Twitter Thread by ■Kareem Carr■



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When academic experts like me try to share our knowledge on social media, we attract our own special kinds of reply guys (and gals!).

Here's my list of academic reply guys! ■

The Traffic Cop. This type wants you to "Stay in your lane!". You can use social media or you can know what you're talking about but you can't do both! The traffic cop understands that democratic debate works best when everybody involved is ignorant.



The Trash Panda. The trash panda is very picky and will only consume information from unofficial sources. Everything else is fake news! People with PhDs, Government officials, World recognized experts. BAD! Facebook posts, WhatsApp viral videos, Youtube comments. GOOD!



The Conspiracy Theorist. This type assumes the only reason you're giving advice is you're trying to control them. So you want them to ask an expert how to solve a problem, then listen to the answer and then do what that person says? No sir! That sounds like mind control!



The Contrarian. There is nothing you can do to convince this type. If what you're saying is unpopular, they will side with you and once your opinion becomes popular, they will be on the other side. That's just how it is.

The Foot Soldier. This type needs your message to be angry. You need to attack a minority group of some kind otherwise they won't listen to your advice. Foreigners, greedy politicians, welfare recipients. These are popular targets.

The Innovator. This type is progressive and forward thinking. If you want this type to support you, your ideas need to be CRAZY. Infinite universes! Sexual access is a human right! You need to go big or go home!

The Rugged Individual. To convince this type you need to preface your advice by telling them nobody is coming to save them and it's up to them to save themselves by doing whatever they need to do to keep them and their family safe! Avoid mentioning any kind systemic solutions.

The Cherry Picker. This type will always do a random subset of whatever advice you give them and they don't care if that subset makes sense. Whatever you say will only be vaguely related to whatever it is they end up doing.





The Enforcer. Theoretically this type is on your side but they take your advice VERY SERIOUSLY. They will go after anybody who doesn't do 100% of what you say. They use your message to attack people in your name and your message suffers because of it.

The Mercenary. This type makes money by disagreeing with you. There is no point trying to convince them because they are paid not to agree with you.



The Fake. This type will claim to 100% "support your mission" while not doing anything different. This is because they want the PR of working with you but don't want to change in any way. They will constantly gaslight you about your own message.



The Teacher's Helper. This type is a social influencer that wants to help you "share your message" to a "wider audience". They will share a very cute, completely wrong summary of your work with a million followers and put YOUR name on it!

The Wounded Warrior. They had a very bad experience with an expert in the past. The only way you can convince this type is by not being like the other experts. They will turn on you if you seem too sure of yourself or like you think you're some kind of expert or something.

The Genius. This type is a fellow expert in a different field. They don't respect you because you don't use every opportunity to show off how much math you know. They will only agree with you if they can derive your advice from first principles using math and bad assumptions.

The Reader. The reader doesn’t believe in experts. Only textbooks and peer-reviewed articles. The reader will only accept what you say if they can read it somewhere else and once they read it they're just as smart as you. You're not better than them!



Thanks for coming to my TED talk! ■