

You are not disposable

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Modern economics behaves as if some people simply do not matter. In this video, I reject that idea outright.

Neoliberal economic policy treats people as costs, blames them for failures they did not create, and deliberately excludes those who do not contribute to its narrow definition of “productivity”. Disabled people, carers, the long-term sick, the elderly, migrants, and those in insecure work are all made disposable by design.

I explain why this is not an economic law but a political choice, how institutions like central banks enforce it, and why the result is an economy that fails by choice.

I also set out the alternative: a politics for people and a political economy of care, built on inclusion, dignity, and justice.

No one is disposable. You matter. And your job is to reject any politician whose actions suggest otherwise.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g8VOypobBr8?si=27eJ6zznYjSF0qWd>

This is the audio version:

https://www.podbean.com/player-v2/?i=77p8p-1a44150-pb&from=pb6admin&share=1&download=1&rtl=0&font=Arial&skin=f6f6f6&font-color=auto&logo_link=episode_page&btn-skin=c73a3a

This is the transcript:

There are no disposable people in our economy, and I think it's incredibly important to say that because I keep seeing policy attitudes and outcomes that imply that there are, but that's not true. No one is disposable in this world. Everyone matters. But modern society pretends otherwise, and our economics behaves as if some people simply do not count. This video is about rejecting that idea. You matter.

Listen to what politicians who do not care about people say.

They say inequality is inevitable.

We are told economic and social exclusion is regrettable, but unavoidable.

Migrants are treated as objects to move around a game board, not as people who matter.

And people are abused, and no one raises much objection.

We are told some people are economically inactive, unproductive, or a burden, but those labels are political choices and not economic facts, and all of them imply that the people in question don't matter, or are disposable, and this is unacceptable.

What does disposable really mean in modern economic policy?

Disposable means being ignored when decisions are made.

Disposable means being cut loose when budgets tighten.

Disposable means being blamed for failure that the people who are being blamed did not create.

Disposable means being treated as a cost and not as a person.

And none of this is by chance. Mainstream economics, as we now suffer it, creates disposability.

Value is defined narrowly as market output, and if you are on low wages, you don't matter.

Care work is ignored or downgraded.

Those outside paid employment are treated as marginal.

Difference is always treated as a cost to be minimised or ignored.

And human worth is collapsed into wage rates and productivity.

The role of the state in this process is to challenge this economics of destruction.

Neoliberalism is the economics of destruction.

It says the state must stand back.

It says that public services are unaffordable.

It says that support systems must be turned into punishment regimes, and it says that responsibility must be shifted from society to the individual.

The result is the destruction of capacity; that's why I'm calling it the politics of destruction.

Who is made disposable: disabled people, the long-term sick, the elderly, carers, those in insecure or low-paid work, any and every minority, and those already failed by housing, education and health systems.

The lie that underpins this utterly destructive thinking is plain for all to see. The claim is within neoliberal economics - the economics of destruction, as I'm now calling it - that the economy only works if some people lose.

Let me give you an example. The Bank of England is deliberately forcing people into unemployment at present. 1 in 20 people in the UK is out of work, and that is by choice; by choice of a very small group of people at the Bank of England who have decided that interest rates must remain high to supposedly tackle inflation, even though there is no evidence that this policy succeeds in delivering on that goal. But people are paying the price nonetheless.

That same economics says that scarcity is natural, but actually it's constructed. The consequence is that people lose out, but it's excused by neoliberalism.

Neoliberalism, the economics of destruction, claims that care is a cost rather than an investment in well-being for everyone, and it says that markets allocate human worth efficiently when it is glaringly obvious that they do not.

What we're seeing is one overriding assumption, and that is that everybody is the same; when we are not.

We are different. We have different values, we have different things to contribute. We have different skills. We have different aptitudes. We have different preconditions within our existence, we have different genders, and you name it, everything else under the sun. We're not the same, and yet, if we don't conform to what neoliberalism thinks - that there is one type of human being - they call it homo economicus - then we are not worthy of counting, and that is the challenge that I'm facing here.

And there are real economic consequences of this ridiculous idea on the part of the neoliberal hierarchy of power.

There are lost skills and wasted potential.

There are higher long-term public costs.

There's poorer public health.

There's lower social trust, and there's a weaker, more fragile economy and an economy that has failed by choice, and I cannot emphasise that last point enough.

The economics of neoliberal destruction has turned into the economics of failure, and that is not an accident; that is by design.

This also creates political consequences. There is alienation and anger, and quite reasonably so.

There is the rise of authoritarianism and exclusionary politics.

And blame is being redirected away from those to whom it is attributable, those with power, and towards those with none at all, because those people are seen as being disposable.

Meanwhile, democracy is hollowed out by despair because people are refusing to engage with it.

Politics is becoming remote from people. It's not about being for people anymore; it's about alienating people.

The alternative is a politics for people and a political economy of care. These start from the principle that 'everyone matters', and they design policy around human need and not market purity. They treat care as core economic infrastructure and above all else, they recognise difference, diversity, call it what you will. But what they want to do is include everyone so that the state deliberately provides services to all and not just a few, as it does now. Exclusion is considered an impossibility.

What this means for economic policy is something quite radical.

Employment must be provided, including meaningful work and care for everyone who wants it.

Social Security must provide dignity, and not discipline, which appears to be its entire role at present.

And public services must be universal and preventative in the sense that they ensure that there isn't failure. In addition, tax justice must focus on inclusion, and not reward extraction, but too often, tax at present is all about rewarding those who take the most and contribute the least.

There are obvious conclusions to draw and directions of travel to indicate.

First of all, there are no disposable people, none at all. Disposability does exist at present, but it is always the consequence of a political decision, and not of an economic law. Those who promote that economic law are doing so precisely to ensure that some are treated as disposable and are prejudiced, and that is to benefit a few.

The politics for people that I am promoting would reject the idea of anyone being disposable. As a result, we could have a caring economy, but it would be more efficient, resilient, and democratic as a consequence, because everyone would be included. And if you use all the resources that everyone can bring to the economy, guess what? You have a bigger, stronger, and better economy where incomes are higher.

In that case, we must rebuild the state around inclusion, care and justice, and do so for everyone. Nothing else is more important now.

Remember, above all else, you are not disposable. You matter. The problem is, the state is not confirming that in its actions and no wonder you are fed up with it.

What do you think? There's a poll down below.

Poll

[poll id="316"]