

A transcript of an interview at the Heritage Foundation in New York City, in April 2019. Jordan Peterson is being interviewed by Genevieve Wood. The times on the left correspond to the audio recording I made from the YouTube video: <https://youtu.be/3p2vobGtS0M>

0:11	Genevieve	<i>Half a billion times, people are interested in what you have to say</i>
0:15	Jordan	It seems that way, it's somewhat of a shock
0:20	Genevieve	<i>Well maybe it's because you aren't a politician, you are a psychologist and you're understanding more about what's going on in the world than many of our lawmakers actually do. And I know we've got so many ways we could go with this interview tonight. And we got questions, thank you to all of you in the audience who sent in your questions. I've got some of them right here and we're going to get into those, but let me start with, let's just start with the Socialism piece. Do you think Americans truly understand the history of socialism and actually what it is. As you've gone around, and I know you've had, when you speak to, not just College Campuses, you've been to events around the world, I think 250,000 people you've spoken in front of.</i>
0:50	Jordan	I mean, people are unbelievably ignorant about history, and I would include myself in that, you know. What I know about history, say preceding the 20 th century is very sketchy, it's embarrassingly sketchy, you know. And what young people know about 20 th century history is non-existent, especially about the history of the radical left. How would they know? They're never taught anything about it, so why would they be concerned about it? And then, you know, for many of the people in the audience, you know, you're old enough so that the fall of the Berlin wall was, well that was part of your life you know; that was really the end of the second world war, let's say, in a technical sense. And it was very meaningful. But that's a long time ago, there's been a lot of people born since then. And it's ancient history and we don't have that many good bad examples left, you know. There's North Korea, there's Venezuela, but we're not locked tooth and nail in a war with, you know, in a proxy war, in a cold war with the Soviet Union. And it's easy to understand why people are emotionally drawn to the ideals of socialism let's say or of the left, because it draws on, it draws its fundamental motivational source from a kind of primary compassion. And that is always there in human beings, and so that proclivity for sensitivity to that political message will never go away. And it's important to understand that, you have to give the Devil his due. Unfortunately.
2:47	Genevieve	<i>You've also said that people aren't as resentful at the success of others as we might think. And I think as you watch a lot of people being interviewed today, and you watch some of the students being interviewed, you saw some of the ones up here, you hear people talking a lot about inequality, but you say they really aren't as resentful as we might think as long as they don't think the game is fixed.</i>
3:10	Jordan	Yes, well that's certainly the case. Well, first of all, I mean if you look at the psychological literature, to the degree that it's accurate, which is difficult to ascertain often, people report far more prejudice against their group than against themselves. So that's quite an interesting phenomenon as far as I'm concerned. There's a tendency for people to exaggerate the degree to which the group they belong to is currently suffering from generalized oppression, they being relatively free of it themselves. I also think that fairness is absolutely essential and perceived fairness is an absolutely essential component of peace, because people can tolerate inequality so to speak, or even revel in it, let's say, if they believe that the unequal outcome is deserved. I mean look at how people respond to sports hero's. No one goes to a sports event and boos the star, even though he or she is paid much better and attracts the lions share of the attention, hopefully not into narcissistic a manner. People can celebrate success, but they do have to believe that the game is fair,

		<p>and the game needs to be fair, because otherwise the hierarchy becomes tyrannical. The problem with the radical left is that it assumes that all hierarchies are tyrannical and it makes no distinction between them and that's an absolute catastrophe because, you know, there's plenty of sins, let's say, on the conscience of the West as a civilization, but we can't throw the baby out with the bathwater. And there are far worse places, like all the other places, for example, (laughter) that there have ever been. Well, it's the case, and people also don't understand that, and they also don't understand this is something that's of particular importance they also don't understand and that may even characterize you in this audience, it's the knowledge of how rapidly we're making economic improvements around the world, in the developing world, for example. How fast that's happening, that is not well distributed knowledge. Between the year 2000 and the year 2012, the rate of absolute poverty in the world fell by 50%. Now it's a U.N. figure, a \$1.90 a day, that was their cut off for absolute poverty. And so the cynics have said, well, you know, that's a pretty low barrier, it's not such an achievement to have obtained that. And I can tell you it's an achievement to have obtained that if you were living on less than \$1.90 a day to begin with. But if you double the amount to \$3.80, or you double it again to \$7.60, you find the same pattern. I mean, the poor in the world are getting rich at a rate that is absolutely unparalleled in all of human history. And I think a large part of that is happening in Africa, where by the way, here's another lovely piece of news, the child mortality rate in Africa is now the same as it was in Europe in 1952. Which is, I mean that's an absolute miracle! It's insane that that's not front-page news! Right? That's within a lifetime. And the fastest growing economies in the world are also there.</p>
7:02	Genevieve	<p><i>But why isn't it front-page news? And when you're considering social media and how fast news and photos and all that can travel, and that young people are aficionados of all that technology, why don't they know these things, or why aren't they computing what they see as being progress?</i></p>
7:18	Jordan	<p>Well, I think part of it is that things are changing so fast that none of us can keep up. Like it's hard to keep the story updated. I had no idea, for example, that most of the world's economic news, and even a substantial proportion of its ecological news, by the way, was positive until I started to work on a U.N. committee about five years ago on sustainable economic development, and I read very widely economically and also ecologically and realized that things were way better than I had any sense of, that these improvements had come at a tremendous rate. Partly it is just that it is so new that we don't know and we don't have a story about it and who would be driving the communication of such things, especially given two other things: One is that human beings are tilted towards negative emotion in terms of its potency. And so, for example, people would rather, they're much less happy to lose five dollars than they are happy to gain five dollars. We're loss averse. We're more sensitive to negative emotion than we are to positive emotion. And there's a reason for that. And the reason is, well you can only be so happy, but you can be dead! Right, and I mean dead that's not good. And there can be a lot of misery on the way to that end. And so we're tilted to protect ourselves, and that makes us more interested in some sense and more easily captivated by the negative than by the positive. And so that's a hard bias to fight. And then when you also take into account, and I think this is something that is worth seriously considering, because the other thing we don't understand is the technological revolution that's occurring in every form of media. No one understands it. But one of the consequences is that the main stream media, so to speak, is increasingly desperate for attention, right. They exist in a shrinking market with shrinking margins. All of the leading newspapers and magazines are feeling the pinch. Television is dead, because YouTube has everything that Television has and then an incredible array of additional features. And Radio is being replaced by podcasts, and so it's a very unstable</p>

		<p>time for the main stream media, and what would you expect them to do except to do whatever they can to attract attention in whatever manner they can manage. One example of this, one very good example of this, is you may or may not know that the rates of violent crime in the United States, and actually in most places, have plummeted in the last fifty years. It's really quite remarkable. The United States is now safer, in terms of violent crime, than it has been since the early sixties. And that was probably the safest time there ever was. But the degree to which violent crime has been reported has increased. It's funny, the curves are almost completely opposite to one another. This is the decline in violent crime, this is the increase in the reporting of violent crime. And the reason for that is, well, people read stories about violent crime and then of course, they're much more likely to believe that it's on the increase. And the people who are most likely to believe that it's on the increase, by the way, are also those who are least likely to be affected by it. Because, you know, to be a victim of a violent crime, well it helps to drink too much, and it also helps a lot to be young and male. And those aren't the people who are particularly afraid of violent crime even though they're the ones most likely to be implicated in it. So there's technological reasons for our concentration on the negative and they're complex; it's not easy to figure out how to combat the spiral of outrage and attention-seeking that I think is accompanying the death of our previous means of communication. No one knows how to handle that, and that's a big problem.</p>
11:38	Genevieve	<p><i>I know so many in this audience, and not just here in New York, but we hear from our members all over the country, they're so concerned about what their children and what their grandchildren are both being taught, but also what they're coming back home from college and talking about. Where are they learning? I mean, I know where they're learning it. How is this seeping into them? You obviously have spoken not just to the University of Toronto, but also colleges all over the world, what is it you see today on the campus or among young people today that's new; or is it new? I've heard you say that we're no more polarized today than we were maybe even under Richard Nixon and the campuses were more on fire then than even they are today. So what are the similarities and differences that you're seeing?</i></p>
12:23	Jordan	<p>Well, I don't see any real evidence that your society is more polarized, generally speaking, than it has been at many times in the past. And I think that the Nixon era is a good example. I mean, if you think about it merely statistically, I mean, you've been split fifty/fifty Republican/Democrat for what, five elections now, and it's almost perfect fifty/fifty split. That really hasn't changed. Trump, of course is somewhat of a wildcard and so that complicates things but I don't think it changes the underlying dynamic. What I do think has arisen again, because it has made itself manifest many times in the last 100 years, is the rise of this group identity associated quasi-marxist viewpoint with this additional toxic mixture and paradoxical mixture of post-modernism. The post-modernists are famous for being skeptical of meta-narratives. That might be a defining; that was Lyotard, I believe who coined that, although I might be wrong, it was one of the french post-modernists. And that means that they're skeptical about the idea that uniting, large uniting narratives are valid. And it's a huge problem, that claim. Because the first question is, well how big does the narrative have to be before it's a meta-narrative? Right? I mean is the narrative that holds your family together a falsehood? Is the narrative that holds your community together a falsehood? Like, how big does it have to be before it becomes a falsehood? And so it's a very vague claim, and it's a very dangerous claim, in my estimation; because I believe that, and I believe the psychological research is clear on this: what we have, our cognitive abilities are nested inside stories. We're fundamentally narrative creatures. That's how our brains are organized and so to deny the validity of large-scale narratives is to deny the validity of the manner in which we organize our</p>

		<p>psyches. And that's unbelievably destabilizing for people. I mean, first of all, look, the simplest story, in some sense, is that I'm at point A and I'm going to point B. And that's not as simple a story as it might sound because it implies that you are somewhere, and that you know it, you have a representation of it geographically, let's say, socially, psychologically, you have some sense of who you are. But more importantly you have some sense of who you are transforming yourself into, and so that gives you a direction. And now that direction, the direction gives you meaning and I don't mean that in a clichéd sense. What I mean is that the way that our brains are constituted, is that almost all of the positive emotion that people feel, and it's also true of animals, by the way, emerges as a consequence of observing that you're making your way to a valued endpoint. So you know, you think, well, what makes you happy is the attainment of something. And there is a form of reward that is associated with that, it's called "consummatory reward", it's the satisfaction that you feel, say after you have a delightful Thanksgiving meal. But that isn't the hope and the meaning that people thrive on. The hope and the meaning that people thrive on is the observation that they're moving towards something worthwhile, and that might be individually; although it really can't be because we live in collectives, but it should be collective. And that isn't optional! If you don't have a goal, a transcendent goal, say, something that's beyond you, then you don't have any positive emotion. And that's not good, because you have plenty of negative emotion. And that's the problem with fundamental claims of meaninglessness, too in life; it's the philosophical error that's made by nihilists, let's say, who say, well, life is meaningless. It's like, well, if you're a nihilist genuinely, you've lost all hope. Your life isn't meaningless, it's just unbearably miserable, and that's a form of meaning! That suffering is a form of meaning, and you can try to argue yourself out of that with your nihilistic rationalization, but that is not going to work. You need a transcendent goal in order to withstand the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune and the destruction of the narratives that guide us individually, psychologically, and that also unite us socially, familial and socially, it's an absolute catastrophe. And well, the question then is, why is it being undertaken. And that's a complex question and I don't know if we can even discuss that. That has something to do with this unholy marriage of the post-modern nihilism with this marxist utopian notion, which makes no sense at all, because the post-modernists are skeptical of meta-narratives, yet marxism is a grand meta-narrative. But coherency...</p>
18:08	Genevieve	<i>It doesn't have to make sense</i>
18:09	Jordan	<p>Well, that's, well in fact the idea that things have to make sense is part of the oppressive patriarchy and so we can just (laughter) Well, I'm serious! People teach that in a dead-serious manner, that the requirement for logical consistency is an arbitrary imposition on cognitive structure, it's not something necessary for rational cognition, even if there is such a thing. I mean you don't know how deep this war goes, in some sense. I can give you an example. You know, there's a debate about free speech on campus, but what you don't understand it isn't a debate about who can speak, it's a debate about whether there is such a thing as free speech! And the answer from the radicals is that there isn't! Because for there to be free speech, you see, there have to be sovereign individuals, right. And those sovereign individuals have to be defined by that sovereign individuality and they have to have their own locus of truth in some sense that's a consequence of that sovereignty. And then they have to be able to engage in rational discursive negotiation with people who aren't like them. Which means they have to stretch their hands, let's say, across racial or ethnic divides, they have to be able to communicate and they have to be able to formulate a negotiated and practical agreement. And none of that is part and parcel of the post-modern doctrine. All of that's up for grabs. There's no sovereign individuals, your group identity is paramount, you have no unique voice, you're a mouthpiece of your</p>

		identity group, you can't speak across group lines because you don't understand the lived experience of the other, and so it's not who gets to speak, it's whether the entire notion, it's a very classic western notion, and a very deep one, of free and ineligible speech is even valid. I mean this intellectual war that's going on in the Universities is way deeper than a political war. It's way more serious than a political war; it manifests itself politically, but no, politics is way up the scale from where this is actually taking place.
20:26	Genevieve	<i>So when you're talking with students, both one-on-one or when you hear their questions, and I'm going to get to some of your questions here very shortly. These are not all conservative students that are coming up to you; and they're downloading your videos; and listening to your podcasts; and it's not, even though it is a lot of young men, it's not all men, what do you think drives people to the message and to the things that you talk about?</i>
20:53	Jordan	Oh, I think it's that I'm believable (laughter). Well that's why! That's why, I mean, you know, in most of my lectures. So I've done about 150 public lectures or so in the last year, all over the world, and to large audiences. The audiences in Australia, we're starting to approach, well we had audiences of 5500 people in Australia. So, which is quite remarkable you know that 5500 people would come to listen to, like, a serious discussion about philosophical, theological and psychological issues and to participate in that. And I don't pull any punches, I'm not speaking down, I would never speak down to an audience, I think that's a dreadful error of arrogance. But the reason that I think that people believe what I say is that I'm very pessimistic! (laughter) Well, look! Because most times when you listen to someone who's a motivational speaker, let's say. You know, it fills you with a temporary optimism, but you go home and the wiser part of you knows that mostly it's the painting over of rotten wood with a fresh coat of paint. And I tell my audiences very clearly that their life is going to be difficult and sometimes difficult beyond both imagining and tolerance. And that that is definitely in your future, if it isn't in your present and for many people it's in their present! And that that can be unbearable enough to turn you against life itself, to corrupt you to drive you to nihilism, to drive you to suicide, and worse, to drive you to thoughts of vengefulness of infinite scope, to not only be turned against yourself and your fellow man, but to be turned against being itself, because of its intrinsically brutal, in some sense, nature and that it's worse than that actually, because it's not only that we suffer and that that will necessarily occur but that we all make our suffering worse because of our ignorance and our malevolence. And everyone knows that to be true! And so the discussions start, let's say, on an unshakeable foundation, but then I can tell people, look, despite that, despite that, we're remarkable creatures! You know, we're capable of taking up the burden of that suffering and facing the reality of that malevolence voluntarily, we can actually do that! And all of the psychological evidence suggests, and this is independent of your school of psychology if you're a practical psychologist, a clinical psychologist of any sort, the evidence is crystal clear that if people voluntarily confront the problems that face them, and the malevolence that surrounds them that they can make headway against it. And not only psychologically, so it's not only meaningful to do that psychologically, which it is, to confront the problems that torment you voluntarily, that's meaningful psychologically. But it's also practically useful in that you can actually solve some of the problems that beset you. And God only knows how good we could get at that, you know. I mean I don't know what percentage of human effort is spent in counter-productive activity. You know, I'm not an absolute cynic about that, but I mean, when I talk to undergraduates, I ask them, you know, how much time do you waste every day by your own reckoning, and it's somewhere between five and eight hours; you know, it's a lot of time. (laughter) Well I usually walk the students through an economic analysis of that. I said, well, you know, why don't you value your time at fifty

		<p>dollars an hour and calculate for yourself just exactly what you're doing to your future by your inability to discipline yourself. It's worth thinking through. In any case, people do waste a lot of time and they also act counterproductively a lot of the time. Regardless, we do make progress, and we can thrive under the difficult conditions that make up our lives and we can resist the malevolence that entices us. That's within our power. And we don't know the limits to that. And we also know that it's better to, we all know this, that it's better to live courageously than cowardly. Everyone knows that! That's what you teach people that you love! (clapping) And we know that it's better to live truthfully than in deceit. And you can tell that, too, because that's also what you tell people that you love, and we know that you should pick up your damn responsibility and move forward; everyone knows that! It's part of our intrinsic moral nature, and that nature's there! And it's not difficult to communicate to people about this. Like, everyone knows that you wake up at three in the morning when you've let your life go off the rails and that you berate yourself for your uselessness and your cruelty and your failure to take the opportunities that are in front of you. And if you're the master in your own house, in some sense, the captain of your own destiny, if there was no intrinsic nature, well, that would never happen! You'd just let yourself off the hook, there'd be no voice of conscience tormenting you. But no one escapes from that! And what that indicates to me is that, at least psychologically, we live in a universe that's characterized by a moral dimension. And we understand that well and that moral failings have consequences, and that they're not trivial; they destroy you, they destroy your family, they destroy your community. And you can tell people that, and they listen, because they know! They don't know they know; that's the thing, and maybe that's the thing about being an intellectual, you have the opportunity to articulate ideas that other people know, they embody, but they can't articulate. And that's what people tell me, you know, they say, well you helped me give words to things that I always knew to be true, but couldn't say. Or they say, I've been trying to put some of your precepts into practice; responsibility being the main one; vision, another; honesty I suppose bringing up the pack, and saying, this is the fun part of doing all of this. "Fun" is a weak word, it's the remarkable part of doing all this. I mean, I have people tell me constantly wherever I go, it's so delightful that, you know, they were in a pretty dark place. And they tell me why and there's plenty of dark places in the world. And they decided, well maybe they were gonna develop a bit of a vision and take a bit more responsibility and start telling the truth and putting some effort into something. And they come up and they say, well you can't believe how much better things are! (laughter) It's like, I got three promotions! I had one guy tell me, this was a lovely story, you know; fifteen seconds. He came up after a talk, he said, two years ago I got out of jail; I was homeless. He said, I own my own house, I have a six-figure income, I got married and I have a daughter. Thank you. And that was the whole conversation! It's like, he decided! He decided he was going to put his life together. And you know, and so you can look at that pessimism that constitutes, let's say, the core of what, well I think it's the core religious message, really, is the tragic nature of the world, the reality of suffering, it's part of the core religious message. But what emerges out of that, properly conceptualized is a remarkable appreciation for what human beings are capable of! We are unbelievably resilient and able creatures and we do not have any conception of our upper limits!</p>
30:05	Genevieve	<p><i>Dr. Peterson, let me ask you, I mean, we have about ten minutes and I'm gonna get a couple questions in here from our audience on this, too, but is that that hope that you're talking about, that you're giving people hope, young people hope, is that one of the secrets to reaching them? In terms of fighting back on...</i></p>
30:17	Jordan	<p>Well, it's a funny kind of hope, you know, and it's such a perverse sort of hope because, I would say for the last forty five years we've told; psychologists have been certainly to</p>

		<p>blame for this, at least in part: You're OK the way you are. That's what we tell young people. Oh, you're OK the way you are. It's like, and there's nothing worse that you can tell someone who's young than that, especially if they're miserable! (laughter) You know and lot's of them, well if they're miserable and aimless. It's like, oh, I'm miserable and aimless and sometimes I'm suicidal and I'm nihilistic and I don't have any direction in my life. It's like, well you're OK the way you are. (laughter). And it's like, they don't want to hear that! They want to hear, look, you know, you're; and you know this, you're useless (laughter), you know nothing! You haven't got started! You've got sixty years to put yourself together and God only knows what you could become! And that's so, that message is so much more, it's so funny because, it's so, it's such an attack; but it's so positive! Because there's faith there in the potential that makes up the person rather than the miserable actuality that happens to be manifesting itself at the moment. And young people respond extraordinarily well to that, because, and you know that if you're a parent and you love your child, your son, your daughter. What you're trying to foster is the best in them! You want that to manifest itself across the course of their life! You want them to become continually more than they are! To see what they could be! And, well, and I think that's part of the great message of the West, is that that's the ethical requirement of individual being in the proper sense, is to constantly note that you're not what you could be; to take responsibility for that and to commit yourself, like body and soul, to the attainment of that ideal.</p>
32:33	Genevieve	<p><i>We're going to get a question here from our members right here on the front row, Bob Grantham had a couple good questions right here: He asked, much of your effort today is trying to help people improve their lives. We've just been talking about that. Why does the establishment attack you rather than try to support your efforts?</i></p>
32:54	Jordan	<p>Well, you know, we should be nuanced about that. There's a group of newspapers in Canada called Post Media; that's two hundred newspapers strong, and they supported me. You know, I mean I've had a lot of support from journalists, and I would say I've had more support from the higher quality journalists, which I'm quite happy about. (laughter) So, It's polarized. You know, there is a, I have a dedicated coterie of people who regard me as an enemy. There's no doubt about that. And I think it's because I am absolutely no fan whatsoever of the radical left. I think the fact that you can actively present yourself, let's say on a campus as a communist, is as, the fact that that's allowable is as mysterious as it would be if it was allowable to present yourself as a Nazi. I am not a fan of the radical left. And I think I understand the motivations on the radical left; both on the post-modernist end and on the more marxist end. And because of that I am a relatively effective critic and that makes me very unpopular, so, and that's fine because what people are being taught that's emerged from that brand of absurd and surreal philosophy is of no utility as a guiding light to anyone. And it's a catastrophe to take young people in their formative years when they're trying to catalyze their adult identity and to tear the substructure out from underneath them and leave them bereft. And I do believe that that's what the universities on the humanities end and to some degree on the social science end, I do believe that that's what they fundamentally manage to achieve. So, and I don't admire that! I think there is something deeply sadistic about that, there's something deeply anti-human about that and it presents itself in the guise of moral virtue which makes it even worse. And so, well, that's why people don't like me.</p>
35:45	Genevieve	<p><i>(Laughter) Alright, we've got about five minutes, I'm going to try and get in two quick questions. This is, where is Adam from Vassar College? Is Adam? Oh, there he is. So this was Adam's question: Given the liberal political order bends towards atomization of individuals, e.g. atomization and urbanization, how can meaningful community be assured?</i></p>

36:06	Jordan	<p>Well you build that for yourself in part, you know, I mean Adam, get a girlfriend! (laughter) Well, I mean, people aren't doing that. That's falling by the wayside. Right? And it's because it's trouble. (laughter) Well it is trouble! Life is trouble! And it's trouble to establish a permanent relationship. You know, I mean, we've told young people for far too long, they should be happy in their relationships, let's say, and that's weak! (laughter) Well it is! God, most of you are married. It's like, to be married for forty years, that's not a triumph of happiness, (laughter) it's a triumph of character! It's a triumph of negotiation! (clapping) Right? It's a triumph of will to do that. And that should be celebrated, but it should also be pointed out, that no matter who you find, like, they're no better than you! And that's not so good! So there's gonna be problems! But that shouldn't stop you; it's like, find someone, you know. You're gonna have, if you're lucky, you're gonna have the opportunity to sort of sift through about five people in your life, that's about it. And then you're gonna have to stake yourself on one of those people. And it's a hell of a risk, but with any luck it'll make you a better person, that wrestling.</p> <p>You know, one of the things I learned, I did a series of biblical lectures in 2017 which have turned out to be crazily popular, of all the insane things to be.</p>
37:47	Genevieve	<i>And I was supposed to ask you, why do you think that is?</i>
37:51	Jordan	<p>Yes, well, I learned, one of the things I learned in those lectures, and should have known before, was that the word "Israel", so the chosen people of God, the people of Israel, are those who wrestle with God. And that's such an interesting idea. You know, It's a fascinating idea, because it indicates, at least, even in our deepest religious texts that there is something about existential conflict and engaging in that that's actually part of the moral substructure of life. That simple belief, let's say, whatever that might mean in a deity, isn't sufficient; there's an active engagement with the infinite and it's a battle in some sense and I think that's the proper way to conceptualize it. I think it's the proper way to conceptualize a relationship. It's a battle, it's a battle towards a positive end. It's a battle towards the transformation of both of you into more than you could otherwise be. So, you need that. You need your friends, and you need to develop a network of friendship. And you need to put your family together and to act responsibly towards them and then you need to move out from that into the broader community; and that's on you! That's how you foster it, you make it a part of the ideal that you're pursuing, and then you realize that's up to you to do. And maybe then you realize that you can do it, as well, if you're willing to make the right sacrifices. Which really, which usually means burning off a fair bit of dead wood, and that's not something that people are particularly excited about doing, and no wonder.</p>
39:39	Genevieve	<i>Our time has been too short, We have time for just one more final question, I'm told. What have I not asked you about, in thinking of our theme of standing up against socialism, what have I not asked you about, what have other interviewers not asked you about that would be beneficial for us all to know as we want to take that on.</i>
40:03	Jordan	<p>Well, you asked a little bit about these biblical lectures, you know, and what was interesting was, I rented a theater in Toronto. I rented it fifteen times and it was a theater of about 500 and it sold out every time. And I lectured about Genesis. And it was mostly young men who came, they weren't all young, but they were mostly men, which was very surprising, because like, that's just not what happens. The reason that the lectures worked was because I put together something that I don't think liberals or conservatives have done a good job of putting together. The liberals are more on the happiness and freedom end of things and the conservatives are more on the duty end of things. And those both have their place; but I've been attempting to develop an argument that is centered on meaning and I do believe that our most central religious symbols like the symbol of the cross itself for</p>

		<p>example, the bearing of the cross, is an embodiment, or a symbolic representation of this idea, is that you have to have a meaning in life that sustains you. Life is a serious business, you're all in. It's a fatal business. Right? Everyone's in it up to their neck. And it's dreadful in some sense; in the classic sense. And you need a meaning that can sustain you through that and that's to be found in responsibility. And that's something that we have not communicated, I don't think well to ourselves, but we certainly haven't communicated it to young people. It's like, well, you're lost? There's reasons that you could be lost and they're real. You know, God only knows what terrible things happened to you in your life. It's like, how are you going to get out of that? Well not by pursuing impulsive happiness; that is not going to work; not by thinking in the short term, not by thinking in a narrowly selfish manner either, but by taking on the heaviest load of responsibility that you can conceptualize and bear. That will do it! It'll do it for you! It'll give you a reason to wake up in the morning. It will give you a balm for your conscience when you wake up at night and ask yourself what you're doing with your life. It'll make you a credit to yourself and to your family and it'll make you a boon to your community. And more than that, there's more than that. You know it's said in Genesis that every person is made in the image of God. And there's an idea in Genesis, that God is that which confronts the chaos of potential with truth and courage. That's the logos. And if we're made in the image of God, that's us! That's what we do, is we confront the potential of chaos, the future, the unformed future, we confront that consciously. And we decide with every ethical choice we make what kind of world we're going to bring into being, we transform that potential into actuality. And we do that as a consequence of our ethical decisions. And so it's not only a matter of putting yourself together and putting your family together and putting your community together, it's a matter of bringing the world in its proper shape into being. And I truly believe that that's the case and I believe that we all believe that. We hold ourselves responsible. You know that if you've made a mistake with your family, you know, because you were selfish or narrow minded, or blind in some manner, that you regard yourself as culpable. You could have done otherwise and now you've brought something into the world that should not be there, and it's on you. We hold ourselves responsible in that manner and so what that indicates to me is that in a deep sense we believe that we are the agents that transform the potential of being into reality. And that is a divine; if anything links us with divinity, it's our capability to transform what is not yet into what is. And the other thing that happens, and I'll stop with this in Genesis, and this is so interesting, it's so fascinating, is that as God conducts himself through this enterprise of the transformation of potential into actuality; he stops repeatedly and says, "and it was good." And that's a mystery! Why is it good? And the answer is something like, well, if you conduct yourself with the courage that enables you to accept your vulnerability, which is no trivial matter, and if you're truthful, then what you bring out of potential is what's good. And that sets the world right. And that's up to us. And to me that's the great story of the West. That's why we regard ourselves as sovereign individuals of value; that's what we are! And we need to know that, to take ourselves seriously and to act properly in the world. And so, and that's what I said in the biblical lectures, in many hours. And that's what's made them popular, because people at the level of the soul, I would say, people know these things to be true.</p>
45.54	Genevieve	<i>Ladies and Gentlemen, please help me thank Jordan Peterson!</i>