



Can Deconstructed Horses Even Be Led to Water?

by Millard J. Erickson

- *Yes, but it must be deconstructed water.*

If the horse is genuinely deconstructed, then the water presented to him must be suited to the horse. This, of course, involves conceding the truth of the deconstruction of the horse. It grants that the horse is deconstructed and that deconstruction is here to stay, and must be accepted.

- *Yes, but we must use deconstructed rope.*

This view may or may not hold that the water needs deconstruction in order to be appealing to deconstructed horses (i.e., that the message needs to be altered). It does maintain, however, that it is necessary to alter the form of leading, that is, the method and means. It is more the form or the style of presentation, rather than the content, that needs to be changed. . . . at least in initiating conversation with a deconstructionist we must modify the way in which we do the leading, or present the message. This may mean that a more narrative presentation will have to be the beginning of the conversation, to enable us to cross the bridge to where the horse is, rather than standing on our side of the bridge and trying to coax the horse to come to us. Eventually, of course, we must bring the horse across the bridge, but that may not be possible initially. It means that we will have to listen to the deconstructionist, rather than simply talking. We will need to look through our deconstructionist's eyes long enough to understand why for him or her the view makes good sense. Then we will better understand how to relate the message to the person in a way that can be understood.

- *Yes, but the horse is not really deconstructed.*

This affirms that the horse, although it may think it is deconstructed, really is not. Consequently, no adjustment, either of the water or the technique of leading, is needed.

- *Yes, but we must first de-deconstruct the horse.*

This approach says that the horse is deconstructed, but it is not possible to live on such a basis. . . . deconstructed horses can be reached, but they must first be de-deconstructed, and this requires that they be more thoroughly deconstructed. This is done by pushing such horses to be consistently and thoroughly deconstructed, whereupon they will discover that it is not possible to live on this basis. This was . . . the apologetic approach of Francis Schaeffer. Schaeffer was dealing with deconstructionists before it was popular to call them that. His approach was to push such a person to the end of his or her view, to live out consistently that position, believing that no one could actually live on the basis of such a view. I believe that we may need to help the deconstructionist to "hit bottom," like an alcoholic, before there will be any significant sense of need to move beyond that approach.