

Stephen Moss on Tony Benn

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Stephen Moss [has a touching and respectful interview with Tony Benn in the Guardian today](#), which is well worth reading. The idea in the following piece is not original to Tony Benn (Schopenhauer got here first), but so what?, it's true and Benn has clearly lived by it:

We pause for more tobacco-tamping, and then suddenly he fills the silence with a brief but touching political aria. "How does progress occur? To begin with, if you come up with a radical idea it's ignored. Then if you go on, you're told it's unrealistic. Then if you go on after that, you're mad. Then if you go on saying it, you're dangerous. Then there's a pause and you can't find anyone at the top who doesn't claim to have been in favour of it in the first place." It strikes me that his belief in this process must have sustained him during the long periods in which he was mocked and marginalised.

I suspect Stephen Moss is right.