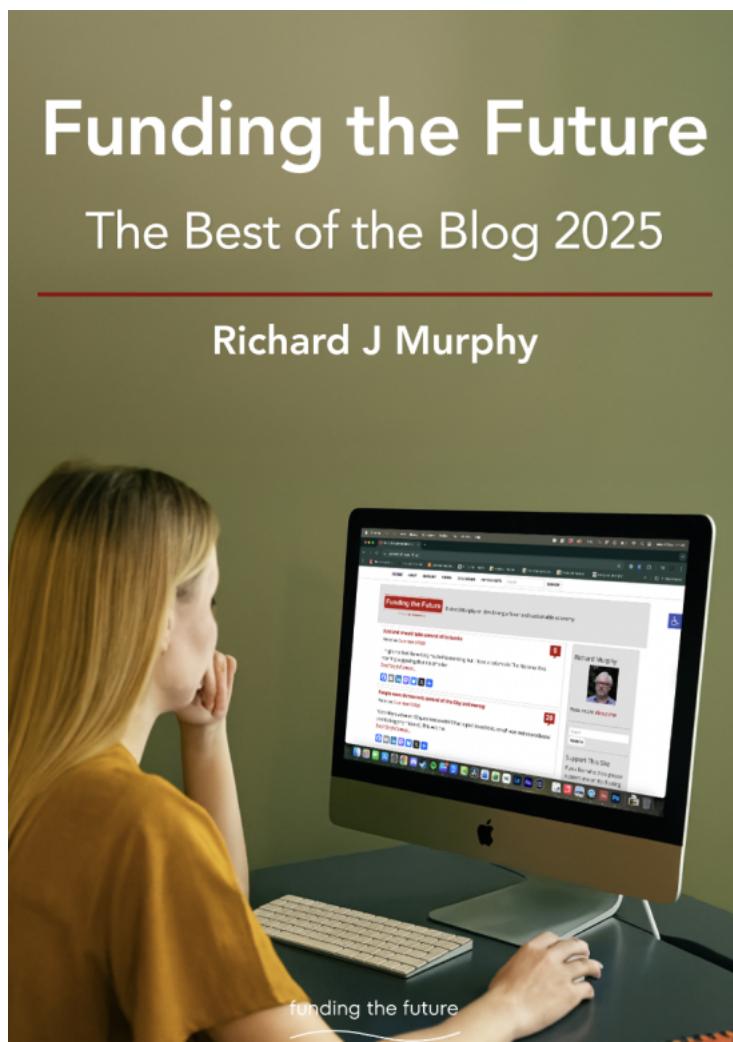


Funding the Future

The Best of the Blog 2025: the Introduction

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The first of our two planned books for Christmas was published yesterday. It was the [Best of the Blog 2025](#).



The book is a 200-page combined volume of 60 blog posts from 2025 chosen from amongst those most liked by readers during the course of the year.

Quite a lot of people have already downloaded the book [from our PDF shop](#), and I hope

many more will do so.

I am also grateful to all those who made donations as a result.

Except for the foreword, [which I shared here yesterday](#), only one chapter in the book has not previously been published. This is the Introduction, in which I have sought to explain how the blog reached this point.

The blog was first published in June 2006, and since then, I have written 3.4 posts per day, on average, 365 days a year, every year, with that number being on a slight upward trend at present. Inevitably, the blog has changed over that period, as has its focus. The Introduction explains that history and why the focus has changed over time. Perhaps more importantly, though, I also seek to explain what motivates me to write as I do, as my small contribution to making the world a better place to share.

Introduction

As I have noted in my foreword to this volume of collected blog posts from Funding the Future, almost all of which I have written, one of the reasons for undertaking this exercise is to explain just what that blog is all about for new and more recent readers.

Answering that question is, however, challenging, not least for me. Writing blog posts has become so much a part of my life over the last 20 years that it is hard to understand what life would be like if I did not, day in, day out, both write posts and then respond to the comments that are posted on the blog, of which there are usually more than 100 a day now. It is hard to be objective about yourself but let me try.

So, what is this blog about? At a simple level, it could be described as a stream of consciousness, reflecting my developing thinking on the issues that are of concern to me in the world, about which I seek to influence change.

That description is fair. When I gave up being a full-time accountant in 2000, I wrote a plan for my future activities. It was only three or so pages. I still have a copy. I refer to it sometimes just to see if I'm still on track. Everything was reduced to a series of bullet points, and when it came to the work elements of that plan, my focus was to be on:

- * Thinking more.
- * Teaching more often.
- * Writing more extensively.

In each case, the goal was to reflect my desire for a world that was:

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- * More equitable.
- * More transparent.
- * More accountable.

Or, to put it another way:

- * Fairer.

In a very real sense, none of that has changed. Those might have been my goals in 2000, and they remain pretty much the same now.

However, over the years, the focus of my attention has altered. Starting in 2002, because of my meeting John Christensen and then working with him to co-direct the Tax Justice Network for more than a decade, my focus was very heavily upon the abuses caused by tax havens and the consequences for developing countries, without ignoring the impact on the UK and other developed nations. There was also a focus on the threat to democracy that these locations created by imposing antisocial neoliberal capitalism and its race to the bottom in regulation and all forms of justice on the world.

Once academia rather than campaigning became my focus, with that reorientation happening around 2015, which year also marked the adoption by the OECD of many of my ideas on tackling tax haven abuse, including country-by-country reporting, a change in the focus of this blog became more apparent. That was partly because of the promotion of some of my ideas in the media as a result of them deciding that I was a major influence on Jeremy Corbyn's thinking as leader of the Labour Party at that time. As a result, I began to write more about:

- * The Green New Deal.
- * Finance for sustainability, and for investment in society, and not just for profit.
- * Domestic rather than international tax justice, and most especially about the need for more progressive tax systems.
- * The curse of inequality and its consequences.
- * The creation of new political narratives.

When I, rather belatedly, realised that this had happened, the blog was renamed as Funding the Future in 2023. Until then, it had been Tax Research UK.

These issues remain the focus now, but they have now tended to gather around a number of particular themes, largely as a result of my "retirement" from all other

projects but the blog and its related YouTube channel, including as a professor at Sheffield University Management School, early in 2025. Doing so has. Meant I have had time to develop some issues in more depth.

As a result, I have found myself developing more explanatory material. In part, this is focused on creating more content in the blog's glossary, which explains core ideas in political economy and is always linked within the blog posts themselves when the topic in the glossary comes up in anything I write.

It is also reflected in the series I have been developing on core economic thinkers who have influenced my work, either positively or negatively.

In addition, the thinking on what I call quantum economics, on which publication is currently on hold because there is just too much else going on, has been very important to me, working with my wife Jacqueline, because it provides an essential underpinning for what I am doing and will, I hope, eventually provide the linkage between economics and the rest of life which is almost absent from most economics currently being taught.

The other new core theme has been about creating alternative political narratives. Part of this has been about reframing what is called neoliberalism as antisocial capitalism, which is precisely what it is. Knowing and understanding your enemy is important, and I am deeply opposed to all the impact that this pernicious form of thinking has had upon our society.

Being opposed to something is not, however, enough. What is required is the putting of something in its place, and this something I desire I describe as the politics of care. That, to use a phrase I like and use on occasions, is the better song that we need to sing.

The politics of care is about our need to live, work and build all our relationships in communities where clear rules of behaviour might exist, but where we also tolerate and seek to understand differences, because we humans are riddled with them.

Part of the politics of care is also about respect, the lack of which is at the core of so many of the crises in our society. Those who suffer discrimination from so many sources are suffering from a lack of respect. Many young men, in particular, seem to crave respect and cannot find ways to secure it in an economy which treats them as expendable. They are not, however, alone: many others feel the same way in our society.

The politics of care, then, must be a politics where the focus is not on difference but on similarities. That, in a nutshell, is why tackling inequality is so important, and why it so motivates me.

Through all this, I hope something else becomes apparent. Although, as is sometimes

clear in blog comments, I can find timewasters irritating, and after 20 years of blog writing, I attract plenty of them, I, overall, like the vast majority of my fellow human beings, warts and all. I know that many of them have very different priorities to me. I am very aware that few would want to spend their life as I do, thinking, writing and YouTube-creating in the main, because that is very obviously a somewhat niche activity. So, inevitably, I am reminded day in and day out that we have different priorities as people. But what I always see, underneath all that, is what we have in common.

We all want to meet our material needs, both for ourselves and for those for whom we are responsible. These are our material needs.

We all need friendship, family, love and community. Let us call these our emotional needs.

In addition, very often in very different ways, we all want to understand how we fit into this world of which we are a part. Building the stories that help us understand just how we achieve this goal seems to be one of the most fundamental human activities that exists. This is our intellectual need.

In addition to these needs, I suggest we all have one other need, and that is to find our purpose. Some express this through religion. Most in the UK do not now. In other countries and cultures, religion is more important. Which of those has priority does not worry me. Purpose does, though.

One of my core perceptions, as I get older, is that everyone appears to have a reason for being, and those who are most angry with the world in the negative sense are those furthest from finding it.

I admit to being angry with the world, but in what I hope is a positive way. I get angry because I think this world could be better. And that, I now think, explains why I write the Funding the Future blog. It is the way in which I explore my own purpose and my own relationship with how I might contribute to making this world a better place. In the process, I seek to understand why I am here and what I can achieve, primarily for others in the communities in which I live. That, in summary, is what I think the Funding the Future blog is about.

You do not have to agree with what I say to read the blog. It sometimes turns out that I do not even agree with myself. In other words, I sometimes change my mind. Which wise person has not? My point is that the Funding the Future blog, while sometimes quite technical and detailed, is also at its core an exploration of how we can have a better world for everyone.

It is my desire for that world, which means that every morning I wake up and seem to want to write blog posts, often before breakfast. Some are in this volume. They are,

however, only a small selection of what I had to offer during the course of 2025. Every day, even when I am on holiday, there are more. That is not because of habit, or addiction, or workaholism. It is simply because I have found something to believe in, which is that a better world is possible.

If you are interested in reading the blog, ***it is available here, and there is a daily summary newsletter sent out every night at around 6 pm, UK time, for those who would rather consume it that way. The alternative, for those who would rather hear or see the message, is to look at my YouTube channel. Either way, if you want to join in the journey, knowing that this is inevitably a personal view which will be flawed as a consequence, then you are welcome to do so, and many thanks if you already do. I appreciate your company.***

Comments

When commenting, please take note of this blog's comment policy, ***which is available here. Contravening this policy will result in comments being deleted before or after initial publication at the editor's sole discretion and without explanation being required or offered.***