

The news agenda exists to stop us asking the important ...

Published: January 13, 2026, 2:31 am

Just occasionally there are mornings when I wonder what to write. Most days several issues come straight to my attention, and I have no problem thinking of an angle to take on them. Then, off I go.

This morning the news has not done that for me. I have already discussed the local elections. I have addressed the denial of choice inherent in first past the post, and in new ID restrictions.

I have discussed Charles Windsor and his absurd coronation this weekend, with all the oppression implicit in it.

The Fed raised interest rates yesterday, meaning the Bank of England is bound to do so, again, and I have related the folly implicit in that policy many times.

War in Ukraine continues. Putin is making more false claims.

So too are our political parties, to the extent that neither of the main ones now say anything of any meaning.

I have an overwhelming sense of a system that is failing about which only so many words can be said. I suspect I am far from alone.

Most people will not vote today, although they are entitled to do so.

More people will worry about their economic fate as they face the private despair imposed on them by bankers who are ignorantly adamant that the excess spending capacity of UK households is the problem they must bear down on.

Young people wonder about a world stacked against them, always tinged by the nagging doubt that maybe it will not have the capacity to sustain them, whilst knowing older people will do nothing about that, so deep is their sense of entitlement.

The refugee knows, as they always have, that few really want them.

And the soldier most likely has just one question that they ask time and again, why is 'why'?

It is an appropriate thing to ask. How we got to this point can always be disputed. Facts are limited in supply when it comes to understanding the human condition. Sentiments are plentiful. And resignation is the easy one. The presumption that it is our fate to live at this moment, suffering these conditions, thinking ourselves unable to address them is commonplace.

I do not accept that hypothesis. The one inalienable right that we have is to ask 'why?' and to decide we do not accept the answer that is suggested to us.

We cannot, in other words, be forced to comply, although the price of non-compliance can be high.

We do have the right to disagree and to promote alternatives that appear to us to be better answers to the questions that we must face.

Earlier this week when being interviewed for the [Scotonomics podcast](#) I was asked what people can do to address the fact that the understanding of economics that I share with William Thomson and Kairin Van Sweeden, who run it, when that perception is not widespread? My answer was to suggest that we should simply talk about the different view that we have.

Right now, we have that option. In amongst the despair that it is all too easy to feel about the state of the political economy in which we live we should not ignore the fact that, as yet, we still seem to have that freedom. The creation of alternatives is still permitted.

What I added on that occasion, and when also discussing my motivations for writing this blog on '[Steve Keen and Friends](#)', was that repetition is not a problem. This morning I am unwilling to return to the dominant themes of today's news agenda as I feel I have addressed them all of late. But, in reality repetition is essential.

Without repetition we do not build narratives. As a result, we do not refine our stories. Nor do we reach enough people. Repetition is, then, key.

Knowing that, I have sometimes joked that I have written no more than ten or so blog posts in the last seventeen years of producing this blog, but have repeated each of them a couple of thousand times in various different ways.

There is an element of truth in that. And it is important. We build our beliefs by testing them. That is what I do when writing. I don't write because I know the answer. I always write to find out what I think. And it is only by thinking and then testing that thinking time and again that we can answer that question 'why?'

Why is there no news that jumps out from the pages to grab my attention this morning? It is because the news agenda is being controlled to focus us on that which is not relevant - the coronation of a king - when there is so much more to really think about. All else has to be downplayed so that our required sense of awe will fulfil us, temporarily. That is today's agenda.

I do not accept that agenda. I will instead ask why we cannot do better. Why, instead of focussing on the falsehoods implicit in the supposed royal traditions, most of which are of remarkably recent creation, we cannot ask the more important questions in life.

Why can't we meet basic needs?

Why can't people be free from fear?

Why can't we live within the means of the planet?

How can we limit the capacity to abuse that humans apparently have?

Why can't we create the conditions in which everyone can flourish?

I believe we could do all those things.

Sometimes today's news agenda distracts us from the big questions.

By ignoring it today I have got closer to what the questions really are. And that's no bad thing.

But normal service will resume soon.