

This is part 2 of a detailed analysis and evaluation of the video "Rationality Rules." It is an exercise in heightening awareness of different epistemological positions including one's own as an intellectually converted critical realist.

*Part 1 consisted of a search for the appropriate context within which to study the epistemological confusions exhibited in this video. We concluded that "Rationality Rules" video is an **attack video** where the commentator (RR) encountered Jordan Peterson (JP) at the third reflective level of the human good, only to find an **almost instinctive reaction** to Peterson's comments. While RR respects JP's work in defending free speech, he considers him to be a light-weight intellectual, especially in the area of religion. It is clear from the very beginning the **JP represents a direct threat** to RR's very being to the point that he has gone to all the trouble of making an entire series of videos around his reaction.*

As an attack (debunking) video, all the references to JP's work as well as other video actors are selected to set up and advance RR's position. This is especially true when it comes to RR's "alter egos" who stand for his own position, adding weight to his own commentary.

All this suggests that the real focus of this inquiry is on RR's own horizon as revealed or objectified through his encounter with Jordan Peterson. It is also interesting that we don't know RR's name, only that he stands in place of "rationality" (rationality rules).

Detailed Analysis (from the beginning)

1. **Icon.** RR's icon is very interesting. It consists of a closed circle with one R upright and the other—on the opposite side—upside down. Or are we reading too much into it?
2. **"Rationality Rules."** Not a personal name, but an avatar. He stands in defense of all rationality in human affairs, hence his somewhat violent reaction to JP's comments on religion: he didn't like what he heard and had such a reaction that he produced a number of videos systematically "debunking" J.P.'s approach. (R.R.'s opening statement.)
3. **Intellectual.** RR considers himself to be a true intellectual, otherwise how could he debunk JP as a light-weight thinker? He explicitly equates JP with Deepak Chopra (popular spiritual approach to life that is non-materialistic?) as both being somewhat less than rational people. In either case, he himself holds "truth" to be of high value.
4. **Truth.** RR uses this video to focus on truth, explicitly stating that the video is about epistemology. He "asks" JP, How can you tell a theory is true? This is RR's opening attack vector upon which the subsequent video hammers his point home, namely that JP is not being rational.
5. **Differentiation of Mind.** Not one of the participants brought forward in this video have any idea of Lonergan's notion of the differentiation of mind. Lonergan's point is that "truth" depends on the realm of meaning one is involved with, so common sense "truth" is not the same as "scientific" truth, which is not the same as "reflective" truth. Unaware of these distinctions, the participants bravely forge ahead unaware that they are talking about very different things while using the exact same terminology. Thus, over time, tempers rise in a state of mutual confusion.
6. **Darwinian/Newtonian.** JP "defines" truth as that which enables a person to survive, and in doing this he briefly mentions these two scientific world views. It seems as if he is using these views in a rough and ready way, almost as if the important element is the notion of human survival (and enhancement) that is part and parcel of his professional practice where bad "truths" can kill. This he is not deriving his notion of truth from Darwin, but from his experience as a clinical psychologist. RR reverses this, attacking JP misunderstanding of Darwin's theory of the origin of species (quite true, but irrelevant to JP). In a general sense, "Newtonian" is used to represent a materialistic world while "Darwin" is used in an evolutionary way in which Jung's theories play a major role. Selfish gene: survival.

7. **Myths.** It is for this reason that "myths" become the hinge upon which RR and JP play their epistemological confusions. For JP, myths are real (true) in the sense that they have a dramatic impact on a person's life. In fact, they can be said to underly much of human behavior at at psyche level as in the great hero myths or the mythic fairy tales that still enthrall (Disney). This is not true for RR, where myths cannot be real but only subjective non-verifiable internal states that cannot be subject to empirical investigation. In this, RR holds to a empiricist epistemology in contrast to JP's almost conceptualist "ideal" approach.
8. **Control.** In observing the style of the two primary participants, it seems that RR is heavily involved with control is a somewhat rigid fashion while JP is highly exploratory open to questions and further inquiry. It is as if RR has a solid position while JP is still searching, i.e., a difference between open and closed minds, between the desire to control and the desire to understand. In a way, JP expresses an openness at the reflective level of the human good in the establishment of personal relations among free participants seeking sound terminal values that offer not only survival but enhancement. Because of this, RR comes across as being very reductionist when it comes to understand human behavior. (Alan Bloom, *Love and Friendship: Nietzsche vs. Shakespeare*)
9. **Appealing to Argument.** It's interesting to note that so far RR does not appeal to fact but only to rational argument. But then, the very argument is over what is or is not a "fact." The problem is that RR's argument is grounded in a specific horizon, one that is not aware of reality (the sensate world) as mediated by meaning or that all meaning is proportionate to us being human. The realm of interiority is not available to him, possibly because that realm remains part of a "subjective" feeling that to an empiricist is not "real."
10. **Fullness of Being.** Myths are real if they help people not only survive but flourish. But "flourishing" is only partially dependent on the intellect. Of equal and perhaps more importantly, the dramatic, aesthetic, and biological patterns of human experience are at play—elements of the human condition that can be embodied in integrative myths and symbols far beyond the reach of the pure intellect.
11. **Critical Realism.** In contrast, a critical realist starts with the world of experience, seeks to understand, judges that understanding, and finally decides what should or should not be done. RR fails to attend to experience; JP is entirely grounded in it.