



Thought terminating cliches

Thanks to whoever recommended the Conspirituallity podcast ("Dismantling New Age cults, wellness grifters, and conspiracy-mad yogis."). The Conspirituallity guys really put in the work - over 180 episodes and going strong. I guess this points to the overabundance of material.

I dove in at episode #176 [Russell Brand's Man Stans](#), which looks at how the online man-o-sphere - which seems to resonate at the same frequency as a range of alt-right, conspiracy theory and wellness gurus/grifters - responded to the accusations that Russell Brand is serial sex offender.

Aside from the main topic of the episode, I was struck by co-host Julian Walker's comments on the style of thinking deployed by Brand's defenders:

Once you've crossed over that really signifiant epistemic line, [to reject mainstream narratives] whether it is about paranormal phenomenon ... or alternative medicine ... then how you interact with the world can be radically impacted when it comes to questions of facts and evidence. ... one very strong downside to this style of belief is that it tends to be both anti-psychological and anti-political... Why? Because it has built in circular metaphysical and conspiratorial explanations that are actually thought terminating cliches as defaults against anything which might be threatening. These protect against anything which goes against these core articles of faith and in fact my sense is that this protection is part of way the belief system is so appealing in the first place.

<https://tomstafford.substack.com/p/complex-problems-and-the-rush-to>

Date: 2023-12-28

Words: 239

Time to read: 1 min

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