

Are you the media now?

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People keep asking me what they can do to help change the conversation about economics, politics, and power. The answer is simpler, and more important, than most people expect.

Social media now decides what people see, hear, and believe. If our ideas are not present there, they effectively do not exist. Silence is not neutral; it cedes the space to those who already dominate it.

In this video, I explain why liking, sharing, commenting, and eventually creating your own posts are now forms of civic action. I also explain how algorithms really work, why perfection is not required, how AI can help without replacing judgement, and why consistency matters more than scale.

This is a practical guide to becoming part of the conversation and shaping it.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=27CxVViSxyg&si=Ulmz1VRg9BUPxRsx>

This is the audio version:

https://www.podbean.com/player-v2/?i=57ka8-1a2bf2d-pb&from=pb6admin&share=1&download=1&rtl=0&fonts=Arial&skin=f6f6f6&font-color=auto&logo_link=episode_page&btn-skin=c73a3a

This is the transcript:

I've been asked by people, "What can I do to talk about the issues that I discuss on this channel?" And the answer is a lot. That's what this video is about, because it really is important that we share the messages that I talk about, and others talk about on other channels, because let's be honest, I'm not alone in creating ideas, but I want to start with the simple idea that you need to share these ideas on social media.

Why? Because how we get our news matters, and what we know is that the mainstream media is now very definitely filtering what we hear, and in a very biased way. Academic research shows that the mainstream media is biased against the left, and so we have to make good that deficiency, and the answer is that we have to make the news by sharing the good news

- or the bad news stories if that's what they are - that we think are important, so that people hear the truth. That's the message I want to get over to you, and you are the agent for delivery.

This matters. Social media now shapes what people see, hear, and believe. If our ideas are not present there, they effectively do not exist. So making content is now part of political participation, and far too many people who share our values are absent from that conversation, and that's what worries me, and that's what I'm trying to persuade you to change if you are one of those who isn't making a comment.

This is a practical appeal. I'm not talking here about theory. I'm talking about what actually works. If we want our ideas to be spread, we have no choice but to share them, and that requires everybody to take part to the greatest possible extent. Good ideas don't spread themselves, is my message.

Social media rewards activity and not virtue. Algorithms amplify engagement and not quality, let's be totally honest, because we can see that on the right, they put out utter drivel, but it still gets noticed. But if we do nothing, their voices fill the space, and no wonder people then say that social media is toxic because we let them make it so. We have to challenge that. Our silence is not neutral. It reduces reach, but it lets them be heard.

So, we need to create as much media content as we can.

Now, let's be clear. I already do what I can. I do daily blog posts. I do daily YouTube videos. We post links to those across multiple platforms. X, and Bluesky, and Facebook, and Instagram, and TikTok and more, besides, and this is intentional and not accidental. I am deliberately trying to spread a message, but there is a limit to what we can do.

Let's be clear, why would everybody want to listen to us all the time? Why would they not want to listen to you? Because you are also important, even if you only have a limited circle of friends on social media, so what? You can speak to them. You can tell

them what matters to you. And this is what I'm talking about.

And you can do it in various ways. I know that most people's time and energy are limited. I'm realistic. I can do this full-time. I know you probably won't want to. I know you may not be able to, but that doesn't matter, because the key issue here is amplification. Reach is collective and not individual.

So what can you do? Well, the simplest action of all is to like something that you read on social media. In particular, you are watching this YouTube. You could like it using the buttons down below, and that sends a signal to the YouTube algorithm. The more people who like this video, the more people who will see it, because YouTube will believe that this is a good video, and therefore they will share it with more people. You can genuinely help by simply ticking that box, and you can do the same if you are on Twitter, or Bluesky, or Facebook, or I don't know, LinkedIn, or Substack; we are there as well. All of those platforms, liking makes a difference.

But you can do something a little bit more. You can also repost content. That just means literally pushing the button to repost. You don't have to even add a word of your own. All you're doing is picking up our content and putting it on your stream on whatever platform you are on. You are just saying by implication, I like this, have a look at it. But that doesn't even require you to have a large following. Again, reposting is simply about saying you like this, but in the process, you do something else.

If people find that they like what you repost, they will follow you. They will engage with you. They might want to talk with you. You won't necessarily find people who agree with you all the time, but just make it into a conversation. That's how ideas travel, and this matters. So reposting is one stage up from liking.

Reposting with a comment is even better. Just add a sentence about what you are reposting. Say, "I like this. I thought you might find it interesting too," or, "I like the arguments in this video. I don't necessarily agree with them all, but I definitely think they're worth discussing." Anything like that which humanises your recommendation really extends its impact. It increases engagement. It expands reach, and it turns you into an active participant in this process in a way that previously you were passive.

Liking and reposting without a comment is great. Let's be clear. If that's all you can do, please do it. If you can add a comment as well, though, you suddenly become a participant. You are in the first stages of becoming a campaigner, and becoming a campaigner is important in a world where we need every campaigner we can get.

Of course, the next step is to create your own posts. Now here, I know I'm making a big ask. This is a giant leap forward from just reposting with a sentence, because a post involves multiple sentences. Now, some people haven't written for years. I speak to people who tell me, and they're roughly my age, that they haven't written anything very much since they were at school. The idea of stringing together a few sentences is

really quite difficult unless it's a note about what's going to go on at Christmas or whatever else, in an email, or a text or a WhatsApp or whatever. No, we're talking about something a little more than that here, because we're talking about creating an argument.

Now, this may be something you don't feel confident about. If it isn't something you feel confident about, please do let us know, because one of the things you can also do when you are engaging with social media is actually tell us what you don't like or what you want. We do pay attention to that. We're doing increasing analysis of the comments we get on this channel. Sometimes we get more than 1,000 comments on a YouTube video, and that gives us a lot to think about. Tell us what you want. If you want us to explain how to create posts, we will do it. If you want us to create videos on other subjects, we will notice.

The point I'm making at this moment is that you can do this too, and perfection is not required. There's a story that goes around YouTube, and I think it has got a lot of merit to it: the first hundred videos that anyone makes are, let's be polite about it, pretty rubbish. And I've got some suspicion that that is true because if we go back and look at our very early videos, we think they are pretty rubbish. They're not nearly as good as we do now. I wasn't as good; technically, we weren't as good. We didn't know how to film as well, and that's okay, because we had to do them to practice our craft before we began to make anything that anybody noticed. And it did take that long, more than a hundred videos, before somebody did notice.

Well, it's the same with any posts that you do. Not many people are going to notice at first, and that's fine. Perfection isn't required then; all that matters is doing it. Doing it is the key thing here, and unless you start, nothing will ever happen. So creating your own posts is something you can do, and if you haven't got many followers, that's almost an advantage. But what you'll find is you get more followers by doing it. So, practice makes perfect here, but please have a go.

And when doing that, do think about using AI, but use it sensibly. AI can genuinely help you generate texts for use in a social media post. Whether it's a tweet, whether a Bluesky post, whether it's a short thing on YouTube here, whether it's a comment that you want to put on Facebook, a comment on LinkedIn, a whole long article on Substack saying why Richard Murphy was wrong. It doesn't matter what it is, you can do that using AI. But I add a word of warning. I have never yet got anything out of AI that is perfect for my purposes. I've always had to read it. I've always had to check it, and I've always had to refine it. But I have used it, and I do admit it can be very helpful.

So, if you are not sure where to start, chuck the text of something into AI and ask it to write a comment for you. Ask it to write 10 comments for you. Ask it to write 10 tweets for you, or whatever it might be. But the point is you'll then begin to get a pattern. You'll see a style, you'll decide you don't like any of them, but because you know you don't like them, you might be what you do like and do it. This is how you learn using AI.

Don't treat AI as a tool which is blind and does everything for you. If you treat it as an assistant who will help your learning and get you to the point where you can publish, it's very useful. So I suggest using it.

I don't know which one is best. I have used ChatGPT quite a bit. I'm finding it a bit frustrating right now. I quite like Claude AI. Google has its own version, and so does Microsoft. I don't like Microsoft's very much. Google's isn't bad. Claude AI seems to me to be really quite good, and there is a free version, and ChatGPT, well see what happens. You might get on with it, you might not. My point is, until you try, you won't know. And this is the key issue I'm making. Becoming a campaigner is about trying. It's about how participation grows. You start with liking, you then repost, you then repost with a comment, and finally, you post your own ideas.

And saying all that I've mentioned lots of platforms, and it's very difficult to do them all. So choosing your platform matters, and I think that's important.

If you are an older viewer, Facebook might work, but also, Facebook can be very hostile, so do you want to use it? I'll come back to that in a minute.

The friendliest platform I know is curiously YouTube. Over 98% of the comments we get on this platform are positive, which is extraordinary.

Bluesky is the next most constructive, and so too is Mastodon, which not many people know of, and you won't get as much reach, but it's also pretty friendly.

I'd start with Bluesky. If you don't know where else to go, I've got around 40,000 or 50,000 followers there, which is, of course, more than you are going to get at the start. But the fact is that if you go there and if you begin to link other people's comments into yours, so if you retweet me, you make sure that you put my handle in there, so people begin to see it, you will begin to attract attention, and they're definitely more friendly there.

But whichever platform you try to use, consistency matters more than scale. In other words, if you post one day, it's great if you post the next day and the day after that and the day after that, or whatever else. Frequency does matter. It means that people get used to expecting to see you, and that's good. So just repost one item a day, just repost one item with a comment per day, whatever it might be, and if you can only write one article or one slightly longer piece a week, well, do it every Saturday if that's what you want to do. But consistency is key.

And I've mentioned comments already, and friendliness, so let me make it clear. You can ignore all the comments that everybody makes on everything you write if you want to. One of my friends is Larry Elliott. He was the economics editor of The Guardian for, well, longer than anybody can remember. I think from 1985 to 2025, nearly. Something like coming on for 40 years. He had thousands of articles published by The Guardian,

and many of them, in more recent years, of course, went on the web. His advice to me was, never read a single comment that anybody makes on any article you write: that way, you keep your sanity.

Now, I do read the comments on YouTube. We analyse them. I read every comment that is made on my blog. I don't read almost any of the comments I get on other platforms, and that's because I just don't have time to, I'd love to, but I'm human, and so I don't, and that's a perfectly valid response. If you want to avoid the hostility, just ignore the comments. The idiots will show themselves up. Your friends won't be embarrassed by the fact that people are reacting to you. They might say that somebody has, but don't worry about it. Just say, "I ignore the idiots." It's worth it to get the message out there, and that way, you'll keep your sanity. Your job is to keep posting, and not to worry about those who don't like you.

So, we need to shape the space. That's what I'm talking about. Social media reflects those who participate. If you think it's toxic, it's because you are not there and you are letting the toxic people own it. If we withdraw, others dominate. Participation increases reach and visibility, and content creation is now the preferred form of civic action because that way we can shape the news.

You can start from here. You can start by liking. You can start by sharing. You can go to my blog, Funding the Future and do the same things. On both of these platforms, we include convenient buttons to help you to literally click and share. But when you want to go further, think about content creation. Think about how you want to make a difference on things that matter, because this is genuinely how the world is shaped now, and you could be as much a campaigner as anyone else. Go on, give it a go. And down below there's a poll, and the poll is focused on what you would like us to talk about if you want to take this further. Let us know. We will pay attention.

Poll

[poll id="304"]

Tickets are now on sale for the Funding the Future live event in Cambridge on 28 February. [Tickets and details are available here.](#)