

[Drill baby, drill: fracking just got cheaper](#) ^[1]

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As regular readers will know I have something of a bee in my bonnet about the costs and benefits of jobs. To those who have a job it is a cost of gaining the income which they desire from having a job. To those actually doing something having to hire people to do a job is of course a cost of getting that thing done. Jobs are, on both sides, therefore a cost, not a benefit of something being done.

Unfortunately those who pretend to rule us are entirely ignorant of this [simple fact](#) ^[3]:

Shale gas drilling across Britain could create just a third of the jobs David Cameron hoped for, the government has been warned. The Prime Minister insisted the country could benefit from 74,000 new jobs and could not afford to miss out on 'fracking', the controversial process used to release gas trapped deep underground. But a study produced for the energy department suggests that just 24,000 full-time roles could emerge even when the industry is at its 'peak'. The prediction could be a major blow to Mr Cameron's argument in favour of shale gas.

Whether you want to think that it is the Daily Mail that rules us, David Cameron or the energy department makes no difference here. All three are arguing exactly the wrong way around.

That fracking for shale gas will produce fewer jobs than was formerly thought is good news. For it means that the costs of fracking for shale gas have just gone down. This is therefore an argument in favour of fracking: we will get more energy for a lower cost.

Hurrah! and drill baby, drill.

Which leaves us with only one question. Whichever of the three of them you do think rules us on this matter, why is it that none of them know enough economics to be able to negotiate their way out of a wet paper bag?

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