

## These things I believe

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This weekend a person who has all the appearance of being a right-wing troll, but may be the concerned member of the Labour Party that they claim to be, took aim at what they obviously think to be my extreme political opinions. These did, she claimed, undermine my academic arguments on modern monetary theory and anything else I had to comment upon because of their extreme nature. The evidence for this was my criticism of Keir Starmer's current policy vacuum, [which I am far from alone in noticing](#).

A lot of trolls did pile onto the blog behind this person, and were deleted, as usual. I do not host a site where right-wing extremists are provided with the opportunity to be abusive. That is why all comments are moderated.

But what really gets me is the idea that I am, apparently, an extremist.

I believe in a mixed economy. I very firmly support the right of people to create and own businesses. But I also expect them to be accountable and to pay their taxes. I also expect regulation to prevent market abuse to be upheld, because only if these things happen can we have fair markets, and who wouldn't want them? I could not be more pro-fair markets in many ways.

I also want us to manage climate change. Who wouldn't when our own futures and those of our children are at risk? Why would anyone want to take that risk?

I want to ensure no one lives in fear of hunger, homelessness, the cold, illness, old age, the perils of unemployment and being denied opportunity. Why would anyone do otherwise?

I believe people are equal as well as different. I have lived this experience since I was very young, having a gay twin brother who I realised, when really quite young, was different to me and as valuable. I cannot abide prejudice as a result. Why does anyone disagree?

I believe that there are some things where the state can deliver more cost effectively than markets. Where there is only room for one supplier if everyone is to have access

to a service, whether paid for (such as water, energy and railways) or supplied for free (such as the NHS and education), then I think that it is the state's job to supply such services so that access is universal and either abuse or denial of service does not arise. Who would want anything else?

I believe in the right to be. That is, the right to have time off or to have the time to think, to laugh, to live, to understand, to relax, to idle an afternoon in a way of our choosing. But I know this right has been hard won and is not universal now. Why would anyone want to deny these things to anyone?

I believe work is worthwhile. I know most people would like to work. But I believe in that case in making work the best possible experience for people, and not in it just being an opportunity to exploit their labour for profit. What is wrong with that?

I think the value generated from work is greater in importance than the returns made from speculation, exploitation and extraction. Too many so-called businesses are actually engaged in the latter activities, whether they be most energy companies, banks or even many pension funds. I believe that they should be heavily regulated and/or taxed as a result, because the so-called profits they make are extractions from the well-being of others, and are not value added to society at large. Who would disagree?

I believe in equality of opportunity. Don't you? Doesn't that make you want the best possible education for everyone? Why wouldn't you?

I believe in equality within our democracy. So I am opposed to private control of much of the media and the access the wealthy secure to politicians and the influence they secure as a result. Unless you are a eugenicist why would you disagree?

I do not believe there is a gene that identifies a natural right to govern. Again, unless you are a eugenicist, why would you?

I believe instead we all have the right to govern - and so I believe in the widest representation of people in society within politics - even when I disagree with those saying something. But there have to be limits on the promulgation of hate. Ethics requires it. Why would you disagree?

I believe in the state as the mechanism for delivering much of this, because there is nothing else. So I think those arguing for a small state do not want them. Why else would they argue as they do?

I believe in progressive taxation that is properly enforced because I see tax as a way to deliver social, economic and fiscal policy within a state for the well-being of all. This is not what we have now. Why would you want the tax system to be biased in favour of the rich, as it is at present?

And I believe in justice. Mainly I believe in forms that seek to correct wrongs done: but justice has to be done and be seen to be done, and that is not possible in the society in which we live where most have been excluded from any opportunity to seek remedy for wrongs of any sort. Why would you oppose that?

But most of all I want freedom from fear. I want people to live lives of hope, and not despair and anxiety which is all that is offered to most now. Why wouldn't you want that?

Does any of these things make me an extremist? Why?