

- *This is the transcript from the video discussion between Pennell Rock, Suzanne Taylor and Justin Brown. You can read about it here:*

<https://ideapod.com/what-did-wild-wild-country-miss-about-osho-philosophy/>

*Please note number of transcription errors below. If you come across any, we would appreciate your help!* Ideapod discussion on Wild Wild country and I am really lucky to be here with Suzanne and Pennell. The way this is happening is that Suzanne is an [Ideapod prime member](#) - she's been around Ideapod for a while. I saw quite a random little video clip pop up on a page where Suzanne is talking about the "Wild Wild Country" recent documentary series. It's come out on Netflix and is a roaring success. The documentary series centers around a man named Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh who renamed himself Osho before he passed away. In the Seventies his ashram in India started something of a revolution in human thought and action. In the Eighties he was brought from India to Oregon where a commune, Rajneeshpuram, was created by his inspired community of believers and supporters. There was so much beauty and inspiration in this "town" and yet at the same time, as we learned in the documentary series, there were charges of terrorism, immigration fraud and attempted murder. There's just so much drama in there and in the video by Suzanne, she was saying "well, you know, it's fascinating to learn of all the events that happened but there really wasn't much focus on the philosophy behind it and on what people really believed" or what Osho helped people to learn about themselves, about each other, the world and their connection to the universe and everything going on. So, Suzanne has organized this wonderful discussion here with herself - and I'll introduce you in just a moment-- and Pennell, who was part of this movement, so this is the chance for us to go a little deep into these philosophies and ideas behind what was really going on. So, I will just introduce you both very briefly. Suzanne produces stimulating events, projects and experiences for sophisticated audiences with a visionary voice that challenges the status quo and helps people feel inspired forward a collective vision. Her current project is a website to generate a conversation as if our lives depend on it [www.SueSpeaks.org](http://www.SueSpeaks.org).

**Suzanne Taylor:** 02:23.21 Sounds like you doesn't it, Justin?

**Justin Brown:** 02:25.28 Yeah, well I think we're all very aligned. When I read this bio of Pennell, I think that we've got a lot in common. Although I don't claim to have the amazing experience that Pennell has with his academic institutions. Pennell began his professional career as a child actor appearing on television or in theaters on the East Coast and he was educated in Philosophy and Comparative Religions at Yale, Harvard, the Sorbonne, and King's College, Cambridge. He has had many academic appointments, including the Jung Institute in Zurich and the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions in Santa Barbara. Thank you both for joining us in this discussion.

**Pennell Rock:** 03:11.28 We're here.

**Justin Brown:** 03:14.13 We're really happy to have you. So, I guess if you could just start Suzanne, could you share a bit of the context for this discussion and why you feel it's important.

**Suzanne Taylor:** 03:24.21 Well, many of my friends were Sannyasins with Osho. That was the time when everybody had a guru and there were gurus from India, there were local gurus, and it was a very big guru time. The biggest, best, most dramatic of all was Rajneesh and virtually all my friends were members. I was not and the little video you found was me speaking about the

one weekend when I was flown to Oregon because they were recruiting for movers and shakers and I'm a "mover and shaker"! So, I got flown up on the private plane for a weekend at Rajneeshpuram. Well, you would've thought I could've spoken about it that way. But, the reason I made the video is because it was a quite a humorous-not-so-funny-at-the-time kind of a invitation to a bit of hell because the situation was deteriorating at the time. I don't know why they were still recruiting because they really were in a lot of difficulty at the time and I arrived for my weekend in the middle of things.

**Justin Brown:** 05:01.14 Absolutely.

**Suzanne Taylor:** 05:01.29 I speak about it so I won't repeat it here but when you found my video and you said "Oh, c'mon let's talk about it!", I said "No, I'm not the expert but I have the expert!" Now, I have a more expert person in terms of how long Pennell was with Rajneesh. He will tell you when he was with just a few people and he was very intense, high-minded and elevated, and my friend Pennell likes that a lot. Rightly so. He's very scholarly and smart and was with it all along. He'll speak about his opinions about how it changed and what happened to it, but he's gonna be your main person because he's the one who really was watching it from the beginning -- intelligently, from the inside. I'm just a little minor observer, so, Pennell, over to you.

**Justin Brown:** 06:05.14 Yeah, maybe you could just give us some context. How did you find yourself there by Osho's side within this community and what's the background to that?

**Pennell Rock:** 06:19.16 Well, I already was very much involved in a mystery school called Arica. I was not interested at all in any other teachers. While I was making a trip to India, where I had once lived for quite a number of years, people kept pressing into my hands articles by this new master in India. A lot of it had to do with sex! Now, one of my basic criteria for evaluating a teacher is whether or not they can talk turkey about sex. It is because sex is the great conundrum of the spiritual life. So, it's like a doorway to me - if you can't talk really intelligently about sex then I'm not interested. Well, I found him really amazing. Not only not shying from the subject but very, very clear and upfront about it and so I said "well, I have to go and see this." And so I went to him, and I fell into the thrall of his brilliant mind and his beautiful presentation. I was there early enough to have something of a personal relationship with him in which he really addressed every major existential issue in my life. I had a wonderful time with him. I did not fall in love with him like most people did, I have to say, but I truly was in love with his mind. I still think he was the most brilliant person I've ever had contact with.

**Suzanne Taylor:** 08:10.27 One more thing, I could not quite understand why all of my friends were just so drawn to this person who didn't really draw me. I had respect for him. I thought he was quite intelligent but I didn't feel that kind of "oh, I gotta be with this person!". But, one of my very successful, sophisticated, intelligent, rich friends said to me, "Suzanne, you're missing the best party in town!" So, people are really having a good time which you wouldn't have known so much watching that documentary. I think that kinda picked up somewhat after those years.

**Pennell Rock:** 09:01.03 Wait a minute, those years were in India?

**Suzanne Taylor:** 09:03.18 Yeah

**Pennell Rock:** 09:04.06 The first six years that I was with him in India were very different from what came down in Oregon.

**Justin Brown:** 09:11.06 The question I've got Pennell, you mentioned that sex is one of the great mysteries or the great paradoxes of our spiritual development. Can you explain what you

mean by that? So that the people viewing this video can start to understand the brilliance of Osho's mind and his ability to tackle these existential issues and help people like yourself to really achieve some sort of enlightenment on these issues. How did Osho help you come to a new understanding of the role of sex in your own life or the human species?

## What if women ruled the world?

**Justin Brown:** 14:17.10 You've touched quite a number of things that I do really wanna flesh out. One of them is certainly the power structure and the breakdown of what happened there in helping people. There's a lot to do with power and organizational power - with what Sheela has done with factions and everything like this.

**Pennell Rock:** 14:37.28 That was in Oregon, that was not in India, which was really very different. In Oregon, it changed tremendously. One of the things I wanted to point out is that there were several things about the series that didn't portray things accurately. One is what we're basically addressing here.'why did people love him so much?' The second one was this great experiment designed by Osho. He was called Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh then. Rajneesh, by the way, is the name of the full moon. It means ruler of the night, so I thought of him in that light. His great experiment with the commune was this, and it was also a dream of mine, "what if women could run the world? wouldn't the world be a better place?". So, women ran Rajneeshpuram from the very beginning. The department heads were called "Ma" and Ma Sheela was the head of all of them. I leave it to you to evaluate the experiment. What happens with women running the world?

**Suzanne Taylor:** 15:44.18 No, it was just a couple of women.

**Pennell Rock:** 15:52.14 That was the experiment and the men were just sort of drones. So as I say, I really didn't participate in Oregon very much. Not much about the new commune was in the old. When talking of the "new commune" Bhagwan always said that it's going to be full of artists who were creative and doing their arts to express his teaching in the world. What happened in Oregon? They built a city and everybody was turned into a drone! Many people loved being a drone, I didn't. I have to say that Osho himself, at one point, was asked "What would you do if you were in this commune?" and he said "I'd run away as fast as I possibly could" and that's basically what I did. So, I was truly following the master, even though I wasn't going along with what was happening.

**Suzanne Taylor:** 17:04.29 What was going on with this funny picture. You're getting a funny picture of Pennell where he freezes?

## Why were so many people enthralled in Osho's presence?

**Justin Brown:** 17:00.14 Yeah, I've got a message saying that Pennell's bandwidth is quite low but the voice is still coming through. It looks like it's recovered. The technology here is pretty good so I think that it's gonna keep on recording and come through. We'll definitely push on. I guess, my question is I understand that Osho had an incredible mind. So much clarity and

stability to give the most phenomenal sermons spontaneously without notes. That must have been so inspiring to be in his presence but when I looked at the documentary, I see people almost shaking with awe in his presence as though it's this transcendent experience just to be around his aura. Pennell, can you, and maybe Suzanne as well, can you tell us about that? How is it that another human being, although human beings are very fallible as well just like all of us, why they would react that way around a human?

**Pennell Rock:** 18:07.02 Okay, let's see if I can hold on to all the thoughts that came up when you talked about this. First of all, there was another element that you did not talk about. He was a PhD in Psychology and he was a master of all the great scriptures and all the great religious writings in the world. In his discourses he would take one of those scriptures and for a month, go through line by line and bring it right down home into your here/now existence. That was his brilliance. So that was certainly one of the elements of it. But, people project. There's such a thing as a guru projection - it's an archetype. A guru is the "knower of the truth" and we all have it as a potential inside of us, called in Sanskrit he "sat guru". We project it on whoever we think fits the bill. Well, he was a fabulous projection. He was like a blank screen and you could project the whole thing on him and people did. So, he became their inner teacher. He became the embodiment. Now you said, people were shaking. Well, there were two things that were shown in the series. First, earlier on in India after he stopped speaking so much, he gave what he called "energy darshans" and people, mostly women in his presence would be in ecstasy. When you had darshan with him, he would touch your forehead and you'd get this thrill in your whole being that was called "shaktipat" or shakti energy. Many people responded in a very physical way and they'd go into these sort of ecstatic states and start shaking. So, that's one form of the shaking. In Oregon, once a day he used to do things called drive-bys and he would drive in one of his Rolls Royces through the little town. People would stand on the side and shake and jump up and down as Rajneesh went by. So that was a kind of an institutional thing that disciples did. I wasn't really into all of that, I never did really get much from an energy darshan. It's just not the way I responded to him. Many, many people did and they were completely into it and completely in the thrall of it.

**Suzanne Taylor:** 20:52.17 But do you know it was an earlier era? Really, everyone was learning about this thing called spirituality or god within and we were naive. All those gurus were teaching us this. You know, in some ways it was a little bit crazy. Everybody was sublimating and following and worshipping. The demise of Rajneesh as the biggest and best of them all kind of ended that era. It ended by thing falling apart. It just lost all kinds of all its juice, all the energy kinda ran away from those people.

**Pennell Rock:** 21:45.10 In America only. Not elsewhere in the world.

**Suzanne Taylor:** 21:46.08 Oh yeah, I don't know what was going on there.

## The Lord of the Night was not a paragon

**Pennell Rock:** 21:47.05 Well, the rest of the world is different. Europe had its own way and Asia has had its own way that's very, very big. Much bigger in Europe and even bigger in Asia, in fact. But that's a whole other story. One of the things that's really important to understand about the Lord of the Night was that he was not a paragon. He was not, the ultimate good

person who was up there, a perfect being. That would be in the category of yoga - to have a perfect being. Now, when most people think of a guru, it's an ultimately good being. Osho was NOT that. He looked like that in his theater, when he sat up there and gave his discourses in India and wore his pure white robes. There was never a god theater that was better than his. I mean if you just wanted to see what God would look like, he would look just like Osho sitting up there in his white robe speaking in his slow-motion way. It was brilliant so you could easily project on that, but he was not a paragon. He was the other thing in India which is a tantric master. A tantric master is not a paragon but a provocateur, so he was always provoking. In fact, that's the way he worked with individuals - to provoke them, one way or another. And he didn't just provoke individuals, he provoked cultures. For instance, his discourses lasted for an hour and a half in the early morning in India. You'd hear the birds singing, the beautiful sounds of the jungle, and he'd be speaking in this wonderful effortless way, really. But what would happen was that he would push people into their tendencies and make them live out these tendencies, but with awareness. That was the way his teaching happened. So, he was very controversial in India until he died. Once he died, he was safe - he wasn't gonna do anything surprising anymore. But, one of the things that he did as a provocateur in India was to start sprinkling his glorious discourses with dirty jokes! Totally freaked the Indians out.

## A sermon on the word "fuck"

**Justin Brown:** 24:40.04 There's a great story about a sermon or a lecture he gave on the word "fuck".

**Pennell Rock:** 24:47.26 I happen to have that quote, and if you won't censor me I will read it to you.

**Justin Brown:** 24:53.18 Please, feel free to do that

**Pennell Rock:** 24:55.08 All right, this is the kind of thing he did. One day, he would lecture on a passage in the scripture and the next day he would answer questions. One of his disciples, Sargamo, asked "How can you use the word fuck, it's such a disgusting word?" So, he says Sargamo, "it is one of the most beautiful words - the English language should be proud of it. I don't think any other language has such a beautiful word. One Tom from California has done some great research on it. I think he must be the famous Tom of Tom, Dick and Harry." Tom said, "One of the most interesting in the English language today is the word 'fuck'. It is one magical word. Just like it sounds, it can describe pain, pleasure, hate and love. In language, it falls into many grammatical categories. It can be used as a verb, both transitive - "John fucked Mary" and intransitive "Mary was fucked by John." As a noun - "Mary is a fine fuck." It can be used as an adjective - "Mary is fucking beautiful!". As you see, there's not many words with the versatility of "fuck". Besides its actual meaning, there's also the following uses:

Fraud - I got fucked at the used car lot.

Ignorance - Fuck, if I know.

Trouble - I guess I'm fucked now.

Aggression - Fuck you!

Displeasure - What the fuck is going on here!

Difficulty - I can't understand this fucking job.

Incompetence - He is a fuck off!

Suspicion - What the fuck are you doing?

Enjoyment - I had a fucking good time!

Request - Get the fuck out of here!

Hostility - I'm going to knock your fucking head off!

Greeting - How the fuck are you?

Empathy - Who gives a fuck?

Innovation - Get a bigger fucking hammer.

Surprise - Fuck, you scared the shit out of me!

Anxiety - Today is really fucked!

and it is very healthy too. “

That's it! When he told it in his way, the whole audience was just collapsing with laughter. That's the provocateur he was.

**Justin Brown:** 27:42.09 I've seen the video before and it's truly incredible. I'll make sure that Ideapod viewers get access to links so they can actually go on and take a look and see him in robes and long beard and the way he speaks with such precision and power. He really enunciates every sentence, it's truly quite phenomenal to watch.

<https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x26zues>

## Spiritual groups have a tendency towards fascism

**Pennell Rock:** 28:06.03 Actually, somebody else who was a provocateur was Gurdjieff. You know, Gurdjieff was a tantric master. People who teach in that way are bad, they're not good boys - they're bad boys. They provoke. Since Osho was not speaking in America, he couldn't tell dirty jokes. What on earth would you do in a materialistic culture like America? What could you do that was provocative enough to really draw attention and really push everyone's buttons? What would you do if you wanted to really, so to speak, fuck over the American psyche? How about a hundred Rolls Royces?! And I maintain in the end that the commune/city itself was the real provocation, and it's taken 30 years for it to mature. Now, with this series, it is exploding upon the American consciousness in a whole new way. I feel that in his vision of the grand design, it somehow played a major part. And I want to explain just a little bit about that. The tantric way is to take a tendency that you have and to live it out fully and try to remain aware of the whole thing. Find the teaching underneath what that excess produces. So, one of the tendencies I have experienced as a spiritual seeker, having been associated with a number of groups including Arica, is that they all have a tendency towards fascism. All of those spiritual groups tend to become devoted to their leader, to become very rigid, to become very authoritative and to have a new kind of compulsory conformity. That is the tendency in spiritual organizations. Well, basically, what happened was that the Rajneesh disciples lived out that tendency in spades. That was not the end of him by any means. It was actually just the beginning of a bigger spectacle which is beginning perhaps to unfold now. Because people in America after 30 years, after that whole impression of what happened has died down, people have forgotten it. Now, a whole other generation enthralled by those events is arising and people like you are saying "Who is this guy?" and "What did he teach?" It's stupendous PR.

**Suzanne Taylor:** 31:16.01 And, in India, I don't know if the audience here knows this, but the Ashram is really going great guns. It's beautiful. There's no more contention or ugliness or whatever the difficulties were. So, it lives on.

**Pennell Rock:** 31:37.05 Yes, it DID transcend its fascism for sure. It is a very exquisite place - it's the same place I went to 40 years ago, but, it's all grown up into jungle now. All of the buildings have been painted black so they disappear in the jungle. People glide around in red robes during the day and at night they glide around in white robes. There are fountains everywhere. Everywhere the sound of water - it's all a huge zen garden and nowhere to be seen is a picture of Osho. He's kind of disappeared. It's all theater.

## **The paradox of a guru's power: freedom vs submission**

**Justin Brown:** 32:19.02 I'd love to drill a little bit into the notion of fascism and what happened out there. I find that fascinating. I said at this time I'm sort of an occasional observer of the writings of Osho. I've written articles about Osho and they're extraordinarily powerful. I just love the clarity of his mind and what has been created, this body of work for us to sort of dive into. But, the thing that I do have trouble understanding when I look at the documentary series is the idea that Osho has helped to create almost a revolution of human thought. It's all about an individual finding a connection with their own humanity, their own sense of inspiration, and yet at the same time there were fascist tendencies. It looked like an attempt to create some sort of organized religion, really. And, people were in uniforms and he dressed differently from everyone around him. So, he was very conscious of his separation, I guess his superiority in some sense. I think it's okay to understand that he did have superiority in terms of his ability to deliver the discourses, pull together ideas in such powerful ways, harness his energy and really help people break through their important psychological challenges. But, I still wonder why all of this kind of notion of leadership being a guru. In that sense, can you help me understand a little bit more?

**Pennell Rock:** 33:54.20 Yes, the basic end of his teaching is truly wholeness. That means the worst together with the best. When I was growing up in college, there was a book that really struck me greatly. It was called "Escape from Freedom", by Eric Erikson. The basis of that book was that the human soul is ambivalent. It wants total freedom but it also wants total submission. So, if you're gonna deal with wholeness, somehow, you've got to come to terms with that. So being a tantric, as I said, you'll live out a tendency. He himself was always talking about "listen to your heart (the guru that is within you) and do what that guru says", I really took that to heart. That was the main message I received, and I didn't fall for the fascist thing. Frankly, I think in my last life, I must've been a fascist, because I think I'd already learned my lesson at that time. I never wanted anything to do with it. So, I was definitely always moving towards my own greater freedom. Actually, this became my crisis with Sheela, because Sheela was growing into this rivalry with my partner, Hasya. She targeted me as being someone who was uncooperative and was on his own ego trip. She gave me a very hard time during those first Oregon years because I wasn't becoming a drone. I was listening to that other Rajneesh that said "get away from here as fast as you possibly can". So in his way of presenting himself and his way of guiding us, he took us through both of those extremes. Both of the extremes have to be there: freedom and

submission. I had my way. There were many disciples who really wanted to go into that submissive thing, and they did. They lived life like drones on the ranch.

**Justin Brown:** 36:06.27 I think that's really fascinating way to explain it around the two competing desires for submission and freedom at the same time. That's really a part of us and it sounds like Osho embraced that fully and helped to create a place where all of this could play out. My question is, as you mentioned, in the documentary series with Sheela and after that with Hasya, there were power battles going on. Then, you also said that Osho encouraged you and everyone to connect with the guru within, and, that if it was him, he would run away from that place. It wasn't the right place for someone like Osho himself to find connection to his own human spirit and subsequently you've found that for yourself as well.

**Pennell Rock:** 36:58.02 Not subsequently, from the beginning I was outta there, because I picked up on the power trips coming down and my beloved was one of the main ones involved.

**Justin Brown:** 37:09.28 So, was Osho aware of all of this and was he encouraging it and seeing it as a useful tool or was it all just out of his control?

**Pennell Rock:** 37:22.14 I think he had a meta-awareness of it, yes. And he probably did, he was a provocateur! What is a provocateur? You see a tendency and you push it, and you push that tendency to the point where there is a possibility of a profound lesson and transcendence. Because if you've lived out that fascism..., believe me, all those three people who went to prison - they're not gonna have anymore fascist tendency. I tell you, they're finished with it, they've transcended it. So, I mean the teaching did work, but it was kind of a bloody mess.

## When fascism started to get out of control

**Justin Brown:** 38:08.17 Looked like it got completely out of control.

**Pennell Rock:** 38:12.08 Yes, what fascism does - look at what's happening in our world now. There's a whole tendency back towards strong leadership and that is the tendency towards fascism. We are moving in that direction and the liberal democratic way of being that arose after the two World wars is losing ground. Just watch it around us. So, we're dealing with something that is major and within all of us and unfortunately within our world civilization.

**Justin Brown:** 38:48.13 So, for the people like myself who watched this documentary series and learning about Osho for the first time, what message do you want to share with them as it relates to the world today? How can we better prepare ourselves to embrace our own humanity and come up with a different way of living - embrace fascism or reject it? Any general thoughts to share on that?

**Pennell Rock:** 39:12.26 Well, I think one of the things is to really get in touch with how these things exist inside of you. There's definitely a fascist in me - I am so in touch with it. It's just that I don't choose it among my many possibilities, but I can get into it. I know it's there and when I see it outside, I can recognize it. What I would say to your viewers is, there's so many to have a direct hit of Osho. All of his meditations are available and practicing any of them will give you a personal experience of his teaching. There are videotapes of his discourses, there are audio tapes, you can find them all over YouTube and all of his books are available. Forget about hearsay. Read what he says and don't try to imagine what you think he's saying. Read, watch or hear or practice for yourself. Go to the source and the source is prodigious. There's many,



many, many, many possibilities out there. So, that would be my response, maybe you want to ask me further about that.

## Recognize the fascist within you

**Justin Brown:** 40:15.18 Yeah, I'm curious what it means to recognize the fascist within. So, tell me about that expression.

**Pennell Rock:** 00:40:25.25 As I told you, I've always had a tendency towards it. This is kind of deep and personal, but actually, Hasya was a Holocaust survivor. Part of the huge universe of the relationship I had with her was that I felt like I needed to make it up to her. And we went very deep into that, and at a certain point, I discovered that maybe in my last life I was a Nazi. But I was a "bad" Nazi because I fell in love with a Jewish woman. So, I got bumped off by Hitler in 1933. When I went digging into this, I realized this is why I felt I had to make it up to Hasya in our relationship. That's what I came up with. But that's not important, the thing is, I know in me that there's a Prussian. There is a Prussian officer who sits very straight on a horse, and he is very militant. I'm just aware of that part and it comes out from time to time. But, I see it just as a part of a greater whole of who I am and I hope that it only comes out when I need it and not as a definite mode of being which becomes my identity and m.o. in life.

**Justin Brown:** 41:55.24 Absolutely, just to clarify for people watching, Hasya was the producer I believe of "The Godfather".

**Pennell Rock:** 42:04.08 Her husband, before I was with her, was Al Ruddy. Al Ruddy produced "The Godfather" and she financed it.

**Justin Brown:** 42:15.17 Right, and then she end up as right hand to Osho. When Sheela was the main sort of chief secretary of this ashram and the whole organization was built around them, it looked like basically a massive corporation -- a huge business. There was just so much going on. And then there was subsequently a power struggle. Hasya became the chief secretary to Osho. Suzanne, I'm wondering if you have any questions for Pennell to flesh out a little more that hasn't been discussed yet.

## The power struggle between Sheela and Hasya

**Suzanne Taylor:** 42:52.25 You spoke about there being a power struggle. Was there a power struggle, Pennell? Or, was it that Sheela went to jail and so Hasya took over when Sheela was no longer on the job?

**Pennell Rock:** 43:05.26 The "Hollywoods" were the ones who had all the connections to people with money. So, when Osho came to this country, suddenly my little Sannyasin family became very important. They began having a lot of power and Sheela called upon them to raise the money to establish this new city, and so they became more and more powerful. I always thought that when I took Hasya to Bhagwan that he would end up taking her away from me, which he basically did. But what happened was that the Hollywoods and Hasya, in particular, were a counter faction to Sheela who was in power. You could call this the 'war of the Ma's'. I think Osho played them off against each other or he played Hasya off against Sheela. It became very violent, and as Hasya became more and more powerful, Sheela was becoming more and more

crazy. Finally, Sheela split and absconded - that's very well portrayed. And so immediately, Osho brought Hasya forward. (I sort of fell away from it at that point) and Hasya became the secretary - she did not have the kind of power that Sheela did. But, she's the one you see setting fire to the "Rajneeshi Religion. They burned the religion up, they ended the religion. They disassembled the whole super- structure of Rajneeshpuram. Of course it fell apart by itself after he was arrested and sent out of the country. So ever since the beginning, when Osho came to the country, there had been this power struggle growing between Hasya and Sheela.

**Suzanne Taylor:** 45:32.04 One more piece of information, you said that Hasya financed it but how did this Holocaust survivor have enough money? Well, her first husband was very wealthy! That's true.

**Pennell Rock:** 45:47.07 Yes, he was. He was a real estate magnate.

**Suzanne Taylor:** 45:50.26 When she married Ruddy, she came to that marriage with enough money to finance "The Godfather."

**Pennell Rock:** 45:59.05 It was a good investment.

**Suzanne Taylor:** 46:04.28 You asked if there was anything else I would ask Pennell, I don't know, he's as good a communicator about this as anybody you would find and I don't know what else.

## Will Osho become the next great religious figure?

**Pennell Rock:** 46:19.27 Well, I have something I wanted to talk about. That is this question: "Is it possible that Osho will become the next great historical religious figure that goes down in history, like Buddha or Jesus?" There's no way really to know about that, history is what determines that. You know, Jesus didn't decide "I'm going to be the great Christ figure of the Western world". He didn't make that decision. That was bestowed upon him, if you like, by God through history. History decides that so I have no way of knowing. But I can say that I do know that Osho "pre-programmed" a kind of serial deployment of his teaching. A lot of it had to do with provocatively doing things that created a lot of attention and curiosity. There are many examples I don't have time to go into now. But in the bigger picture, the Oregon story may be seen as such a provocative event. It is certainly turning out that way. Basically, it was important first to generate enough controversy in the world that everybody kind of knew about him even if it was in a very negative way. But at the same time, he left this extraordinary record of his teaching. A thousand books! Each one is totally brilliant! Tapes, videos, but there's no consistent teaching. There's a lot of contradiction - you have to see through the contradictions and the paradoxes to see what the true teaching is. Pictures of him went everywhere, and then there's the "mythology" that he was slain by the American government. Niren, who was featured in the series is presently writing up the whole legal case that he was poisoned in those days when he was moved back across the country to Oregon and put in a different prison every night. There is concrete legal evidence that they put radiation poison under his pillow or something like that, because in 5 years, the whole right side of his body degenerated and decayed. The teeth fell out on that side of his mouth and they did analyses of this whole process. Two separate diagnostic institutions concluded that he'd been subject to radiation poisoning and so there's that "mythology", a kind of chemical crucifixion, that will grow up around him. And steadily his

star is rising. There are all those books. Actually I understand that he is the best selling author worldwide! And so this historical process is kind of under way. He planned it out. I don't know how it's going to come out, I won't be alive to answer the question of what he becomes. But I can say that the teaching is substantial and incredibly beautiful. It will exist in the books, in his various videos, so people will have ample access to him and his teaching for a very long time. I think he set it up, he saw this would happen, but it remains to be seen how it will play out.

## Was Osho "consciously provoking" or did he lose control?

**Suzanne Taylor:** 49:58.28 Actually, I do have one thing to ask. I watched the whole television series and maybe I didn't get it. But, how come he went from provocateur to really things that were very unattractive? I don't think you'd call them "conscious provocations by the master" as much as he'd lost his control. Is there something more to say about how that happened, how it really became corrupt and not just provocative?

**Pennell Rock:** 50:53.02 I don't really know. I felt that way, too. I mean I was a bit mystified by some of the extremes that I saw and I do know that he started taking some medication. He had a lot of problems with his back and he started taking pain medication. I think they started giving him laughing gas and I don't know what else. Early in India Rajneesh always wore this white robe and he was very pure. Then my Hollywood group did something which I thought was horrible - they "torted" him up. I remember one of them said "we want to put him on a diamond throne". And so, they dressed him in these elaborate costumes and plied him with diamond watches, which they said were necessary to keep him in his body. It all was kind of gross. That exceeded my capacity to cope. I saw things going in directions that I certainly didn't want to have any part of. At that point, I broke with my "family" and the organization. And so, I might say, it surpassed my limits as well and my limits are pretty broad-based.

**Suzanne Taylor:** 52:27.24 How do you think he let that happen?

**Pennell Rock:** 52:32.01 Well, I think he trusted that some process was happening and he just went with that. It involved that level of debasement. There's some wonderful books that Sannyasins are writing about it. One of the books that I recently read was by somebody who was one of the people who bugged the rooms. My room was bugged when I was there! He had to come to terms with what he'd done and the last quotation is this very beautiful quotation that the "whole includes the worst with the best". Somehow, wholeness has to comprehend the whole. And there's some point at which the Dao includes all of that. If one becomes the Dao, one becomes all of it. That is, only by becoming the whole (rather than the best) is there real transcendence. That was really the basic message of the tantric way.

**Suzanne Taylor:** 53:59.11 Who bugged the rooms? So, that wasn't Rajneesh bugging them?

**Pennell Rock:** 54:04.14 No, it was Sheela.

**Suzanne Taylor:** 54:07.04 [inaudible] What an intrigue, it's very hard to understand.

**Pennell Rock:** 54:11.24 Oh yeah, this is a whole big thing. I can tell you more about that. They bugged our room because I was connected with Hasya so I was one of the targets. They spread lies about me. They told her I had AIDS, for instance, and that she probably had it, too - it was

unbelievably untrue and ugly. It was manipulation to the point of such ugliness that one could hardly conceive of it.

**Suzanne Taylor:** 54:44.03 So, this was a power struggle of Sheela and Hasya?

**Pennell Rock:** 54:48.09 Yes, so Sheela felt herself losing power and what happens in fascist governments when they want to maintain control? They just broaden their control. It was Orwell's 1984! It was actually the year 1984, and we were the only place in the world that actually did 1984!

**Suzanne Taylor:** 55:16.27 So, what happened to Rajneesh? He just sort of seceded control? He was letting himself be controlled by the Mas?

**Pennell Rock:** 55:26.21 I don't really believe that myself. We are in areas where I cannot speak with authority, and all I have is my own instinct and intuition. I believe that he saw this fascist teaching emerge out of it. I think he provoked it in some way. So, I think he pushed Sheela to her limits and she kind of went overboard and lost her mind for a time. But she certainly transcended fascism. One of the beautiful things in the series was what Sheela is doing now! Sheela runs a place in Switzerland that takes care of people who have dementia to such a degree that they're confined to their beds. She is nursing these people. This is what she is doing with her life now. I think that's very interesting about transcendence.

**Suzanne Taylor:** 56:30.28 When she spent several years in jail before that, right?

**Pennell Rock:** 56:33.20 Yeah, but now, this is her work. I never particularly liked Sheela but I felt very endeared to her when at the very end of the series, after she finished this long interview, she said, "Now, let's have a drink." So that's that. I can't just justify everything that happened, but I can look at the big pattern and see that it just might have been part of this deployment of the Osho brand into posterity... possibly.

**Justin Brown:** 57:13.21 Well, Pennell and Suzanne, I think that we're pretty much out of time. But, I think this has been an incredible discussion that has covered so many of the key things that I know you all wanted to flesh out and talk about. I think one of the great questions is, "What will the legacy of Osho be?"

**Pennell Rock:** 57:32.25 Well, I'll tell you one last thing. Just before Osho left his body, he supposedly turned his head to Jayesh, the disciple who was to head up the Ashram, the last person he spoke to, and he said, "I leave you my dream." So, in like manner, I leave you his dream.

**Justin Brown:** 57:57.08 I think it sounds fantastic and Ideapod is a place for us to explore these ideas together and come up with different ways of thinking. For me, a lot of questions remain. To what extent was Osho the most incredible guru of the 20th century that's helping us to create a new way of life and thinking in the 21st? Or, to what extent was he another revolutionary, charismatic revolutionary, someone like Che Guevara? The meaning of this is that they inspire people to create these movements, and, ultimately, things may come tumbling down in some way. Who knows, but I love the fact that we're talking about this and exploring it like this. I think that it's been a wonderful discussion. I thank you so much, Suzanne and Pennell, for sharing so much of your own personal experiences and thoughts and ideas. I just really appreciate it and I'm sure the Ideapod community will as well.

**Pennell Rock:** 58:51.25 Well, we appreciate you and it will be interesting to see what you'll do with this dream.

**Suzanne Taylor:** 58:56.27 Really, I appreciate you a lot, Justin. You're asking just the right questions. We all need some way, now that we're not following anybody, to figure this all out amongst ourselves and you're one of the main people who is putting out that opportunity.

**Justin Brown:** 59:11.29 I really appreciate it, and I appreciate you being part of the community, so I guess we'll end the recording here. Thank you so much and see you all soon.

**Pennell Rock:** 59:20.02 Goodbye everybody.