

Is this place fair to me?

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I [accused Rachael Reeves yesterday](#) of finding it 'really difficult to make any decisions when [she] lacks a moral compass, a political philosophy, and any rational explanation for why [she] seeks the power [she] so obviously craves.'

I am surprised that no one challenged me as a consequence to specify what my own success criteria might be for the role of Chancellor. The obvious answer overlaps with discussion, also on this site yesterday, on the thinking of John Rawls that has appealed to me for a very long time.

My suggestion is that the goal of a left-of-centre political economy is to create a state where anyone, whoever they might be, and whatever their origin, gender or orientation, or whatever their wealth or income, or age or education; should be able to live in a country and affirmatively answer the question 'is this place fair to me?' If a reasonable person could always do so then political economic justice would have been delivered. If they could not then that would not be the case.

Saying that, I recognise that the word 'reasonable' in that last sentence might be doing a lot of work, but if we presume that in practice a double reasonableness test is in use i.e. the test is that a reasonable person might reasonably believe that outcome to be true, or not, then I think that the test is fair. This is a now commonly used legal concept, close only approximating to the ['person on the Clapham omnibus'](#) test.

Comments are welcome.