

Entity: Brendan O'Neill

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Semantic Summary

British journalist and pundit; chief political writer at Spiked, which he edited from 2007 to 2021, and columnist for The Big Issue, the Daily Mail and The Australian. A former anarcho-leftist turned contrarian right-libertarian, O'Neill is a leading voice in the "anti-woke" commentariat — defending free speech against "cancel culture", taking gender-critical positions on trans issues, criticising lockdowns and vaccine passports, supporting Brexit, and staunchly defending Israel (author of "After the Pogrom", 2024, on 7 October). His significance in the UK right-wing ecosystem is as an intellectual bridge between the libertarian left and the right-wing culture war: Spiked positions itself as left-wing while consistently aligning with the right on free speech, trans issues, COVID-19 and Islam, and O'Neill's former left-wing credentials provide cover for readers wary of overtly right-wing commentary, while his mainstream columns give him national reach.

Basic Information

- **Type:** Person / Journalist / Editor / Pundit
- **Status:** Active
- **Role:** Chief political writer at Spiked (formerly editor 2007–2021); columnist for The Big Issue, The Australian
- **Background:** Former anarcho-leftist who now occupies a contrarian right-libertarian position
- **Platforms:** Spiked, The Big Issue, Daily Mail, The Australian, X/Twitter

Role in Ecosystem

Brendan O'Neill is a distinctive voice in the UK right-wing commentariat — a former left-wing anarchist who now writes from a contrarian right-libertarian perspective. As the long-time editor (2007–2021) and now chief political writer of Spiked magazine, he has become a leading figure in the "anti-woke" commentariat, defending free speech against "cancel culture", criticising lockdowns, taking gender-critical positions on trans issues, and defending Israel.

His significance in the ecosystem is as an intellectual bridge between the libertarian left and the right-wing culture war. Spiked positions itself as left-wing but consistently argues positions that align with the right on free speech, trans rights, COVID-19, and Islam. O'Neill's role as a regular Daily Mail and Big Issue columnist gives him mainstream reach, while his former left-wing credentials provide cover for readers who might be uncomfortable with overtly right-wing commentary.

Known Associations

Person/Org	Relationship	Evidence
Spiked	Former editor (2007–2021), chief political writer	Wikipedia
The Big Issue	Columnist	Wikipedia
Daily Mail	Regular contributor	Wikipedia
The Australian	Columnist	Wikipedia

Key Positions

- **Free speech:** Strong advocate against "cancel culture" and platform censorship
- **Trans issues:** Gender-critical; opposes trans-inclusive policies
- **COVID-19:** Criticised lockdowns, vaccine passports, and restrictions
- **Israel-Palestine:** Staunchly pro-Israel; wrote "After the Pogrom" (2024) about 7 October
- **Islam:** Criticises Islamism while defending right to criticise Islam
- **Brexit:** Supported Brexit

Notes

- Born 1975 (age 50–51)
- Former anarcho-leftist activist; later moved to right-libertarian positions
- Editor of Spiked (2007–2021); now chief political writer
- Author of "After the Pogrom: 7 October, Israel and the Crisis of Civilisation" (2024)
- Spiked described as "right-libertarian" by Wikipedia
- A leading voice in the "anti-woke" and free speech absolutist movement

Tags

- anti-lockdown
- anti-woke

- author
- brendan-oneill
- brexit
- commentator
- free-speech
- gender-critical
- journalist
- person
- spiked
- twitter

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