

The Problem with Peterson

by Fergus Downie



I really don't like to say it, but Jordan Peterson really bores me. Until recently I repressed the urge to say it out loud because these days anyone saying a man is not a woman is a prophet and when all is said and done, sometimes you just have to choose your sides.

I'll stay on his but the notion that someone who trades in such verbose and thundering vacuities is entitled to preening deference is too much to entertain. Rules for Life is simply abysmal and his prose is so bad it's almost a relief when a cliché interrupts the performance. I agree people should tidy their rooms- it seems a good idea on balance but I've never been sure why, after giving him the sympathy he deserved for being forced out of his job I have to pretend something profound is going on when he forces these searing aphorisms out. With Peterson we know when he thinks this is going on –

he italicises it and when all else fails in an interview he creates an awe struck silence. Douglas Murray in the time honoured manner of serious British intellectuals pauses his flow and launches the killer parody with a light touch – Peterson by contrast is picturesquely brooding and always looks like he's about to cry, which after the 57th Jungian reference is almost a relief. Small wonder he's click bait and YouTube abounds with segments of Peterson making a heroic stand and saying the gulag was bad . It was but only CNN anchors and Alexandra Occasional Cortex need need to learn that. The medium here is trivialising the message. It's cut price education for the young but they should stick to digestible books and authors who can teach them how to write. And how many people reading this actually think psychoanalysis is any more of a science than Scientology?