARE FREQUENTLY A PERSONAL TRIUMPH OVER GOOD THINKING  
YOU DEFINE REALITY BY WHAT YOU KNOW, WHAT YOU BELIEVE, AND WHAT YOU DO ABOUT IT.