

'Scared' Prof Blasts Political Correctness

Last week, University of Toronto psychology professor Jordan Peterson released a video in which he pushed back on the political correctness movement.

"I am very concerned about what's happening in universities," said Peterson, a tenured research and clinical psychologist.

Peterson has been called a bigot and "abusive" because he has declined to use genderless pronouns ("they," for example, to describe a person who identifies as non-binary) and has not publicly accepted non-binary gender theory.

Now, Canada is considering legislation that stands to make refusal to use genderless pronouns a criminal offense.

"The law scares me," Peterson says. "The doctrines behind the law scare me."

The law to which Peterson is referring is Bill C-16, legislation that would alter the Canadian Human Rights Act and the Criminal Code to include the terms 'gender identity' and 'gender expression.'

Peterson said he made the video because he didn't know what else to do.

"They put into the legal substructure of the culture certain assumptions about basic human nature that not only do I believe to be untrue, I believe them to be dangerous and ideologically motivated," he says.

Peterson expressed concern that some of the things he was discussing in the video "may now be illegal even to say." Despite his misgivings, Peterson [went on CBC Radio](#) to defend the ideas he shared in the video.

Carol Off: Professor Peterson, you have said that you don't recognize another person's right to determine what pronouns you use to address them?

Jordan Peterson: That's right. I don't recognize that. I don't recognize another person's right to decide what words I'm going to use, especially when the words they want me to use, first of all, are non-standard elements of the English language and they are constructs of a small coterie of ideologically motivated people. They might have a point but I'm not going to say their words for them.

It's difficult to tell if Peterson is foolhardy, brave, or

both.

What's clear is that he's staked out a position that is highly unfashionable among the intelligentsia, one that will win him little acclaim and much ridicule. But, one could argue, the stakes are high.

People of course can identify as whatever they choose. But requiring others to do so by adopting a prescribed vernacular is another matter. It challenges not just free speech, but [free thought](#).

Is Peterson's stand a noble defense of free speech? Or is it abusive to people who identify as transgender or non-binary?

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