

King's Great Debates

The Climate Emergency: Do We Need a Whole New Political Economy?



“What makes a Great Debate? ~ It addresses a challenge our politics has failed to deal with ~ Despite all our knowledge, there is a lack of consensus on how to take action ~ It is conducted by Great Debaters.”

Collective thoughts of the School of Politics and Economics, meeting on 12 November 2020

For our first Great Debate of 2021, we face up to the Climate Emergency, exploring the different dimensions of the debate from the perspective of political economy dealing with ethics, technology, the role of the citizen.

What are the key options we face? How radical do we need to be – are wholesale economic changes needed, or does the existing system offer adequate economic and technological fixes? Do we need, in short, a whole new political economy?

How can we split the costs of tackling the problems fairly across generations, nations, regions, demographics? What scope is there for citizen participation and democratic innovation in deciding this?

How should governments manage the necessary policies, and what lessons can we learn from governance during the Covid crisis? Finally, in a polarised society increasingly susceptible to conspiracy theories, how can governments communicate what they're doing to mitigate the crisis looming before us?

Thursday 18 March 2021, 2pm-5pm, online and flexible

2pm-2.50pm

Welcome and opening session

Three experts in the field, drawn from academia and the campaigning and public policy arenas will set out the parameters of this great debate. They will introduce the topic and set out some ideas we can pick up in our debates. They will zone in on particular panel topics, such as the global south.

Professor Rebecca Willis, Lancaster Environment Centre, Lancaster University

Professor Sam Fankhauser, Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change, LSE

Professor Neil Carter, University of York

2.50pm 10 minute break

3pm-3.50pm

Working groups

When the introductory session is over, attendees will enter a facilitated breakout group to discuss key questions in a certain area of the debate. You can sign up in advance to attend a particular group or be sorted automatically.

- a. *Justice*: ethics, fairness, who pays, intergenerational justice, equality and inclusion
Facilitator: Dr Carmen Pavel, Department of Political Economy
- b. *The Global South*: implications for development and inter/intra-nation equality
Facilitator: Dr Emily Barritt, Dickson Poon School of Law

- c. *Citizenship*: collective action, behaviour change, nudge, the costs borne by the citizen, democratic innovations
Facilitators: Dr Rod Dacombe and Dr Federica Carugati, Department of Political Economy
- d. *Technology and economy*: the availability of fixes, economic costs, whether a complete change in the economic model is needed?
Facilitator: Dr Karly Kuralbayeva, Department of Political Economy
- e. *Policy choices*: available options, top-down or bottom-up, governance, how sectors link up
Facilitator: Dr Francesca Vantaggiato, Department of Political Economy
- f. *Communications*: Role of social media, alternative facts, eco-scepticism, link to polarisation, regulation of the media
Facilitators: Laura Hayward, Ipsos MORI and Dr Tomas Maltby, Department of Political Economy
- g. *COVID*: exhaustion of public finances versus lessons learnt with adaptability
Facilitator: Professor Brian Salter, Department of Political Economy
- h. *Radical politics*: role of direct action, radical political economy
Facilitator: Dr Joseph Baines, Department of European and International Studies

3.50pm 10 minute break

4pm-5pm

Closing session

Bring your findings back to the main event for our discussants to sum up

Professor Frans Berkhout, Executive Dean of the Faculty of Social Science and Public Policy

Professor Sarah Birch, Department of Political Economy

Professor Peter John, Head of the School of Politics and Economics

What are the Great Debates?

The School of Politics and Economics presents a series to discuss society's most pressing questions, in the company of experts from academia and beyond. We are breaking out of the panel format. We want to hear from students, academics, experts, campaigners and professionals and we hope to publish the debate's conclusions.

Follow us to hear about more Great Debates in the future.

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