Category distribution between the 3 main antagonists of the Ace Attorney Phoenix Wright trilogy:

FSIQ -

I went through each category pretty much, and overall in FSIQ Manfred clears by a large margin, I'd argue that Matt is next, with Dahlia being last, however this *is* Manfred's best category imo and Dahlia/Matt have better feats in the others. (Manfred >>> Matt > Dahlia)

Manfred von Karma no-low diff



FSEQ -

EQM/EQE/EQU/EQF/EQA/EQR/EQP - Matt gaps, he's an skilled actor who's completely aware on how to use/abuse emotions and control his own far better than Manfred and Dahlia who both can act impulsively, then I'd say it's Manfred solely due to him understanding Yogi's emotions well although I think it's close between the two. (Matt >>> Manfred >= Dahlia)

Matt Engarde low diff



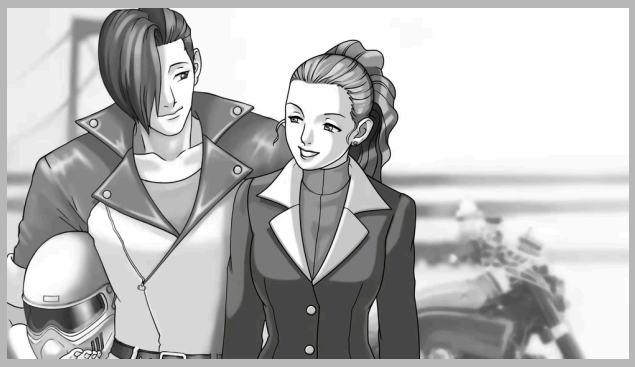
FSSQ -

Social Skills - Dahlia and Matt are the main candidates for this, Dahlia seems to be incredibly popular and capable of becoming close to people easily, Matt is a skilled actor who definitely

doesn't lack social skills, not to say Manfred does either, but compared to the other two he loses here. (Matt >= Dahlia >> Manfred)
Social Awareness/ Empathy - Dahlia takes, she seems to be very competent at understanding others emotions (even if she then abuses the hell out of this), then Matt then Manfred. (Dahlia >> Matt >> Manfred)
Social Intuition - honestly CGEW with this, I think Manfred is last here though, (Dahlia = Matt > Manfred)
Leadership - Manfred through his role as prosecutor placing him in control of investigations at times, literally the only way I can give this to one of them, then Matt due to being a lead actor I suppose (Manfred > Matt >> Dahlia)
Relationship Management - Matt gaps, then Manfred, then Dahlia (she didn't actually meet Phoenix for their "dates", she sent Iris, so therefore she's never displayed any skill at keeping relationships lmao, especially since when we're introduced we find out her ex was snitching on her for being a danger to Phoenix) (Matt >>> Manfred > Dahlia)
Self-Awareness - CGEW between them, they all understand what they're doing lmao.
Influence Building - between Matt and Manfred imo, Manfred due to having the police network through being a prosecutor, Matt having stacks of money and power through his profession

as a celebrity actor, Dahlia is meh here (Matt >= Manfred >> Dahlia)
Self-Management/ Regulation - Matt gaps imho, Dahlia and Manfred have done things purely out of rage lol, Matt doesn't usually, rather keeping it cool for the most part even if he's scheming (Matt >>> Dahlia > Manfred)
Charisma - not gonna go into this too much, (Matt >>> Dahlia >> Manfred)
Aura - Manfed gaps, his presence is stated to be incredibly powerful (Manfred >>>> Matt > Dahlia)
Cunning - Matt then Dahlia then Manfred, although they're all pretty skilled at this in my opinion (Matt >= Dahlia >= Manfred)

Matt Engarde high diff



FSAQ -

Composure - Honestly all 3 are very skilled here and it really CGEW

Determination - Manfred by a decent bit, he wanted to prosecute Miles badly enough to put himself at risk (even if he considered it to be a low risk) for the sake of revenge (Manfred > Matt >= Dahlia)
Impulse control/management - Matt gaps, both Manfred and Dahlia have instances where they fail this lmao (Matt >>> Manfred >= Dahlia)
Cognitive discipline - Manfred due to consistently continuing to argue against Wright even with setbacks without struggling (up until the end) whereas Dahlia and Matt don't have as impressive feats for this (Manfred >> Dahlia = Matt)
Perseverance - Same as Determination (Manfred > Matt >= Dahlia)
Stress tolerance - honestly Matt and Manfred are both skilled with this, Dahlia as well, but not so much as the other two in my opinion (Manfred >= Matt > Dahlia)
Mental fortitude - Manfred by a bit, then Dahlia imo with Matt last purely due to Matt never really being shown to be in a situation where this mattered all that much (his plan being perfect, and so the second it broke, he broke) (Manfred > Dahlia >> Matt)

Manfred von Karma mid-high diff



Manipulation -

Direct/indirect/verbal/psychological/suicide inducement/individual/social/emotional manipulation - all to Dahlia with Matt being a close second here (Dahlia > Matt >> Manfred)
Event/logical/mass manipulation - Manfred due to DL-6 for the most part, although Matt is a candidate for mass (Manfred > Matt > Dahlia)

Dahlia Hawthorne low-mid diff



Deception -

Misdirection/fabrication/gaslighting/guilt tripping/concealment/information control/scapegoating/brainwashing/sophistry - all to Manfred by a lot, due to his dealings with Miles and the DL-6 incident plus the case (Manfred >> Matt >= Dahlia)
Verbal/non-verbal/mass deception/acting skills/strategic deception/threats/extortion/disguise/smearing/triangulation /fear inducement - Matt gaps imo with Dahlia being close in certain categories (Matt >> Dahlia >>> Manfred)
Seduction/persuasion/love bombing/negotiation - Dahlia takes, although seduction is debatable between Matt (Dahlia > Matt > Manfred)

Matt Engarde high-extreme diff



Planning -

planning/short term planning/planning intricacies/planning coverage/planning risk calculation/planning contingencies/planning invincibility - Matt takes, although all 3 *did* have complex/powerful plans, imo Matt's is the most powerful and difficult to crack, plus the least risky (Matt >>> Manfred > Dahlia)
He takes most other cats in this btw

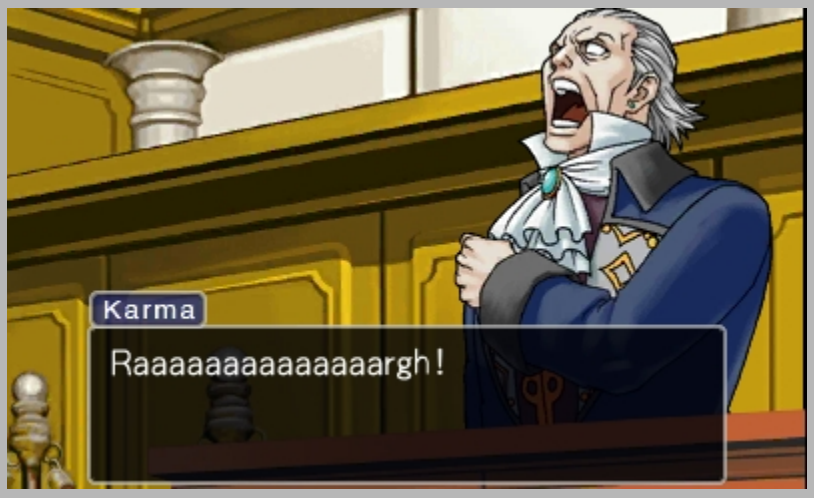
Matt Engarde mid diff



Thinking/reasoning -

Manfred gaps here, he's shown to be incredibly good at thinking/reasoning and has feats in both logical/illogical reasoning (such as retraining Yogi's parrot in preparation for the trial) there might be a few cats up for debate, put Manfred takes overall (Manfred >>> Matt = Dahlia)

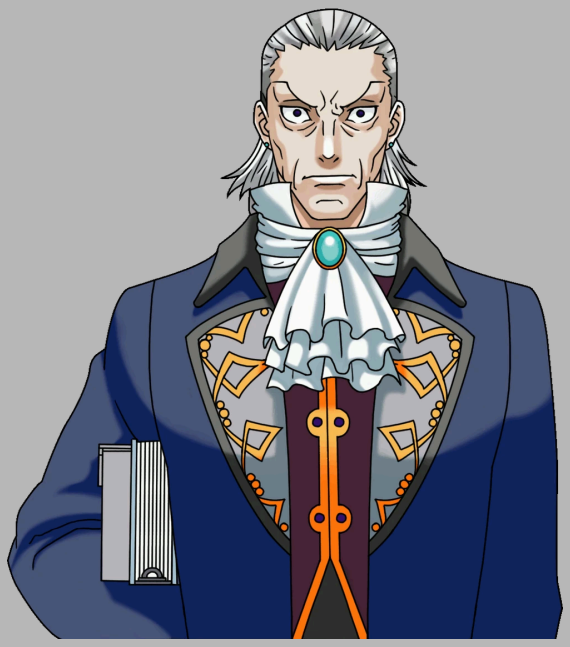
Manfred von Karma no diff



Foresight/traps -

Anticipation - Matt solely due to his own plan being almost invincible, showing he was prepared for most outcomes (Matt > Manfred > Dahlia)
Prediction - Manfred predicted Wright would use the parrot for testimony, literally the main thing I can think of for this (Manfred > Matt = Dahlia)
Setting traps - All three are skilled in this, however, I'd argue it's mainly between Manfred and Matt due to the pair being the two to make Wright struggle most (Manfred >= Matt > Dahlia)
Trap evasion - Dahlia gaps imo, due to her being the only antagonist to actually make it out of a trial in game lmao, Manfred next and Matt last due to him being heavily reliant on his plan, which once fails he has no way out (Dahlia >>> Manfred > Matt)

Manfred von Karma extreme diff



OVERALL:

I love all three of these villains to death, each are incredible and fun characters who are easily highlights of the games. So, to finish off, in my opinion the winner is:

Manfred von Karma extreme diff



with Matt being the closest other competitor. Honestly, this was majorly surprising to me, was expecting Hawthorne to either be second or first, however she's not actually all that outside of manipulation.

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