Twitter Thread by Jack Monroe ■■



Jack Monroe ■■
@BootstrapCook

Hi all. I've been sent LOTS of photos of the food parcels that have replaced the £30 vouchers and asked what I would do with them. I'm replying with advice privately because to do so publicly would look like justifying these ill thought through, offensively meagre scraps /1.

There seems to be a prevalent train of thought that if you're in poverty you should be 'grateful' for anything you get. I have spent the last seven years giving talks to various organisations and conferences and political parties urging them to put DIGNITY AND ACTIVE LISTENING /2

at the core of all of their work. Nothing about us without us. Ask people what their needs are, respond accordingly. Don't be a Marie Antoinette or worse, a sneering Scrooge. People in difficult situations are PEOPLE, no less 'deserving' of a good meal than anyone else. /3

The vouchers were a good idea. They were BLOCKED from being spent on age restricted products, like alcohol, lottery tickets, cigarettes. Despite this restriction, mouthpieces on Twitter with their own austerity agendas claimed that there was widespread misuse. With no evidence./4

But the demonisation of the poor and working class in this country has been in plain sight for years now. Programmes like Benefits Street, Jeremy Kyle, ill fortune as gladiator style entertainment. /5.

Mick Philpott on the front page of the Mail, not as murderer but as a 'benefit claimant' first and foremost. I could go on. It undermined a whole and very large segment of our society, and one without a mainstream media platform to speak up about who they really were. /6

I crossed over. Kind of. From benefit mum to book author and business woman. The media loved me until I started calling them out on their shit, but I'm not one to pull the ladder up behind me, and besides, I'm not as far up it as you think and every other rung is broken anyway /7

Now Because of a noisy few objecting with fabricated or v rare examples of an abuse of the system (rich when it's usually coming from people who themselves abuse every financial loophole they can find...) the vouchers, which were a lifeline, have been replaced with a food box /8

Which comes with all sorts of problems about transport, access, shielding, virus transmission, risk, unnecessary trips, etc. /9

But also, I added up the contents of the box. Its value at supermarket prices is under a fiver. To replace a £30 voucher. /10.

So what I want to know is:

WHO IS MAKING AN ABSOLUTE FORTUNE OUT OF SCAMMING THE POOREST AND MOST VULNERABLE IN OUR SOCIETY NOW?

Who has those contracts? What are they trousering? And you can bet I won't rest til I find out. /11.

People deserve BETTER than constantly shouldering the financial mismanagement of this frickin Government; and its always the people who can afford the least that are asked to bear the biggest burden. /END.

PS if you've been sent one of those food boxes please send me the photo, I have an investigative team of friends who are journalists and researchers looking into this now (not ALL of the media are terrible) and they would like as many examples as poss.

You can reply here or by DM, please include local area if comfortable doing so, so we know where to look for leads on responsibility/contracts, and if you DM it I won't publish any identifying details. I protect my sources, always. Thankyou.

And if your LA or school is still doing vouchers, OR providing decent food boxes, please let me know so we can show the shysters that it IS possible and more importantly, that it's the right bloody response to this. I've been mad about this for a long time but now I'm REALLY mad.

For the record, this is what £20 of food looks like at supermarket prices without the benefit of bulk discount. (My food shop a couple of months ago).

Here's another one of my £20 shops recently.

And here's what one Local Authority thinks passes for £30, five days (!!!!!) of food. Spot the difference.

And the media adored me when I was a single mum making 9p burgers. But when I started asking WHY people needed 9p recipes they turned on me and have ripped me to shreds ever since. But I'm not going to stop asking. Not as long as people still tell me 'I'm not alright, Jack.' ■

If you're a registered charitable organisation currently actively working to plug the gaps in food poverty support during this pandemic, please reply with your donation link (for donations) and area (so people in need can find you) and I'll make a thread of them all.

I'm aware it shouldn't fall to us but as I've always said, first we feed the people, then we sort everything else. But first we feed the people. Drop links & locations below. I'm working on something as well but need to think through not just hothead it off the cuff, so bear with

Oh and media? Hiya. If you're going to scrape this, considering the traction, email me and ask me to write it. It's my story, I'm a freelance writer working from home in a pandemic, and this is my life's work, so you can commission me on jackmonroediary(at)gmail(dot)com. Cheers.

https://t.co/zs1nRQTPF6

> Hello new followers. This is a thing I wrote last year about where I came from and where I am now and the lasting impact of deprivation and poverty on a person even though they \u2018appear\u2019 to have \u2018escaped\u2019. [CW: PTSD, poverty, suicidal ideation]https://t.co/o31LAKqsUY
>
> — Jack Monroe \U0001f329\U0001f44f (@BootstrapCook) January 11, 2021

And I'll be off here for a bit as I'm a single mother to a ten year old and it's the quality time bit before his bedtime, so serene face back on for stories and cuddles now but I'll pick this back up again later!! Thanks all for being as furious about this as I am. It matters. ■