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The Thoughts Of Chairman Bob

From: Jerome Clark <jkclark@frontiernet.net>
Date: Sun, 02 Aug 98 15:10:56 PDT
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Subject: The Thoughts Of Chairman Bob

The following parody was just passed on to me by someone in the skeptical movement. You may have already seen it. The author has indicated it can be freely distributed (I am NOT the author). I think it is pretty funny, and it also seems indicative of some tensions among the "skeptics." Anyway, I thought you might like to see it. -- Marcello Truzzi

An Interview with Nick Cooper, Paranormal Investigator

Today we meet with Nick Cooper, former private detective, paranormal investigator, feng shui instructor, and rodeo clown.

INTERVIEWER: So, Mr. Cooper, why don't you tell us a little bit about yourself?

[THREE HOURS GOES BY AS COOPER TALKS ABOUT HIMSELF.]

INTERVIEWER: Uh... Mr. Cooper, perhaps we should have been more specific. Who do you work for?

COOPER: I work for the truth in all things and the greater glorification of truth and reason as personified by me.

INTERVIEWER: And who pays for that?

COOPER: An organization located in Plattsburgh, New York. It's called C.S.I.C.A.A.P. or the Committee for the Sensationalized Instigation of Clowns Arguing Against the Paranormal.

INTERVIEWER: And who founded this organization?

COOPER: My dear friend, the famed philosopher Professor Bob.

INTERVIEWER: That sounds very interesting. Who runs this organization?

COOPER: Friends of Professor Bob. Professor Bob is our founder.

INTERVIEWER: And who chose Professor Bob?

COOPER: Professor Bob.

INTERVIEWER: Uh... Okay, tell us about what you do for this organization.

COOPER: I have several duties. The first is that I frequently appear on lurid talk shows where I encounter sad and confused people who are being exploited by the major television networks.

INTERVIEWER: That's interesting. And what do you do for these sad and confused people who are being exploited by the major television networks?

COOPER: I call them names and attempt to embarrass them and make them look like shit in front of millions of people.

INTERVIEWER: Why not discuss things politely with them?

COOPER: Because these shows are really pretty sleazy. There's no chance to explain anything in detail on them. You only have time to scream and call people names. Besides, Professor Bob hasn't yet written his thesis on Courtesy for Circular Humanists, so I wouldn't know how.

INTERVIEWER: Well, does the audience listen to you and become interested in what you have to say?

COOPER: Oh no. We've found that the audiences on these shows rarely convert to our point of view. In fact, they generally think I'm a pompous, egotistical, selfish, loud-mouthed son of a bitch! Can you imagine? Obviously, these people are of little intelligence. Even more importantly, they are not friends of Professor Bob

INTERVIEWER: Then why appear on these shows in the first place?

COOPER: It's simple. The more times I appear on these shows, the more often they run such shows. The more often they run such shows, the more often we can cite appearing on these shows as a great accomplishment when we mail our fund raising letters to the friends of Professor Bob.

INTERVIEWER: Don't the friends of Professor Bob catch on to this?

COOPER: Oh no! The friends of Professor Bob never watch those shows.

INTERVIEWER: I see. What else do you do?

COOPER: I travel around giving talks to groups of open minded people who we feel may be swayed to science and reason...

INTERVIEWER: Could you define "Science and Reason"?

COOPER: No, that task belongs to Professor Bob and Professor Bob alone.

INTERVIEWER: Okay, and when you meet these people who might be swayed to science and reason, what do you do for them?

COOPER: I tell them how wonderful I am and insult them and their deeply held beliefs. I especially enjoy insulting people who wander in with a completely open mind and have never heard my point of view before.

INTERVIEWER: I see. Well, why don't you tell us why this is important? What do you consider the number one threat to science and reason in this country today?

COOPER: Oh that's very simple. What we call "pseudo-science" is definitely on the rise. But there's a more important, more insidious threat to our cause today.

INTERVIEWER: And what might that be?

COOPER: Michael Shermer and the Skeptic Society in California.

INTERVIEWER: Why is Michael Shermer a threat to science and reason? I don't understand.

COOPER: It's very simple. Michael Shermer does not follow the word of Professor Bob. Those who do not follow the word of Professor Bob should never be allowed to claim to represent science and reason.

INTERVIEWER: Is Professor Bob a religious figure?

COOPER: He's a Circular Humanist. Circular Humanists have no

religious beliefs.

INTERVIEWER: Why do you use the term "Circular Humanists"?

COOPER: Because we wanted something that combined our belief in "humans", such as Professor Bob, with our love for Circle Jerk sessions. It's a wonderful set of teachings. But, and let me make this clear, it's not a religion. Definitely not a religion by any means.

INTERVIEWER: If Circular Humanism is not a religion by any definition of the term, then what is it?

COOPER: It's not a religion. It's just a small group of people who have found the one true way as taught by Professor Bob.

INTERVIEWER: Are you yourself a Circular Humanist?

COOPER: Of course. How could I spread the word as I do, if I did not have the one true way?

INTERVIEWER: But doesn't this adherence to your own zealous and insular creed interfere with spreading your message?

COOPER: Well, we've found that people who aren't friends of Professor Bob, don't listen to us anyway. Besides, I don't see why the general public is important. Our experience, and I am a professional after all, is that we have found that the friends of Professor Bob are quite able to contribute sufficient funds to pay my salary and tell me how wonderful I am. That is, after all, the important thing

INTERVIEWER: But what about the majority of people who are perfectly content with their own already, pre-existing religious beliefs?

COOPER: Well, it's one thing to have religious beliefs. That's stupid. It's better to have a strict set of all encompassing 'non-religious' beliefs that constitute an entire world view, philosophy and so on, as long as they have been approved by Professor Bob. That's clearly more intelligent.

Professor Bob is a wonderful man. He has designed his own "naming ceremony" which will replace baptism. He has designed his own "memorial services" which will replace funerals. In fact, one of the real reasons I travel so much is that Professor Bob is currently at work designing a Circular Humanist "foreskin removal ceremony" that will replace

Circumcision as practiced by many of the faiths which have now been made obsolete by the teachings of Professor Bob and it can be little frightening when he looks at you with that gleam in his eye while discussing foreskin removal.

But please understand, it would be completely incorrect to refer to this set of teachings as a religion. It's definitely not a religion. It's the truth.

But anyway, I'm afraid I have to go soon. Unless you'd like to hear me tell stories for five hours straight about my days as a rodeo clown, I just don't have time. I am after all, working on a new book. In this one, I am promoting my theory of Frequently Problematic Personalities. This is my own personal term for people who disagree with the teachings of either myself or Professor Bob. Such people are clearly irrational and I can spot them a mile away without even having met them.

Now some have criticized this as a case where I am shooting off my mouth and substituting my own views for a careful study of the science of psychology. This is clearly no more the case than those uninformed people who accuse my dear friend, Professor Bob, of starting his own religion.

INTERVIEWER: And who is publishing this fine book?

COOPER: Professor Bob.

INTERVIEWER: And who's the target audience?

COOPER: Friends of Professor Bob. We've found they're an important audience as they tend to agree with me and donate.

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