



The courage to say no

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In this edition of the *IPA Review* we feature and salute two extraordinary individuals, two men who have taken a stand against an apparent consensus, at significant risk to their careers, reputations, and most definitely any hopes they may have had of a quiet life.

Those of us deeply concerned by the dominance of progressivism and identity politics in our public culture have in the last year or two been energised by a sudden proliferation of people who did not set out to campaign against mantras of diversity and equality but who, simply by taking a stand on one particular issue, have through their moral courage done powerful service in exposing the shallow and pernicious nature of the official ideology:

- Professor Jordan Peterson of the University of Toronto took a stand against laws which compel the use of gender pronouns, and was heckled and jeered on campus for his troubles;
- Professor Bret Weinstein of Evergreen College supports many progressive causes but took a stand against a call for 'white people' to fight racism by absenting themselves from the College for a day, and in the subsequent conflagration had to leave his job;



- Lindsay Shepherd, a teaching assistant at Wilfred Laurier University, was called in, sanctioned and (erroneously) told she had breached federal law in Canada simply for showing a Jordan Peterson video in a class, but rather than cop the standover tactics she released a recording she had made of the Orwellian 'interview', and;
- Here in Australia Professor Peter Ridd of James Cook University, is having to fight disciplinary actions in court because of the stand he has taken on integrity in science.

Needless to say the attacks on these and similar heretics have been intense, and this vilification is typically accompanied by sneering attempts to portray them as determined activists making arguments only to support (variously), misogyny, climate denialism, racism, and so on.

Similarly the incredible support they have received from a long-suffering public is attributed to media manipulation by an amorphous and ill-defined 'alt-right'. But these charges have failed to stick because with the rise of online media we have all had the opportunity to hear directly from and see the quality of these individuals. Indeed, quite a few progressives still believing in free speech tuned in and discovered they had many points of agreement with those they had been told to dismiss out of hand.

The real story of the whole phenomenon was captured by Bret Weinstein's brother, Eric (himself a contrarian), in an interview on *The Rubin Report* in February (available on YouTube). Eric said:

You put a ton of pressure on a large group of people to salute some flag that shouldn't be saluted, and most people make the calculation, do I really want to screw up my life just over whether or not I salute a flag, whether that's (about) maybe diversity or multiculturalism, that sounds pretty good? ...and then you'll get one person who will stand up and say, you cannot compel me.

And this is how we found Bret, this is how we found Jordan Peterson, it's how we found Lindsay Shepherd and in all cases the commonality seems to be that the person who doesn't salute the flag usually has a very deep reason, not just that it's wrong, it's that they've got an entire world view. ...isn't it interesting that the only people willing to screw up their entire lives over these things are the people who the crowd will find – it's like a truffle hound.

Therefore our Special Feature for this edition consists of articles on Peterson and Ridd: John Roskam's thoughts on Jordan Peterson's 'rock concert' in Melbourne (*12 Rules* is reviewed on page 42), and then Matthew Lesh's vitally important look at what drives Peter Ridd and his battle for integrity in science.

This is our first *IPA Review* without Dr Darcy Allen who has so ably served as Editor of the magazine over the previous four editions. Darcy has moved into academia and we wish him well, but he retains his ties with the IPA and we look forward to seeing his contributions in future editions.

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