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# The Impact of Neoliberal Policies on Political Language in Britain: 1997-2017

Roisin Lee

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Roisin Lee. The Impact of Neoliberal Policies on Political Language in Britain: 1997-2017. Humanities and Social Sciences. 2019. dumas-02452388

**HAL Id: dumas-02452388**

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# **The Impact of Neoliberal Policies on Political Language in Britain: 1997 – 2017**

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Mémoire de master 2 - 30 crédits

Parcours : anglais, orientation recherche

Année universitaire 2018-2020



## **Acknowledgements**

Véronique Molinari for all her insights, constant advice and patience.

Laure Gardelle for introducing me to the word corpus and taking so much time to answer my many questions.

Emma Bell for her inspiring lectures on neoliberalism which led me to choosing the Master in LLCER and her advice long after I stopped being her student.

Anis Bouzidi for printing and delivering this dissertation.

My family, Ma, Da and sister Shona for all the love, motivation and encouragement every step of the way. To Yannick's family for supporting me and to my dearest Dr. Yaya, let's grow old together.







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# The impact of neoliberal policies on political language in Britain: 1997-2017

## Introduction

The term neoliberal ...it's usually used by Marxist academics, in my experience, saying 'we have to attack this neoliberal hegemony'....Usually that means that they think that there is no real difference between the left and the right in terms of how much (the right or the left wing) are for markets."

*Trevor Burrus.*<sup>1</sup>

In his podcast for [libertarianism.org](http://libertarianism.org), research fellow for the Cato Institute, Trevor Burrus<sup>2</sup> asked Sam Bowman, the executive Director of the Adam Smith Institute (ASI) if he could explain what one of Britain's top think-tanks<sup>3</sup> actually was. Bowman's response was that along with the Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA) and the Centre for Policy Studies (CPS), the ASI was one of the "driving forces behind the Thatcher radiation." He went on to define it as a free-market, classical-liberal organization, but added that it had recently started to identify itself as "neoliberal." When pushed for a definition of this seemingly subjective term, Bowman explained:

"It's used as a sort of bogeyman on the left to attack the right, and we thought it would be nice to take that back and change what it means...the left use it to attack anybody that likes markets to any extent."<sup>4</sup>

The origins of the ideology can be traced as far back as the 1920's<sup>5</sup> and as Bowman claims, the concept of neoliberalism was indeed generated by think-tanks,<sup>6</sup> then implemented in

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1 Burrus, Trevor, "Neoliberalism in the UK Free Thoughts" [libertarianism.org](http://libertarianism.org), published 28 July 2017. 02:30–02:55, 28 July 2017. Accessed 1 December 2018 <https://www.libertarianism.org/media/free-thoughts/neoliberalism-uk>.

2 Cata.Org. Accessed December 18 2019 <https://www.cato.org/>

3 Author unknown, "List of thinktanks in the UK," *The Guardian*, 30 September 2013. Accessed 20 January 2019 <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2013/sep/30/list-thinktanks-uk>

4 Burrus, Trevor, "Neoliberalism in the UK Free Thoughts" [libertarianism.org](http://libertarianism.org), published 28 July 2017. 00:54–03:15, 28 July 2017. Accessed 1 December 2018 <https://www.libertarianism.org/media/free-thoughts/neoliberalism-uk>.

5 London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). "Masters of the Universe: Hayek, Friedman, and the Birth of Neoliberal Politics". YouTube video, 05:32. [Published on Feb 5, 2013] Accessed 10 March 2019 [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ehrp2\\_ffpc&t=602s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ehrp2_ffpc&t=602s)

6 Think-tanks first appeared concomitantly in the US and the UK at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Their primary function is to carry out research on public policies and find the means to implement said policies by influencing governments. Hauck, Juliana Cristina Rosa. 'What are 'Think Tanks'? Revisiting the Dilemma of the Definition.'

Britain on a large scale by Thatcher's 1979 government. The term first appeared during the 1970's, but only within intellectual circles,<sup>7</sup> which Burrus suggests is still the case today. Yet the practice of this doctrine was denied in the public sphere up until as recently as 2016, when the International Monetary Fund published its first paper using the word "Neoliberal".<sup>8</sup> In the media opinions were divided; some economic journalists hailed the IMF's embrace of the concept as simply caving in to critics of the right,<sup>9</sup> others saw the admission of its existence as the first death-throes of neoliberalism.<sup>10</sup> As part of its emergence into mainstream media Sam Bowman appeared in various interviews (including the one cited), claiming the term in the name of the ASI and other centre-right think-tanks.

Nevertheless, neoliberalism remains an ill-defined concept, which changes across the range of disciplines it spans and is appearing more frequently in the public eye. So as Burrus asks, what exactly is it? He implies that it is erroneously applied to both the right-wing and the left-wing, one way to test if it covers the political spectrum would be to study the differences in spending between governments as the first signs of Keynesian economics<sup>11</sup> ceding to neoliberalism was when public spending started to decrease in 1968.<sup>12</sup> However, if identifying neoliberalism was as simple as just looking at the amount of public spending then surely defining it would not be such a contentious issue.

Different scholars have different definitions, which could offer a clue as to how even denying the existence of neoliberalism in mainstream media has been possible until recently. Journalist and critic of the ASI, George Monbiot, suggests that the difficulty in defining neo-

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*Bras. Political Science Revue* volume 11 (July 27, 2017), pp. 1-4. Accessed 27 March 2019 <http://www.scielo.br/pdf/bpsr/v11n2/1981-3821-bpsr-1981-3821201700020006.pdf>

7 Mudge, Stephanie Lee, "What is neo-liberalism?" *Oxford Academic Socio-Economic Review*, Volume 6, Issue 4, 1 October 2008, pp. 703–731. Preview of main arguments, paragraph 5. Accessed 18 February 2019 <https://doi.org/10.1093/ser/mwn016>

8 Metcalf, Stephen, "Neoliberalism: the idea that swallowed the world" *The Guardian*, 18 Aug 2017 <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2017/aug/18/neoliberalism-the-idea-that-changed-the-world>

9 Author unknown "A misplaced mea culpa for neoliberalism," *Financial Times*, May 30, 2016. Accessed 25 January, 2019 <https://www.ft.com/content/ae448fcc-23fa-11e6-9d4d-c11776a5124d>

10 Chakraborty, Aditya. "You're witnessing the death of neoliberalism – from within," *The Guardian*, 19 December 2018, paragraph 7. Accessed, 19 December 2018 <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/may/31/witnessing-death-neoliberalism-imf-economists>

11 Keynesian economics appeared in-between classical liberalism and neoliberalism, a period characterised by high overall public spending due to the state employing people and the financing of state owned industries and services (such as health and housing.) A prominent aspect of Keynesian economics was full male employment; the shared consensus across political parties was that the state had a duty to provide this. After Thatcher's 1979 Conservative government, the Keynesian economic model was relinquished as a governing political ideology.

Schott, Kerry "The rise of Keynesian economics: Britain 1940—64" *Economy and Society*, Volume 11, Issue 3 1982, published 24 May 2006, pp.292-316. Accessed 24 February 2019. <https://www.tandfonline-com.sid2no-made-1.grenet.fr/doi/abs/10.1080/03085148200000021>

12 Rogers, Simon 'How Britain changed under Margaret Thatcher. In 15 charts' *The Guardian*, 8 Apr 2013

liberalism is one of its features,<sup>13</sup> that the use of language is an important element of a doctrine primarily concerned with creating stability for the market, a notion reinforced by Bowman's announcement that the ASI is appropriating the term. Before investigating if there is evidence to support Monbiot's theory that neoliberalism incorporates changes in language, it would be advantageous to have a definition of the doctrine to work to.

A commonly found definition is that neoliberalism shares many aspects with 19th century classical liberalism – exemplified when Bowman described the ASI think-tank as both neoliberal, then classical liberal, effectively fusing the two schools of thought. Neoliberalism and classical liberalism have been conflated online and in the media,<sup>14</sup> indeed there are many similarities between the two which are worth exploring as we search for a definition.<sup>15</sup> The two liberalisms have also been merged by academics, political geographers<sup>16</sup> Connor Joseph Cavanagh and George Holmes define neoliberalism as:

“a complex and multifaceted trend characterized largely by the rise of practices and discourses of financialisation, marketization, privatization, commodification and decentralisation”<sup>17</sup>

which are also traits of classical liberalism.

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13 Monbiot, George. "Neoliberalism – the ideology at the root of all our problems" *The Guardian*, 15 Apr 2016. Accessed 28 January, 2019 <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2016/apr/15/neoliberalism-ideology-problem-george-monbiot>

14 Ben Geier, journalist for the business magazine *Fortune* claims that neoliberalism is simply an updated version of 19<sup>th</sup> century laissez-faire policy which predated Keynesian ideology. Geier, Ben. “Even the IMF Now Admits Neoliberalism Has Failed.” *Fortune*, 3 June 2016. Accessed 23 January 2019 <http://fortune.com/2016/06/03/imf-neoliberalism-failing/>

15 For both classical liberals and neoliberals, the promotion of freedom is necessary to allow companies to react to the market and generate wealth which will filter through the rest of society. There are other similarities to be made between these two schools of thought; the notion of “Freedom,” under both classical liberalism and neoliberalism, is interpreted as freedom *from* the state, for both business and individuals. At the heart of neoliberalism is the idea that economic growth is a means by which more choices are made available to citizens, so that they can be independent of state aid. According to neoliberalism, those who are dependent upon state assistance are not free, which harkens back to the opening of classical liberalist Samuel Smile's 1859 publication, “Self-Help.” From the lectures of Professor Bell, Emma. Université Savoie Mont Blanc, Chambéry, 2016.

16 Geographers are important when considering political doctrine because they study “the restructuring present,” a process which requires an evaluation of economic, political and social factors as they are happening, this is so that localised events can be placed into a larger context of changes.

Parkland Institute “Neoliberalism: Dead or Alive? - Jamie Peck” YouTube [Published 8 January 2018.] 21:45 - 22:10. Accessed 15 June 2019 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DL1pztzxIHA>

17 Holmes, George. Joseph Cavanagh “A review of the social impacts of neoliberal conservation: Formations, inequalities, contestations” *Research Gate*, Geoforum Volume 75, p. 200, August 2016. Accessed 23 January 2019. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/305984888\\_A\\_review\\_of\\_the\\_social\\_impacts\\_of\\_neoliberal\\_conservation\\_Formations\\_inequalities\\_contestations](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/305984888_A_review_of_the_social_impacts_of_neoliberal_conservation_Formations_inequalities_contestations)

Social scientist Stephane Mudge equally states that neoliberal doctrine seeks to decrease state involvement and promote “the market,” giving greater independence to businesses,<sup>18</sup> again, these are traits of a classical liberalism.<sup>19</sup> Philosopher Pierre Dardot, and social scientist Christian Laval also focus on the similarities between the classical liberalism and neoliberalism with regards to a reduction in state involvement. They write that the *laissez-faire* approach of classical liberalism was based upon the work of 19th-century economist, Herbert Spencer, after he adapted Darwin’s theory of evolution to commerce.<sup>20</sup> Reducing the role of the state for Spencer was a means to ensure the “survival of the fittest,” so that the best businesses could flourish, unfettered by state intervention. This reduction of the state is also an important element of modern-day neoliberalism. Dardot and Laval add another definition by saying that neoliberalism creates a society which favours competition:

*“Le Spencérisme a introduit quelques-uns des thèmes les plus importants du néolibéralisme, en particulier la primauté de la concurrence dans les rapport sociaux.”*

In addition to neoliberalism entailing a reduction of state involvement and the creation of competition in society, Dardot and Laval also discuss how the way law and order are maintained to ensure stability in a country, this too is another shared feature between neoliberalism and classical liberalism. This is achieved by maintaining infrastructures in the form of roads, ports and legal systems in which contracts may be honoured, along with armed forces to ensure peace (such as the police and military). This reflects the classical-libertarian political philosophy; the role of the state is like that of a “Night-watchman.”<sup>21</sup>

However, philosopher and historian of ideas Michel Foucault would have refuted all of the above, for Foucault there were distinct differences between the two schools of thought. He stated that the “Night-watchman” elements found in classical liberal doctrine existed much earlier than the 19th century and that these features were present in mercantile states before

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18 Mudge, Stephanie Lee ‘What is neo-liberalism?’ *Oxford Academic Socio-Economic Review*, Volume 6, Issue 4, 1 October 2008, pp. 703–731, 2. Preview of main arguments (ii)c. Accessed 18 February 2019 <https://doi.org/10.1093/ser/mwn016>

19 The market is a viable alternative to state intervention because heavily regulated companies are economically hindered, so by giving them more freedom to act autonomously, economic growth is ensured, vicariously leading to greater freedom for individual citizens through the creation of wealth in society and increased employment opportunities.

20 Dardot, Pierre et Christian Laval “*La nouvelle raison du monde: essai sur la société néolibérale*,” La découverte, Chapter 5, pp.77-78, 2010.

21 Thorsen Dag Einar, Amund Lie, "What is Neoliberalism?" *Department of Political Science University of Oslo*, p. 4 paragraph 5, 2007.

the classical liberal period – despite the state not having an economic plan during the Middle Ages, law and order was maintained in similar ways to how it was during the classical liberal period.<sup>22</sup> Unlike Marxist academics such as Bourdieu, Foucault poses that neoliberalism is distinct from any other form of capitalism, defining it as a phase in which a new manner to govern people occurs, producing subjects of the state and effectively inventing “*l’homme économique*.”<sup>23</sup> Whereas the classical liberalism of the nineteenth century tried to reflect a process of natural competition in which businesses vied against one another and only the strong survived, neoliberalism requires specific intervention in markets by the state; ergo a defining feature of neoliberalism is state intervention and a reduction in fair competition.<sup>24</sup> Another defining feature of neoliberalism for Foucault is that state intervention requires an increase in centralised power, this is to provide the best environment for the market to function.<sup>25</sup> What Foucault proposes goes against not only Mudge’s statement that it engenders decentralisation,<sup>26</sup> but also against Cavanagh and Holmes’ definition.<sup>27</sup>

To sum up the different points of view: Mudge says that neoliberalism implies less state involvement, Foucault, says more – Cavanagh and George Holmes say it equates decentralisation; Foucault says centralisation. Dardot and Laval say neoliberalism creates competition; Foucault says state intervention in the market reduces it. When placed side-by-side like this, we can see why agreeing on a definition is difficult.

However, to create a definition for us to work with and distinguish neoliberalism from classical liberalism, there are common elements in the above arguments which complement one another and that we can use as a point of reference when identifying neoliberal doctrine. The definition we will work to has four points and the reasoning is as follows: Dardot and Laval’s claim is that a defining feature of neoliberalism is that it creates competition in society, but for Foucault, to do this state involvement governs market conditions. To create these market conditions where competition can take place, neoliberalism requires an increase of centralised power. Therefore, our definition will start thusly:

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22 Foucault, Michel "Naissance de la biopolitique," Lecture, Cours au Collège de France, Paris, 1978-1979, pp. 7-10 Accessed December 2018 <http://ekladata.com/cAvYIjzaeE2-eR6aA71K6LzIwg/Foucault-Michel-Naissance-de-la-biopolitique-1978-1979-.pdf>

23 Laval, Christian. *Foucault, Bourdieu et la question néolibérale*. La découverte, 2018, p. 18.

24 Lève-toi et pense."Michel Foucault – Naissance de la biopolitique 9." Recorded [1979.] YouTube, 00:23. [Published 23 July 2016.] Accessed 01 March 2019, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t4BSjQ9NfbU&t=24s>

25 Foucault, Michel *Op. Cit.*

26 Mudge, Stephanie Lee, “What is neo-liberalism?” *Socio-Economic Review*, Volume 6, Issue 4, 1 October 2008, Figure 1 Neo-liberalism's three faces.

27 Holmes, George. Joseph Cavanagh, *Op. Cit.*

- 1) Neoliberalism increases state intervention.
- 2) It encourages competition in society – but it is not balanced competition because neoliberalism favours some market actors more than others. For this reason:
- 3) Neoliberalism leads to a centralisation of power.

The fourth point to consider concerns the point raised by the interview between T. Burrus and think-tank representative S. Bowman: the use of language by the state as a means of implementing neoliberalism:

- 4) Neoliberalism has an impact on language.

We will now consider elements surrounding this aspect of the doctrine. Cavanagh and Holmes’s definition of neoliberalism included “The discourses of…”with regards to financialisation, marketization, privatization, commodification and decentralisation.<sup>28</sup> The role of political language when constructing and disseminating a message promoting neoliberal principles is a topic which reoccurs across multiple disciplines.<sup>29</sup> Like other features of neoliberalism, this discourse shares points in common with classical liberalism in that it links moral worth with employment status/autonomy. From Conservative Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, when she described unemployed people as “moral cripples” to New Labour’s spin doctor/public relations consultant Peter Mandelson when he described the workless as cut off from “what the rest of us regard as normal life”<sup>30</sup> or Conservative PM David Cameron’s description of the Big Society in which “those who work hard will be rewarded.”<sup>31</sup> all seem to echo the 18th-century classical-liberal ethos of, *Self-Help*, which opens with the maxim “Heaven helps those who help themselves.”<sup>32</sup>

When considering political discourse in relation to neoliberalism there is the question of whether changes in language are a means of disorganising alternate centres of power which could threaten the authority of the doctrine. In *Constructions of Neoliberal Reason* (2010) geographer Jamie Peck describes a process he calls “roll-back,” in which state intervention re-

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28 Forrest, Ray, Alan Murie, *Selling the welfare state, the privatisation of Public Housing*, Routledge 1988, p. 4.

29 Language change was initially identified in the field of geography, as geographers study a process called “the restructuring present.” This requires an evaluation of economic, political and social factors as they are happening and places localised events into a larger context of changes. Parkland Institute “Neoliberalism: Dead or Alive? - Jamie Peck” YouTube, [Published 8 January 2018.] 21:45-22:10. Accessed 15 June 2019 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DL1pztzxIHA>

30 Fairclough, Norman, *New Labour, New Language*, p. 52, paragraph 2, London Routledge, 2000.

31 Hennessy, Patrick, "David Cameron interview: those who work hard will be rewarded" The Telegraph, 07 January 2012, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/david-cameron/9000253/David-Cameron-interview-those-who-work-hard-will-be-rewarded.html>

32 Smiles, Samuel. *Self-Help*, London 1859. Accessed 03 April 2019 <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/935/935-h/935-h.htm>

inforces neoliberal policies via the reduction of alternative centres of power. Although he does not explicitly state that language plays a part in this, political discourse would be an interesting element to consider alongside Peck's theory of roll-back procedures. Peck identifies the roll-back process as one in which the state restructures institutions, via "deregulating zones of bureaucratic control" and "disorganizing alternate centres of power."<sup>33</sup> We could use UK trade unions as an example, as from the 1980's<sup>34</sup>-1990's,<sup>35</sup> UK trade unions were undermined by both legislation<sup>36</sup> (deregulating zones of bureaucratic control) and "linguistic violence,"<sup>37</sup> (disorganising alternate centres of power.) In this instance the weakening of an alternative centre of power entailed changes in language. Part of the structural adjustments Peck includes in the roll-back process focus on the function of the state in establishing the behaviour of citizens. This is achieved via disciplining "potentially unruly (collective) subjects."<sup>38</sup> Peck is not referring to the classical liberal, Night-watchman role of the state in this context – it is not through policing and imprisonment that reform of the individual takes place, but through structural adjustments to institutions with the aim of changing the actions of individuals. People are not "disciplined" by punishment, but instead have their opportunities to express themselves reduced.<sup>39</sup>

Another theory which compliments Peck's, is that of Nick Couldry, Professor of Media, Communications and Social Theory. He proposes that neoliberal-ideology reduces democratic participation by restricting platforms of expression; opportunities in which different ideas and opinions are voiced.<sup>40</sup> Couldry claims that by restricting people in this way their ca-

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33 Peck, Jamie, "Constructions of Neoliberal Reason," *Oxford University Press*, 2010, p. 22..

34 The 1980's Tory government passed legislation on industrial relations concerning; union elections, strike ballots and picketing rights. Driver, Stephen. Luke Martell *New Labour, politics after Thatcherism*, Polity press, 1998, p. 26, paragraph 2.

35 When elected New Labour did nothing to reverse the Tory legislation on industrial relations concerning union elections and strike ballots, nor were picketing rights restored.

Driver, Stephen, Luke Martell, *New Labour*, Polity Press p. 69.

36 New Labour's preference towards neoliberalism was reflected in the decision to abandon its commitment to the nationalisation of companies by the rewriting of clause 4 of the party manifesto. New Labour abolished the trade-union "block-vote," reducing the influence of unions upon decision making. Despite its working-class roots, New Labour considered the contribution of worker's ideas on the same par as other stakeholders in society, which included corporate business. Bell, Emma " From Marshallian Citizenship to Corporate Citizenship: The Changing Nature of Citizenship in Neoliberal Britain" *Revue française de la civilisation britannique XXI-1* | 2016 , p. 3, paragraph 7. Accessed 23 April 2019 <https://journals.openedition.org/rfcb/850#tocto2n2>

37 Hélie, Claire, "From Picket Lines to Poetic Ones: the 1984–1985 Miners' Strike and the Idea of a 'Condition of England Poetry'" *études britanniques contemporaines*, volume 49 : State of Britain, 2015 paragraph 1. Accessed 27 March 2019 <https://journals.openedition.org/ebc/2658>

38 Peck, Jamie, 'Constructions of Neoliberal Reason,' *Oxford University Press*, 2010, p. 22.

39 This, Peck claims, is achieved by eroding trade unions, public bureaucracies, systems of entitlement and planning agencies, realised through deregulation, which manifests in the form of funding cuts and privatisation. *Idem*.

40 "A situation where in many domains voice is continually offered yet retracted, endorsed, but then made empty...one element in the mix on the specific intent of neoliberal doctrine for over three decades, to make market functioning the overriding principle of social and political organization. The core of neoliberal doctrine was

capacity to organise and oppose neoliberalism is reduced. Couldry refers to this process as creating “A crisis of voice”; in order to alter public opinion, spaces of expression are narrowed so that only one form of discourse becomes dominant, thus diminishing potential challenges to neoliberalism.<sup>41</sup> In this way the state is intervening, reducing competition to neoliberal ideology. This is achieved by altering institutional structures which permit public opinions to be voiced,<sup>42</sup> thus centralising power and devaluing voice by reinforcing a message that public opinion has no place in the decision-making process on how resources are shared.<sup>43</sup> These practices also reflect our working definition of neoliberalism, (state intervention which affects competition, centralises power and implicates a change in political discourse.)

Peck and Couldry’s theories draw attention to comments like Bowman’s about think-tanks targetting language; it is a bold claim that the ASI appropriated the word “neoliberal” as a tactic to “change what it means.” This one example implies that the process in which political language changes is not entirely organic and that in fact certain words may be specifically selected to have their meaning changed. It leads one to question whether think-tanks are perhaps involved in other changes in political language, with the goal of implementing neoliberalism. Since think-tanks are behind the creation of neoliberalism it would be logical to take them into consideration when studying any changes in language. Firstly because, as Sam Bowman explains; think-tanks developed the concept. Secondly because one of the tactics used by the ASI to implement neoliberalism involves a mission to change public opinion via Media outreach<sup>44</sup> and thirdly, because Bowman claims that the objective of the Adam Smith

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stated most clearly by Michel Foucault in his lectures ... “the birth of bio politics” where he identifies an early and deep rethinking of liberal government that does not ask the state what freedom it will leave to the economy, but asks the economy how its freedom can have a state creating function - here are the seeds of the idea now so familiar that markets themselves provide a principle of social organization.. neoliberal discourse is an attack not just on particular conditions of political speech or ‘voice’ in the familiar sense, but an attack on the very idea that the opinions, desires and goals of human-beings might matter in the organization of common resources, an attack on voice as a value. Neoliberalism installs the intellectual imperialism of a certain type of economic thought;” York Neoliberalism Conference, Nick Couldry - “Voiceblind: On Some Paradoxes of the Neoliberal State,” Published on 15 Aug, 2013, 01:16- 02:45. Accessed 06 March 2019 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lchbc1l7hF8>

41 To use the example of the trade unions once more, New Labour’s changes to how the party leader was elected resulted in unions holding the same amount of credence as other community stake holders which includes companies. Thus the workers ability to shape decision making processes was reduced by New Labour, evidenced when the new leader, Tony Blair, told union members that they would be treated with “fairness, but not favours.” Bell, Emma “From Marshallian Citizenship to Corporate Citizenship: The Changing Nature of Citizenship in Neoliberal Britain” *Revue française de la civilisation britannique*, XXI-1 | 2016 p. 3, paragraph 7. Accessed 23 April 2019 <https://journals.openedition.org/rfcb/850#tocto2n2>

42 Trade unions are a means by which citizens’ rights to employment can challenge the rights of businesses to make decisions based upon cost efficiency. When the power of unions is reduced, a consequence is that workers have fewer opportunities to voice concerns and opinions upon policies which affect them. Couldry claims that any opinion which is contrary to neoliberal doctrine is denied a platform so that its influence is minimised.

43 York Neoliberalism Conference, Nick Couldry. *Op. Cit.*

44 Adam Smith Institute, "About the Adam Smith institute", [adamsmith.org](http://adamsmith.org). ‘Our strategy’ paragraph 4. Accessed 27 March 2019 <https://www.adamsmith.org/about-the-asi>

Institute in adopting the term Neoliberal has been to change its meaning to neutralise it as an attack to the right.<sup>45</sup>

The think-tanks which Bowman lists as being behind the “Thatcher radiation” (the IEA, CPS and ASI) are all centre-right think-tanks, hence: neoliberal-ideology pertains to the right. However, as Burrus points out, this claim is prone to be challenged by academics, indeed there are also centre-left think-tanks to consider, such as Demos and the Foreign Policy Centre,<sup>46</sup> the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) - if neoliberalism is just the preserve of the right as Bowman claims, then there should be no evidence of it in policy advice from a left wing think-tank, such as the IPPR. Because advice from think-tanks shape the policies of political parties, the role of think-tanks will be taken into consideration when studying the different policy choices made by the various political parties. Proving that left wing think-tanks have also contributed to neoliberal doctrine may demonstrate one way in which “there is no real difference between the left and the right in terms of how much they are for markets.”<sup>47</sup>

To evaluate cross-party consensus and see if there is a consistency between the left and the right applying neoliberal policies when in government, it is necessary to consider both economic and social policies across the governments. Albeit changes in language should be born in mind when doing so, it is important to see what actual legislation was passed under the different governments to see if there is evidence of cross-party consensus. If according to our definition neoliberalism entails centralisation, we might expect a reduction in the number of people contributing to decision-making, for example less cabinet consultation, more influence from a select amount of experts. If there is a deliberate transfer of responsibility in decision making, this might be considered as what geographer Jamie Peck calls “roll-back” procedures in which structural changes take place and privatisation is encouraged. There may be evidence of Couldry’s theory that neoliberalism leads to a reduction in platforms of expression and “voice,” reflected by less citizen participation and influence over decision making. By considering the political discourse surrounding economic and social policies we may gain insights as to how neoliberalism operates to create “*l’homme économique*,” in all his various forms. If so, this message would surely be established in the speeches found in parliament where policies are discussed before being implemented.

Once proof of cross party-consensus is established, a deeper examination of the role of language in political discourse will need to be carried out. There is a paucity of quantitative

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45 “the left use it to attack anybody that likes markets to any extent.” Bowman, Sam. *Op. cit.*

46 Bevir, Mark. *New Labour: A Critique*, Routledge, London, 2005. p.30.

47 Burrus, Trevor, *Op. cit.*

analysis when defining neoliberalism. Linguist Noam Chomsky draws attention to specific examples of how it operates,<sup>48</sup> but he has not used any quantitative analysis to prove neoliberal workings. This would require vast amounts of data to identify patterns in word grouping. Such data can be accessed via word corpora, but to-date Chomsky has not applied this technique to the field of neoliberalism. There has been work to categorise language in this way, but it is not specifically focused upon the sphere of neoliberalism. In *New Labour, New Language*, linguist Norman Fairclough takes a qualitative and quantitative approach towards the political speeches of Tony Blair, carrying out a linguistic analysis of speeches in which he identifies words he considers significant. In addition to this qualitative analysis, Fairclough uses a language corpus to identify where certain words appear in high frequency. Using the same method on all the political speeches of the three PMs after Tony Blair would be beyond the remit of this study and not as effective as a direct comparison of political language pre- and post-neoliberalism in Britain. To do that language data must be sourced from pre-neoliberal Britain (1960's) and contrasted with data from a period after neoliberalism became the leading ideology in British politics, preferably the most recent years, the 2000's.

The aim of this study is to establish the impact of neoliberal policies on political language. Although Couldry comes from the discipline of sociology and media studies and Peck's research is from the perspective of a geographer, the two disciplines could be considered alongside one another with a study which focuses on changes in language to provide evidence linking the two disciplines. Having read literature on neoliberalism from many different domains, it would appear that changes in language is an underused means by which neoliberalism could be identified. The approach of this dissertation is to present research which is both qualitative and quantitative and shows evidence of neoliberalism across political parties. For this reason the years 1997 to 2017 in Britain make an appropriate period to study, as during these two decades the government was comprised of: New Labour, (centre-left,) the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition, (centre-right and centre-left respectively,) then finally the Conservative Party (centre-right.) It is Margaret Thatcher's neoliberalism which is traditionally considered as having moulded British politics, so what traces of it remain within the policies of the various governments during the last two decades?

This research has been divided into two parts. In part I, evidence of cross-party consensus in applying neoliberalism is examined by comparing the three government's different

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48 For example how neoliberalism promotes deregulation to create wealth via: "financial manipulations, of course always with the protection of the nanny state." Chomsky, Noam, lecture given at the The University of Toronto, 7 April 2011, paragraph 46. Accessed 14 June 2019 <https://chomsky.info/20110407-2/>

economic and social policies. As the media is implicated in the dissemination of political discourse the research in part one has included secondary sources as well as examining government legislation. Three examples of economic and social policies of the governments are presented (six policies per government in total). I contend that this provides enough information to ensure that any identification of neoliberalism in a party is not just a one-off occurrence. Economic policies are a national issue dealt with in Westminster and affect the whole of the UK. However, since devolution, many social policies are governed by the Scottish and Welsh Parliaments. To focus the research, when evaluating social policy, only those relating to Britain have been examined.<sup>49</sup> If there had been big differences between the parties' policies, then words relating to these differences would have been used for the second part of this dissertation. However, having found that there are more similarities than differences between parties, words relating to social policies were used. Social policy was chosen because it is the consequence of economic policy.

In part II, data sourced from a language corpus is presented and the context in which words appear has been analysed. The time periods the data relates to are pre- and post-neoliberal Britain, so that comparisons can be made in the political discourse between these time periods. The decade before neoliberalism became the dominant political ideology in Britain was the 1960's, the data from the most recent years held by the corpus is from 2000-2005. I have used the Hansard language corpus to retrieve data from the archive of debates within parliament, because it provides reliable, primary-source material and permits access to large quantities of data to show the impact of neoliberal policies on political language in Britain.

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<sup>49</sup> The whole of the UK includes the North of Ireland.

## **Part I**

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**The consistent application of neoliberalism in  
economic policies and its impact upon social policies**

The objective of Part I is to show that by 2017 neoliberalism had become the central doctrine behind the two main political parties in Britain and to identify where changes in language was involved in its implementation. To do this examples are taken from 1. Economic policies, then 2. Social policies over the last 20 years.

Sam Bowman states that the Conservative Party adopted neoliberal ideas from right wing think-tanks such as the ASI as early as the 1970's. What is of interest is how their traditional opposition, the Labour party, adopted a similar doctrine when they came into power in 1997. Indeed, at this stage, New Labour had undergone quite a transformation in more than just name. To understand why and how this happened it is necessary to look at the years leading up to the time period studied in Part I of this research, 1997-2017.

When Labour governed from 1964 to 1970 they increased welfare-spending by raising taxes,<sup>1</sup> thus creating more equality in society by redistributing wealth.<sup>2</sup> However, following its "Policy Review" in 1987, the Labour Party changed its economic stance. Instead of social justice being achieved via taxation and the redistribution of wealth in society,<sup>3</sup> economic growth was now considered to be the best way to give people opportunities, as economic growth would lead to more jobs. In addition to this a skilled workforce would be better able to adapt to the vicissitudes of a global market and make Britain more attractive to investors.<sup>4</sup> For this reason Labour became pro-market.<sup>5</sup> The party made this change in its economic policy following three consecutive defeats at the polls<sup>6</sup> and became pro-market in that it abandoned Keynesian demand management.<sup>7</sup> Labour came to adopt a policy of maintaining low-inflation,<sup>8</sup> stable exchange-rates, low taxation and other means by which economic growth could be encouraged. This was the same policy the Conservative government had applied from the 1980's;<sup>9</sup> anything which could threaten economic growth needed to be controlled.<sup>10</sup> Therefore,

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1 Lund, Brian, *Understanding state welfare*, Sage publications, 2002, p. 145.

2 Driver, Stephen. Luke Martell. *New Labour, politics after Thatcherism*, Polity Press, 1998, p. 36.

3 *Ibid.* p. 30.

4 *Ibid.* p. 76.

5 *Ibid.* p. 15.

6 Author unknown, "List of thinktanks in the UK" *The Guardian*, 30 September 2013, paragraph 11. Accessed 15 March 2019 <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2013/sep/30/list-thinktanks-uk>

7 Driver, Stephen. *Op. Cit.* p. 15, paragraph 2.

8 Welfare excluded child benefits and pensions, these were to still be funded from top tax rates. *Ibid.* p. 15.

9 Post 1987 equality via redistribution of wealth became an economic policy of the past for Labour, bringing it closer to resembling the neoliberal discourse which the Conservative Party had applied from 1975. Conservative Keith Joseph had proposed both a monetarist economic policy and also the abandonment of equality via redistribution. For Joseph, those who sought redistribution of wealth were simply "envious" and the true way to ensure equality was via generating "opportunities." Lund, Brian, *Op. Cit.* p. 162.

10 This had a direct consequence upon Labour's stance on wage-rights as it was deemed that the potential power of unions to achieve an increase in wages would inevitably lead to greater inflation. Hence why, as part of the Policy Review, Labour dropped its pursuit of restoring the powers unions had enjoyed during the 1970's.

following Labour's policy review, social policy regarding education was modified to equip members of society with the skills to adapt to a global economy. This shows how economic policy served to shape social policy. Because economic growth became a priority, it was necessary to ensure stability in Britain for the market, in a world where flighty corporations might flee from a country at the hint of increased inflation, taxes, worker discontent,<sup>11</sup> or any other hindrance to profit growth.<sup>12</sup> The Labour Party followed the advice of left wing think-tank<sup>13</sup> the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR).<sup>14</sup>

It was the IPPR's paper "Opportunity Britain" (1991)<sup>15</sup> which led to Labour pursuing membership of the European Community Exchange Rate Mechanism,<sup>16</sup> which shows how the IPPR influenced Labour to share elements of the Conservative party's manifesto.<sup>17</sup> It also reflected a commitment to ensuring stability for the market, by adopting economic policies which would make Britain attractive to investors. This was due to the low-inflation rate offered by membership of the European body. Henceforth, Labour also toed the neoliberal-

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Bevir, Mark "The Remaking of Labour, 1987-1997," *Observatoire de la société britannique*, Volume 7: pp. 351-366. 2009, paragraphs 18-20. Accessed 30 March 2019 <https://journals.openedition.org/osb/861>

11 In the first year of Tony Blair's leadership, New Labour broke its commitment to the nationalisation of industries, known as Clause 4 of the Labour manifesto. This was re-written, ending the party's drive to replace the market with state ownership and symbolically severing the party from its working-class roots. This public break from socialism was also a step towards embracing neoliberal doctrine, which was already being employed by the conservative party in Britain post 1974.

Driver, *Op. Cit.* p. 15.

This period of modernisation started under the leadership of Neil Kinnock, but continued with the introduction of 'One Member One vote' when John Smith was party leader between 1992 – 1994 which shows that Labour was starting to align more towards the centre-left and embrace similar policies to the Tories before the arrival of Tony Blair.

Bell, Emma. "The Return of Cabinet Government ? Coalition Politics and the Exercise of Political Power", in Leydier, Gilles (éd.) *Revue française de la civilisation britannique*, volume 17, no.1, 2012, p. 3. Accessed 22 April 2019 <https://www.academia.edu/8586567/>

[\\_The\\_Return\\_of\\_Cabinet\\_Government\\_Coalition\\_Politics\\_and\\_the\\_Exercise\\_of\\_Political\\_Power\\_in\\_Leydier\\_Gilles\\_%C3%A9d.\\_Revue\\_fran%C3%A7aise\\_de\\_la\\_civilisation\\_britannique\\_vol.\\_17\\_n\\_1\\_2012](https://www.academia.edu/8586567/_The_Return_of_Cabinet_Government_Coalition_Politics_and_the_Exercise_of_Political_Power_in_Leydier_Gilles_%C3%A9d._Revue_fran%C3%A7aise_de_la_civilisation_britannique_vol._17_n_1_2012)

12 Driver, Stephen. *Op.cit.* p. 63.

13 The body inside the IPPR which recommended this review in policy was called "The Commission" headed by Patricia Hewitt (at the time deputy-director of the IPPR) and David Miliband (a researcher at IPPR and future New Labour leader.) This shows the close connections between the think-tank and New Labour.

Haddon, Catherine. "Making policy in opposition: the Commission on Social Justice, 1992-1994, Institute for government," 2012, p. 6, paragraph 7. Accessed 30 March [https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/CSJ%20final\\_0.pdf](https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/CSJ%20final_0.pdf)

14 Although the Policy Review did include some input from the public via a campaign called "Labour Listens," these meetings were ill-attended.

Driver, *Op. Cit.* p 15. paragraph 2.

15 Bevir, Mark "The Remaking of Labour, 1987-1997," *Observatoire de la société britannique*, Volume 7: pp. 351-366. 2009, paragraph 10. Accessed 30 March 2019 <https://journals.openedition.org/osb/861>

16 Driver, *Op. Cit.* p. 40.

17 Although the 1979 Conservative manifesto had avoided a direct attack upon welfare, at the heart of the manifesto were inflation control and reduced taxation.

Lund, *Op. Cit.* p. 163.

party line in that welfare was to be financed via economic growth,<sup>18</sup> sharing the same stance as the Conservative Party.<sup>19</sup>

Yet this was still not enough reform for the electorate; in the 1992 election, the Conservatives secured 42.3% of the vote, in comparison to Labour's 35.2%.<sup>20</sup> Labour's defeat was attributed to their electoral promises to provide higher pensions and child benefits by increasing a tax which is applied to workers.<sup>21</sup> To rectify this the party abandoned its commitment to fund these social policies via taxation, thus becoming even more pro-market. The aforementioned economic, and by consequence, social policy reforms by Labour, were once again based on the advice from think-tank the IPPR. However, this alone is not proof of neoliberal cross-party consensus, after all low-inflation is just one element of economic-policy, educating workers for a global economy is just one example of social policy and the IPPR is a left wing think-tank; not one of the neoliberal, centre-right ones listed by Bowman.

This part is divided into three sections in which comparisons will be made between the three governments of Britain between 1997 and 2017. These comparisons are based upon the extent to which these governments shared neoliberal elements. As addressed in the introduction,<sup>22</sup> "neoliberal" is defined as involving: 1) more state intervention, 2) competition in society - albeit that some market participants are favoured over others, 3) a centralisation of power and finally 4) a change in political discourse to facilitate the implementation of neoliberalism. These are the criteria we are looking for during the examination of policies implemented by the various governments.

The two different policies are economic and social. The first section of Part I focuses on the British government's economic policies in the domains of: finance, privatisation and employment. The second section of Part I focuses on social policies relating to: welfare, health and housing. The third section of Part I considers the findings of the policies examined in sections 1 and 2, looking at similarities which highlight instances of neoliberalism across the parties' policies. This section also considers the findings in the context of other social the-

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18 Driver, *Op. Cit.* p. 57.

19 Conservative Keith Joseph had proposed both a monetarist economic policy and also the abandonment of equality via the redistribution of wealth from 1975. For Joseph, those who sought such socialist principles were simply 'envious' and the true way to ensure equality was via generating opportunities. In relation to business, Joseph stated that government spending on public services deprived the private sector of opportunities to play a role in financing and running said services.

Lund, *Op. Cit.* p. 162.

20 Lund, *Op. Cit.* p. 187.

21 This form of tax is called National Insurance Contributions (NIC). Labour had proposed funding child benefits and pensions by increasing this tax for high earnings.

Driver, *Op. Cit.* p. 75, paragraph 3.

22 See Introduction p. 6.

ories. This justifies the further research completed in Part II, to try and gather more evidence of changes in language which may be related to neoliberalism.

## **1. Neoliberalism as an economic policy**

In the same way the Conservative party of the 1970's identified economic policy as key to funding social policy, during the 1990's, New Labour also adopted this approach following advice from think-tank the IPPR, which already suggests some continuation in the application of neoliberal doctrine, but to what extent did the different governments apply this? Since social policy came to be governed by economic growth, it would be logical to examine economic policies first.

### **A. New Labour (1997-2010)**

Linguist Norman Fairclough stresses the importance of Labour's decision to prefix the name of the party with "New," saying that it allowed the public to distinguish a shift in the party from being left wing to centre left and heralded in a new-age in which Labour used changes in labels to actively change the perceptions of the electorate.<sup>23</sup> Although this is by no means a new phenomenon in politics, the centralisation of media control via the use of spin under Blair's government was on a scale never previously achieved and reflected a change in the relationship between government and the media, as well as the careful choice and repetition of new terms, for example, "public-private partnership" to replace the word "privatisation."<sup>24</sup> The consistent and repetitive use of new phrases in the media suggests that there was a considered application of certain terms to persuade voters towards a neoliberal way of viewing processes. This shows a centralised approach to communication on behalf of the government, indicative of neoliberalism as discussed in the introduction. However, is there any evidence of changes in language facilitating neoliberalism? Even the prefix "New" being added to the party's name may be indicative of change within political discourse to mark an era of neoliberalism.

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23 Fairclough, Norman, 'New Labour, New Language' bin the spin, vii, Routledge, 2000

24 Fairclough, Norman, *Idem*.

## a) Finance

Maintaining low inflation rates became an important element of New Labour's economic policy following the party review at the end of the 1980's. Two important means by which the inflation rate is controlled include "central bank independence" and optimal tax considerations.<sup>25</sup> Four days after their election in 1997, New Labour deregulated the Bank of England so that it had the power to set interest rates instead of the state being responsible for this.<sup>26</sup> The deregulation is an example of the roll-back procedures defined by Peck, in which collective decision-making by elected government was handed over to financial experts and a centralisation of power occurred. The other way in which Labour ensured low-inflation rates was via low taxation. Corporation tax was reduced by 5% within one decade.<sup>27</sup> In March 2007, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced further reductions to ensure that Britain would have the lowest "of all the major economies."<sup>28</sup>

To bring more financial stability to the UK and keep inflation low, New Labour used a monetarist policy,<sup>29</sup> thus controlling the supply of money in circulation in the economy. Monetarism is also how the state can play an active role in enabling markets to function, reflecting a neoliberal trait – the state is interventionist. In "*Réflexions sur la crise*," Stéphane Guy argues that monetarism is a means to face crises, that it is not dogmatically imposed by the state, but reflects a willingness from Public Authorities<sup>30</sup> to adhere to the same, wider economic stakes as government.<sup>31</sup> However, it could also be argued that Public Authorities are simply acting within their means as a result of state policy, their decision-making a con-

25 Campillo, Marta. Jeffrey A. Miron, "Why Does Inflation Differ across Countries?" *the National Bureau of Economic Research*, Chicago Press, January 1997 paragraph 2, p. 336. Accessed 22 June 2019 <https://www.nber.org/chapters/c8889.pdf>

26 "With permission, Madam Speaker, I should like to make a statement. The Government's central economic objective is high and stable levels of growth and employment. That can happen only if we build on the solid foundation of monetary and fiscal stability...we promised in our election manifesto to reform the Bank of England, to ensure that decision making on monetary policy was more effective, open, accountable and free from short-term political manipulation. On 6 May, I announced the means by which we would achieve that promise: by giving the Bank operational responsibility for setting interest rates." Brown, Gordon. 20 May 1997, Parliament : Column 508 3.33 pm. Accessed 20 June 2019 <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm199798/cmhansrd/vo970520/debtext/70520-06.htm>

27 From 33% in 1997 to 28% by 2007. Lavery, Scott. *British Capitalism After the Crisis*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2019. p. 83, paragraph 1.

28 Hall, Ben. "Brown slashes UK company tax rate," *Financial Times*, 21 March 2007, accessed 28 April 2019 <https://www.ft.com/content/f5f7e14e-d7f0-11db-b218-000b5df10621>

29 Kitson, Michael, Frank Wilkinson. "The economics of New Labour: policy and performance," *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, Volume 31, Issue 6, November 2007, pp. 805–816, paragraph 9 <https://doi-org.sidno-made-2.grenet.fr/10.1093/cje/bem045>

30 Public Authorities are bodies which represent government and form part of the state. At a local level these bodies operate as Local Authorities.

Murry, John, "What defines a 'public authority' – and why it matters" Wardhadaway law firm, 15th July 2015. Accessed 19 July 2019 <https://www.wardhadaway.com/updates/what-defines-a-public-authority-and-why-it-matters/>

31 Guy, Stéphane. "Réflexions sur la crise" *Revue française de civilisation britannique*, WW-2|2016, paragraph 53 Accessed 23 April 2019 <https://journals.openedition.org/rfcb/1117#tocto2n8>

sequence of the financial policy imposed by central government. In this way we see how the state intervened on the market by using monetarism, but that this leads to a situation whereby Public Authorities' spending was affected; the result was a centralisation of power towards government, regardless of what duties and decisions had been bestowed upon the Public Authorities. The action may have created favourable market conditions as private companies were provided with opportunities by Public Authorities, looking for cost effective means to achieve targets set by central government, but not all market participants benefit. If Public Authorities count as participants of that market, or the people living under their jurisdictions, then they are at a disadvantage to private companies, this shows how state intervention may not lead to fair competition. Despite Guy's claim that monetarism reflects the willingness of Public Authorities to adhere to the same political ideology, monetarism actually forces their hand and while Guy claims that monetarism is a means of facing crisis, it was not enough when the banks started to fail in 2008, following deregulation of the financial sector by New Labour.

As a consequence of the financial crisis, the New Labour government spent an estimated £141bn bailing out British banks, with exposure to liabilities of over £1 trillion.<sup>32</sup> Other sources cite the overall cost of preventing a collapse of the banking system as a figure closer to £1.2 trillion.<sup>33</sup> This demonstrates that the state had intervened upon the market to make Britain attractive to business, but to the detriment of customers and taxpayers, who footed the bill. The costs of saving the banks were passed onto taxpayers when New Labour nationalised four major banking groups.<sup>34</sup> This was done to limit the damage caused and protect the pension schemes held in banks and highlights a paradox in which state intervention was necessary following deregulation. According to our definition in which the state intervenes to create competition for the market and Peck's theory of 'roll-back' procedures which suggests that this intervention leads to privatisation, New Labour's nationalisation of the banks seems to be the antithesis of neoliberalism. Creating state-owned banks not only went against New Labour's revised manifesto, but also a course of action not akin with neoliberalism. In a market where there was fair competition, banks struggling to stay afloat would have been allowed to fail and would not have received state support. The "Business as usual" approach in the face of crisis, shows that New Labour was upholding the same commitment as the previous-

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32 "The true cost of austerity and inequality" Oxfam, September 2013, p. 1. Accessed 24 April 2019 [https://www-cdn.oxfam.org/s3fs-public/file\\_attachments/cs-true-cost-austerity-inequality-uk-120913-en\\_0.pdf](https://www-cdn.oxfam.org/s3fs-public/file_attachments/cs-true-cost-austerity-inequality-uk-120913-en_0.pdf)

33 £1,029 billion of which was in unused guarantees and £133 billion in direct outlays.

Sowels, Nicholas. "Fiscal Policy, Public Spending and the 2015 General Election," *Revue française de civilisation britannique*, XX-3 | 2015, paragraph 6. Accessed 27 April 2019 <https://journals.openedition.org/rfcb/52>

34 Sowels, Nicholas Idem

neoliberal Conservative government to continue making Britain appear strong and stable in order to attract investors. The financial crisis highlights how New Labour was unable to simultaneously deregulate banks and protect citizens;<sup>35</sup> a consequence of deregulation was that savers and investors lost money.<sup>36</sup> Although the state did intervene to maintain stability in the market and protect pensions held in banks, in doing so it had to go against the ethos of fair competition and privatisation. In this respect New Labour were not completely neoliberal. However it should be noted that state intervention was in the bank's favour, not the consumer's.

State institutions failed to protect consumers in other ways too. The government's financial watchdog, the "Financial Conduct Authority" (FCA), did not intervene to protect customers in the alleged restructuring scandal in which banks Halifax Bank of Scotland (HBOS), Lloyds and Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS) stand accused.<sup>37</sup> To-date three members of staff working for HBOS between 2003-2007 have been jailed.<sup>38</sup> A spokesperson for HBOS defended the bank, stating it had shared information regarding the allegations with regulators. Nevertheless:

“While concerns regarding the misconduct of certain HBOS individuals were identified, there was not sufficient evidence to establish criminal behaviour.”<sup>39</sup>

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35 Kitson, Michael, Frank Wilkinson, "The economics of New Labour: policy and performance," *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, Volume 31, Issue 6, November 2007, pp. 805–816, published 01 November 2007. Part 3.1 4 Monetary policy. Accessed 22 April 2019. <https://academic-oup-com.gaelnomade-1.grenet.fr/cje/article/31/6/805/1691191>

36 Barclays was involved in fixing the London interbank lending rate (LIBOR) and the foreign exchange market rate (FOREX) this was a consequence of the economic-policy of deregulation.

Bell, Emma. "From Marshallian Citizenship to Corporate Citizenship: The Changing Nature of Citizenship in Neoliberal Britain," *Revue française de civilisation Britannique*, XXI-1|2016 paragraph 5. Accessed 23 April 2019 <https://journals.openedition.org/rfcb/850>

37 "Restructuring units" have been accused of advising many SMEs to take out loans to restructure their companies, indebting them, then unexpectedly calling in the debts, sending the SMEs into liquidation and effectively asset stripping them. So far the events have cost Lloyds £100 million in compensation for victims of the fraud.

Bucack, Selin, "HBOS fraud victims accept compensation from Lloyds" *City Wire*, 04 July 2018. Accessed 01 May 2019 <https://citywire.co.uk/funds-insider/news/hbos-fraud-victims-accept-compensation-from-lloyds/a1135307>

38 Neate, Roupert. "HBOS manager and other City financiers jailed over £245m loans scam" *The Guardian*, 2 February 2019. Accessed 01 May 2019 <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2017/feb/02/hbos-manager-and-other-city-financiers-jailed-over-245m-loans-scam>

39 Makortoff, Kalyeena "Noel Edmonds lashes out at Lloyds boss over knowledge of HBOS scandal" *Independent.ie*, 27 September 2017. Accessed 9 May 2019 <https://www.independent.ie/world-news/noel-edmonds-lashes-out-at-lloyds-boss-over-knowledge-of-hbos-scandal-36175306.html>

A decade after this event FCA was still refusing to release a full report about inquiries into the other banks identified as operating in a similar way.<sup>40</sup> The example shows that neoliberalism only favoured certain business, as Small to Medium Enterprises (SME's) were vulnerable to financial institutions, and highlights how the lack of state intervention led to a deviation from fair-market competition; businesses were not protected when consulting financial advisors, nor when they turned to the financial regulator FCA for protection. This reflects the neoliberal state intervening to create competition, but in the favour of big business, as opposed to assisting SMEs. This is one occurrence which highlights how the sector was insufficiently regulated.

New Labour's mantra "The Third Way" implied that the size of state would be large with regards to promoting economic growth and protecting citizens.<sup>41</sup> However, The Third Way was a term used mainly by Tony Blair and had disappeared by the time Gordon Brown became Prime Minister in 2007.<sup>42</sup> The Third Way was about prioritising economic growth but maintaining social justice; and is described by Jamie Peck as a more socially interventionist form of neoliberal ideology.<sup>43</sup> However achieving social justice via economic growth became increasingly difficult after the financial crash when austerity was introduced to combat the national debt, or "deficit", left by the crisis. This decrease in the use of a term shows a change in language which reflects the economic policy used by the government and how it affected social policy. Further consequences of New Labour relinquishing its commitment to the Third Way will be examined later in Part I.2 Social policy.

#### b) Privatisation

Private Finance Initiatives, or PFI's, were first launched in 1992 under John Major's Conservative government<sup>44</sup> and are a means by which the private sector can fund public services. Initially they encountered problems linked to bureaucracy and the Tories did not meet their tar-

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40 Rumney, Emma, Lawrence White "FCA refuses to publish report on RBS" *Reuters*, 16 February 2018. Accessed 01 May 2019 <https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-rbs-grg/fca-refuses-to-publish-report-on-rbs-idUKKCN1G01MI>

41 Indeed The Human Rights Act passed in 1998 made the European Convention on Human Rights enforceable in British courts of law, fulfilling one of Labour's manifesto promises. Bell, Emma. "From New Labour to New Conservative: the emergence of a liberal authoritarian consensus?" *Observatoire de la société Britannique*, Volume 9 | 2010, paragraph 2. Accessed 23 April 2019 <https://journals.openedition.org/osb/1045>

42 Kitson, Michael, Frank Wilkinson, "The economics of New Labour: policy and performance," *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, Volume 31, Issue 6, November 2007, pp. 805–816, Published: 01 November 2007. Introduction. Accessed 22 April 2019. <https://academic-oup-com.gaelnomade-1.grenet.fr/cje/article/31/6/805/1691191>

43 Peck, Jamie. et al. *Op. Cit.*

44 Esposito, Marie-Claude. "La Public Finance Initiative : de la production d'équipements à la gestion de services." *Observatoire de la société britannique*, Volume 7 | 2009. p. 135, paragraph 1. Accessed 23 April 2019 <https://journals.openedition.org/osb/761>

get of signing £500 million PFI contracts for hospitals by 1 April 1997.<sup>45</sup> New Labour were more neoliberal in its implementation of PFI's than the previous Conservative government as the state under New Labour intervened substantially to promote market values via the privatisation of state commodities. One construction company alone received £486 million worth of PFIs, almost achieving the same target Major had set for his government for over-all spending on privatisation.<sup>46</sup> This shows direct involvement by New Labour to promote business and economic growth, in the same way the Conservative government intervened to enact privatisation before it and the coalition government continued after it.<sup>47</sup> This highlights a continued cross-party approach towards the economic policy of privatisation.

### c) Employment

New Labour's efforts to get people back into work by creating opportunities such as "New Deal" required state intervention. This reflects the way in which the state was active in preparing new participants for a global market, by giving them the skills needed to become autonomous actors in it. New Deal appeared to be successful; by 2004 unemployment reached a 40-year low of 4.7%<sup>48</sup> However, viewed in the context of welfare reform, the creation of New Deal<sup>49</sup> expediently moved participants from the unemployment figures into the category of "in training."<sup>50</sup> This relabelling of the unemployed implicates a change in political discourse to distort unemployment figures – those on New Deal were still unemployed and receiving benefits, but recategorised due to new labelling. In this way political discourse was used to obfuscate and shape public perceptions of the apparatus of state governance. New deal is one example of new terms which appeared in political discourse which reflect neoliberalism and is examined further in section 2.A.

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45 Esposito, Marie-Claude. "La Public Finance Initiative : de la production d'équipements à la gestion de services." *Observatoire de la société britannique*, Volume 7 | 2009. p. 135, paragraph 11. Accessed 23 April 2019 <https://journals.openedition.org/osb/761>

46 Fewer contracts were awarded to Carillion under the coalition government which replaced New Labour the business obtaining PFI's worth only £347 million, (27% of government PFI spending on Carillion, as opposed to New Labour's 38%) Phaup, Hannah. "How many PFI contracts did the last Labour government sign with Carillion?" Full Fact, 18th Jan 2018. Accessed 23 April 2019 <https://fullfact.org/economy/labour-carillion-contracts/>

47 Outsourcing under the coalition accounted for £88bn of the coalition's expenditure, double what the New Labour government had spent privatising state-owned commodities. Plimmer, Gill. "UK outsourcing spend doubles to £88bn under coalition," *Financial Times*, 6 July 2014. Accessed 10 May 2019 <https://www.ft.com/content/c9330150-0364-11e4-9195-00144feab7de>

48 "The true cost of austerity and inequality" *Oxfam*, September 2013, p. 3. Accessed 24 April 2019 [https://www-cdn.oxfam.org/s3fs-public/file\\_attachments/cs-true-cost-austerity-inequality-uk-120913-en\\_0.pdf](https://www-cdn.oxfam.org/s3fs-public/file_attachments/cs-true-cost-austerity-inequality-uk-120913-en_0.pdf)

49 This was focused on young people, long-term unemployed and lone parents. "Welfare-to-Work: The New Deal Research Paper 97/118 12 November 1997" *House of Commons library*.

50 Dolton, Peter and Yvonne Balfour. "Select Committee on Education and Employment," University of Newcastle upon Tyne, Department of Economics, published Parliament.uk 2001, conclusion. Accessed 24 April 2019 <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200001/cmselect/cmduemp/58/58ap09.htm>

## B. The Conservative-Liberal Democrat Coalition– (2010-15)

A potential hung Parliament, resulting from the 2010 general election stirred fears of speculation in the City,<sup>51</sup> but this was averted when a coalition government was formed between the Conservative and Liberal Democrat parties.<sup>52</sup> The alliance was a matching of political visions which the partnership would “strengthen and enhance.”<sup>53</sup> Another feature of the coalition was power-sharing; the Prime Minister’s autonomy on policy making was reduced.<sup>54</sup> In this sense the structure of the coalition ensured less top-down management than under New Labour, thus more participation in decision-making. In this way the coalition was less neoliberal than the previous government as power was less centralised due to government structure. The new government also promised radical reforms, which would translate into economic renewal, building “a new economy from the rubble of the old.”<sup>55</sup> Speaking in 2010 David Cameron and Nick Clegg agreed:

“The most urgent task facing this coalition is to tackle our record debts, because without sound finances, none of our ambitions will be deliverable.”<sup>56</sup>

### a) Finance

The coalition’s economic-policies were heavily guided by austerity measures, which were due to the deficit following New Labour’s deregulation of the financial sector and the subsequent banking crisis.<sup>57</sup> One financial policy to reduce the deficit included increasing Value Added

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51 Wearden, Graeme. “Hung parliament fears send pound plunging,” *The Guardian*, March 2010. Accessed 23 April 2019 <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2010/mar/01/hung-parliament-fears-send-pound-falling>

52 The coalition was comprised of 306 Conservative MPs and 57 Liberal Democrats. “How has the UK's coalition government performed?” Unknown author. Political Studies Association, date of publication unknown, paragraph 6. Accessed 27 April 2019 [www.psa.ac.uk/insight-plus/how-has-uks-coalition-government-performed](http://www.psa.ac.uk/insight-plus/how-has-uks-coalition-government-performed)

53 *Idem*.

54 Prime Minister David Cameron was forced to reduce reforms to welfare by Deputy Nick Clegg and Clegg was able to influence policies concerning the NHS. Bell, Emma. “The Return of Cabinet Government ? Coalition Politics and the Exercise of Political Power,” in Leydier, Gilles (éd.) *Revue française de la civilisation britannique*, volume 17, no.1, 2012 p. 12. Accessed 22 April 2019 [www.academia.edu/8586567/\\_The\\_Return\\_of\\_Cabinet\\_Government\\_Coalition\\_Politics\\_and\\_the\\_Exercise\\_of\\_Political\\_Power\\_in\\_Leydier\\_Gilles\\_%C3%A9d.\\_Revue\\_fran%C3%A7aise\\_de\\_la\\_civilisation\\_britannique\\_vol.\\_17\\_n\\_1\\_2012](http://www.academia.edu/8586567/_The_Return_of_Cabinet_Government_Coalition_Politics_and_the_Exercise_of_Political_Power_in_Leydier_Gilles_%C3%A9d._Revue_fran%C3%A7aise_de_la_civilisation_britannique_vol._17_n_1_2012)

55 Beech, M., Lee, S. (Eds.) *The Conservative-Liberal Coalition Examining the Cameron-Clegg Government*. Palgrave MacMillan, 2015, p. 16.

56 *Ibid*.

57 When the coalition came to power the deficit was 10.1% of GDP, the Emergency Budget of 2010 set out to reduce it to 1.1% within five years. Sowers, Nicholas “Fiscal Policy, Public Spending and the 2015 General Election” *Revue française de civilisation britannique*, XX-3 | 2015, paragraph 8. Accessed 27 April 2019 <https://journals.openedition.org/rfcb/528>

Tax (VAT) from 17.5 per cent to 20 per cent.<sup>58</sup> Government intervention to increase tax does not appear conducive to maintaining good market conditions, as high tax could deter potential investors. However here we can see how neoliberalism results in different rules for different sections of the society. VAT does not hinder the market and is a viable means to collect revenue which does not deter potential investors, unlike corporation tax.<sup>59</sup> This reflects a continuation of New Labour's efforts to make Britain attractive to investors via low tax rates for business. Taxation of corporations was not used as a means to reduce the deficit, but a tax upon goods which all members of society use was. This reflects a continued focus upon economic growth by the coalition, the same as the preceding New Labour government. This also demonstrates how a consequence of neoliberalism is that the market is prioritised over the poorest citizens in society; VAT may increase, yet corporation tax decreases.<sup>60</sup>

The Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act of 2013 deregulated sections of the market in the same way New Labour deregulated the banks, which shows a continuation of deregulation across parties and consistency in the application of neoliberalism. The Liberal-Democrat coalition abolished the Office of Fair Trading and the Competition Commission,<sup>61</sup> which had been responsible for investigating fair operation of the market. This became the duty of the Competition and Markets Authority,<sup>62</sup> streamlining two services designed to ensure fair market conditions into just one body. The restructuring and streamlining of organisations designed to ensure fair-market practice has reduced regulatory mechanisms, resulting in less state intervention to hinder market practise, yet a centralisation of power for market actors. Here we can see how, under neoliberalism, intervention by the state is low when hindering the market, but high in promoting certain market actors, in this case private companies. This has been achieved by a change in language as two departments became merged under one title.

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58 VAT rises, gov.uk. Accessed 17 July 2019 <https://www.gov.uk/vat-rates>

59 Sam Bowman of the Adam Smith Institute states that taxing corporations is an inefficient means to redistribute wealth and reduces investment because this results in more money being in circulation in the economy. The concept of redistribution of wealth via taxation does however still endure, even for self-proclaimed neoliberals like Bowman, but it is not by taxing corporations. Instead he proposes VAT. Triggernometry, "Sam Bowman on Libertarianism, Neoliberalism, the Housing Crisis & Drugs," YouTube, [Published 12 August 2018;] Accessed 27 April 2019 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OZgfdS8IC5w>

60 People on low-incomes pay proportionately more for the goods and services to which VAT is applied. In 2017 *The Independent* reported that the poorest spend 12.5 % of their income on VAT, in comparison to the 5% paid by the richest members of society. Kentish, Benjamin, "Poorest pay higher taxes than richest, new figures show" 26 April 2017. Accessed 27 April 2019 <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/lowest-earners-more-tax-richest-office-national-statistics-inequality-council-tax-vat-equality-trust-a7704331.html>

61 Explanatory notes Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013, legislation.gov, p. 35 'Competition and Market Authority's functions in relation to cartels.' Accessed 22 April 2019 [http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2013/24/pdfs/ukpgaen\\_20130024\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2013/24/pdfs/ukpgaen_20130024_en.pdf)

62 Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013, *Idem*. p. 46.

Another change brought about by the act was that government body Trading Standards was tasked with the added responsibility of consumer education,<sup>63</sup> which promotes an understanding of the structures and systems within the market for citizens, creating opportunities for individuals to participate in it.<sup>64</sup> By underfunding Trading Standards people received less information and skills necessary to participate in the market. Emerging market participants, such as the self-employed or SME's would therefore have a disadvantage to businesses already in operation.

There was a second way in which underfunding Trading Standards led to the state not intervening to protect the interests of citizens. Speaking in 2016 the chief executive of Trading Standards blamed austerity cuts for the decrease in market surveillance, leading to a situation where Trading Standards was ill-equipped to protect consumers.<sup>65</sup> This shows how there has been a continuity of neoliberal practise in economic policy, reducing state support where it protects individuals to the advantage of private companies.

#### b) Privatisation

Writing on the subject in 2014, the House of Commons Library stated that the economic policy of privatisation had reduced significantly post 1997 with only a "handful of instances." However it also acknowledged that sometimes the policy is not directly referred to as "privatisation."<sup>66</sup> New terms such as "PFIs" and "outsourcing" have appeared, making it harder to quantify the number of instances where privatisation has occurred. This would support journalist Monbiot's claim that neoliberal discourse is designed to make its identification difficult<sup>67</sup> and is an example of how language changes have enabled neoliberal practise. The change in political discourse has made it difficult to identify when privatisation took place, because since New Labour the term "privatisation" is not explicit unless a government has chosen to use this word. The continued use of the same words after New Labour indicates a consistency in political discourse which reflects the neoliberal agenda of privatisation.<sup>68</sup> Here we see that changes in political discourse have been adopted by both governments while they implemen-

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63 Explanatory notes Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013, *Idem*. Chapter 24, p. 23, section 142.

64 The European Commission, [www.consumerclassroom.eu](http://www.consumerclassroom.eu), Consumer classroom. Accessed 23 April 2019 [www.consumerclassroom.eu/fr/content/pourquoi-enseigner-l%C3%A9ducation-%C3%A0-la-consommation-%C2%A0](http://www.consumerclassroom.eu/fr/content/pourquoi-enseigner-l%C3%A9ducation-%C3%A0-la-consommation-%C2%A0)

65 Garside, Juliette. "Trading standards institute: consumers are no longer protected," *The Guardian*, 7 Aug 2016. Accessed 23 April 2019 [www.theguardian.com/money/2016/aug/07/trading-standards-institute-consumers-are-no-longer-protected](http://www.theguardian.com/money/2016/aug/07/trading-standards-institute-consumers-are-no-longer-protected)

66 Rhodes, Chris. David Hough, Louise Butcher. "Privatisation research paper," *House of Commons Library*, 14/61 20 November 2014.

67 Monbiot, George. *Op. Cit.*

68 Labour replaced the word privatisation with: public-private partnership, outsourcing and PFIs. Laval, Christian. *Op. Cit.*

ted privatisation under different names. In this sense the practise of neoliberalism is not rigid, but an evolution of different practices which incorporates language as part of state intervention, it is applied during the creation of competition in the market and the centralisation of power which enables the state to intervene in this manner. This serves as an example to support geographer J. Peck's theory that neoliberalism is a process of hybridisation rather than a monolithic power<sup>69</sup> and suggests that changes in language may be a tool used to achieve such hybridity.

Figures related to outsourcing can be used to identify when privatisation occurred; between 2010 and 2015, spending related to outsourcing rose from £64 billion to £120 billion.<sup>70</sup> These figures reflect a continuous neoliberal drive to transfer state-owned services to the private sector. This shows a continuation of New Labour's economic policy under the coalition government.

Another point to consider is that, as addressed in the introduction, one of the often cited traits of neoliberalism is less state interference in the private sector – however the process of engendering privatisation requires state intervention to provide competitive market conditions. The state played a role in favouring certain market participants over others as the private companies receiving the contracts were selected by government. In 2012 private companies received £73m worth of contracts from the Department of Work and Pensions, *The Bureau of Investigative Journalism* reported the high proportion of Tory MPs with links to said private companies.<sup>71</sup> This example shows that on the one hand the Conservative government was committed to decentralisation via outsourcing and previously state-owned departments were taken over by the private sector, but on the other hand these private companies were owned by some of the MPs in the government advocating said outsourcing- which led to a centralisation of power over previously state-owned resources. State intervention resulted in a centralisation of power and resources and unfair competition. The introduction of a new term to describe privatisation, 'outsourcing' accompanied this processes of privatisation.

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69 Peck, Jamie. Adama Tickell. *Neoliberalising space*, Blackwell Publishers 2002, p. 384 paragraph 1.

70 Innes, Abby. "First-best-world economic theory and the second-best-world of public sector outsourcing: the reinvention of the Soviet Kombinat by other means" *London School of Economics*, 2018 p. 3. Accessed 22 April 2019 <http://www.lse.ac.uk/european-institute/Assets/Documents/LEQS-Discussion-Papers/LEQSPaper134.pdf>

71 Ross, Alice. "Tory donors' firms landed lucrative government contracts," *The Bureau of Investigative Journalism*, 30 July 2012. Accessed 26 April 2019 <https://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/stories/2012-07-30/tory-donors-firms-landed-lucrative-government-contracts>

### c) Employment

The Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013 enabled deregulation of certain aspects of the market which led to businesses having an advantage over consumers (see 1.B.a) at the same time as cutting red tape related to employment.<sup>72</sup> To expunge civil liability from employers the Commission for Equality and Human Rights<sup>73</sup> was reviewed; as a result employers were no longer held responsible when health and safety regulations were breached. This reflects how the state under the coalition continued to prioritise conditions favourable to investors in the same way Labour set out to attract business, yet this was not advantageous to workers.

Liability was also removed from the employer in cases where they knew an employee to be harassed by customers or clients, it is stated in the Act that this modification is part of removing “measures which are considered to impose an unnecessary burden on business.”<sup>74</sup> This deregulation is again not of benefit to the employee, but serves to encourage business. It is significant when considering the impact of neoliberalism on political discourse that a reduction in employee protection is legitimised in the name of removing burdens on businesses as it shows that priority is placed upon economic growth over worker safety.

Another way the Act reduced burdens to to business to the detriment of employees was by introducing measures to reduce the number of employment tribunals. Legal proceedings can be costly for a company, but the Act streamlined the number of tribunals by introducing: “regulations on the payment of a deposit if a party wishes to continue to participate in proceedings” i.e. employees who wanted to pursue justice against an employer had to pay more and navigate extra administration. Although there was some state funding available for the deposit, this was to be allocated the Secretary of State with the objective of allowing “tribunals to be more targeted with their case management”<sup>75</sup> When the state takes decisions over which cases are worthy of legal aid which are not this implies a centralisation of power. The introduction of tribunals reveals that the coalition introduced legal requirements which encouraged the reduction of employment tribunals. This reflects state intervention to remove

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72 “Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013” Chapter 5 Miscellaneous, part 5, Reduction of legislative burdens. Accessed 23 April 2019 [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2013/24/pdfs/ukpga\\_20130024\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2013/24/pdfs/ukpga_20130024_en.pdf)

73 *Ibid.* Section 64. p. 26.

74 *Ibid.* Section 65. 442-443 p. 83 on the PDF. Accessed 23 April 2019 [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2013/24/pdfs/ukpgaen\\_20130024\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2013/24/pdfs/ukpgaen_20130024_en.pdf)

75 “...The amendment has the effect of enabling employment tribunal procedure regulations also to provide for tribunal deposit orders if a party wishes to pursue a specific allegation or argument within proceedings. This will enable the Secretary of State to make tribunal regulations which will allow tribunals to be more targeted with their case management.” *Ibid.* Chapter 24, section 124. p. 21 on PDF.

hindrances to business at the expense of the employee via deregulation, this deregulation has led to a centralisation of power for business and a disadvantaged position for workers.

Furthermore, there is an element of the act which highlights the role of language in dissuading employees to seek formal legal action. A change in terminology occurred as “Compromise agreements” were renamed “settlement agreements.”<sup>76</sup> The explanatory notes of the Act state the reason for this change in language is because “settlement” is easier for the public to understand and also reflects the meaning of the agreement.<sup>77</sup> This meaning has been interpreted as the agreement being closed and finished with, ie “settled” which implies all participants are satisfied. Whereas “Compromise” is more pejorative and reflects that those seeking legal action have been dissuaded from carrying it out or that both parties are not entirely satisfied with the outcome. This shows an example of how a neoliberal driven economic policy to reduce restrictions on business has consequentially resulted in a change in political discourse to accompany the legislation designed to reduce hindrances to business.

### C. The Conservatives (2015-17)

The 2016 referendum on UK membership of the EU<sup>78</sup> is debatably one of the most publicised political events to take place between 2015-2017. Although it has been cited as an outcome of neoliberalism<sup>79</sup> rather than focusing on just one event as a possible indication of the doctrine, it would be more scientific to look at several changes over time to identify patterns in the application of neoliberal policy. It is an important element to consider in the context of British politics, but not a defining moment in our study of neoliberalism. So far there is evidence of the doctrine in the economic policies of both the New Labour and Coalition governments since 1997, but was the final government in our study any less neoliberal in its economic policies once freed from the coalition? Were there any examples of changes to political discourse, as seen in parts 1.A and 1.B, which evidence a continuation of neoliberalism impacting language?

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76 Explanatory notes, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013 Chapter 24, pp. 17-18 on PDF, point 23. Accessed 23 April 2019 [http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2013/24/pdfs/ukpgaen\\_20130024\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2013/24/pdfs/ukpgaen_20130024_en.pdf)

77 *Ibid.* Chapter 24, p. 20 on PDF, section 121.

78 commonly referred to as “Brexit.”

79 “The ‘Brexit’ vote is but the latest manifestation of popular dissatisfaction with the utopian ideal of autonomous markets beyond the reach of regulatory democracy. Brexit represented the collective, if (to my mind) often misguided, efforts of those “left behind” in Britain to protect themselves from the predatory nature of market fundamentalism,” *Economist Ann Pettifor*, cited by Cromby, John. ‘The myths of Brexit,’ *John Wiley & Sons*, 9 August 2018, p. 57, paragraph 6. Accessed 14 May 2019 <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1002/casp.2377>

## a) Finance

In the 2015 Conservative Party Manifesto, the party made clear its commitment to austerity via department savings of £13 billion and a further £12 billion more cuts in welfare benefits. Tax evasion was also on the agenda, tackling it would bring an estimated £5 billion extra in savings.<sup>80</sup> The pledge to address tax avoidance was undermined when in 2015 the *International Consortium of Investigative Journalists* reported *The Panama Papers*;<sup>81</sup> details on a mass tax avoidance system, (which also implicated British PM David Cameron).<sup>82</sup> At the International Anti-corruption Summit which followed, Cameron pledged that the Government would continue to “crack down on tax evasion and aggressive tax avoidance.”<sup>83</sup> In 2017 the release of *The Paradise Papers*<sup>84</sup> revealed another legal arrangement which allowed VAT avoidance for high-expense purchases (such as yachts and jets).<sup>85</sup> It should be noted that although these tax avoidance systems were uncovered during the Conservative government, they had been in operation for many years across all governments, the Panama and the Paradise Papers reflect a continuous application of neoliberal principals. The reason why the tax evasion was legal is because it encouraged business investment and economic growth, hence why it was unchallenged by all governments and in some cases used by members of government. The lack of action by the state enabled a transfer of wealth out of Britain.<sup>86</sup> In this sense there seems to be a lack of state intervention to enable neoliberalism, however this would be misleading. The roll-back procedures described by Jamie Peck whereby institutional restructuring takes place to allow the doctrine to thrive is evidenced in the way the state organises tax systems which are preferential towards high-earners.<sup>87</sup> The state is active with regards to

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80 Sowels, Nicholas *Fiscal Policy, Public Spending and the 2015 General Election*, "Revue française de civilisation Briannique, XX-3 | 2015, Paragraph 13.

81 “Commons Library analysis: The international anti-corruption summit in May 2016,” 20 May 2016 paragraph 16. Accessed 03 May 2019 <https://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/CBP-7580>

82 Hamilton, Martha. “British PM Announces New Transparency Measures Following Panama Papers Revelations,” *International Consortium of Investigative Journalists*, 11 April 2016 Accessed May09 2019 <https://www.icij.org/investigations/panama-papers/20160411-cameron-parliament-reform/>

83 “Commons Library analysis: The international anti-corruption summit in May 2016,” 20 May 2016, paragraph 17. Accessed 03 May 2019 <https://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/CBP-7580>

84 Seely, Antony. Federico Mor “The Paradise Papers,” House of Commons Library, Briefing paper, no. CDP-2017-0228, p. 3, 14 November 2017.

85 Bowers, Simon. “British inquiry promises ‘no stone left unturned’ as it tackles tax avoidance and evasion,” *International Consortium of Investigative Journalists*, (Blog) 27 March 2018. Accessed 09 May 2019 <https://www.icij.org/investigations/paradise-papers/british-inquiry-promises-no-stone-left-unturned-tackles-tax-avoidance-evasion/>

86 This recalls the lectures of Chomsky on how “financial manipulations,” which occur under neoliberalism result in the offshoring of wealth. Chomsky, Noam, lecture given at the The University of Toronto, 7 April 2011, paragraph 46. Accessed 14 June 2019 <https://chomsky.info/20110407-2/>

87 Those who pay most towards a redistributive tax are those most likely to use welfare services, because they are on the lowest incomes and VAT is applied to the goods and services they use. VAT on high purchase goods is not redistributed, benefiting the already wealthy and furthering their income. The roll-back mechanism in

imposing VAT for low-wage earners, but not high-wage earners. This demonstrates how a centralisation of power can lead to state intervention which distorts competition; high earners are given additional options with regards to paying tax, which leads to them having extra resources. Those who have money continue to make money, those who do not pay VAT on all the goods which affect them.

#### b) Privatisation

“The sale of government assets this year will deliver the largest privatisation proceeds of all time, higher than the previous record in 1987.”<sup>88</sup> Chancellor of the Exchequer George Osborn.

When delivering the budget, “Privatisation” was used in place of “outsourcing,” “private-public ownership or PFI” which may indicate a tougher approach in the Conservative economic policy, one justified by the need to reduce the deficit. State owned businesses were privatised, such as Royal mail 2014,<sup>89</sup> the sale of Eurostar raised £585.1 million,<sup>90</sup> but a large amount of privatisation happened when the government sold its shares and mortgages in banks. Centre-right publication *Business Insider* reported that these included the RBS, Lloyds, Northern Rock and Bradford & Bingley,<sup>91</sup> some of which had been nationalised under New Labour following the banking crisis. This demonstrates that the nationalisation of banks under New Labour was a temporary feature, in this case at the expense of the taxpayer, whereas the privatisation of state-owned businesses to reduce the national deficit benefited those buying the shares (including some members of the Conservative party.)<sup>92</sup> This not only reveals a

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place is the aforementioned tax-avoidance schemes which offer high-earners the option to not pay towards the welfare system.

88 Osborn, George, “Financial Statement,” House of Commons, Hansard, 08 July 2015, Volume 598, Column 343. Accessed 30 April 2019 <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2015-07-08/debates/15070837000001/FinancialStatement?highlight=sale%20government%20assets%20this%20year%20will%20deliver%20largest%20privatisation%20proceeds%20time%20higher%20than%20previous%20record%201987#contribution-15070837000184>

89 Unknown author, “Privatisation of Royal Mail” [economicsonline.co.uk/Business\\_economics/Privatisation\\_of\\_Royal\\_Mail.html](http://economicsonline.co.uk/Business_economics/Privatisation_of_Royal_Mail.html), *Economics Online*, 2019. Accessed 04 May 2019.

90 “The Sale of Eurostar” Sixteenth Report of Session 2015–16, House of Commons Committee of Public Accounts, 13 January 2016. p. 9, paragraph 4 <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201516/cmselect/cmpubacc/564/564.pdf>

91 Williams-Grut, William. “Britain is in the middle of a privatisation boom bigger than Margaret Thatcher's, but no one seems to notice,” *Business Insider France*, 9 July 2015, paragraphs 6-9. Accessed 29 April 2019 <https://www.businessinsider.fr/us/george-osborne-plans-to-raise-31-billion-through-public-sector-sell-offs-in-2015-2015-7>

92 Ross, Alice. “‘Tory donors’ firms landed lucrative government contracts,” *The Bureau of Investigative Journalism*, 30 July 2012. Accessed 26 April 2019 <https://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/stories/2012-07-30/tory-donors-firms-landed-lucrative-government-contracts>

conflict of interest, but also how a centralisation over power and resources took place as a result of state intervention.

### c) Employment

The “Five-year tax lock”<sup>93</sup> legally prohibited the Conservatives from raising revenue via VAT, National Insurance Contributions (NIC) or income tax<sup>94</sup> and shows that workers were rewarded with low taxes. The tax lock was possible due to “reducing wasteful spending, making savings in welfare” and addressing “tax evasion and aggressive avoidance.”<sup>95</sup> Although initially NIC was included in the tax lock,<sup>96</sup> citing Brexit as a reason, NIC rose to 11%.<sup>97</sup> The type of NIC which was increased by the Conservative government was Class 4 - a tax which affects the self-employed, putting them at a disadvantage to other market participants, such as already established businesses.<sup>98</sup> This reflects state intervention which alters competition, but in the favour of some market actors over others. The Resolution Foundation, a think-tank which describes itself as “focused on improving the living standards for those on low-to-middle incomes,”<sup>99</sup> defended the decision to increase tax on the self-employed, despite it breaching the Conservatives commitment and legislation.<sup>100</sup>

Although tax evasion and aggressive avoidance were supposed to be a means to enable the tax lock, there was a continuation from previous British government’s economic policies in that companies remained deregulated to the detriment of citizens. One example includes British company BHS, which highlighted how a lack of regulation could lead to company directors using employee pension schemes as collateral.<sup>101</sup>

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93 Author unknown, “David Cameron income tax law promise 'made up on the hoof,’” *BBC news*, October 2016. Accessed 10 May 2019 <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-37797134>

94 Sowels, Nicholas *Op. Cit.* Paragraph 14.

95 The Conservative Party Manifesto, 2015 p. 9 column 1 paragraph2- column 2 paragraph 1.. Accessed 10 May <http://ucrel.lancs.ac.uk/wmatrix/ukmanifestos2015/localpdf/Conservatives.pdf>

96 Weaver, Matthew, "How the Conservatives pledged no rise in national insurance, then raised it" *The Guardian*, 9 March 2017, paragraph 14. Accessed 2019 <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2017/mar/09/how-the-conservatives-pledged-no-rise-in-national-insurance-then-raised-it>

97 Bradshaw, Jonathan, Fran Bennett. "National insurance contributions and the self-employed in the UK" European Commission, 2017, column 1, paragraph 3. Accessed 10 May 2019

98 Gov.UK The abolition of Class 2 National Insurance: Introducing a benefit test into Class 4 National Insurance for the self-employed 11 December 2018. Accessed 01 July 2019 <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/consultation-on-abolishing-class-2-national-insurance-and-introducing-a-contributory-benefit-test-to-class-4-national-insurance-for-the-self-employed/the-abolition-of-class-2-national-insurance-introducing-a-benefit-test-into-class-4-national-insurance-for-the-self-employed>

99 Resolution Foundation, "About us" Accessed 17 June 2019 <https://www.resolutionfoundation.org/about-us/mission/>

100 Bradshaw, Jonathan, Fran Bennett. “National insurance contributions and the self-employed in the UK” European Commission, 2017, column 2, paragraph 2.

101 “BHS inquiry” Work and Pensions Committee, 25 July 2016. Accessed 09 May 2019 <https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/work-and-pensions-committee/inquiries/parliament-2015/bhs-inquiry-16-17/>

The Conservative's economic policy of austerity was a way of managing the national deficit following the financial crash which took place under New Labour, due to a deregulation of the banking sector. To reduce the deficit, the Conservatives deregulated sectors related to employment to encourage economic growth, at the same time as increasing taxes which primarily affected the self-employed (NIC) and consumers (VAT). This is another instance in which state intervention has led to a distortion of fair competition in the market, as the tax paid by low-wage earners and the self-employed is proportionately more than that paid by businesses, which are deregulated. This reflects an economic policy which is focused on economic growth as a means of not only funding social policy but addressing the deficit of the country, this leads to prioritising the market over certain rights. Another means of reducing the deficit was via an economic policy of austerity. As with taxation, this austerity was not shared evenly across all sections of society, as it involved making cuts to public spending. This inevitably had an influence upon social policies which will now be examined with a view of identifying occurrences of neoliberalism and if applicable, when the doctrine has led to a change in political discourse. So far there has been a consistency across governments economic policies in how neoliberal practise leaves citizens vulnerable to exploitation as a result of prioritising private actors pertaining to a global market.

## **2. Neoliberalism's impact on social policy**

Since Labour's Policy Review, all British parties have funded social policies via economic growth instead of tax redistribution. We have established that there was some consistency in the application of neoliberalism in the economic policies examined from 1997-2017 which had an impact on certain political discourse. There were also occasions when legislative changes upholding this commitment led to a change in language to facilitate neoliberalism, for example the creation of new terms. These included: "PFIs" and "Outsourcing" in place of "privatisation" under New Labour, and "Compromise agreements" being renamed "settlement agreements" under the coalition. There was a shift back to the use of "privatisation" under the final government, but this process still occurred under the preceding governments, just under different names. These changes reflect a neoliberal mechanism of what Peck describes as roll-back procedures to promote the market via deregulation. There is evidence of cross-party consensus across the economic policies studied, but it is necessary to consider how these impacted social policies. Changes in language which accompany legislation will be considered

to see if similar processes which took place in the implementation of economic policies also took place within social ones. When considering changes in language which occur within social policy it is necessary to take into account other theories related to linguistics and political discourse.

Linguist Norman Fairclough states that New Labour heralded in a new age in which there was a focus on language with the aim of altering electorate perceptions.<sup>102</sup> This is by no means a new phenomenon in politics, but the centralisation of media control via the use of “spin” under Blair’s government henceforth changed the relationship between government and the media. There was also the careful choice and repetition of new terms, for example “public-private partnership” to replace the word “privatisation.”<sup>103</sup> Fairclough states that the consistent and repeated use of this new phrase in the media is evidence of the new focus on political language in order to change the voter’s perceptions. The new form of communication was not limited to relabelling privatisation. Under New Labour the way in which certain sections of society were viewed also changed. As part of a homogenisation with EU terms, the concept of “social exclusion” was adopted by the party and as Fairclough explains: “represented a shift from the previously dominant concept of ‘poverty’.”<sup>104</sup>

Addressing social exclusion was a policy priority for New Labour as demonstrated by its welfare-to-work programme.<sup>105</sup> During the launch of the Social Exclusion Unit in December 1997, new Prime Minister Tony Blair stated that the term “social exclusion” encompassed more than poverty in relation to income, and extended government duty to providing “life-chances.”<sup>106</sup> To provide these New Labour addressed the problem of people being cut-off from “what the rest of us regard as normal life.”<sup>107</sup> This comprehensive definition of social exclusion is evidence of how members of society were recategorised as outside or within the norm, due to their employment status. Sociologist Levitas has defined different discourses in relation to social categories.<sup>108</sup> By defining the unemployed as excluded members of society New Labour categorised these people under what Levitas calls “social integrationist discourse” (SID).<sup>109</sup> This is reflected in the political discourse which labels them as socially

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102 Fairclough, Norman, *New Labour, New Language*, Routledge, 2000 vii.

103 Fairclough, *Ibid.* vii.

104 Fairclough, *Ibid.* p. 51, paragraph 3.

105 *Ibid.* p 51.

106 *Ibid.* p. 52

107 *Ibid.*.

108 Levitas defines the ‘redistributionist discourse’ (RED) as citizenship being the counterpart of exclusion and reducing inequalities is achieved by the “redistribution of resources and power.”, ‘Understanding State welfare, social justice or social exclusion?’ *SAGE publications*, 2002, Levitas cited p.9 This would not have been an option to Labour following its 1987 Policy Review. Lund, Brian

109 Lund, Brian, ‘Understanding State welfare, social justice or social exclusion?’ *SAGE publications*, 2002, Levitas cited p. 9.

excluded. In this section we will see how under Conservative legislation the word “poverty” became replaced with “workless.” However it was New Labour who started this shift in meaning by presenting the notion that there were opportunities for the excluded and unemployed. The implication was that in spite of these opportunities, the excluded chose not to work. This projects a message that the unemployed are not just identifiable and outside of the mainstream, but that they are culturally different from “the rest of us.” Levitas calls this the moral underclass discourse (MUD). As New Labour used “life-chances” in relation to finding work, the Conservatives used “life-chances” to replace the term “child-poverty,” which demonstrates a continuation of the compound being associated with the poorest in society and evokes the idea that opportunities are being provided, yet not taken. If employment opportunities appear available to the citizen, but remain unused, the focus is then placed upon the behaviour of individuals and shifted away from being about the structure of society and the lack of wealth redistribution. The question of what real opportunities exist for people without the financial resources or protection from institutions to participate in a market, is not asked.

In this part we will examine to what extent there was consistency across the governments in their social policies and whether there was a continuation of MUD, in which categorisation occurred between the poorest of society and “the rest of us” To what extent were the moral underclass to blame for their circumstances and how did language reinforce this?

## A. New Labour (1997-2010)

Following the implementation of austerity as an economic policy, it was inevitable that social policies would suffer from cut-backs. However, before the banking crisis of 2008, New Labour presided over a decade of economic growth,<sup>110</sup> therefore were there any signs of neoliberalism impacting upon social policy from 1997-2000, a period in which there was no downturn in the economy? It is worth considering another aspect of the doctrine when making this analysis, which relates to our definition of neoliberalism. Professor Emma Bell describes a tension between libertarianism and authoritarianism found in neoliberal doctrine where on the one hand the state advocates the universality of human rights,<sup>111</sup> yet on the other hand places

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110 Valero, Anna. John Van Reenen and Dan Corry, "The UK's sustained growth between 1997 and 2008 was fuelled by the importance of skills and new technology. Rather than just austerity, the government should focus on building human capital and innovation to support long-term growth." *London School of Economics and Political Science*, 15 November 2011, paragraph 3, Figure 1 – Trends in GDP per capita (adult) 1979-2010 (relative to 1997). Accessed 20 June 2019 <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/politicsandpolicy/uk-growth-and-productivity-1997-to-2008/>

111 As demonstrated by New Labour's move to bring the UK inline with EU laws concerning Human Rights. "Human Rights Act 1998" c.42 Hansard. Accessed 28 April 2019 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/>

emphasis on the conditions under which rights are provided.<sup>112</sup> This reflects the MUD discourse in which those who refuse to partake in the social contract are effectively choosing their own poverty. There is evidence of this occurring in the way that state welfare became dependent upon citizens upholding their responsibilities under New Labour in new forms of welfare payments, this may serve as an example of how there was a centralisation of power under New Labour and the state became more coercive.

#### a) Welfare

An example of Bell's libertarianism/authoritarianism paradox would be New Labour's "New Deal program." New Deal was a form of unemployment benefit which was coercive in that the claimant had to conform to prescribed behaviour and enrol on training programs in exchange for state-paid benefits. Combined with funding from the European Union to generate new businesses, New Deal was a means for Labour to create new participants in the job market, leading to economic growth which in turn would lead to resolving social issues such as unemployment.<sup>113</sup> However, an internal select committee found that the welfare scheme was inefficient, partly because while participants on the new form of welfare could access training opportunities they were still constrained by macro-economic factors.<sup>114</sup> In theory the state was being proactive in equipping the unemployed with skills to contribute to the economy and attain self-reliance, but in practice, due to the wider market, the scheme was ineffectual. The report also suggested that New Deal may have been implemented to appeal to voters by making New Labour appear proactive in reducing unemployment,<sup>115</sup> yet in practice continuing benefit payments under New Deal.<sup>116</sup> This is interesting because it reflects the neoliberal principal

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[1998/42/contents](#)

112 This is demonstrated by New Labour proposing a "Bill of Rights and Responsibilities." Bell, Emma "From New Labour to New Conservative: the emergence of a liberal authoritarian consensus?" *Observatoire de la société Britannique*, Volume 9 | 2010 paragraph 18. Accessed 29 April 2019 <https://journals.openedition.org/osb/1045#ftn47>

113 Under New Deal claimants were channelled into training which would equip them with the tools to potentially start businesses and participate in the job-market as self-employed.

114 Select Committee on Education and Employment Appendices to the Minutes of Evidence, Appendix 8 Memorandum from Peter Dolton and Yvonne Balfour, University of Newcastle upon Tyne, Department of Economics, Parliament.uk 2001, conclusion, paragraph 1. Accessed 24 April 2019 <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200001/cmselect/cmduemp/58/58ap09.htm>

115 A way in which New Deal potentially appealed to voters is reminiscent of Thatcher's conversion of council house tenants into private property owners, in that a government which favours participation in market orientated activities naturally appeals more to a demographic it creates which are the self-employed. Also, it reflects the continued focus on promoting economic growth as a means of funding social policy as this was no longer the duty of the state since the abandonment of Keynesian demand management.

116 "The "get tough" policy in which the continued receipt of the Job Seeker's Allowance is dependent on participation in the New Deal could be attractive to floating voters." Select Committee on Education and Employment Appendices to the Minutes of Evidence. Appendix 8 Memorandum from Peter Dolton and Yvonne Balfour, *University of Newcastle upon Tyne*, Department of Economics, Parliament.uk 2001, conclusion, paragraph 2. Accessed 24 April 2019 <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200001/cmselect/cmduemp/>

that the state has a reduced role by placing onus upon the individual. It also highlights that “New Deal” was just another way to speak of unemployment benefit, however it had additional conditions attached.

The creation of the proactive term “Job Seekers Allowance” (JSA) shows the use of a label to differentiate the new way in which benefits would be paid on the condition of compliance; a citizen could enjoy rights, providing they upheld responsibilities denoted by JSA; taking the opportunities offered by government. The new form of arrangement by which the state still offered benefits to the unemployed, but rebranded as “New Deal,” shows how the economic policy affected political discourse. New Deal was a way of presenting opportunities to the unemployed as a means of bringing the excluded outsiders into society (SID). It also shows how to enable this change there was a new category of benefit claimant invented. Thus we see evidence of a change in language enabling neoliberal practice; the New Deal was money offered to people to help them integrate, but they needed to be willing participants in training programs in order to receive state aid. This supports Bell’s theory on the libertarianism/authoritarianism paradox and also the way in which Foucault said the state diffuses its power via institutions.

In October 2008 Incapacity Benefit started to be replaced with Employment and Support Allowance (ESA). The creation of this benefit by New Labour was following advice from think-tank the IPPR with the aim of creating a single system for benefits<sup>117</sup> much like the Conservative’s Universal credit system<sup>118</sup> this was designed to replace six benefits with just one<sup>119</sup> and shows a simplification of terms, by replacing many with just one. Universal credit was introduced in 2009 by the Conservative Party on the advice of the centre-right think-tank, the Centre for Social Justice. This shows cross-party consensus in that the two main political parties were both taking advice at the same time on how to stream-line the Welfare system.

The introduction of ESA also incorporated the Work Capability Assessment as part of New Labour’s benefit-system review, in which “virtually everyone claiming benefit and not in work should be required to engage in activities that will help them to move towards, and

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[58/58ap09.htm](#)

117 Purnell, James "Raising expectations and increasing support: reforming welfare for the future" Department for Work and Pensions, December 2008 p 35, paragraph 1.

118 Citizens Advice Bureau "Moving to Universal Credit from other benefits," 28 March 2019. Accessed 19 June 2019 <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/benefits/universal-credit/before-you-apply/moving-to-universal-credit-from-other-benefits/>

119 Housing Benefit, income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA, income-based Jobseeker’s Allowance, Child Tax Credits, Working Tax Credits (WTC) and Income Support by 2023. Citizens Advice Bureau "Moving to Universal Credit from other benefits," 28 March 2019. Accessed 19 June 2019 <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/benefits/universal-credit/before-you-apply/moving-to-universal-credit-from-other-benefits/>

then into employment.”<sup>120</sup> This demonstrates the libertarian-authority paradox expressed by Professor Bell. It also reflects a discourse in which opportunities/activities were presented to those “outside” of society, the unemployed, and the concept that they should be required to engage in these activities in order to become integrated into society (SID). Yet, in 2008 New Labour anticipated that: “The new WCA (Work Capability Assessment) will be applied to ESA customers and will be a tighter gateway..fewer people will gain eligibility to ESA.”<sup>121</sup> This shows that the new benefit and its accompanying WCAs were intended to actively reduce the number of welfare claimants, however when viewed in the context of the political discourse which accompanied it, the only people not eligible for ESA would be those who were unwilling to: “engage in activities that will help them to move towards, and then into employment.” This reflects two forms of discourse, moving from SID, (where the state offered opportunities for people to become integrated in society via work) to MUD (financial aid was available on the condition that claimants were willing to engage in the conditions set under ESA, if they did not, the onus of their situation was placed upon them, not the state.) At the same time there were roll-back procedures to ensure that the Work Capability Assessments reduced the amount of claimants, this demonstrates that the new benefit worked in two ways to reduce claimants, but was accompanied by a discourse which placed onus upon the claimant.

Employment and Support Allowance replaced “Incapacity Benefit” however there was no reference to illness in the new name, rather an emphasis on work. A big difference between the old Incapacity Benefit and ESA was that previously, it was a claimant’s doctor who presented evidence of their illness or disability to the state, which exempted them from work and qualified them for the benefit.<sup>122</sup> Following the introduction of ESA an additional Work Capability Assessment was completed on behalf of the state to verify that claimants were ill enough to qualify for the benefit.<sup>123</sup> By 2013 the assessments were no longer undertaken by doctors, but ‘Health Care Professionals.’<sup>124</sup> These were employees of private com-

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120 Department of Work and pensions, "raising expectations and increasing support: reforming welfare for the future" December 2008, p. 69.

121 Explanatory Memorandum to the Employment and Support Allowance Regulations, 2008, No. 795. p. 9 Accessed 21 June 2019 [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2008/794/pdfs/ukxiem\\_20080794\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2008/794/pdfs/ukxiem_20080794_en.pdf)

122 Banks, James. Richard Blundell, Antoine Bozio, Carl Emmeron. "Disability, Health and Retirement in the United Kingdom" *Institute for Fiscal Studies*, Working Paper W11/12, February 2011 p. 4, paragraph 2.

123 Disability Rights UK "When will the work capability assessment take place?" 2012 , <https://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/when-will-work-capability-assessment-take-place>

124 Department for Work and Pensions, "Work Capability Assessment (WCA) handbook" 19 March 2013. Accessed May 2019 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/work-capability-assessment-handbook-for-healthcare-professionals>

pany ATOS, who signed a contract with the DWP from 2008 to 2015.<sup>125</sup> This period covers all governments shown in our study, but the practice of allocating power to private companies over the allocation of a sickness benefit started with New Labour. Atos was given contracts as soon as ESA was created.<sup>126</sup> In 2017 it was revealed that during the time ATOS handled the assessments, they were working to a target of rejecting 80% of benefit appeals.<sup>127</sup> This is important because it highlights a consequence of neoliberalism promoting privatisation to nourish the market, claimants were not assessed upon their ability to work due to the level of their illness or disability, but upon a business incentive to reduce claimants, (as stated by New Labour in 2008).<sup>128</sup> The implementation of this processes required new definitions be applied and a tougher approach in the language used in relation social policies. New names were created which were focused upon employment and new job titles were created which replaced ‘doctor’ or ‘GP’ with ‘Health Care Professional.’

#### b) Health

In 1992 Labour opposed compulsory-competitive tendering<sup>129</sup> which allows companies to bid for NHS services, but following its Policy Review New Labour changed its stance. Whilst in office New Labour did not reverse the privatisation of health services under this directive, furthermore public spending related to the outsourcing of healthcare rose from £9bn to £16.5bn.<sup>130</sup> This shows a continuation of neoliberal policy in the privatisation of the health sector which was a consequence of New Labour abandoning its commitment to nationalising industries and implementing neoliberal policies or privatisation. Outsourcing was one of the reasons cited for the spread of MRSA to almost endemic proportions across public hospitals in Britain from the years 2010-2014.<sup>131</sup> In this sense, state intervention in the jobs market has

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125 Committee Publications, "The PIP and ESA contracts," point 75. Accessed 15 June 2019 <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmworpen/829/82909.htm>

126 "The PIP and ESA contracts" *Parliamentary business, article 75*, 12 February 2018. Accessed 23 May <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmworpen/829/82909.htm>

127 Sharman, Jon. "Department for Work and Pensions 'has outrageous target' to reject 80% of benefits appeals" *Independent*, 17 May 2017. Accessed 21 June 2019 <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/dwp-benefit-appeals-target-reject-80-per-cent-outrageous-pip-jobseekers-allowance-department-work-a7740101.html>

128 Explanatory Memorandum to the Employment and Support Allowance Regulations, 2008. *Op. Cit.*

129 Milne, Robin and Magnus McGee, "Compulsory Competitive Tendering in the NHS: A New Look at Some Old Estimates" *JSTOR Fiscal Studies*, Volume. 13, No. 3 (AUGUST 1992), p 96. Accessed 23 April 2019

130 Source: Williams, Stephen and R.H. Fryer, *Leadership and Democracy* (Lawrence & Wishart) used for website 'people's history NHS.' Article 'Outsourcing in the NHS' 2011, paragraph 5. Accessed 23 April 2019. <https://peopleshistorynhs.org/encyclopaedia/outsourcing-in-the-nhs/>

131 Toffoluttia, Veronica. Aaron Reevesb, Martin McKeec, David Stuckler. "Outsourcing cleaning services increases MRSA incidence: Evidence from 126 english acute trusts". *Elsevier social science and medicine*, Volume 174, February 2017, pp. 64-69. Accessed 3 February, 2019 <https://reader.elsevier.com/reader/sd/pii/S0277953616306864?token=870A201DA2E31FB1889BE5143507F781C3BDC9EB426FF600FED-C2271FF59D79311E23C1B221FD9DE91FEBE2BA7CF3D2C>

proven to be detrimental to a state duty, that of public health and shows that neoliberal doctrine prioritised the market to the detriment of British citizens.

Furthermore, by taking a more active role in the creation of markets, the state under New Labour initiated PFIs, leading to hospitals renting their premises from the Contractors Commission, specialists in the design and building of hospital premises. This is how one of the NHS's valuable assets, land, started to become outsourced.<sup>132</sup> The use of the terms outsourcing and PFIs in place of "privatisation" once again highlights how the policy had an impact on political language.

Between 1998-2018 regulators were brought into the NHS via different bodies, including the "Care Quality Commission" and "NHS improvement,"<sup>133</sup> which suggests that New Labour and consecutive governments were not completely neoliberal with regards to deregulation in the health sector. However to what point these bodies were effective depended on funding. As Couldry has addressed in his theory of "voice" the state may appear to offer more means for participation in decision making and consult bodies, but in practise alternative opinions are crowded out by neoliberal discourse and count for less leading to a "crisis of voice."<sup>134</sup>

### c) Housing

Conservative Member of Parliament Michael Heseltine claims the Conservative election victory of 1979 was due to council tenants being transformed into property owners,<sup>135</sup> under a scheme known as Right to Buy, New Labour leader Tony Blair concurred, thus New Labour no longer opposed private ownership of property so that it had a better chance of being elected.<sup>136</sup> New Labour therefore continued efforts to provide for home buyers and took no action to reverse the Tory policy. This shows some cross-party consensus between the parties in their policies towards housing. New Labour imposed building targets on regional planning au-

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132 It has been reported that PFIs have cost the NHS £300 billion in rent and maintenance. Campbell, Denis, James Ball and Simon Rogers "PFI will ultimately cost £300bn" *The Guardian*, 5 July 2012 <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2012/jul/05/pfi-cost-300bn>

133 Ormerod, Jessica. "Legislation, Privatisation and the NHS" *Socialist Health Association*, June 13, 2018 <https://www.sochealth.co.uk/2018/06/13/34928/>

134 Couldry, Nick. *Why Voice Matters: Culture and Politics after Neoliberalism*. London: Sage 2010

135 Gimson, Andrew, "How Thatcher sold council houses – and created a new generation of property owners" *Conservative Home* (Blog.) March 21, 2014. Paragraph 3. Date accessed 21 February 2019 <https://www.conservativehome.com/thetorydiary/2014/03/how-thatcher-sold-council-houses-and-created-a-new-generation-of-property-owners.html>

136 In 1992 before he became Prime Minister, Tony Blair had decided that the Labour party needed to stop opposing Right to Buy in order to become more electable. Gimson, Andrew, "How Thatcher sold council houses – and created a new generation of property owners" *Conservative Home* (Blog.) March 21, 2014. Paragraph 7. Date accessed 21 February 2019 <https://www.conservativehome.com/thetorydiary/2014/03/how-thatcher-sold-council-houses-and-created-a-new-generation-of-property-owners.html>

thorities,<sup>137</sup> but from 1997 to 2010 there were no Local Authority-built properties.<sup>138</sup> Conservative whip Kris Hopkins reminded the House of Commons in 2013 that: “more council houses have been delivered in the nearly five years of this Administration than were delivered in the 13 years of the Labour Administration.”<sup>139</sup> This highlights how there were some differences between the political parties, although by ceding to the Conservative’s stance on private ownership, New Labour maintained the same commitment towards social-affordable housing, by not building any more state-owned homes.

## B. The Conservative-Liberal Democrat Coalition (2010-15)

The new government was dedicated to: “a radical redistribution of power away from Westminster and Whitehall to councils, communities and homes across the nation.”<sup>140</sup> The restructuring process moved decision-making to Local Authorities, but at the same time the onus of accountability, was also placed upon them. There is evidence of roll-back procedures in how decision-making may have appeared to be decentralised, but it was still guided by the economic policies from central government. This commitment to decentralisation was part of the electoral campaign incorporated within the ethos of “compassionate conservatism,” a term invented by independent think-tank The Centre of Social Justice (CSJ)<sup>141</sup> which adopted New Labour’s idea of the active welfare state. This shows a continuity of cross-party consensus amongst the think-tanks, regardless of whether the parties pertained to the left or right. New Labour’s Prime Minister had envisioned giving people a “hand up” rather than a “hand out.”<sup>142</sup> In the same vein as this David Cameron defined his party’s mantra as “trusting people and sharing responsibility.”<sup>143</sup> This was part of “Compassionate conservatism,” As with New Labour’s “Third Way”, the ethos of the political discourse reflected the need for economic growth, without negatively affecting citizens and also a repeated message of responsibility.

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137 Sibley-Esposito, Claire. *Op. Cit.* p. 189, paragraph 3.

138 Annex 1. Wheeler, Brian, 'A history of social housing,' BBC News, 14 April 2015. Accessed 23 February 2019 [www.bbc.com/news/uk-14380936](http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-14380936)

139 Hopkins, Kris. House of Commons debate, ‘National Infrastructure Projects (Local Development)’ Hansard, Volume 592, 12 February 2015. Accessed 2 February 2019 [https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2015-02-12/debates/1502126300001/NationalInfrastructureProjects\(LocalDevelopment\)?highlight=tom%20copley%20council%20flats#contribution-15021263000160](https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2015-02-12/debates/1502126300001/NationalInfrastructureProjects(LocalDevelopment)?highlight=tom%20copley%20council%20flats#contribution-15021263000160)

140 Beech, M., Lee, S. (Eds.) *The Conservative-Liberal Coalition Examining the Cameron-Clegg Government*. Palgrave MacMillan, 2015, p. 1, column 2, paragraph 3.

141 Bell, Emma. “From New Labour to New Conservative: the emergence of a liberal authoritarian consensus?” *Observatoire de la société britannique*, Volume 9| 2010, paragraph 5. Accessed 23 April 2019 <https://journals.openedition.org/osb/1045#tocto1n3>

142 *Ibid.*

143 *Ibid.*

The continuity in the message behind social policy was also accompanied by some changes in language. In the same way New Labour changed the conditions under which certain benefits could be accessed by relabelling certain unemployment benefit “New Deal,” and Incapacity benefit “Employment and support Allowance,” the coalition continued to create social policies which had an influence over political language. There was also the emergence of other neoliberal elements in their social policies such as the aforementioned authoritarian libertarian paradox; an active-welfare state in which help via social policy was offered on the condition of the citizen fulfilling certain criteria.

Think-tank, the Policy Exchange, defined compassionate conservatism as: “freedom from state interference, decentralization of power from the state to the community and government accountability.”<sup>144</sup> The rhetoric of compassionate conservatism is therefore quite the opposite of our definition of neoliberalism, in which there is an increase of state intervention in order to create competition, leading to centralisation and changes in political discourse. We will now examine to what extent the coalition was neoliberal in its application of social policy according to our definition of neoliberalism.

#### a) Welfare

Despite the power-sharing nature of the coalition, the decision to cut child benefit bypassed Cabinet and instead was announced at a Conservative conference.<sup>145</sup> This is indicative of the centralisation of decision-making necessary for neoliberalism to function. It is a continuation of the way in which New Labour functioned when it started to bypass cabinet in preference to the opinions of experts. There were also roll-back procedures in which restructuring welfare led to a readjustment of social-security payments in proportion to the Customer Price Index. Previously welfare payments had been linked to the Retail Price Index; therefore income increases would no longer match increases in the cost of living. This had a direct effect upon the poorer members of society in receipt of Housing Benefit and Child Benefit.<sup>146</sup> In 2013 Oxfam reported that due to public-service cuts, the poorest tenth of the population had their net income reduced by 38% during the coalition government (in comparison to the richest tenth los-

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144 Bell, Emma. “From New Labour to New Conservative: the emergence of a liberal authoritarian consensus?” *Observatoire de la société britannique*, Vol 9| 2010, paragraph 5 accessed 23 April 2019 <https://journals.openedition.org/osb/1045#tocto1n3>

145 Bell, Emma. « The Return of Cabinet Government ? Coalition Politics and the Exercise of Political Power », *Op. Cit.* p. 11.

146 Oxfam predicted that these factors would lead to people experiencing a loss of income close to 7 %. Poinasamy, Krisnah. "The true cost of austerity and inequality," Oxfam case study, 2013, p. 3, paragraph 2. Accessed 26 April 2019 [https://www-cdn.oxfam.org/s3fs-public/file\\_attachments/cs-true-cost-austerity-inequality-uk-120913-en\\_0.pdf](https://www-cdn.oxfam.org/s3fs-public/file_attachments/cs-true-cost-austerity-inequality-uk-120913-en_0.pdf)

ing 5 percent of their income.)<sup>147</sup> However this increase in poverty would not have been only due to cuts in welfare, but also the change in how the rate of benefit payments was calculated. This is evidence of Peck's theory on roll-back procedures in which institutional restructuring takes place in order to enable neoliberalism to function.

Another way social policy reflected the policies of austerity was that from 1 April 2013 "The Bedroom tax" was introduced. This stipulated that social tenants in receipt of Housing Benefit had their benefits reduced by up to one quarter<sup>148</sup> if they lived in housing that was deemed to be too large for their needs.<sup>149</sup> Bedroom tax could be avoided if tenants moved to a one bedroom property or provided lodgings for other tenants. Despite the Conservative manifesto pledge to prevent increases in income tax and VAT, (see 1.C.c) there has been the introduction of a tax which affects welfare claimants. This reflects state intervention, but to the detriment of benefit claimants, not business or workers.

The state played a role in the private-loans market by creating new customers for this sector.<sup>150</sup> This was a consequence of the Conservative's commitment to reduce the deficit by reducing welfare; "Universal credit" was implemented in 2010 and led to numerous delays in payments, but the government's social fund was able to provide crisis loans in these circumstances, also Community Care Grants were available from the social fund for claimants moving home. The Welfare Reform Act 2012<sup>151</sup> abolished the social fund, leaving benefit claimants more vulnerable to loan companies. The reduction in public funding towards welfare led to loan companies having increased opportunities, as citizens searched for new means by which to feed themselves, revealing state intervention to promote the market. The only competition facing loan companies were the soup kitchens and increasingly used food banks, (which cannot cover all living costs, just those related to eating.) It is possible that the creation of new customers for this market was inadvertent, a by-product of the neoliberal-driven austerity measures in Britain following the financial crash. However, the party's commitment to neoliberalism is not so much in its drive to reduce welfare spending (a policy applied by all governments following the financial crash,) but in the way it created favourable market conditions by not protecting the citizen, also a consistency across parties. When the

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147 *Idem*, p. 4.

148 Morris, Nigel, "'Brick up your doors, knock down the walls': Labour MP Frank Field makes dramatic call as 'bedroom tax' hits" *Independent*, 28 March. Accessed 17 June 2019 2013 <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/brick-up-your-doors-knock-down-the-walls-labour-mp-frank-field-makes-dramatic-call-as-bedroom-tax-8552262.html>

149 Wilson, Wendy. "Under-occupying social housing: Housing Benefit entitlement," *House of Commons Library*. 9 June 2017, p. 3, paragraph 3.

150 From the lectures of Professor Emma Bell, Savoie Mont Blanc Université, Chambéry, 2016.

151 Blackwood, Mark, "Britain: Soup kitchens become part of mainstream welfare provision," *World socialist website*, 28 November 2012. Accessed 11 May 2019 <https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2012/11/food-n28.html>

state intervened it was to create favourable market conditions to the detriment of those who no longer had the option of state support, conversely the state appeared inert when preventing people from becoming trapped in debt. All governments failed to place a cap upon the amount private loan companies were allowed to lend individuals and interest rates charged by loans companies also remained unchallenged.<sup>152</sup> This is one way in which government enabled favourable conditions for these businesses,<sup>153</sup> whilst failing to protect the most vulnerable in society. This process took place at the same time David Cameron was promoting “the big society” manifesto which focused on decentralisation of powers and more citizen-driven community initiatives. The effects of public-spending cuts such as the abolition of the social fund, show how in practice social policy could lead to an appropriation of community via debt.

#### b) Health

Although the 2012 Health and Social Care Act was passed largely to ensure economic stability,<sup>154</sup> it seemed to encourage more contributions from workers within the NHS during decision-making processes, this was via Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs).<sup>155</sup> These Membership bodies consulted NHS workers, seeking their views in decision-making processes thus apparently providing a platform of expression, in which an alternative narrative to neoliberalism could be heard. The CCGs were comprised of local GP practices and responsible for approximately 2/3 of the total NHS England budget.<sup>156</sup> It would appear the coalition was in this sense not as neoliberal as New Labour, as it provided opportunities for participation in decision-making, thus the government operated in a less centralised manner. However, the same Act also changed the way in which funding could be applied for. Following this legislation, instead of receiving a set amount of money from local authorities, hospitals began to obtain funding based upon the quotas they fulfilled. Quantifying success based upon targets became a means used to designate money. Hospitals which were underachieving were not given more funding in order to improve; conversely they were obliged to increase efforts and fulfil quotas in order to compete with other hospitals in the area. Although the advantage of creating competition between service providers has been cited as a means of driving up stand-

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152 Bell, Emma, *Idem*.

153 *Ibid*

154 Glover-Thomas, Nicola. "The Health and Social Care Act 2012 The emergence of equal treatment for mental health care or another false dawn?" *Sage*, December 2013, abstract. Accessed 23 April 2019 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4523576/>

155 Explanatory notes, 'Health and Social Care Act 2012' Chapter 7, p. 97, 579. Part 10 of Schedule 4 (property and finance). Accessed 22 April 2019 [http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/7/pdfs/ukpgaen\\_20120007\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/7/pdfs/ukpgaen_20120007_en.pdf)

156 NHS Critical Commissioners, 'About CCGs,' [nhscc.org](https://www.nhscc.org/ccgs/). Accessed 22 April 2019 <https://www.nhscc.org/ccgs/>

ards, this has been called into question, especially within mental health.<sup>157</sup> There is also the health of the workers to be taken into account, when placed in an environment not only concerned with patient care but performance in relation to targets. This is evidence of state intervention to create competition but to the detriment of the citizen as neoliberal narratives become a dominant feature of the evaluation process. It also reflects Couldry's theory that neoliberalism provokes a crisis of voice in which platforms of expression (such as the CCGs) appear to be offered, yet the opinions expressed are disavowed. This has been achieved by what Peck describes as roll-back procedures, in which institutional change has restructured the way in which health services are funded, pushing them toward a target based approach of quantifying health care.

In 2013 the coalition government made it the duty of the Secretary of State to carry out research into matters affecting public health services and to ensure that the research is carried out.<sup>158</sup> As funding for this has been decreasing since 2010, the Labour Party carried out their own independent report which revealed that an increase in the socio-economic divide is directly linked to a rise in what has been termed "Dickensian diseases."<sup>159</sup> However, there has been cross-party consensus in the application of neoliberalism to ensure that privatisation of the NHS has taken place and market elements, such as target based quotas have entered into health care.

### c) Housing

Claire Sibley-Esposito writes that planning permission under the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition was modified as part of:

"A broad ambition to reduce what various government officials repeatedly represented as a "burden of bureaucracy, undermining economic growth"<sup>160</sup>

This would suggest a continuation of New Labour's policy of deregulation. Sibley-Esposito

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157 Glover-Thomas, Nicola. "The Health and Social Care Act 2012 The emergence of equal treatment for mental health care or another false dawn?" Sage, December 2013, conclusion. Accessed 23 April 2019 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4523576/>

158 Health and Social Care Act 2012, The health service: overview Section 6. Accessed April 2019 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/7/section/6/enacted>

159 Matthews-King, Alex. "'Dickensian' diseases on the rise under Tory-led governments: From scarlet fever to tuberculosis to malnutrition." *Independent*, 2 February 2019. Accessed 3 February 2019 [https://www.independent.co.uk/news/health/scarlet-fever-gout-whooping-cough-malnutrition-tuberculosis-dickens-victorian-tory-cuts-austerity-a8759716.html?utm\\_medium=Social&utm\\_source=Facebook&fbclid=IwAR1qdxwVAbRXHuRNQ-ENargA0Jc1LGSOEuA9RpPfur7Wf0fDpMxa8In-R4g#Echobox=1549117454](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/health/scarlet-fever-gout-whooping-cough-malnutrition-tuberculosis-dickens-victorian-tory-cuts-austerity-a8759716.html?utm_medium=Social&utm_source=Facebook&fbclid=IwAR1qdxwVAbRXHuRNQ-ENargA0Jc1LGSOEuA9RpPfur7Wf0fDpMxa8In-R4g#Echobox=1549117454)

160 Sibley-Esposito, Claire. "Not out of the woods yet : Spatial planning (de)regulation under the Coalition Government," *Observatoire de la société britannique*, 15 | 2014, pp. 189-214, paragraph 1 <https://journals.openedition.org/osb/1644>

cites two pieces of legislation which enabled this: the Localism Act 2011 and the Growth and Infrastructure Act 2013. Along with the creation of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and proposals for a “biodiversity offsetting” scheme.<sup>161</sup> The Localism Act 2011, created new platforms of expression, or occasions in which debates and influence over decision-making could take place. These were in the form of neighbourhood forums, which met to identify community needs in relation to new developments and agree plans on how to address these needs. The forums sought to give more power to the locally-based forums in decision-making and was a democratic process, creating referendums in which 50% of members had a vote on whether any neighbourhood plan be put into force or not. This would appear to be a means of inviting alternative narratives into decision-making processes and goes against the neoliberal centralisation of power. However, in practice local communities struggled to voice opinions due to a lack of funding.<sup>162</sup> Furthermore, the NPPF states that building permission should be granted automatically “where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date.”<sup>163</sup> The NPPF was able to grant planning permission in cases where community groups had not created development plans and also held the power to overturn decisions to protect land. This reflects the roll-back procedure of institutional restructuring, creating what appears to be a system of consolidation, alongside a new framework with neoliberal agendas to reduce alternatives. It also serves as an example of what Couldry calls “voice blindness” whereby opportunities for community expression were offered, then retracted – the lack of funding led to silence and this silence was taken to imply consent. In cases where the NPPF was not proactive enough in the appropriation of land, the state could still intervene to ensure that decision-making was taken in favour of economic growth. In July 2013, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, approved plans to expand a quarry into ancient woodland, criticising the NPPF for not taking into account “circumstances where the loss can be outweighed by other considerations.”<sup>164</sup> This introduction of biodiversity offsetting was used as a means to quantify the environment and is demonstrative of a way in which land becomes valued in relation to market forces; the benefits of economic growth started to be measured against the environmental cost following the Act. The decision was criticised as opening the door for mass redevelopment on previously protected land, the biodiversity offsetting serves to show how the coalition was more neoliberal in housing social policy than the New Labour government, who mooted the concept.<sup>165</sup>

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161 *Ibid.* paragraph 3.

162 *Ibid.* paragraph 4.

163 *Ibid.* paragraph 10.

164 *Ibid.* paragraph 24.

165 *Ibid.* paragraph 26.

There is evidence of the coalition compromising on some aspects; in the early proposal of the NPPF the ambiguous threat towards the environment prompted protests from a range of stakeholders and even members of the coalition government.<sup>166</sup> As a result the NPPF was revised so that areas considered “sustainable” became better defined. The revised NPPF also included the added recommendation that “Brownfield sites” (previously industrial, disused or contaminated land) should be used for new developments instead of Greenfield (rural land left to develop naturally or used for agricultural purposes).<sup>167</sup> This shows that public opinion on housing was still taken into consideration by the coalition government. However Brownfield land was later redefined to include council estates. This was advocated by Richard Rogers, commissioned by the New Labour government in 1998 to lead *The Urban Task Force*, bringing together specialists from the public and private sector to address urban decay.<sup>168</sup> Rogers also worked for the IPPR, in his report on “City Villages” for the centre-left think-tank Rogers stated: “the only sustainable way to do (Urban Renaissance) was by using brownfield sites and intensification in well-designed compact towns and cities – abandoning suburban sprawl in favour of urban regeneration” (Rogers et al 1999).<sup>169</sup> In a 2014 article for centre-left newspaper *The Guardian*, Rogers wrote:

“the biggest opportunity may not be in large sites, but in intelligent retrofitting and redevelopment, adapting existing buildings and working outward from high streets and neighbourhood centres”<sup>170</sup> This shows how the relabelling of land resulted in state-owned housing being reclassified as viable land for redevelopment by the private sector. The reason why Local Authorities sought to do this was due to reduced funding for the provision of housing by consecutive governments. It is evidence of how neoliberal doctrine resulted in a change in discourse to enable the implementation of market orientated policies. Although Rogers pertained to the centre left due to his employment by New Labour and the main think-tank advising New Labour, the renaming of land as Brownfield was part of a roll-back procedure in which categories were altered. Irrespective of the political party in office the aim of redeveloping inner cities and registering them as Brownfield land continued throughout the two decades studied.

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166 *Ibid.* paragraph 6.

167 *Ibid.* paragraph 7.

168 Sadoux, Sytéphane, Gilles Novarina et Charles Ambrosino "L'urban Renaissance : la ville selon Richard Rogers ?" *Presse sorbonne*, pp. 2-3. Accessed 30 May 2019 [https://www.academia.edu/11760058/LUrban\\_renaissance\\_la\\_ville\\_selon\\_Richard\\_Rogers](https://www.academia.edu/11760058/LUrban_renaissance_la_ville_selon_Richard_Rogers)

169 Rogers, Richard, 'City villages: More homes, better communities,' *IPPR*, 24 March 2015, paragraph 12. Accessed 24 March 2019 <http://ippr.org/read/city-villages-more-homes-better-communities#building-tomorrow-s-cities-the-urban-task-force-15-years-on>

170 Rogers, Richard, “Forget about greenfield sites, build in the cities” *The Guardian*, 15 July 2014, paragraph 9 <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/jul/15/greenfield-sites-cities-commuter-central-brownfield-sites>

## C. The Conservatives (2015-17)

When government changed from the Coalition into a purely Conservative government, spending as part of the national income from 2010 to 2017 increased, specifically in health and pensions<sup>171</sup> implying that the Conservatives may have shown less neoliberal traits in their social policies than economic ones. However, as with Labour's increase in spending, let us examine how money was spent and where it was cut.

### a) Welfare

Chancellor George Osborne made good on his commitment to cut benefits by £12 billion by introducing welfare caps for households.<sup>172</sup> These were part of the "highly regressive cuts being implemented for working age benefits, particularly for families with children, from April 2017."<sup>173</sup> In The Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016 the commitment to end child poverty was not abandoned, but "Child poverty" was relabelled as "Life chances."<sup>174</sup> The changes in language are indicative of neoliberalism as the state intervened to change discourse to enable policies which reflected the Social Integrationist Discourse (SID). As with the Employment Act of 2013 whereby the responsibilities of employers diminished as employees had extra onus placed upon them, the Welfare Reform and Work Act meant that those in poverty had the onus placed upon them due to the implication that economic chances existed, they just needed to be taken. The Act also ensured further caps on benefit, a continuation from the coalition government's social policy<sup>175</sup> and evidence of state intervention to reduce spending in the area of Welfare. This is part of the austerity measures which are indicative of neoliberalism. In a continuation of what Professor E. Bell has demonstrated as a tension between liber-

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171 Emmerson, Carl. "Two parliaments of pain: the UK public finances 2010 to 2017," *Institute for fiscal studies*, May 2017, paragraph 7. Accessed 28 April 2019 <https://www.ifs.org.uk/publications/9180>

172 Income levels at which credits were paid were lowered at the same as freezing credit increases. Sowell, Nicholas "Op. Cit. Paragraph 32.

173 Bradshaw, Jonathan, Fran Bennett. "National insurance contributions and the self-employed in the UK" *European Commission*, 2017, column 2, paragraph 1.

174 "Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016" *The National Archives*, section 7, (12). Accessed 17 May 2019 [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2016/7/section/7](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2016/7/section/7)

The term "poverty" replaced with "workless". "Child poverty" was relabelled "Life chances"

PartA1 (2); Accessed 17 May 2019 [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2016/7/crossheading/life-chances](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2016/7/crossheading/life-chances)

UK charity Barnardo's highlighted how by doing government was distancing itself from its commitment to end Child poverty by 2010, Khan Javed "The welfare reform and work bill will make poor children poorer" *The Guardian, Letters*, 19 July 2015, paragraph 3. Accessed 17 May 2019 <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2015/jul/19/the-welfare-reform-and-work-bill-will-make-poor-children-poorer>

175 Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016, *National Archives*, 2016. Accessed 17 May 2019 [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2016/7/section/8](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2016/7/section/8)

tarianism and authoritarianism<sup>176</sup> was the introduction of conditionality for Universal Credit. This shows that the state was engaged in providing support for people, but there were conditions which had to be met. These can serve as evidence of a neoliberal agenda, such as conforming to specifications which reflect neoliberal objectives. Those who did not comply, or “integrate,” by taking the chances which seemed to be offered to them, could be more easily recategorised as belonging to a moral underclass.

#### b) Health

Following their 2015 victory the Conservatives launched *NHS five year forward view*, a plan to improve health care, the project is forecast to receive more than £8 billion in state funding between 2015/16 and 2020/21,<sup>177</sup> meeting the Party’s manifesto pledge for funding. However this success is in part due to a new means of measuring health spending, as the money will be delegated to NHS England (created in 2013). Under previous governments, health care was evaluated upon the amount of funds given to the “Department of Health,” but since 2013 this no longer governs NHS practises. The change denotes the roll-back processes of which Peck speaks, in which there is a process of fragmentation via the restructuring of departments and funding. Continued privatisation has distanced the state from its responsibility towards providing healthcare, yet the state still has role - to actively restructure the NHS so that neoliberal principles may prevail. State intervention has resulted in roll-back procedures which have led to under-funded services. This reduction of state support on the one hand leaves a service more vulnerable to privatisation, but on the other creates opportunities for more competition between companies bidding for NHS contracts.

In 2016, the Conservative Chancellor of the Exchequer Philip Hammond relaunched New Labour’s privatisation incentive for the NHS via PFI’s, but under a new name: ‘PF2.’<sup>178</sup> This shows that from New Labour to the Conservative government there has been a continued reduction in public spending in the NHS alongside a continued drive to privatise elements of it. Also many terms are used to describe a process by which state-owned industry and services are transferred towards the private sector.

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176 Bell, Emma "From New Labour to New Conservative: the emergence of a liberal authoritarian consensus?" *Observatoire de la société Britannique*, Volume 9 | 2010, paragraph 18. Accessed 29 April 2019 <https://journals.openedition.org/osb/1045#ftn47>

177 McKenna, Helen, 'Has the government delivered on its pledge to increase NHS funding?' *The Kings Fund*. 12 May 2017. Accessed 01 June 2019 <https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/publications/articles/government-pledge-nhs-funding>

178 Inman, Phillip. “After Carillion and Capita, is PFI itself on the critical list?” *The Guardian*, 03 February 2018. Accessed 11 July 2019 <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2018/feb/03/pfi-carillion-capita-critical-list-outsourcing>

### c) Housing

In the run up to 2015, Universal Credit alterations led to benefits being paid on a monthly basis as a lump sum to claimants, whereas previously housing benefit had been paid directly to landlords. “Direct Payments” required more autonomy from individuals, reflecting a neo-liberal agenda.<sup>179</sup> The rise in homelessness as a result of Direct Payments was predicted by Sheff Hallam University, commissioned to investigate the potential outcome of implementing the scheme as part of Universal Credit. The findings were presented to the government before the scheme was put into effect on a nationwide scale and concluded that the majority of tenants in the study failed to pay their rent in full as a result of the changes. Paul Hickman, leader of a study stated that the findings were ignored and the resulting homelessness could have been prevented.<sup>180</sup> This demonstrates elements of neoliberalism which concern processes of consolidation; alternatives to neoliberal narrative were disavowed, on this occasion it was not through lack of funding or time restraints, but by commissioned research being dismissed.

Local authorities’ duty to re-home people is discharged if the person has been made homeless due to any deliberate act of their own, which includes rent arrears. The title “intentionally homeless” has connotations of placing the onus upon the individual for their circumstances.<sup>181</sup> The members of society who struggle most with budgeting may include those who are ill or who have a disruption in benefit payments due to benefit sanctions.<sup>182</sup> Benefit sanctions are imposed due to claimant non-compliance with the agreement made between the state and claimant. Homeless charity Shelter recorded 1182 more rough sleepers in England between 2015 to 2017.<sup>183</sup> This figure may be higher as it does not include those who are street homeless, but staying with family or ‘sofa surfing.’ Figures for the total number of homeless

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179 The state does not have a duty to provide for people because they are independent and responsible actors in society.

180 ‘The Universal Credit Crisis - BBC Panorama’, [Published 13 November 2018.] 11:40–12:12. Accessed 20 January 2019 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TrdEVhyoiP4>

Hickman, Paul, KEMP, Peter A, Reeve, Kesia and Wilson, Ian (2017). The impact of the direct payment of housing benefit: evidence from Great Britain. *Housing Studies*, 32 (8), 1105-1126.

181 Although “Intentionally Homeless” was a term in existence before the conservative government, its use has the potential to be applied to circumstances which to evolve, such as the introduction of direct payments. Temporary accommodation is provided by local authorities for those registered as homeless in their jurisdiction, while they make applications for social housing. In the case of the intentionally homeless, applications are made to private landlords, housing associations, or hostels depending on the individual’s needs, but acceptance onto a housing list for a council property is no longer an option. This could be viewed as creating new customers for the private housing industry.

182 A benefit sanction is a temporary halt of payments, which can last for up to 1095 days. Citizens advice. Check 2, paragraph 2. Accessed June 1 2019 <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/benefits/universal-credit/sanctions/check-sanction/>

183 Richie, Hannah 'Number of rough sleepers in England has increased more than 250% since 2010,' Shelter, 29 January 2019. Accessed May 2019 <https://ourworldindata.org/homelessness-rise-england>

people across Britain as a result of the introduction of Direct Payments requires further research.

There is an additional constraint upon local authorities in that they are unable to fund the construction of new council housing. In BBC Panorama a representative of a local government association explained that councils get less money into their housing accounts due to rent arrears, which adds to the housing problem as they are unable to build new homes.<sup>184</sup> For this reason it could be argued that the state, by implementing changes in Welfare and increasing the amount of rent arrears, is directly affecting the housing market. Affordable, new housing cannot be built by local councils due to the rise in rent arrears caused by Universal Credit. In addition to this it has been argued that the definition of ‘affordable’ has changed since Local Authorities have started selling council estates to redevelopers who then convert property for the private sector.

As the private sphere started taking an ever-increasing role in the provision of social housing, or where private corporations were charged with renovating council estates instead of the Local Authority, previous, social-rented properties became out of the price range of former inhabitants once the renovation work was complete. As a result some former tenants found themselves indefinitely in temporary accommodation for the homeless.<sup>185</sup> During the 2015 election campaign, the Conservative Party ensured that the housing problem in Britain was addressed in their manifesto not via building more social housing at affordable rates for tenure, but instead via increasing opportunities for first-time buyers, by pledging to build 200,000 “starter homes” instead.<sup>186</sup> This demonstrates state intervention to boost the private sector.

During the debates around the Housing and Planning Bill of 2016, the term “Starter Homes,” began to equate “affordable housing” and this latter term stopped being used exclusively to refer to property owned by Local Authorities.<sup>187</sup> This demonstrates how by conflating

184 Watts, Richard. The Universal Credit Crisis - BBC Panorama, 26:25. Accessed 29 April 2019 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TrdEVhyoiP4>

185 Sng, Paul. *Dispossession: The Great Social Housing Swindle*, Directed by Paul Sng. Production company: Velvet Joy Productions, 2017.

186 Rigby, Elizabeth. David Cameron pledges 200,000 cut-price starter homes' *The Financial Times*, 2 March 2015. Accessed 23 March 2019, <https://www.ft.com/content/57da8424-c033-11e4-9708-00144feab7de>

187 A select Committee reported that “Starter Homes should not be built at the expense of other forms of tenure; where the need exists, it is vital that homes for *affordable* rent are built to reflect local needs.” Housing Minister, Brandon Lewis when asked if the government was deferring from this recommendation was clear that the definition of ‘affordable housing’ needed to evolve to encompass the starter homes, run by the private sector with the intention of being sold as a new product on the housing market: “I must point out to the Chairman of the Select Committee that we have been clear from the beginning that we need to see a shift in this country. We have had the farcical situation in which we in this place talk about affordable homes but refer only to homes that people can rent. We know that 86% of our population want to buy their own home, and it is therefore absolutely right that affordable homes should include those that are available to buy. We make no apologies for creating a new product and for turbocharging that new product to ensure that we get 200,000 such homes built over the

the term “affordable” with “starter homes” the definition of “affordable housing” began to alter. Starter Homes are not intended for those wishing to rent or unable to afford property on the housing market, but future home owners. The question of “affordable” does not extend to “affordable for whom?” The section of the population this effects the most is the poorest.<sup>188</sup>

In contrast there is evidence that under the Conservative government social housing was given a slight advantage over private housing as The Welfare Reform and Work Act of 2016 required *registered* providers of social housing to reduce tenant's rent by 1%.<sup>189</sup>

## Conclusion for Part I: Cross-party consensus in the application of neoliberalism

Think-tank “The Institute for Government,” states that there has been “30 years of consensus upon Outsourcing.”<sup>190</sup> Although the sample studied in this dissertation is small, there is enough evidence to confirm that there has been some cross-party consensus in the application of neoliberalism in economic and social policies across the various governments during the period 1997-2017. Yet we have seen that neoliberalism is not an easily identifiable ideology, as it operates in many ways – there is no continuous line which demonstrates it across political parties because the way in which it was applied varied; in some ways New Labour were more neoliberal than the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition, in other ways less. Its vagueness seems to not only be a trait, but as journalist G. Monbiot suggests, part of neoliberalism’s *modus operandi*, and it may be why libertarian T. Burrus suggests that there is confusion over what it is (other than something ill-defined that left-wing academics attack.)

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course of this Parliament.” Lewis, Brandon, Housing and Planning Bill, 03 May 2016, Volume 609, column 65 Accessed April 2019 <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2016-05-03/debates/16050323000001/HousingAndPlanningBill?highlight=affordable%20homes#contribution-931AA0C7-8BE1-46EB-BD72-C4C8F37D55EA>

188 A report by *The Office for National Statistics*, found that in 2014 the lowest 10% of earners could expect to spend at least 73% of their wages on social housing rent in 158 out of the 348 local authorities across England and Wales." Social housing became less affordable over past decade," *National Office of Statistics*, 5 August 2015. Accessed 03 March 2019 <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/articles/socialhousingbecamelessaffordableoverpastdecade/2015-08-05>

189 Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016, The National Archives, section 23. Accessed 17 May 2019 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2016/7/section/23>

190 Sasse, Tom. “Labour’s outsourcing policy risks creating more problems” (blog) *The institute for government*, 25 March 2019. Accessed 10 May 2019 <https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/blog/labours-outsourcing-policy-risks-creating-more-problems>

Nevertheless, it is possible to break down neoliberalism into easy to understand examples based upon the economic and social policies examined. The state has on numerous occasions intervened to promote market competition, to the benefit of the more wealthy members of society, but the disadvantage of the poorest, to prioritise well-established, big businesses over SME's and the self-employed. Although this seems quite a binary means of viewing the outcomes of neoliberalism, the centralisation of power has on numerous occasions required and engendered market conditions being prioritised over social welfare. This is because as of 1989 the two main political parties have come to view economic growth as a means of enabling social justice, as opposed to redistributive tax.

The creation of good market conditions has required governments to maintain low-tax rates for businesses and high-rate earners, a stable society in which there is low inflation and with reduced competition from the state in certain sectors, such as housing and health, these objectives have been maintained by all governments during the period studied. The state has been selective in its intervention, regardless of which government has been in power there has been a consistency in the way that state intervention is most prevalent when it is to the benefit of the market, due to economic growth being a priority. There was little intervention to stop banks setting up advisory services with the aim of asset stripping SMEs by sending them into liquidation, the Financial Conduct Authority responsible for protecting clients was not proactive enough in doing so. Another consequence of the financial sector being unregulated was banks over-lending to clients, the subsequent banking crisis created the national deficit. All governments have applied austerity measures to try and reduce this deficit and public spending cuts have effected the poorest members of society the most. Speaking in 2011, former Labour Party MP David Marquand stated: "The trend towards greater inequality has continued irrespective of the party in power."<sup>191</sup> If true it may have been a consequence of continuous neoliberal politics in Britain over many decades.

Neoliberalism has lead to market-based organisations working unfettered by the state throughout all governments in the period covered. We have seen how in the financial sector this was to the detriment of the taxpayer and bank clients. In employment, priority has been given to business by encouraging out of court settlements and removing onus of responsibility for harassment and health and safety from employers. This has been in an effort to encourage economic growth. The state intervened when resolving the banking crisis caused by deregulation

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<sup>191</sup> Marquand, David, "A realignment of the mind - what way forward for progressive politics?" *Compass Annual Lecture*, p. 6, column 2, 10 February 2011. Accessed 23 February 2019 <http://www.lse.ac.uk/globalGovernance/publications/articlesAndLectures/compassAnnualLecture.pdf>

tion of the financial sector by nationalising the banks, this protected pensions and savings, but at the taxpayers expense, not the bank's. The sale of government shares and mortgages from these banks in later years shows that nationalisation was a temporary measure.

The state intervened in the housing market, drumming-up business for banks in the form of mortgages by focusing on buildings for buyers, instead of providing affordable, rented accommodation. The Conservative party chose to focus on first-time buyers, but the preceding New Labour government adhered to the same policy by not increasing the social-housing stock, working in different ways to the same end. By playing a less active role the state has withdrawn from the provision of one amenity, whilst simultaneously nourishing the banking sector. This may be because owner-occupiers equate business in the form of mortgages, but social-rented accommodation equate state costs.

Proving the presence of neoliberalism is not as simple as just using statistics on Gross Domestic Product or government public spending as a means of gauging the level of neoliberalism, there were variations in spending across the parties, but it is the consistency on how funds were spent which demonstrates that neoliberal doctrine was the continuous driving force behind economic and social policies. There was a continued effort to transfer state-owned assets to the private sector (such as NHS services) some public spending was used to enable this.<sup>192</sup> We can see how economic policy had a direct impact upon social policy, in that New Labour spent money semi-privatising parts of the NHS via PFIs and outsourcing, the coalition continued this and also restructured the NHS, due to a fragmentation of the NHS less funding was given to the organisation. Streamlining services in welfare via privatisation has other knock-on effects, for example the quantification of health services has placed additional administrative requirements upon NHS staff, who are required to fulfil quotas in order to secure funding. Similarly, in housing the quantification of the environment has left land vulnerable to redevelopment as biodiversity offsetting is a means by which land is considered as viable for redevelopment.

There have been occasions whereby the state has created new opportunities for private loans companies as a result of austerity due to delays in benefit payments and benefit sanctions, driving new clients into these markets.<sup>193</sup> Loans companies have not been regulated

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<sup>192</sup> Spending designated for outsourcing sectors rose under New Labour, from £37 billion to £67 billion, under the coalition spending on outsourcing almost doubled, rising from £64 billion to £120 billion between 2010-2015. Innes, Abby. "First-best-world economic theory and the second-best-world of public sector outsourcing: the reinvention of the Soviet Kombinat by other means," *London School of Economics*, 2018, pp. 3-4. Accessed 22 April 2019 <http://www.lse.ac.uk/european-institute/Assets/Documents/LEQS-Discussion-Papers/LEQSPaper134.pdf>

<sup>193</sup> From the lectures of professor Emma Bell, l'université de Savoie Mont Blanc, 2016

by any of the governments with regards to the level of interest they charge or the amount they can lend. This supports our definition of neoliberalism in that the state intervenes to promote competition, but it favours certain actors over others. Citizens are vulnerable to exploitation as a result of prioritising private actors on the market and in this way the competition created is not a fair fight.

The intervention of the state to create conditions in which competition can flourish has not been only limited to business. With an increase of Moral Underclass Discourse, state intervention to create competition has extended into civilian life; the fit and able to work are prioritised over the ill and unemployed which is expedient in a society where economic growth is a priority. Justification for state-provided resources in the form of housing and welfare payments have increasingly been based upon civilian obedience in complying to the terms and conditions under which benefit claimants receive state support. This reflects a liberal-authoritarian paradox whereby the state offers assistance, but on the provision that certain behaviour is displayed and conditions met. New Labour's efforts to increase opportunities for participating in markets is evidenced in the creation of New Deal, which also required claimants to adhere to certain behaviour in return for benefits. Under the coalition the arrangement by which benefits were granted based upon citizen compliance was reinforced by structural changes such as Universal Credit and outsourcing health assessments necessary to access sickness benefits to private companies such as Atos. Looking at just a few policies in detail reveal that across the governments, changing the structures of institutions goes hand in hand with the implementation of neoliberalism and evidences Foucault's theory on the creation of *l'homme économique*.

Another means of assessing the doctrine which has become apparent by looking at the examples, is the reduction in platforms of expression within governments, achieved by the centralisation of power and bypassing of cabinet as well as restructuring institutions.<sup>194</sup>

This could be viewed as an attack on "voice" as defined by N. Couldry. There is the telltale sign of "auditing," a process whereby collective decision-making is handed over to specialist

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194 During the New Labour years centralisation manifested as a new form of communication, ensuring that decisions were made with less involvement from the Cabinet, thus centralising decision making processes. Whereas Blair's close and trusted members gained opportunities to contribute ideas and be involved in decision making processes, elected cabinet ministers did not. In comparison, the coalition government, due to its power sharing nature, was less centralised thus provided more opportunities for a collective approach towards policy making. This indicates that in the domains of communication and decision making processes, the coalition government was less neoliberal in its structure than the New Labour and Conservative governments. These are part of the roll-back mechanisms suggested by Peck, when he states that neoliberalism requires a process of restructuring institutions.

advisors,<sup>195</sup> as seen in social policies concerning health and housing. The coalition government appeared to give community stake-holders the opportunity to contribute to decision-making processes. In health this was done by establishing Clinical Commissioning Groups<sup>196</sup> in housing by establishing neighbourhood forums – yet these groups were rendered impotent by underfunding. In this way platforms of expression have been reduced and what Couldry labels “voice blindness” has occurred. Another means by which the neoliberal narrative has dominated platforms of expression has involved requests for research, then the dismissal of findings, as proven by the implementation of Universal Credit contrary to the advice that it would increase homelessness. This suggests that consultation is perfunctory and that alternative narratives to neoliberalism are impuissant.

In cases where there is opposition, frameworks are in place to reduce this alternative to neoliberalism, this has been achieved by under-funding organisations, such as committees, Local Authorities and institutions and accompanying changes in language. For these reasons land which was previously considered “off-limits” for redevelopment has started to be reclassified as Brownfield sites and therefore viable. The term has been applied to council estates, where people live in social, affordable housing. As a result state-provided housing is requisitioned by the private sector and made available to home buyers.

Changes in language may also be a means of identifying the dynamic ways neoliberalism has been implemented through policy over time. New Labour were able to re-categorise the unemployed as “in training” and influence unemployment statistics at the same time as appearing to give “life chances” in the form of these training opportunities. The coalition also used the term “Life Chances” to replace “Child Poverty.” There were changes in terminology towards employment law; a “compromise,” for example, which has a negative connotation, came to be referred to as a “settlement.” In the context of the rest of the 2013 legislation in which employment tribunals were discouraged, it is possible that this change in language along with structural changes to deposit schemes, were to discourage legal action against business, not to make the process easier for the citizen to understand as cited in the Act.

There has been a change in discourse to accompany the way in which the state seemingly presents opportunities through work and thus engenders a Moral Class Discourse which can be applied to those “outside” of society due to their unemployment. This was seen with

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195 York Neoliberalism Conference, 'Voiceblind: On Some Paradoxes of the Neoliberal State.' Filmed 02 July 2013, YouTube, [Published 15 August 2013,] Couldry, Nick. 06:45– 07:00 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lchbell7hF8>

196 “Health and Social Care Act 2012 Chapter 7.” *Op. Cit.*

“New Deal” which gave people “a hand up, not a hand out.” Political discourse has changed to remove certain terms, for example references to illness or disability in relation to unemployment have been removed as “Incapacity Benefit” has been replaced by “Employment and Support Allowance.” The masking of certain processes has also occurred, as the term “privatisation” has been intermingled with new terms such as “private-public ownership”, “PFIs”, “PF2” and “outsourcing.”

In summary all governments have applied economic policies which prioritise economic growth as a means of funding social policies. Economic policies have focused upon deregulation in the finance sector and privatisation of state-owned commodities to boost employment. The social policies examined show how market elements have encroached upon areas concerning health, housing and welfare, with the aim of reducing state spending. All governments have followed a similar approach in reducing funding to social policies over the time period covered. This action has been justified by a Moral Underclass Discourse which has placed an onus upon those at the bottom of society being responsible for their own poverty. This action has been a consequence of prioritising the market and reflects our definition of neoliberalism in that to achieve this we have seen evidence of:

- 1) an increase of state intervention,
- 2) encouraged competition in society – (albeit unbalanced competition due to some market actors being favoured over others),
- 3) a centralisation of power,
- 4) an impact upon language.

There may be many other examples in which political discourse has changed to reflect a political agenda, the existence of think-tanks and spin doctors/media consultants in political parties suggests that this may be the case, as do stand-out examples of when one word replaced other words and thus the meaning and implications.<sup>197</sup> Identifying these changes in language could be uncovered on a ‘find as we go along’ basis, as we have done so during the examination of different economic and social policies in Part I. It would be interesting to see what other changes in language have occurred and what these may signify with regards to platforms of expression, but using a method which does not reply on examining legislation and identifying

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<sup>197</sup> For example the term ‘sexed up’ was used extensively in the media and in parliament to refer to the falsification of documents presented by weapons inspectors to justify the 2003 invasion of Iraq.

changes as and when they appear. Using a method to narrow down areas where there may be changes in language as a result of neoliberalism would be more effective in identifying relevant legislation. Since it is possible to see elements of neoliberal doctrine throughout all of the policies in all of the governments from 1997 – 2017 establishing whether certain words have come to represent different notions might be possible by comparing the changes in which context certain words appear in. How do the changes in language reflect neoliberalism and the ways in which it has operated in Britain? To do this it is necessary to find a way to source data which could lead to further research. This will be addressed in the following part.

## **Part II**

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**A change in the language used within  
Westminster as a result of neoliberal ideology in  
Britain**

*“We have grown used to ways of organizing things that ignore voice, that assume voice does not matter. We are experiencing a contemporary crisis of voice, across political, economic and cultural domains that has been growing for the last three decades. Telling the story of this crisis is important, since one of its aspects is a loss of the connecting narratives that could help us to grasp many specific break-downs as dimensions of the same problem...offers of voice are increasingly unsustainable; voice is persistently offered but in important respects denied or rendered illusory; and at the root of these contradictions is a doctrine [neoliberalism] that denies voice matters”*  
Nick Couldry, on the “Crisis of Voice”<sup>50</sup>

Part I concluded that neoliberal doctrine was present in both the economic and social policies examined, across all the British governments of 1997 to 2017. There were also some instances where language enabled the application of policy, however, this is not extensive. Sam Bowman’s assertion that think-tank the ASI appropriated the word “neoliberal” to change its meaning is only one instance of this process. There may be more which show how political discourse has altered to reflect a market-orientated ethos, which can be applied on a wider scale. Political geographer Jamie Peck states that neoliberalism’s enduring achievement is to incapacitate bases for ideological opposition,<sup>51</sup> and academics such as Nick Couldry theorise upon how a restriction of voice and reduction in platforms of expression may engender this. Yet, there seems to be a paucity of solid evidence in this domain. As we are looking for changes in political discourse related to neoliberalism, it is imperative that the speeches should be from politicians in relation to policy making. For this reason a good source for political discourse is a parliamentary record. Some social policies such as housing are devolved matters, dealt with on a national-level in the Scottish and Welsh parliaments, but as Westminster is the parliament which decides national issues examining changes in language which took place here would be more advantageous. This includes all the speeches made, both in the House of Commons and the House of Lords. The inclusion of the latter is necessary as this part of Parliament has the final say in whether proposed Bills are agreed and passed into Acts or not. For this reason the political discourse found therein is significant.

The majority of political speeches made in Westminster have been compiled in an archive called Hansard, which has been digitalised and can be used for qualitative and quantitative research. Hansard is restrictive in that it does not reflect all political discourse, but it does hold vast quantities of reliable, primary-source data, specifically linked to policy-making which could show changes in political discourse within parliament.

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50 Couldry, Nick. *Why Voice Matters: Culture and Politics after Neoliberalism*. London: Sage 2010.

51 Peck, Jamie, “Explaining (with) Neoliberalism, Territory,” *Politics, Governance*, 1:2, 2003, p. 152, paragraph 1. Accessed 15 May 2019 <https://doi.org/10.1080/21622671.2013.785365>

When choosing which words to research, to minimise user bias, it was decided that nouns rather than adjectives or other parts of speech should be explored.<sup>52</sup> If in Part I there had been big differences between the parties in the application of neoliberalism then the words chosen would have been based around these differences. However, as there appeared to be a lot of similarities across the parties, to be consistent with the research completed in Part I the words selected for research in Part II were: **Welfare, Health and Housing**. These are the social policies previously examined where neoliberal elements have already been identified. In addition to these, the word “Benefit” was added, because it is a term which appeared frequently when carrying out the research in Part I, as a synonym of welfare. A ‘benefit’ is a form of payment from the state, the same as a ‘welfare payment.’

The singular of the noun has been chosen to reduce word ambiguity, for example the plural ‘benefits’ is more likely to generate results whereby the keyword appears as a synonym of advantageous. The inclusion of ‘benefit’ is in part to address the ambiguity encountered when researching ‘welfare’ whereby results were generated in relation to well-being. This is to provide additional useful data in relation to state payments to individuals.

In the following section, the choices made over sourcing the data will be presented, (Approaches), then details on how the corpus was used to extract data will be explained, (Methodology). A working example of the corpus using the word “benefit” will be used to explain how quantitative data was extracted from the corpus. Then the qualitative analysis of the results will be presented. So that the most relevant findings are presented in terms of how language has changed as a result of neoliberalism, only summaries of the qualitative research are provided for results relating to Welfare, Health and Housing.

## 1. Approach

The objective was to establish if neoliberal policies have had an impact on political language in Britain. To do this it was decided to compare the context in which words related to social policy appeared. To compare changes in language words were examined in contexts prior to the implementation of neoliberalism in British politics and afterwards. This part will present the choices made over sourcing the data.

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<sup>52</sup> For example, the verb ‘scrounge’ throws bias into the research because it is pejorative and although initially it might seem like the fastest means to find which words have come to be associated with ‘scrounge’ it may also be used by the opposition to criticise government and therefore not be evidence of a change in discourse to facilitate neoliberal ideology.

Norman Fairclough completed a qualitative analysis of Tony Blair's speeches by applying a linguistic approach; examining political discourse via speeches and also using quantitative data sourced from a language corpus.<sup>53</sup> However, to apply the same techniques in equal measure to all the speeches by David Cameron then compare them to Fairclough's work on Blair would not represent compare changes from different time periods, with regards to the connotations certain words have gained since the implementation of neoliberalism in Britain. For this it is necessary to compare political discourse before the application of neoliberalism in Britain and after. For this reason it was decided to compare the 1960's with the 2000's. The process of analysing just one or two speeches by various politicians is an option to see how language has changed, which is part of Fairclough's method, but not only is this a slow process, even the selection of which speeches to use may introduce bias into the results. There is the question of which politicians to choose; should it just be speeches made by the four different Prime Ministers between 1997 and 2017, regardless of how long they were in power and are these always the best examples to gain an understanding of how neoliberalism is impacting language? Would speeches by the Chancellor of the Exchequer be better? The Housing Minister? There is a risk when choosing any politician in that he or she may not be representative of changes in language in relation to neoliberalism at all and just reflect his or her own political views. This method of proving a link between a change in language based upon which words are chosen by a select few politicians is too subjective. Furthermore, there is the temptation of "cherry picking" polarising speeches. Take for instance, if the aim of the research was to provide one or two extreme examples of how language is changing to blame the poor for being poor, it would be possible to source speeches from any politician who has this agenda. However, this does not provide reliable proof that the onus of poverty is starting to be placed upon the poor as a consequence of neoliberalism, just that the politician in question holds those beliefs. A way to remedy potential bias would be to take speeches at random then analyse them, but this would be haphazard. For this reason it would be more representative to access large quantities of data which show the number of times certain words occur, regardless of which political party the speaker hails from.

Using [www.hansard.parliament.uk](http://www.hansard.parliament.uk), an on-line archive of political speeches, it is possible to trace the original speeches in which a word appears and view it highlighted in the text. This would be an obligatory process to find out if the word was used by members of the Opposition to criticise neoliberal policy or not and would require an examination of each speech in which it appears in order to gain the context of its occurrence. The quantitative element of

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53 Fairclough, Norman, *New Labour, New language*. Routledge, 2000

Hansard.parliament.uk is the visualisation of occurrences in graph form. Take for example the word ‘scroungers’:

**Figure 1.**



Figure 1 shows a spike in 2013 which indicates that this is when the word was used the most, but it is not indicative of an association of this word with social or economic policy, what words it appears in connection with, nor the connotation this word has gained since neoliberalism was introduced to Britain - therefore the data from this archive is too vague. It would be necessary to read through each speech in which the word occurs. If I were to choose this method then I would only be able to fully investigate one word within the scope of a Masters dissertation.

A language corpus however is able to amass vast amounts of quantitative data and filter through it to present collocates of words. A collocate is a nearby word which occurs in conjunction with the searched for “keyword” and can reveal what connotations the keyword may have.<sup>54</sup> This makes analysing the data to establish patterns much easier to achieve. For this reason, it was decided to focus the study on collocates. The other possible option would have been to search the language corpus using semantic tagging to show the sense of a keyword, (in our case: benefits, welfare, health and housing,) but although this appears to be an effective way to determine their significance, it is possible that process involves automatic tagging, a process by which words are labelled by a program then grouped together. The results can be erroneous given that context is not taken into account in the tagging.

The Bringham Young University has developed a language corpus using over 7,600,000 speeches from Hansard to create [www.hansard-corpus.org](http://www.hansard-corpus.org), which include collocates. This language corpus was used to source data because it can provide the maximum amount of information necessary to see if there has been a change in political language.

54 Alexander, Marc and Mark Davies. (2015-) Hansard Corpus 1803-2005. Available online at <http://www.hansard-corpus.org>. ‘What words are used with other words? word meaning and usage’ <https://www.hansard-corpus.org/>

Moreover, unlike other Corpora, such as the TV corpus in which the percent of information varies in each search, the Hansard corpus is consistent in that it accesses all the speeches which took place in parliament. This is important to show whether or not the neoliberal elements identified in Part I are reflected in the political discourse used within Parliament, as it provides solid statistical evidence. It is also primary-source, reliable data.

However it is not perfect due to the amount of years compared (a full decade for the 1960's is compared to the years 2000-2005.) This is born in mind when considering the ratios and the frequency of occurrences. Also just a quantitative search on its own can be misleading as a sudden spike in the number of speeches using certain words does not necessarily reveal the change of political language, but is indicative of a word appearing in a speech. Further qualitative research is always possible to understand the rise or decline in the use of certain collocates and necessary to dispel any word ambiguity. The corpus is useful in providing data to highlight significant words which may be beneficial to research further in order to study changes in political discourse.

## **2. Methodology**

This section will present how the corpus was used to conduct the study. Data from 1960-1969 was compared with data from 2000- 2005, the 1960's was the decade in which Keynesian demand management began to decline as the governing ideology in Britain, it was also one decade before Thatcher's neoliberal government came to power. The most up-to-date information held by the corpus extends to 2005 so the dates used for the 2000's are from 2000-2005. Accessing records up to 2017 would have been ideal, but the corpus was still able to provide the amount of information necessary to show changes in political language by comparing the two decades. It showed these changes via revealing differences between contexts in which keywords appeared.

First, a quantitative analysis was undertaken by comparing the number of occurrences of each of these collocates between the two time periods. Second, a qualitative study was also conducted, based upon the results of the quantitative study. This was conducted by reading through the sample-sets and where necessary conducting further research. These sample-sets are created by the corpus taking 100 examples in which the word occurs, so that the word can be viewed in context. This can be filtered so that the samples are representative and not

presented in just a chronological order. The fact that each word can be viewed in its original context reinforces the credibility of the research. In cases when the sample provided by the corpus did not provide enough information to ascertain the context, it was possible to locate the original speech using, [www.hansard.parliament.uk](http://www.hansard.parliament.uk) as reference details are provided in the sample. There were occasions when in a sample set a speech was cited more than once, this was taken into account and another example of the word in context was taken.

The quantitative research was carried out by first searching for collocates to the left of 'benefit' (represented by '\* benefit'), comparing which collocates appeared before this word during the 1960's, then looking at how the quantity of these collocates had changed by the 2000's. Next, the same process was carried out for collocates to the right of 'benefit' (represented by 'benefit\*').<sup>55</sup>

The qualitative research was afterwards conducted via reading the context of words to ascertain the connotation of the word use. The quantitative and qualitative elements are used together to discuss the change in political discourse during these last decades and their relation to neoliberalism implementation in the UK.

## A. Setting parameters

The word 'Benefit' will be presented as a working example to showcase how the data was sourced via the setting of parameters. Following this, the quantitative results for benefits will be presented, then the qualitative analysis. The same approach has been used when researching all keywords.

### a) The quantitative approach

Figure 2 shows an example of the interface of the corpus. In the field "WORD(S)" the keyword 'Benefit' was entered. The capitalisation of letters does not impact upon results. In the COLLOCATE field, the asterisk signifies that the corpus will search for all words used in conjunction with 'Benefit,' and present these in the results, regardless of word class.<sup>56</sup> The left-hand, drop-down menu specifies where the collocate appears in relation to the keyword.

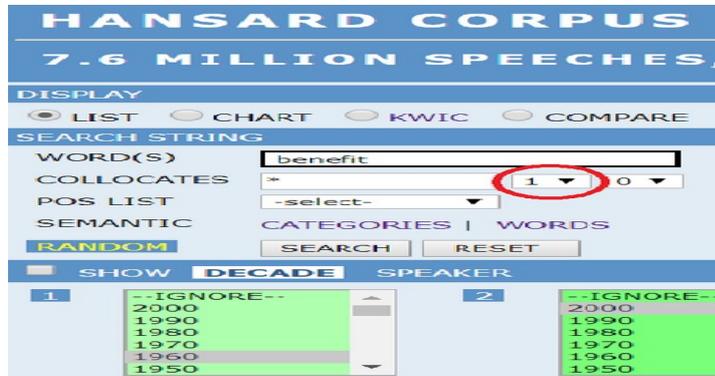
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<sup>55</sup> The top six collocates of a keyword were studied. First all the collocates which appeared to the left of the keyword/searched for word were analysed. This was done by examining the biggest change in collocates from the 1960's to the 2000's, (six data sets). Then the biggest changes between collocate from the 2000's and the 1960's were compared (six data sets, twelve in total.) The same process was repeated for collocates to the right of the keyword which also provided twelve datasets, therefore twenty-four results for each keyword. The four keywords researched therefore provided forty-eight datasets in total. These were evaluated quantitatively then qualitatively.

<sup>56</sup> It is possible to use the corpus to carry out a search for collocates which are adjectives, verbs, adverbs or nouns. However, by specifying only certain word classes the results will be narrowed down and data reduced, therefore the results have not been filtered to allow a maximum amount of data.

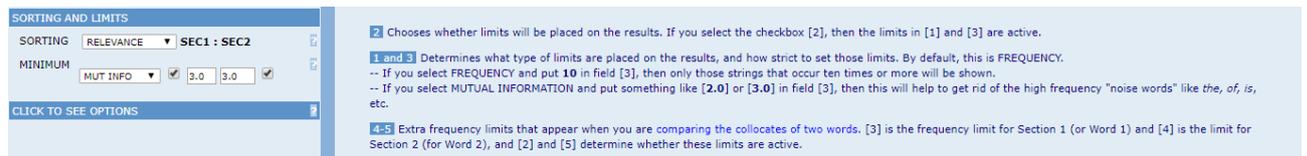
Selecting '1' on the drop-down menu to the left indicates that all the collocates which appear just before 'Benefit' be shown.<sup>57</sup> The date ranges are entered into the 'DECADE' field. This compares all speeches from 1960 to 1969 with all the speeches from 2000 to 2005.

Figure 2.



To reduce 'noise'/ irrelevant information, it is necessary to change 'SORTING' options from 'FREQUENCY' to 'RELEVANCE' (figure 3), which filters out any function words, for example 'the,' 'to,' 'of,' 'a.' By analysing the most relevant data, trends with regard to changes in political language within parliament are more pronounced and identifiable. To filter the results further, we can select 'mutual information' and set the range to 3.0 which will remove high frequency noise, as advised in the help guide of the corpus.

Figure 3.



An example of how results are colour-coded is presented in Figure 4. This helps users identify the largest differences. The biggest ranges between word use in the 1960's and the 2000's are shown in dark green, as the ratio appears to be anything over the value of 5 and therefore the most significant. Light green is used for ranges 1.50 to 5 and below 1.50 is white, below a ratio of 1 is indicated in red and denotes relatively little difference between the two decades examined. For this reason those results shown in dark green are the most significant and why there has been a focus on analysing the data from the top three results. The Ratios<sup>58</sup> are calcu-

<sup>57</sup> It is possible to use the drop down boxes in the field to specify where nearby words/collocates appear in relation to the keyword. The corpus allows a search of words up to 9 words before or after the keyword. However, the further we go from our keyword, the more diffuse the information and weak the connection. For this reason searches for just the preceding and subsequent collocates have been carried out.

<sup>58</sup> To get the ratio it is necessary to divide PM1 by PM2, the result is always close to the Ratio shown, but never a complete match. It would appear that precise numbers have been used to calculate the ratio shown on the cor-

lated by comparing the number of times the word ‘Benefit’ occurs Per Million words (PM) in the 1960’s (the fifth column of each section, PM1) with the number of times the word ‘Benefit’ occurs PM words in the 2000’s (sixth column, PM2.)<sup>59</sup>

**Figure 4.**

	WORD/PHRASE	TOKENS 1	TOKENS 2	PM 1	PM 2	RATIO		WORD/PHRASE	TOKENS 2	TOKENS 1	PM 2	PM 1	RATIO
17	DISEASES	20	0	0.13	0.00	13.15	17	CHILDREN	34	5	0.38	0.03	11.69
18	UNEMPLOYMENT	1180	61	7.76	0.69	11.25	18	DISABILITY	40	7	0.45	0.05	9.82
19	CORRESPONDING	20	2	0.13	0.02	5.82	19	IMPORTANT	27	5	0.31	0.03	9.28
20	HIGHER	20	2	0.13	0.02	5.82	20	IS	26	5	0.29	0.03	8.94
21	RETIREMENT	33	4	0.22	0.05	4.80	21	THEREFORE	20	4	0.23	0.03	8.59
22	INESTIMABLE	24	3	0.16	0.03	4.65	22	POTENTIAL	52	12	0.59	0.08	7.45
23	SOCIAL	120	17	0.79	0.19	4.11	23	PUBLIC	260	68	2.94	0.45	6.57
24	INCREASED	20	3	0.13	0.03	3.88	24	ALL	121	33	1.37	0.22	6.30
25	SPECIAL	46	7	0.30	0.08	3.82	25	CLAIM	44	12	0.50	0.08	6.30
26	INDIRECT	26	4	0.17	0.05	3.78	26	CONTRIBUTORY	20	6	0.23	0.04	5.73
27	DERIVE	44	7	0.29	0.08	3.66	27	ADDED	30	10	0.34	0.07	5.16
28	CASH	55	9	0.36	0.10	3.56	28	UNIVERSAL	22	8	0.25	0.05	4.73
29	SUBSTANTIAL	114	19	0.75	0.21	3.49	29	NOW	30	11	0.34	0.07	4.69

The collocates are in the second column under the title ‘WORD/PHRASE.’ There are two sections to the corpus, as seen in figures 4 and 5. In the green box to the left-hand side, all the words which were associated with ‘Benefit’ during the 1960’s are presented. In the box to the right all the collocates which appear just before the word ‘Benefit’ in political speeches for the years 2000-2005 are presented.

Figure 5 shows the top results for the collocates associated with benefits. The result in the number 1 slot represents the biggest change in usage between decades. In the column ‘TOKENS 1’ the number of times this particular collocate appeared in association with ‘Benefit’ during the 1960’s is shown. In the column labelled ‘TOKENS 2’ the number of times the same word occurred in the 2000’s is shown, comparing the two columns shows the change in frequency of use.

**Figure 5.**

pus, but that the figure for Per Million must have been rounded up or down (probably to save space). Eg for Sickness:  $5.5 / 0.07 = 78.571$  not the ratio shown (81.06.) However  $5.6742 / 0.07 = 81.06$ , suggesting that to save on space the corpus has rounded 5.6742 down to 5.50. What is important is that the Ratio displayed is accurate and based upon precise representative data; the occurrences of the collocate per million for the decade searched making the information more reliable.

59 Alexander, Marc and Mark Davies. (2015-) Hansard Corpus 1803-2005. Accessed 23 July 2019 [https://www.hansard-corpus.org/help/display\\_table\\_compare\\_e.asp?h=y](https://www.hansard-corpus.org/help/display_table_compare_e.asp?h=y)

**HANSARD CORPUS (BRITISH PARLIAMENT)** R LE

7.6 MILLION SPEECHES, 1.6 BILLION WORDS, 1803-2005 -- START -- ? history | lists | logs

DISPLAY: LIST CHART KWIC COMPARE

SEARCH STRING: benefit

COLLOCATES: \* 1 0

POS LIST

SEMANTIC CATEGORIES WORDS

RANDOM SEARCH RESET

SHOW DECADE SPEAKER

1 --IGNORE-- 2000 1990 1980 1970 1960 1950

2 --IGNORE-- 2000 1990 1980 1970 1960 1950

SORTING AND LIMITS

SORTING: RELEVANCE SEC1 : SEC2

MINIMUM: MUT INFO 3 3.0

CLICK TO SEE OPTIONS

SEE CONTEXT: CLICK ON WORD (ALL SECTIONS) OR NUMBER (SPECIFIED SECTION) [HELP...]

SEC 1: 152,041,765 WORDS SEC 2: 88,449,672 WORDS

	WORD/PHRASE	TOKENS 1	TOKENS 2	PM 1	PM 2	RATIO		WORD/PHRASE	TOKENS 2	TOKENS 1	PM 2	PM 1	RATIO
1	SICKNESS	836	6	5.50	0.07	81.06	1	HOUSING	1759	0	19.89	0.00	1,988.70
2	INJURY	210	2	1.38	0.02	61.08	2	CHILD	706	1	7.98	0.01	1,213.59
3	SUPPLEMENTARY	1075	20	7.07	0.23	31.27	3	INCAPACITY	574	0	6.49	0.00	648.96
4	WAGE-RELATED	47	0	0.31	0.00	30.91	4	DEFINED	302	0	3.41	0.00	341.44
5	SUPERANNUATION	44	0	0.29	0.00	28.94	5	COMMUNITY	201	2	2.27	0.01	172.76
6	NON-CONTRIBUTORY	43	0	0.28	0.00	28.28	6	OFF	74	1	0.84	0.01	127.20
7	INSURANCE	210	5	1.38	0.06	24.43	7	HUGE	42	1	0.47	0.01	72.20
8	ASSISTANCE	37	0	0.24	0.00	24.34	8	ENVIRONMENTAL	45	0	0.51	0.00	50.88
9	FLAT-RATE	81	2	0.53	0.02	23.56	9	ON	320	15	3.62	0.10	36.67
10	EARNINGS-DELETED	38	1	0.35	0.01	22.11	10	MEANS-TESTED	126	6	1.43	0.04	36.16

OVERVIEW: ROISIN LEE Help / information / contact

**Personal information**

Institution: GRENOBLE UNI  Update

Country: FRANCE  Update

**Activity**

Last login (before this time): 4/2/2018 4:14:56 AM (Utah time; same as Denver)

Queries (24 hours / 30 days): 0 / 4

Corpora used (30 days): HANS (4)

KWIC lists (24 hours | saved): 0/500 [0%] | 0/15000 [0%]

Customized word lists: 0

Source: Hansard Corpus <sup>60</sup>

The corpus provides up to 100 word/phrase results per page, but it is best to analyse the most relevant information thoroughly. The top 3% of word/phrase results should be sufficient for an analysis, as these show the highest differences between the decades, denoted by ratios. It is the largest ranges between the years which yield the most information with regards to changing word associations and these appear towards the top of the results. After this the differences between the two decades are less pronounced and function words start to appear more frequently, leading to “noise,” or less relevant words in the data. Also the ratios between decades diminish after the top results so the change in usage of the collocate is not as distinct. From the results of the quantitative study of contextual changes, only the top 3 highest ratios were analysed.

### b) The qualitative approach

By clicking on the number of occurrences of a collocate, the corpus provides the detailed context in which the words were used on a display screen: “keywords in context.” These contexts were what the qualitative research was based around. An example is shown in Figure 6. To ensure that the information sourced was from a representative sample, ‘SAMPLE 100’ was selected. This means that the corpus randomly uses a range of examples from across the dec-

60 Alexander, Marc and Mark Davies. (2015-) Hansard Corpus 1803-2005. Available online at <http://www.hansard-corpus.org>.

ade and does not present the information in a simply chronological order. This makes the data more reliable as it is from a range of sources, mixed by date and political party, making the data more representative.

Figure 6.

The screenshot shows a table with columns for date, speaker, and text. The text column contains several instances of the phrase 'sickness benefit' in various contexts. A red circle highlights the search parameters at the top right: 'PAGE: 1 / 9 > >>' and 'SAMPLE: 100 300 500'.

CLICK FOR MORE CONTEXT			
1	C-1965	Thatcher (L)	A B C I am afraid that many a student has found himself without unemployment benefit or <b>sickness benefit</b> and sometimes, if he has had a tragic accident, his widow has found
2	L-1966	Macpherson (L)	A B C alternative to cover this fortnight), or, alternatively, to pay earnings-related <b>sickness benefit</b> from the start of the period of <b>sickness</b> , if <b>sickness</b> exceeds three days:
3	C-1963	..... (C)	A B C date: But, as the hon: Member will know, the unemployment and <b>sickness benefit</b> increases will come into effect on 7th March and the comparable increases in National Assistance
4	C-1967	Pentland (L)	A B C the extent of having paid 156 contributions for weeks of work, can draw <b>sickness benefit</b> indefinitely until either he is able to return to work or, on reaching retirement
5	C-1966	Herbison (L)	A B C another, has a deficiency in his contributions, whether it be pension, <b>sickness benefit</b> or unemployment benefit, regulations made under subsection (8, b) could help
6	C-1960	Mahon (C)	A B C great landmark in our history, and things which helped, like holidays and <b>sickness benefit</b> facilities, were of course good, but in spite of that, we still
7	C-1968	..... (L)	A B C was designed to raise the sum of £ 17½ million by cutting <b>sickness benefit</b> and unemployment benefit: That money was to be used to finance family allowances:
8	C-1966	Joseph (L)	A B C out of 22 million wage earners in this country are covered by private occupational <b>sickness benefit</b> : There is a vast variety of schemes in terms of qualification, amount,
9	C-1968	Ridsdale (L)	A B C is abroad and, in particular, whether anything should be done to give <b>sickness benefit</b> to David Belsham: I am sure that it can not be underlined enough and
10	C-1963	..... (C)	A B C before us contains a temporary provision to ensure that a person whose unemployment or <b>sickness benefit</b> is supplemented by National Assistance will not get less advantage from the
11	C-1968	..... (L)	A B C problem of benefit where the husband is out of work, or is receiving <b>sickness benefit</b> , or wage-related benefit, and where this creates difficulty for the wife: Perhaps
12	C-1960	Boyd_C (C)	A B C made by the National Assistance Board, which, in cases of supplementation of <b>sickness benefit</b> , are, as an inquiry some years ago showed, mainly to aid the
13	L-1966	Macpherson (L)	A B C help employees receive: In some schemes the employer makes up the National Insurance <b>sickness benefit</b> to full wages or salary, although presumably not to normal earnings where th
14	C-1969	..... (L)	A B C various schemes and saying how local authorities assist: The National Insurance Scheme provides <b>sickness benefit</b> for disabled people incapable of working, and retirement pension for
15	C-1969	Campbell (L)	A B C saying about disability benefits and allowances being considered in the short-term or the long-term <b>sickness benefit</b> had no effect on the people about whom I am talking: They could n
16	C-1966	Dean (L)	A B C because of the deficiencies in their contributions record, in getting early employment or <b>sickness benefit</b> : All these were substantial moves by the previous Administration to improve th
17	C-1968	Kimball (L)	A B C have the extra burden of not getting the voucher for the three days of <b>sickness benefit</b> , and that will put another very heavy burden on our employers and on our
18	C-1963	Stephen_M (C)	A B C on board and remains on full pay while he is sick: Therefore, <b>sickness benefit</b> is not paid to the man concerned, and his employers continue to pay him
19	L-1963	..... (L)	A B C but nothing comparable has been done in the case of unemployed benefit or of <b>sickness benefit</b> : What is happening in this measure is merely another piece of patchwork and

In the qualitative analysis looking at the context revealed if the collocate was being used as a modifier in a sentence, (e.g ‘benefit sanctions’) or appeared as part of a proper noun (e.g ‘Sickness Benefit’). This could also affect the connotation of collocates and keywords, which was the second part of the qualitative analysis. To see what connotation the word might have the collocate and keyword were considered within the sentence to see if the keyword had gained any pejorative sense due to the collocate. For example, ‘benefit sanctions’ may imply that keyword ‘benefit’ has become associated with a word which means punishment ‘sanctions’.

Contextual information was used for each of the collocates to ascertain the connotation of the word, by viewing the sentence in which it appeared. This process was conducted 100 times for each collocate, except for collocates which had less than 100 occurrences, in which case they were all checked. In cases where there was not enough information from the sample to understand the connotation of the word in use, the original speech was located on Hansard, then read.

In the next part we will use ‘Benefit’ as a working example. First, the quantitative results will be presented (3.A), followed by the qualitative analysis (3.B). The objective of the qualitative analysis was to complement the quantitative data, by reducing ambiguities of certain words found in the data and clarify their contexts. After explaining how the quantitative results were

obtained for benefit, this process will not be repeated for the other keywords **Welfare, Health and Housing**, for these only summaries of the qualitative results will be presented.

### 3. ‘Benefit’ as a working example of the corpus

In this section the top 3 words which were the main collocates to the left of benefit in the 1960s are analysed, then the same process is applied to collocates for the 2000s. The procedure is then repeated for collocates to the right of benefit, this is how the quantitative data is sourced (3.A). Then to provide qualitative research (3.B) the words will be viewed in context, this will compliment the quantitative data. The findings will be summarised by comparing how the main collocates changed during these time periods, combining the quantitative and qualitative methods to explain why this change in political discourse is significant in demonstrating the application of neoliberalism.

#### A. Quantitative data: Collocates of ‘benefit’

The collocates to the left of keyword ‘Benefit’ will be presented for the 1960’s and contrasted to their contexts for the 2000’s. Then the collocates to the left of ‘Benefit’ will be presented for the 2000’s and contrasted to their contexts in the 1960’s. In this part potential problems with using a simply quantitative approach will be addressed as part of the working example.

##### a) Collocates to the left of ‘benefit’

**Figure 7.** Results for 1960s. \* benefit

	WORD/PHRASE	TOKENS 1	TOKENS 2	PM 1	PM 2	RATIO
1	SICKNESS	836	6	5.50	0.07	81.06
2	INJURY	210	2	1.38	0.02	61.08
3	SUPPLEMENTARY	1075	20	7.07	0.23	31.27

Figure 7 shows that for the 1960’s ‘sickness benefit’ appeared 836 times, (TOKENS 1) in comparison to this term only appearing 6 times in the political discourse of the 2000’s, (TOKENS 2). The frequency difference gives this collocate a ratio of 81.06, making it the top result. In second place for left-hand collocates of the 1960’s, was the term ‘Injury benefit’ which appeared 210 times in the speeches held on Hansard, as opposed to the 2 instances in

the 2000's. The third highest change was for the collocate 'Supplementary benefit' which appeared in speeches 1075 times during the 1960's, but only 20 times in the 2000's.

The quantitative results initially suggest a large decrease in the use of collocate 'sickness' in relation to 'benefit'. However, restrictions on what information the quantitative data can provide must also be taken into consideration. The fact that the comparative dataset of the 2000's is half the time frame of the 1960's makes the comparison less precise. However, I contend, that a difference of 830 occurrences of 'Sickness Benefit' is significant, because it is enough of a difference to suggest that there has been a large decrease in the use of the word 'benefit' in conjunction with the word 'sickness' since the 1960's, which would make it interesting to study further. Yet there is a second problem – we cannot gauge *how* the frequency of this word varied during the period. For example, the majority of the 836 occurrences may have taken place over two or three 'peaks' of debate on the topic at one end of the 1960s, rather than consistently throughout, which is not shown by quantitative results. This makes interpreting increases or decreases in word frequencies or patterns difficult. Besides, quantitative data alone does not reveal the context of words, for example, if there has been a change in the name of a benefit. This is why qualitative analysis and further research is needed to accompany the quantitative data.

**Figure 8.** Results for 2000s. \* benefit

	WORD/PHRASE	TOKENS 2	TOKENS 1	PM 2	PM 1	RATIO
1	HOUSING	1759	0	19.89	0.00	1,988.70
2	CHILD	706	1	7.98	0.01	1,213.59
3	INCAPACITY	574	0	6.49	0.00	648.96

The biggest change in word context is that 'Housing Benefit' has entered political discourse by the 2000's, but was non-existent in the 1960's. There were 706 occurrences of 'Child Benefit' found in speeches made between 2000-2005. From 1960-1969, 'Child Benefit' was mentioned once. 'Incapacity Benefit' appeared 574 times in the 2000's, but did not appear in the political discourse of the 1960's. This may indicate, as with 'Housing Benefit', that this is a new term – but further qualitative research is needed to establish an explanation.

## b) Collocates to the right of ‘benefit’

To see which words can be found to the right of the keyword, as before, it is necessary to set the parameters for collocates to make associated words appear after ‘benefit’, thus transforming the keyword into a modifier within a sentence. This generates another set of data.

**Figure 9** Results for the 1960’s. Benefit \*

	WORD/PHRASE	TOKENS 1	TOKENS 2	PM 1	PM 2	RATIO
1	SCALES	28	0	0.18	0.00	18.42
2	UPON	20	0	0.13	0.00	13.15
3	OUT	62	3	0.41	0.03	12.02

Figure 9 indicates that the largest difference between decades for words to the right of ‘Benefit’ was for ‘Benefit Scales’, appearing 28 times in the 1960’s. This makes it top of the list as it appeared naught times in the 2000’s, suggesting the disappearance of ‘Benefit Scales’ from political discourse by the 2000’s. Similarly, in comparison to the 20 occasions of ‘Benefit Upon’ in the 1960’s there is no trace of these words appearing side-by-side during the years 2000-2005. ‘Benefit Out’ occurred 62 times in the 1960’s, thrice in the 2000’s.

Two of the words in the data, “upon” and “out,” are prepositions and highlight another point to consider, as the nature of these collocates appear to be function words. Also the low-ratios indicate that these words might not be interesting to research.

**Figure 10.** Results for the 2000s. Benefit \*

	WORD/PHRASE	TOKENS 2	TOKENS 1	PM 2	PM 1	RATIO
1	FRAUD	470	2	5.31	0.01	403.96
2	SANCTIONS	82	0	0.93	0.00	92.71
3	SUBSIDY	45	1	0.51	0.01	77.35

Figure 10 shows that by the 2000’s there was a significant change in the top three collocates to the right of ‘Benefit’, the words which appeared in conjunction with the keyword were: ‘Benefit **Fraud**’, ‘Benefit **Sanctions**’, and ‘Benefit **Subsidy**’.

The quantity of times the word occurs is much higher for the 2000’s, despite only half the decade being represented. This is reflected in a strong ratio of 403.96, demonstrating the biggest rise in a new word associated with benefits. However, due to the variations in time periods (a full decade for the 1960’s and only half a decade for the 2000’s) the ratio must be considered alongside the number of occurrences. In figure 10 we can see that there is a significant rise in the word fraud being used in conjunction with benefit, as there were 470 occurrences of ‘Benefit fraud,’ found in the political discourse of the 2000’s, compared to it ap-

pearing twice during the 1960's. The quantitative results might demonstrate that the words 'benefit fraud' have become more prevalent in political discourse since the implementation of neoliberalism in Britain, but require further qualitative analysis to confirm this.

It is important that assumptions are not made based on quantitative results alone as increases or decreases in collocates are just indicative of changes of language and do not offer explanations as to why these changes have occurred. To see if neoliberalism is directly linked to these changes in language other factors still need to be taken into account, research to verify when policies introduced changes in language are also needed, reading the keyword in context to ascertain the connotation of the word is also required and again reinforces the need for qualitative research after results have been gained. The quantitative data generated by the corpus provides good leads which can be investigated further, which is what will now be presented in relation to keyword 'benefit'.

## B. Qualitative analysis

In this part a qualitative assessment will be used to assess the connotation of collocate words placed beside the keyword and to identify ambiguities in the meaning of the words generated by the corpus. The same approach is applied to collocates to the left, then the right of keyword 'benefit'.

### a) Collocates to the left of benefit

First the language changes with regards to collocates found in the 1960s will be considered, (figure 7) then the 2000s, (figure 8) before comparing the two alongside one another (figure 12) to see how the language compares between these two time periods.

#### i) For the 1960's

The top 3 left collocates in the quantitative results for the 1960s were: **sickness, injury, and supplementary** (figure 7). We will first discuss the two collocates which relate to health issues, (sickness benefit and injury benefit), then look at supplementary benefit, related to employment. These words have been analysed by looking at a sample set of 100. When there was not enough information from the sample to understand the connotation in which the words were used, the original speech has been sourced.

In the 1960's 'Sickness Benefit' appeared in relation to unemployment, discussions concerning this related to eligibility for Sickness Benefit and about whether it was of a suffi-

cient amount for people to live on. In comparison, during the 2000’s the term Sickness Benefit appeared in political discourse only 6 times, once in relation to a sickness benefit paid in a foreign country, 5 times in relation to costs for employers. This shows a change in focus concerning a benefit related to health, before it was used in relation to a benefit specifically designed to support British people who were too ill to work, but in the 2000’s the term occurred in relation to supporting the sick only when the benefit was used to refer to a foreign country, the other contexts had a focus upon employer costs. As we know from further research in Part I Sickness Benefit underwent a name change which may also account for the decrease in the use of the term ‘Sickness Benefit’ by the 2000’s. This reflects how political policy has resulted in a change in language as the word ‘Sickness’ has come to be less associated with ‘Benefit’ post neoliberalism.

The second collocate that the corpus revealed was ‘Injury Benefit.’ Viewing the two words in context (figure 11) shows that Injury Benefit was paid during the 1960’s in relation to employment law and primarily used in relation to industrial injuries.

Figure 11. Keywords in context for the 1960’s. \* benefit.

C-1961	Edwards (C)	A	B	C	individuals whilst carrying out their duties on buses but who had been denied <u>industrial injury benefit</u> ; In many cases industrial <u>injury</u>
L-1966	Bowles (L)	A	B	C	8 arises from the proposal to pay the new earnings-related supplement on top of <u>injury benefit</u> : The adjudication machinery under the
C-1960	----- (C)	A	B	C	the insurance officer is likely to rule that he or she is entitled to <u>injury benefit</u> which is payable at one rate only: When the total incap
C-1966	Davies (L)	A	B	C	injury provisions, on days of incapacity for which a person is entitled to <u>injury benefit</u> , into line with those in the National Insurance Act
C-1966	Davies (L)	A	B	C	within 13 weeks of the first day of incapacity: This will enable the <u>injury benefit</u> waiting days to be paid immediately where there is a
L-1967	Sorensen (L)	A	B	C	To come back to the noble Lord, Lord Drumalbyn, he asked about <u>injury benefit</u> and 100 per cent: disablement benefit: These have hi
C-1960	Stross (C)	A	B	C	1958 ... there were 16,200 spells of incapacity due to dermatitis for which <u>injury benefit</u> was paid ... Of these, 13,100 related to men a
C-1966	Van_S (L)	A	B	C	Article 14A: As I understand it, in the case of pneumoconiosis, <u>injury benefit</u> is not paid: I think that that follows from the Explanatory
C-1963	Stephen_M (C)	A	B	C	employed under contract of service in Great Britain: In 1961, claims for <u>injury benefit</u> totalled 833,000, and for disablement benefit, 1
C-1966	Herbison (L)	A	B	C	day of incapacity if more than a negligible amount of work is done: <u>Injury benefit</u> for a day may be lost in up to 600,000 cases a year,
C-1967	Archer (L)	A	B	C	Factory Inspectorate was enterprising enough to compare the accidents reported with claims for <u>industrial injury benefit</u> : It was disco
C-1966	Herbison (L)	A	B	C	average, about a quarter of a million sick people, including 30,000 on <u>injury benefit</u> , and about 110,000 unemployed people— assumi
C-1960	----- (C)	A	B	C	great care to ensure proper diagnosis when any applicant comes to us claiming <u>industrial injury benefit</u> : In difficult cases, a man or w
L-1966	Bowles (L)	A	B	C	be paid only where and in so far as the earnings-related supplement paid with <u>injury benefit</u> falls short of the normal colliery worker’s
L-1963	Scrymgeour_W (C)	A	B	C	to bring in the new higher rates of unemployment and sickness benefit together with <u>injury benefit</u> as from the 7th of March: The extr
C-1962	----- (C)	A	B	C	in the steel industry who has two children: In Belgium, his <u>industrial injury benefit</u> is 71:3 per cent; in France, 46:7 per cent; in Wes
L-1966	Bowles (L)	A	B	C	benefit the insured person: In any case, the payment of supplement with <u>injury benefit</u> , which is the main reason for the changes, wil
C-1963	Swingler (C)	A	B	C	and National Insurance (1) in view of the anomaly of denying <u>industrial injury benefit</u> to those who suffer the same injuries by proces
C-1966	Davies (L)	A	B	C	sickness benefit in respect of the incapacity due to pneumoconiosis during the period when <u>injury benefit</u> would otherwise be payable-
C-1960	Boyle (C)	A	B	C	great assistance either to the war disabled or to those in receipt of <u>industrial injury benefit</u> : I should like to give the Committee a few
C-1961	Boyd_C (C)	A	B	C	that in the sort of cases which we have been discussing in which <u>industrial injury benefit</u> has been refused, in the generality of cases t

Looking at words in context for Injury Benefit in the 2000’s, there is no specific reference to injuries obtained via employment in the same way it appeared in the political discourse of the 1960’s. The change in frequency reflects the amount of state involvement in employment dur-

ing the 1960's and also the accountability of employers, as the context reveals that the state used to provide benefits specifically related to injuries in relation to employment. The results show that 'injury benefit' did feature in the political discourse of the 2000's in relation to employment law. However, there is a significant decrease, indicating a reduction of political discourse in this domain. This may reflect the state withdrawing from its role of providing welfare payments in relation to industrial injuries since neoliberalism arrived in British politics. This would also coincide with the reduction in nation-owned industries, such as the mines, to which some of the discussions in the 1960's relate. Yet when considered in the context of the research carried out in Part I, (1.B.c) we know that the state has not become completely withdrawn in employment matters, suggesting that the political discussions relating to a duty of the state to provide this particular benefit had reduced by the 2000's. This may also however denote a change in name for the benefit and would require further research. It may also reflect a centralisation of power, because since Labour's policy review there has been less contribution from union members over decision making processes, potentially leading to less discussions relating to Injury Benefit being paid. Further research would be needed to establish this.

'Supplementary Benefit' was also used in the speeches of Westminster significantly more in the 1960's in comparison to the 2000's, appearing as the third biggest change between the decades. However, further research shows that 'Supplementary Benefit' appeared less in the political discourse of the 2000's due to a change in name. From 1966 'Supplementary Benefit' was a welfare payment for the long-term unemployed which included people who were unable to work because they were sick and/or disabled.<sup>61</sup> By the year 2000 Supplementary Benefit had changed names and become 'Income Support'.<sup>62</sup> The change in name reflects the inclusion of a word indicating work (income) and making it more focused upon becoming employed rather than a general term to cover both sickness and worklessness (supplement). It is reminiscent of how in Part I we found that Incapacity Benefit was superseded by Employment and Support Allowance, also reflecting a work focused agenda being placed upon the sick and disabled. Using reference points provided by the corpus, it was possible to trace the original speeches from which the data was sourced between 2000-2005 on *hansard.parliament* and see that in one speech, the subject of how changes in political language are enacted via rebranding and repetition. This is the opinion of just one speaker, but is interesting when considering the impact of neoliberalism upon political language.<sup>63</sup>

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61 Burchardt, Tania. 'The Evolution of Disability Benefits in the UK: Re-weighting the basket' London School of Economics, 1999, p. 6, paragraph 4.

62 Jonathan, Bradshaw, Fran Bennett. "Minimum Income Schemes in the United Kingdom" *Peer review, European Commission or the Member States*, April 2004, p. 4, paragraph 2.

63 "It is one of the rewards of being in this place that if we keep saying the same thing year after year, eventually

ii) For the 2000's

The top three, left collocates of benefit for the 2000s were: **Housing, Child, and Incapacity Benefit** (figure 8). During the 2000's the biggest change in collocates to the left of benefit was the emergence of the proper noun 'Housing Benefit.' This was non-existent during the 1960's, as it was introduced under Thatcher's 1982 conservative government.<sup>64</sup>

The change in political discourse and use of the term Housing Benefit highlights how the state is playing an active role in the housing market and still redistributing taxes, but in a different way to the 1960's. The difference is that money is not redistributed to fund social policies but to pay private property owners. The creation of housing benefit is significant in relation to neoliberalism, because housing benefit is paid to tenants in state-provided and private accommodation.<sup>65</sup>

Discussions about Child Benefit were also more prevalent in the 2000's, which is interesting because although child benefit and pensions existed in the 1960's, it is clear that debates surrounding this particular benefit have risen over time. During the 1960's funding for child benefit and pensions was derived from taxes and a distributive system of wealth; by the 2000's, when social policy was determined by economic growth, Child Benefit had become a well broached subject.<sup>66</sup> There may be a link between this rise in the discussion of Child Benefit and the cross-party policy of abandoning redistributive tax as a means of funding it, but this would require further research. What the corpus shows is that in a period when Child Benefit was funded via high-taxation, discussions of this benefit featured significantly less than

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people will listen: It was heartwarming to see the IPPR report, "A New Contract for Retirement": To our astonishment— and its own— it advocates raising the basic pension to the level of the minimum income guarantee: The minimum income guarantee was a piece of branding: All Governments have indulged in that, as with national assistance changing to supplementary benefit ..... then income support: They have always found new labels that they hope will be more acceptable: The minimum income guarantee is the old income support, topping up the basic pension, but it was a good presentational move: If we have a criticism of the Bill, it is that it errs on the side of presentation: I dread the future, when pensioners come to our surgeries because the presentation made them think that they would get the true benefit of all their pensions..." Flynn, Paul. 'State pension credit Bill' House of Lords, Hansard, 25 march 2002.

64 Social Security and Housing Benefits Act 1982 [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1982/24/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1982/24/contents)

65 As part of opening up the housing market under neoliberalism, the housing sector has become increasingly comprised of multiple agencies, not just the state. Local authorities and also private companies now provide social-affordable housing; in comparison to the 1960's where the state was the primary provider of social housing.

66 Another interesting result, although outside of our top three examined collocates is the absence of the word 'pensions' during the 1960's. 'Pension benefit' does not feature at all in the top 100 results for the 1960's, a decade when pension and child benefit were classed as separate to welfare and funded via tax increases. However, following the loss of the 1992 election Labour abandoned the policy of paying for these via tax redistribution as part of modernising the party to make it fall in line with the neoliberal doctrine established Great Britain post 1979. It was under New Labour the words 'pensions' appeared as a collocate of 'benefit,' appearing literally side by side 33 times in the 5 years of data held by the corpus for this time frame. Only once did this happen in the period 1960 to 1969.

in a later period after neoliberalism was introduced into Britain and social policy became funded by economic growth. Looking at a sample of 100 keywords in context confirms that there was indeed a Child Benefit bill introduced in 2005 amending rates of Child Benefit. This accounts for a portion of the discourses in the sample. There were also instances of child behaviour discussed in relation to child benefit, which could be investigated further in relation to MUD theory (Part I).

‘Incapacity Benefit’ was the third highest appearing collocate to the left of benefit in the 2000’s. Keywords in context showed a sample of 100 times in which Incapacity Benefit appeared during the political speeches of the 2000’s addressing various issues to do with the benefit. These included the number of people claiming Incapacity benefit, opportunities for disabled people to get back into work, the amount paid (whether it was a sufficient amount to live on) and cuts to the benefit following the Welfare Reform and Pensions Act 1999. In comparison, during the 1960’s Incapacity Benefit appeared nil times. This suggests that the benefit was non-existent, further research based upon the quantitative results shows that there has been an evolution of terms.

In the 1960’s ‘Sickness Benefit’ appeared most in the collocate results, yet at some point this decreased, why? In 1971 ‘Sickness Benefit’ became only available for a period of up to 28 weeks. For those who were long term sick or disabled a new benefit was created, ‘Invalidity Benefit’.<sup>67</sup> The creation of ‘Invalidity benefit’ introduced a time limit to claimant’s eligibility for Sickness Benefit. It also introduced the need for a medical assessment to verify that claimants were genuinely sick or disabled enough to receive ‘Invalidity Benefit’. The assessments were performed by a personal doctor who could confirm that claimants were unsuitable for work.<sup>68</sup> Invalidity Benefit was in operation from 1974<sup>69</sup> until 1995<sup>70</sup> then was replaced by ‘Incapacity Benefit’. We have seen this term before in our research in Part I; there has been a significant evolution in terms to accompany the way in which the state has dealt with those too sick to work; what started off as being a benefit for all forms of sickness (‘Sickness Benefit’) over time was narrowed down to ‘Invalidity benefit’ to ‘Incapacity Benefit’. As seen in part I, (2.A.a) ‘Incapacity Benefit’ was replaced with ‘Employment and Support Allowance’ in 2008. Hence we can see a gradual shift in language during the years of

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67 Banks, James. Richard Blundell, Antoine Bozio, Carl Emmeron. "Disability, Health and Retirement in the United Kingdom" *Institute for Fiscal Studies*, Working Paper W11/12, February 2011 p.4 paragraph 2

68 Banks, James. *Idem*.

69 Westminster, Department of the Official Report (Hansard), House of Commons. "House of Commons Hansard Debates for 21 Apr 1971," parliament.uk. Accessed 20 June 2019 <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1971/apr/21/national-insurance>

70 Incapacity Benefit House of Commons debate, 23 January 1995 vol 253 cc3-5. Accessed 20 June 2019 <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1995/jan/23/incapacity-benefit>

neoliberalism which reflect the legislative change, the long-term sick and disabled claimed Sickness Benefit in pre-neoliberal Britain, by 2008 after the implementation of neoliberalism Employment and Support Allowance was available for those who were unable to work due to sickness or disability. This shows a change in political discourse towards a work-oriented approach towards benefit claimants which has been highlighted by the corpus.

We also know from the research in Part I that to be eligible for ESA claimants had to undergo a Work Capacity Assessment, but by following up information provided by the corpus, we can see that that assessments were actually introduced much earlier than New Labour, when in the 1970's Incapacity Benefit was created to move long-term sick and disabled off 'Sickness Benefit.'<sup>71</sup> Initially these assessments were undertaken by personal doctors, but as discussed in Part I this stopped being the case with the introduction of Employment and Support Allowance and assessments began to be carried out by employees of a private company with a target to reject 80% of benefit appeals.<sup>72</sup> Perhaps there will other collocates related to this change in approach towards state support for the sick, such as the emergence of the job title 'Health Care Professional'/ employee of Atos.

This qualitative analysis explained some reasons why the top, three, left collocates in the quantitative results for the 1960s (sickness, injury, and supplementary -figure 7) may have appeared, but as with all the results further research is always possible. There is an indication in the domain of benefits that there was a change in political discourses relating to Health and Employment Benefit. However this may be a one off occurrence. Instead of carrying out further research into these, to identify if there are trends across word collocates which might reflect neoliberalism, we will now move on to collocates found on the right of benefit.

#### b) Collocates to the right of benefit

These were **Benefit Scales**, **Benefit Upon**, **Benefit Out**, (figure 9). First the 1960's will be examined, then the 2000's.

##### i) For the 1960's

The ratios for the top benefits were very low, the biggest difference in words which appeared to the right of benefit was 'Scales.' 'Benefit Scales' appeared 28 times during the 1960's. This low frequency suggests that the results for this collocate are a weaker indication of

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71 Banks, James. Idem

72 Sharman, Jon "Department for Work and Pensions 'has outrageous target' to reject 80% of benefits appeals" Independent, 17 May 2017. Accessed 21 June 2019 <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/dwp-benefit-appeals-target-reject-80-per-cent-outrageous-pip-jobseekers-allowance-department-work-a7740101.html>

changes in language, also because ‘upon’ and ‘out’ are prepositions, these too may be less fruitful in showing changes in language. At first glance the term ‘Benefit Out’ seemed insignificant due to the low ratio and the fact that it appeared as a function word. Yet it was still verified in the qualitative analysis, as all words have been. In this instance the collocate did not appear in relation to welfare payments, but as a synonym of ‘advantage’ (figure 12.) This means that the collocate did not appear as part of a term relating to policy, for this reason the result is less likely to reflect a political ideology in the discourse. This reinforces the need for qualitative assessment to ascertain the meaning of collocates in relation to the keyword. Seeing the word in context confirms that ‘Benefit Out’ can be discounted from the results. Similarly ‘Benefit Scales’ and ‘Benefit Upon’ did not provide results which were indicative of changes in political discourse which related to policy.

Figure 12.

KEYWORD IN CONTEXT DISPLAY					Help / information / contact	
1	C-1960	Manningham_B (C)	A	B	C	b) — that is to say shareholders who may, by surtax, <b>benefit out</b> of transactions in which another party gets a tax benefit, and transactions in
2	C-1960	Strauss (C)	A	B	C	a private company, is it right that the public— the taxpayers— should <b>benefit out</b> of any profits subsequently made as a result of that investment?
3	C-1960	Mitchison (C)	A	B	C	this is a grand arrangement for the company because the shareholders are getting the whole <b>benefit out</b> of the loan: Why should not the Government, when they are fir
4	C-1960	Benn (C)	A	B	C	is using one's existing roads in such a way as to get a greater <b>benefit out</b> of them: This is something which has been neglected in the past:
5	C-1960	Benn (C)	A	B	C	vehicle: If we could get better use of vehicles we might get even more <b>benefit out</b> of existing road space: That is why late the other night, when
6	C-1961	Warbey (C)	A	B	C	if he is now able to sell it for building he will get a double <b>benefit out</b> of it, the second benefit on the basis of contradicting the first:
7	C-1961	----- (C)	A	B	C	than 17,000 <b>out</b> of more than 50 million of the population who get any real <b>benefit out</b> of the Budget: These concessions are not incentives, but a straightforward redit
8	C-1961	----- (C)	A	B	C	of £ 16 10s: If that is so, he would get a <b>benefit out</b> of the tax of 10 per cent:
9	C-1961	Thompson (C)	A	B	C	fact is that the system is so framed that the child will get the greatest <b>benefit out</b> of taking part in both sessions, and the class itself will work better
10	L-1961	Collins (C)	A	B	C	the prices of the food he ate, the taxpayer does not get one penny <b>benefit out</b> of the £ 266 million he is now paying in farm subsidies:
11	C-1962	Darling (C)	A	B	C	that system without encouraging improvements, I do not think the growers will get any <b>benefit out</b> of it, and certainly the housewives, the customers, are not going
12	C-1962	Darling (C)	A	B	C	, and certainly the housewives, the customers, are not going to get any <b>benefit out</b> of it: I would ask the hon: Gentleman, therefore, to answer
13	C-1962	----- (C)	A	B	C	who would want to discharge workers at the same time as he was getting more <b>benefit out</b> of the machinery he had installed if he had any confidence in the future
14	C-1962	Ross (C)	A	B	C	local authority has provided a single old people's home or not, it gets <b>benefit out</b> of the aggregate for what is being spent by others: The noble Lady
15	L-1962	----- (C)	A	B	C	use to the person who owned it previously: Therefore, if he has that <b>benefit out</b> of it, I do not see why he should complain particularly when he
16	L-1962	----- (C)	A	B	C	: I can not see why a commercial company who are going to get some <b>benefit out</b> of the pipe-lines should not pay the owners some part of that benefit for
17	C-1963	Roberts (C)	A	B	C	in premiums for benefits purely for their widows: Those who do that get some <b>benefit out</b> of the payments made from the insurance funds— private insurance funds I ai
18	C-1963	----- (C)	A	B	C	provision for the self-employed whose earnings would not continue: If we took short-term sickness <b>benefit out</b> of the scheme we could then concentrate the benefits on
19	C-1963	Corfield (C)	A	B	C	are bigger ones, but I do not agree at all that one has no <b>benefit out</b> of the business of being a trustee for the future:
20	C-1963	Thompson (C)	A	B	C	give aid whereby it could be shown that our own exporters and manufacturers had some <b>benefit out</b> of it: I see no need to be ashamed of that: In

## ii) For the 2000's

For the 2000's, (figure 10) two out of the top three words associated with ‘benefit’ entailed some form of punishment: **Benefit Fraud** and **Benefit Sanctions**, followed by **Benefit Subsidies**.

Benefit Fraud, when viewed as a keyword in context, revealed that political discourse was primarily centred around preventing this type of fraud. Qualitative results revealed that in 22% cases the discussions related to ‘Housing Benefit Fraud.’ This shows that out of all the occurrences, fraud relating to housing was the most debated form of benefit fraud in Westminster. Following devolution in 1997, these occurrences may have related only to Housing Benefit Fraud in England, so the data does not represent all of Britain. However, all the other times in which ‘Benefit Fraud’ appeared in political speeches related to state-welfare pay-

ments being illegally obtained and relates to a national social policy. However, there were also discussions in which the speakers questioned the amount of time and energy which was dedicated to the subject of Benefit Fraud in Westminster, stating that it seemed disproportionate. This shows that not all of the occurrences of the collocate advocate the pursuit of benefit fraud over other crimes, yet the high presence of this proper noun in the 2000's and its absence in the 1960's does show that this issue had grown in importance since the implementation of neoliberalism. Agentive sentence constructions such as 'tackling benefit fraud,' fighting/combating and reducing, accounted for 15% of the data when viewed in context. It might be interesting in further research to compare the number of discussions related to Benefit Fraud to Corporation fraud or tax evasion in order to see if there has been an equal amount of time dedicated to pursuing money lost through deregulation. This would provide additional information on the impact of neoliberalism on Britain, denoted by a change in political discourse.

Benefit Sanctions appear in debates which question the severity of their application and show that, although present in political discourse, this is not in the context of imposing Benefit Sanctions. Speeches reveal that the issue of sanctions is a contentious one, as debates addressed the difficulties people face when under sanctions, the knock-on effect of this and possible alternatives to the sanctions. However the rise in this topic within political discourse is significant because it reflects that it is an issue which has entered political debate not so during the 1960's.

Benefit Subsidy appeared in all forty-five contexts in conjunction with Council Tax Subsidy. The reason this did not occur in the 1960's was because Council Tax was introduced by Thatcher's 1980's conservative government. The only occurrence of the Benefit Subsidy in the 1960's was in relation to "social benefit subsidy analysis". All the occurrences in the 2000's of Council Tax Subsidy Benefit were made by Labour MPs and related to a limitation, then abolishment of the benefit.

### C. Benefits – Summary

The information chosen for summaries is deemed to be the most relevant. This is based upon the words in context in relation to our definition of neoliberalism and also the high ratios which show how many times a word appeared in context between 1960-1969 and 2000-2005. The themes addressed have been governed by the quantitative data and subsequent qualitative analysis. They show that there are changes in the context of the word 'benefit' within the do-

mains of health, employment and housing. The rest of the results found will be presented in this way, displaying the quantitative data side-by-side then a summary of the qualitative research.

Figure 13 shows results for collocates to the left of keyword ‘benefit’ during the 1960s and 2000s.

**Figure 13.** \* benefit. 1960’s compared to the 2000’s:

1960’s							2000’s						
	WORD/PHRASE	TOKENS 1	TOKENS 2	PM 1	PM 2	RATIO		WORD/PHRASE	TOKENS 2	TOKENS 1	PM 2	PM 1	RATIO
1	SICKNESS	836	6	5.50	0.07	81.06	1	HOUSING	1759	0	19.89	0.00	1,988.70
2	INJURY	210	2	1.38	0.02	61.08	2	CHILD	706	1	7.98	0.01	1,213.59
3	SUPPLEMENTARY	1075	20	7.07	0.23	31.27	3	INCAPACITY	574	0	6.49	0.00	648.96

The top collocates to the left of welfare for the 1960’s were: ‘**Sickness Benefit**’, ‘**Injury Benefit**’, ‘**Supplementary Benefit**’. For the 2000’s: ‘**Housing Benefit**’, ‘**Child Benefit**’ and ‘**Incapacity Benefit**’.

Figure 14 shows results for collocates to the right of keyword ‘benefit’ during the 1960s and 2000s.

**Figure 14.** benefit\*. 1960’s compared to the 2000’s:

1960’s							2000’s						
	WORD/PHRASE	TOKENS 1	TOKENS 2	PM 1	PM 2	RATIO		WORD/PHRASE	TOKENS 2	TOKENS 1	PM 2	PM 1	RATIO
1	SCALES	28	0	0.18	0.00	18.42	1	FRAUD	470	2	5.31	0.01	403.96
2	UPON	20	0	0.13	0.00	13.15	2	SANCTIONS	82	0	0.93	0.00	92.71
3	OUT	62	3	0.41	0.03	12.02	3	SUBSIDY	45	1	0.51	0.01	77.35

The top collocates to the right of welfare for the 1960’s were: ‘**Benefit Scales**’, ‘**Benefit Upon**’, ‘**Benefit Out**’ For the 2000’s: ‘**Benefit Fraud**’, ‘**Benefit Sanctions**’, ‘**Benefit Subsidy**’.

Health-related social policies are visible when viewing the two decades side by side (figures 12 and 13). Sickness and Injury Benefit featured less frequently in the 2000’s, but shows that state-welfare payments in relation to members of society who were ill did still occur in the early 2000’s. However there were less discussions about these and in the context of costs for employers. This is a significant change from the 1960’s when paying Injury Benefit was primarily a cost for the state, this change may reflect the privatisation of businesses following the introduction of neoliberalism in Britain and a move away from nationalised industry. ‘Incapacity’ is the only term which appears in the 2000’s in relation to illness. This reflects a narrowing down of terminology since the implementation of neoliberalism in Britain and indicates a change in language by which the broad term ‘Sickness’ has been narrowed down following the introduction of new benefits such as ‘Incapacity benefit’. This difference between ‘Sickness’ and ‘Invalidity’ was that ‘Sickness Benefit’ was only available for those

in need of state support for 28 weeks. This change is as a result of new conditions being attached to benefits, these include the introduction of medical assessments by professionals who were not the claimant's personal doctor. This shows a 'toughening up' in the way benefit was paid in relation to disability or illness.

With regards to employment, in the 2000's there was a marked decrease in the number of discussions about 'Supplementary Benefit' which is an income-related benefit. Further research showed that 'Supplementary Benefit' was replaced with 'Income Benefit' which does not feature in the corpus results for the 2000's. The decrease reflects less political discourse relating to state support in the area of employment. This could be part of the roll-back procedures Peck describes as necessary to implement a neoliberal-social policy; one in which the state is less involved in providing welfare to support people in relation to work. The qualitative analysis revealed an evolution in words whereby a payment from the state was commonly referred to as 'benefit' in the 1960's (Sickness Benefit), but by the 2000's had come to be referred to as an 'allowance,' (Employment and Support Allowance.) The significance of 'benefit,' (an additional extra) is different to 'allowance' (which has the connotation of permission) and reflects the liberal-authoritarian paradox. It may also facilitate the role of the state withdrawing from its obligation of providing support to those out of work, permitting state payments on the condition that claimants passed the Work Capability Assessments.

Benefit Fraud entered into the political discourse of the 2000's, although present in debates of the 1960's, the increase is significant and suggests that this issue has become very debated since the implementation of neoliberalism. One reason to explain the large difference is that Housing Benefit (to which 22% of the samples referred) did not exist in the 1960's. Its presence in the results highlights how governments have intervened on the housing market as a result of neoliberal doctrine. This is because Housing Benefit is available to help tenants pay their rent, meaning that the state is compensating land-lords who charge high rates. The state still redistributes taxes, however these state payments go to private-property owners. This reflects a neoliberal agender to promote the private business and shows how the state intervened on the housing market to encourage this.

Using 'benefit' as a keyword we can see where there have been changes in political discourse over the last fifty years in relation to this payment from the state. The corpus is not conclusive in providing explanations, but it does denote a change in political discourse which might be interesting to investigate in the context of historical changes. Possible reasons for the decline in employment-related benefits could thus reflect the shift which took place under neoliberal doctrine from the 1970's to reduce the role of the state in providing support in rela-

tion to employment. Employment has stopped being considered as a right following the break away by Labour from the unions as part of a move away from Keynesian economics towards neoliberalism. As the role of the state in providing work has been reduced and it has become the prerogative of the market to provide employment, a term related to welfare ('Benefit,') has become disassociated with the word 'work' over fifty decades as supplementary benefit/income benefit is less discussed in the 2000's compared to the 1960's. This may be indicative of how the state has distanced itself from the provision of benefit in relation to employment. We can rule out the possibility that this is due to replacing the word 'benefit' with 'credit' which took place during the restructuring of the welfare system in Britain and under which certain benefits became replaced by 'universal credit,' because this was put into effect from 2016.<sup>73</sup> It also provides information on the context in which collocates have appeared, which can be used to ascertain meaning or carry out further research. The working example of benefit is the same method used for the three other keywords researched; Welfare, Health and Housing. All collocates were examined, but the following results are summaries of the most relevant information in determining to what extent there may have been a change in political discourse as a result of neoliberalism. This has been ascertained via gaining quantitative data and applying quantitative analysis as done here.

## 4. Welfare

Benefit is often synonymous with Welfare, as they can both be used to describe payments by the state to support people not in work. Welfare also appeared as a synonym of well-being in addition to appearing as part of a proper noun 'welfare officer'. The data set created by the corpus will be presented then the qualitative analysis. Now that the methodology has been explained on how the analysis was carried out using the example of 'Benefit,' only the relevant findings will be presented in the qualitative study. To obtain the results the same process was carried out as for 'Benefit' whereby each word to the left, then the right of the keyword was analysed in context using a sample of 100 when possible.

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73 Morse, Amyas Sir. 'Rolling out Universal Credit,' London: National Audit Act, *Department for Work & Pensions*. Published June 2018. p. 7. Accessed 14 April 2019. <https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Rolling-out-Universal-Credit.pdf>

## A. Welfare, Quantitative data

**Figure 15. \*Welfare**

1960's							2000's						
	WORD/PHRASE	TOKENS 1	TOKENS 2	PM 1	PM 2	RATIO		WORD/PHRASE	TOKENS 2	TOKENS 1	PM 2	PM 1	RATIO
1	PRISON	78	0	0.51	0.00	51.30	1	COURT	46	2	0.52	0.01	39.54
2	THESE	63	1	0.41	0.01	36.65	2	OPERATIONAL	27	0	0.31	0.00	30.53
3	MORAL	54	1	0.36	0.01	31.41	3	PIG	23	0	0.26	0.00	26.00

The top collocates to the left of welfare for the 1960's were: '**Prison Welfare**', '**These Welfare**', '**Moral Welfare**'. For the 2000's: '**Court Welfare**', '**Operational Welfare**' and '**Pig Welfare**'

**Figure 16. Welfare \***

1960's							2000's						
	WORD/PHRASE	TOKENS 1	TOKENS 2	PM 1	PM 2	RATIO		WORD/PHRASE	TOKENS 2	TOKENS 1	PM 2	PM 1	RATIO
1	AUTHORITIES	153	0	1.01	0.00	100.63	1	REFORM	191	0	2.16	0.00	215.94
2	WORKERS	99	0	0.65	0.00	65.11	2	ISSUES	82	1	0.93	0.01	140.96
3	WORK	97	1	0.64	0.01	56.43	3	STANDARDS	157	2	1.78	0.01	134.94

The top collocates to the right of welfare for the 1960's were: '**Welfare Authorities**', '**Welfare Workers**', '**Welfare Work**'. For the 2000's: '**Welfare Reform**', '**Welfare Issues**' and '**Welfare Standards**'.

## B Welfare, Qualitative analysis

There are no occurrences of the term 'Welfare' in relation to prison for the 2000's, but for the 1960's when viewed in context this appeared 64 times out of the 78 with a proper noun: 'Prison Welfare Officer(s).' 11 times 'Prison Welfare' was used to indicate the well-being of prisoners which could reflect the reduction of the state in providing management and holding contracts for prisons and services. This conclusion is drawn from the fact that as of 1996, Private Finance Incentives (PFIs) have run services in prisons and as of 2011, prisons have started to be transferred out of the public sector into the private sector. This has been reflected in the political discourse as terms relating to 'Prison Welfare' have become less a prerogative of the state.<sup>74</sup>

Although function words were deemed to be less indicative of change in discourse 'These Welfare', revealed 63 sentences in the 1960's in which references were made to physical locations where community activity took place and which have either ceased to exist or

<sup>74</sup> Ford, Jonathan and Gill Plimmer "Momentum stalls on UK's private prisons," *The financial Times* <https://www.ft.com/content/3c356914-0d9c-11e8-839d-41ca06376bf2> see Annex

have undergone a name change.<sup>75</sup> Any name changes do not include the word ‘Welfare’ as this been removed from the political discourse of the 2000’s to refer to a physical location. For example ‘These Welfare Offices...’ by the 2000’s would have been relabelled as ‘The Department of Work and Pensions’ or ‘The Job Centre Plus’ which had the same function as welfare offices in dealing with payments from the state. The change in language has the effect of uniting many separate locations under one organisation due to the use of the definite article in the title. It also makes reference to employment rather than welfare. This reflects a more proactive state which focuses on employment and economic growth as opposed to welfare payments.

Similarly there were a range of ‘Welfare Authorities’ in the 1960’s.<sup>76</sup> These also included local, county and North Eastern Welfare Authorities. Viewing the collocate in context shows that these bodies were responsible for a range of public services. By the years 2000-2005 the term ‘welfare’ had ceased to appear in connection authority<sup>77</sup> The most recent public reference to ‘Welfare Authorities’ links them to ‘local welfare schemes.’<sup>78</sup> It is not clear from the corpus why there is this decrease in word usage, but it could be interesting to research further, as it may indicate a reduction of state responsibility in providing for the poorest in society.

‘Moral welfare’ appeared a total of 54 times in reference to institutional bodies.<sup>79</sup> The decline in the use of ‘Moral Welfare Boards’ and ‘Moral councils’ might indicate that there were less of these after neoliberalism, but we cannot say that this is because of neoliberalism. Seeing the words in context reveals that these bodies were affiliated with the Church of England. It is possible that because the adjective ‘moral’ is subjective and potentially contentious within a more religiously diverse society it may have been replaced with something less

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75 These Welfare: centres, committees, halls, homes and office.

76 Welfare: blind, children/child, health, education, hospital, mental welfare authorities.

77 Searching the first three pages of Google, Bing and Yahoo along with gov.uk fail to provide results in relation to welfare authorities indicating that the term has fallen out of use. Two articles by the same journalist from *The Guardian* appear in reference to welfare schemes run by local authorities and the subsequent rise in poverty levels; one written in 2017 refers to “local authority-run welfare safety net schemes” established to replace ‘social funds’ in 2013. Butler, Patrick "English councils’ local welfare schemes in ‘meltdown’," *The Guardian*, 13 September 2017 <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2017/sep/13/english-councils-local-welfare-schemes-meltdown>

78 These were established to assist benefit claimants subject to benefit sanctions. The decrease of ‘Welfare Authorities’ appearing in political discourse of the 2000’s could be a result of central government distancing itself from the responsibility of providing assistance in this domain, but further research is required. Thus far it would appear that a consequence of austerity has resulted in the continued need for a ‘Welfare Authority,’ but that this term is now less common and operates under the name ‘local authority scheme.’

Butler, Patrick. *Op.Cit.*

79 ‘Moral welfare’ appeared 12 times to refer to councils, 9 times moral welfare associations, 4 times to boards, 2 times societies, once to a ‘moral welfare organisation’ and once for the ‘moral welfare movement.’

ambiguous by the 2000's. However this is not conclusive and requires further research, it does not necessarily suggest a change in language due to neoliberalism.

A rise in collocates which can be linked to neoliberalism are those relating to 'Welfare Standards' and 'Pig Welfare' between 2000-2005. Both of these refer to the well-being of animals rather than state payments or people, however debates centred around 'Pig Welfare' were about Britain's participation in the European market and how British farmers faced competition from countries with less regulations on pig welfare. As a result political discourse reflected a widening of the market to increase competition and issues facing deregulation. This could be interesting to political geographers studying "the restructuring present"<sup>80</sup> because this change in language has indicated political and economic change in a wider context. However, the finding occurs a relatively low amount of times in the corpus and is featured in the debates of the 2000's on only 23 occasions, so although useful as one example it is not quantitatively significant to prove a change in political discourse as a result of neoliberalism. Viewing the results in context reveal that many of the occurrences of this collocate originate from one speech and therefore does not reflect a change in political discourse, but more the agenda of one MP representing disadvantaged farmers on a European market. Although the collocate is related to neoliberal issues (the market and deregulation,) the occurrences are not high enough, nor from a varied enough amount of people to suggest that there has been an association of the keyword with the collocate within political discourse. Therefore, when using a corpus to trace changes in political discourse it is more useful to concentrate upon high frequency occurrences of words.

'Welfare Standards,' related to the same issues but occurred more frequently. 'Welfare Standards,' were discussed twice during the 1960's<sup>81</sup> but appeared 155 times more in the years 2000-2005, with one duplication in the sample set which needed to be discounted. The only mention of 'Welfare Standards,' in relation to humans is that of soldiers in a speech about MOD expenditure. As with 'Welfare Issues' the term 'Welfare Standards,' appeared most frequently in relation to animals. Although this may not seem to reflect neoliberal doctrine, seeing the words in context reveal notable debates in relation to imports from the EU and the need for UK farmers to compete on a bigger, global market. This could be related to neoliberalism as viewing the keyword in context reveals debates concerning competitors on a European market who were at an unfair advantage because they were not under the same legal

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80 Peck, Jamie. Parkland Institute. *Op.Cit.*

81 The term welfare standards appeared in two debates; one in the House of Lords in 1963 during the 'offices shops and railway premises bill' and again in 1967 during a debate in the House of Commons on 'Family poverty'.

obligation to uphold animal welfare standards in their countries This highlights pressure the state was under to deregulate industry as a result of its participation in a larger market.

The highest change in collocate appearing to the right of the keyword was ‘Welfare reform’ present 192 times in the political discourse of the 2000’s, but not at all in the 1960’s. The reason for its high occurrence is that it was part of proper noun “The Welfare Reform Act of 1999.” One of the speeches described the compulsory work focused interviews for benefit recipients who are too sick or have caring responsibilities. Claimants were required to attend work focused interviews regardless of their ability to work or not. This indicates that there was an emergence of coercive behaviour from the state towards claimants following the Welfare Reform Act. A speech by David Willets in October 2001 shows that due to ‘Welfare Reform Act’ fixed periods of time were applied to claiming Incapacity Benefit as well as interviews to review their disability status. This is similar to The Work Capability Assessment later introduced by Labour in 2008, (see part I.2.a). The creation of these conditions under which state support was made available reflects a centralisation of power in the provision of benefits and the corpus highlights that this initially started under the well mentioned ‘Welfare Reform Bill’. By reading the words in context we see reference to a speech made by the Labour Secretary of state to the IPPR,<sup>82</sup> in which he reportedly said Labour proposed “to make awards of Incapacity Benefit for fixed periods: So that at the end of the award, we can review the claim and offer more ...(sic) support.”<sup>83</sup> However, as we have seen in Part I, the introduction of fixed time periods for benefit payments and periodical reviews of claimant’s health was with the aim of driving down payments from the state. Private assessment companies such as Atos were working to targets to reduce claims and given contracts to run the Work Capacity Assessments specific to ESA as soon as the benefit was created, in the legislation it is explicitly stated that the idea behind the WCAs was specifically to reduce claims to benefits.<sup>84</sup> This is indicative of neoliberalism because the state intervened to boost the private sector by creating new customers for Atos, whilst simultaneously distancing itself from responsibility over health matters. Using a language corpus highlights a change in political discourse after the implementation of neoliberalism, with the research in Part I we can see how changes in language are related to neoliberal principals of state intervention to increase competition,

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82 As found during the research carried out in Part I, p. 35 the IPPR recommended the introduction of the assessments.

83 Willets, "social security" debate in the House of Commons, 25 October 2001, Column 472, paragraph 9. Accessed 22 May 2019 <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2001-10-25/debates/01b52873-5460-439d-abd0-b374bc3b1f4f/SocialSecurity>

84 Explanatory Memorandum to the Employment and Support Allowance Regulations, 2008. *Op. Cit.*

but to the detriment of benefit claimants. This has required a centralisation of power and has also led to a change in political discourse in which we have found the appearance of ‘Welfare Reform’ during the 2000’s.

One collocate occurrence shows why using a corpus to study changes in political discourse may be useful, but limited. During the 1960’s “Welfare issues” were mentioned once, but in relation to 363 Labour MPs basing their platform for the General Election upon ‘Welfare Issues.’ This suggests that the term was used extensively outside of Parliament, but there is only one record for it in the Hansard database highlighting the restrictions of the corpus. If further research into changes in political discourse were to take place then they might be more thorough by incorporating data from media sources too.

## 5. Health

As with Welfare, the top collocates during the 1960’s will be examined, then the 2000’s giving summaries of findings which may indicate a change in political discourse as a result of neoliberalism.

### A. Health, Quantitative data

Figure 17. \*Health

1960’s							2000’s						
	WORD/PHRASE	TOKENS 1	TOKENS 2	PM 1	PM 2	RATIO		WORD/PHRASE	TOKENS 2	TOKENS 1	PM 2	PM 1	RATIO
1	INDUSTRIAL	189	1	1.24	0.01	109.95	1	STRATEGIC	1153	0	13.04	0.00	1,303.57
2	CENTRAL	66	2	0.43	0.02	19.20	2	SEXUAL	287	1	3.24	0.01	493.34
3	AUTHORITY	106	4	0.70	0.05	15.42	3	REPRODUCTIVE	227	0	2.57	0.00	256.64

The top collocates to the left of Health for the 1960’s were: ‘**Industrial Health**’, ‘**Central Health**’, ‘**Authority Health**’. For the 2000’s: ‘**Strategic Health**’, ‘**Sexual Health**’ and ‘**Reproductive Health**’.

Figure 18. Health\*

1960’s							2000’s						
	WORD/PHRASE	TOKENS 1	TOKENS 2	PM 1	PM 2	RATIO		WORD/PHRASE	TOKENS 2	TOKENS 1	PM 2	PM 1	RATIO
1	WHAT	778	7	5.12	0.08	64.66	1	IMPROVEMENT	604	1	6.83	0.01	1,038.25
2	WHETHER	435	4	2.86	0.05	63.26	2	COUNCILS	695	0	7.86	0.00	785.76
3	INSPECTOR	95	0	0.62	0.00	62.48	3	PROFESSIONALS	523	0	5.91	0.00	591.30

The top collocates to the right of health for the 1960’s were: ‘Health **What**’, ‘Health **Whether**’ and ‘Health **Inspector**’. For the 2000’s: ‘Health **Improvement**’, ‘Health **Councils**’ and ‘Health **Professionals**’.

## B. Health, Qualitative analysis

The biggest change for the 1960's was 'Industrial Health' which fell from 189 occurrences in the 1960's to once in the 2000's. This suggested that there had been a decline in state involvement in industrial-health issues. Seeing the word in context revealed that there used to be 'Industrial Health' advisory committees, surveys, centres and services. 'Industrial Health' during the 1960's was present in political discourse due to the state's duty to regulate safety at work. The one occurrence of "Industrial Health" in the 2000's was during a debate over the international market and how this made regulation difficult due to businesses moving to other countries if restricted by government. This reflects the more globalised economy of the 2000's in which regulation had become increasingly difficult and the role of the state limited. This issue was not a feature of the 1960's debates, which centred around the state's role in ensuring health and safety. During 1960's Britain there were three forms of occupational health; services available to employees of nationalised industries (provided under the nationalisation Acts), statutory services administered by the Minister of Labour and occupational health services, voluntarily provided by employers.<sup>85</sup> The decline in debates concerning 'Industrial Health' may therefore reflect the decrease in nationalised businesses; as the number of state-owned industries declined only voluntary occupational health remained and this was provided by private employers. An indication of the change in economy is that Britain moved from the secondary sector to the tertiary sector during the 1980's, resulting in a fall in Britain's industrial exports.<sup>86</sup> The reduction in product based industries may have led to fewer occurrences of "Industrial Health" in political discourse.

Another possible explanation is that the Industrial Health Service used to carry out research (as revealed by viewing the keywords in context.) Funding towards this has also been on the decline since the 1980's<sup>87</sup> and may have led to a decrease in "Industrial Health" being mentioned in political discourse. Whether it has been due to the shift in industry or the reduction in funding for research, both could be linked to the introduction of neoliberal doctrine, as the state has intervened to define the type of economy and also to reduce the amount of funding available for research into industrial-health matters. In addition to this, neoliberalism leads to less nationalisation of companies; as the number of state-owned businesses have

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85 Pavitt, Laurence, "Occupational Health Service," Volume 710, Column 1316, 13 April 1965. Accessed 25 May 2019. <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/1965-04-13/debates/449dd4e8-209f-43ee-ac40-7486855f5cf3/OccupationalHealthService?highlight=industrial%20health#contribution-472fa1e7-289b-452b-8d3d-d44eaf160bab>

86 Rhodes, Chris, 'Manufacturing: statistics and policy' House of Commons Library, Number 01942, 12 November 2018, figure 6, p. 18.

87 Rhodes, Chris, 'Manufacturing: statistics and policy' House of Commons Library, Number 01942, 12 November 2018, Research and development, p. 15.

reduced as part of a mixed economy, so too has the need to discuss industrial health in relation to employees of nationalised industries. The decrease in “Industrial Health” does not appear to be due to a complete withdrawal of the state in Industrial Health<sup>88</sup> just a decrease in the amount of times this collocate has featured in political discourse in later years. Based on the research in Part I, we know the state is still involved in Industrial Health Issues, as the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act of 2013 removed onus of responsibility from all employers in certain health and safety matters, encouraged out of court compromises/settlements and reduced legal aid available for employees. This deregulation demonstrates how state intervention still occurs and that it can lead to favourable market conditions which prioritise private companies over employees. The corpus shows that political discourse had altered before the 2013 Act, as there had already been a reduction in debates concerning health and safety matters relating to industry.

The reduction of other collocates such as “Central Health” by the 2000’s shows how the state had withdrawn from its role of providing health-related services. During the 1960’s the collocate occurred mainly as proper noun; “The Central Health Services Council,” a body established by the National Health Service Act 1946, but abolished under Thatcher’s government.<sup>89</sup> In the 2000’s similar central-health bodies and watch dogs were discussed in one speech about the privatisation and disbanding of these organisations as a result of government decentralisation.<sup>90</sup> This suggests that as economic policy changed from promoting a mixed economy which included state-owned services, to an economy focused on growth from the private industry, political discourse has changed to reflect less onus upon the state in providing for health-care services.

The collocate “Authority” also appeared as part of several proper nouns such as ‘Local Authority Health’: centres, welfare services, committees, clinics and visitors, which were present in the 1960’s, but not by the 2000’s. There has been either less state consultation with aforementioned services or their abolition by the 2000’s. Either way the corpus may indicate that contributions from local actors towards decision making within central government have been reduced. Examples from the sample sets reveal that The Local Authority Health

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88 Industrial health, National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health. 2019 Volume 57 Issue 2. Accessed 26 May 2019 <https://www.jstage.jst.go.jp/browse/indhealth/list/-char/en>

89 'Central Health Services Council' The Health Foundation, 2019. Accessed 22 May 2019 <https://navigator.health.org/content/central-health-services-council>

90 Smith, Trevor 'Address In Reply To Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech' House of Lords, 02 December 2003, Hansard Column 216. Accessed 22 May 2019 <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Lords/2003-12-02/debates/3a0a4bfe-2341-482a-8b5f-4f372e15bb12/AddressInReplyToHerMajestySMostGraciousSpeech?highlight=central%20health#contribution-97684b76-fc29-4c64-81c4-8ce4c376c667>

Boards and Services of the 1960's worked in partnership with general practitioner services dealing with family issues, identifying those who required supplementary support, mental health (in England and Wales,) housing of the elderly and the provision of "certain services, particularly hearing aids, home help and meals services."<sup>91</sup> Although Local Authority Health Services also appeared in political discourse during the 2000's, it was on comparatively fewer occasions and in relation to narrowing down support to only the most in need households, reflecting austerity measures and a withdrawal of the state in providing care for the elderly. Keywords in context reveal that the discussions in the 2000's concerned reducing fuel poverty via the state paying for renovation work in social housing. The role of the state therefore has changed from being a diverse range of services which are provided to all members of a community, to being focused on those living in social housing. As addressed in Part I, the number of social housing tenants has fallen since neoliberalism became the guiding ideology in British politics. If support is only offered to those in social housing this effectively restricts who the state offers help to.

The Local Government Act of 2000 established Local Authority Health Scrutiny Committees, these removed the requirement for Local Authorities to make decisions "through meetings of the full council or of committees."<sup>92</sup> This reduction in consolidation may explain the reduction in health related collocates found in the political discourse of the 2000's. It is also evidence of Couldry's theory that neoliberalism provokes a crisis of voice in which there is a reduction in participation in decision making. This has been reflected in the change in collocates provided by the corpus.

When considering the top three collocates which appeared most during the 2000's (Strategic, Sexual and Reproductive) there were once again large differences in the appearance of these words between the two decades. For the time period 2000-2005 "Strategic Health" appeared 1153 times, but 0 from 1960-1969, the sample of 100 occurrences showed that on all occasions "Strategic Health" appeared as part of a proper noun "Strategic Health Authorities." Further research shows that this name replaced "Health Authorities" in England 2002, at the same time that the Secretary of State's functions were delegated to Primary Care Health Service.<sup>93</sup> This is significant as it shows a change in the function of the Health Authority – as the name changed, so did the role of the body. No longer just concerned with the run-

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91 Braine, "Clause 3—(The Supplementarybenefits Commission) Next" House of Commons Hansard, Column 1090. Accessed 26 May 2019 [https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/1966-06-13/debates/6e7370af-ef0c-418d-a590-c7ff921bbda9/Clause3—\(TheSupplementarybenefitsCommission\)?highlight=certain%20services%20particularly%20hearing%20aids%20home%20help%20meals%20services#contribution-1320dd48-cf76-4958-a283-b5278769f5e0](https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/1966-06-13/debates/6e7370af-ef0c-418d-a590-c7ff921bbda9/Clause3—(TheSupplementarybenefitsCommission)?highlight=certain%20services%20particularly%20hearing%20aids%20home%20help%20meals%20services#contribution-1320dd48-cf76-4958-a283-b5278769f5e0)

92 Sandford, Mark, "Overview and scrutiny in local government" House of Commons Library, 18 February 2019.

ning of health services, the addition of “Strategic” to the name indicated the additional role of the Health Authority in “Performance management of local NHS Trusts and Primary Care Trusts,”<sup>94</sup> thus introducing performance related elements to the NHS. Following the Health and Social Care Act of 2012, ‘Strategic Health Authorities’ were dismantled, their property and estates transferred to private companies such as NHS Property Services Ltd.<sup>95</sup> The corpus has highlighted a change in political discourse which upon further examination has revealed an evolution of a term indicative of neoliberalism; from a state institution concerned with only health matters (a Health Authority) to it including elements of neoliberalism such as performance management, to finally the abolition of Strategic Health Authorities we see how state assets have been transferred to private companies. This is an example of our definition of neoliberalism: state intervention led to more favourable market conditions and an increase in competition. However this transpired to be disadvantageous to the poorer citizens of Britain, as private companies have been able to acquire NHS services. To achieve this privatisation of state assets, there has been a centralisation of power in which government has used language to reclassify “Health Authorities” so that they reflect more neoliberal discourse in their title: “Strategic Health Authorities.” Under this new title NHS services had the additional requisite of proving their profitability. When the Strategic Health Authorities were abolished in 2013 staff and NHS property was transferred to private company NHS-Property-Services-Limited.<sup>96</sup>

The role of the state has not completely diminished in the health sector since the implementation of neoliberalism in Britain, indicated by the change in collocates between the 1960’s and 2000’s relating to sexual health. Mentioned once in 1960 in the context of protecting mental health patients, ‘Sexual Health’ appeared 287 times in the 2000’s. Words in context reveal that this was in relation to the education of adolescents following a rise in sexually transmitted diseases. There was a continuation of discussions which concerned ‘Sexual Health’ for members of society with extra physical and mental health needs or disabilities. Also featured in the sample set were discussions concerning waiting times for sexual-health

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93 Health Service (Functions of Strategic Health Authorities and Primary Care Trusts and Administration Arrangements) (England) Regulations” 2002, Explanatory note, paragraph 1. Accessed 27 May 2019 [www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2002/2375/made/data.xht?view=snippet&wrap=true](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2002/2375/made/data.xht?view=snippet&wrap=true)

94 NHS business Definitions. Accessed 13 July 2019 [https://www.datadictionary.nhs.uk/data\\_dictionary/nhs\\_business\\_definitions/s/strategic\\_health\\_authority\\_de.asp?shownav=1](https://www.datadictionary.nhs.uk/data_dictionary/nhs_business_definitions/s/strategic_health_authority_de.asp?shownav=1)

95 David Flory CBE Deputy NHS Chief Executive to SHA Cluster Chief Executives, 31 May 2012, Department of Health archives [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/214983/dh\\_134533.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/214983/dh_134533.pdf)

96 Memorandum for the House of Commons Health Committee, National Audit Office, March 2014, p. 6. Accessed 14 July 2019 <https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Investigation-into-NHS-Property-Services-Limited.pdf>

treatment. This shows that the state had become more proactive in managing health risks of this nature by the 2000's and that this element of public health is not an area which has become managed by the private sector. As with sexual health, the distinct rise in parliamentary discussions concerning 'Reproductive Health' during the years 2000-2005 suggests active state intervention over public health matters, a sample of the 100 out of 227 instances in which the collocates during the 2000's showed that the government had become proactive in education concerning reproductive health in schools. One of the issues identified by looking at the keywords in context is the lack of funding for certain services, but the presence of these issues in the political discourse of the 2000's shows that the state, not private business, managed these public health risks from 2000-2005. In 2013 public health became the responsibility of Local Authorities<sup>97</sup> so it is possible that in future data the issue may appear less in the political discourse at Westminster. As discussed in Part I, Local Authorities are governed by the funding designated to them from central government, in other sectors such as housing this has led to the Local Authorities allocating some responsibilities to private organisations, to see if the same thing happens in health will require further research in the future as well as more cross-reference work to see if a transfer of responsibility to Local Authorities often leads to the contracting out of services in order to be cost efficient.

Despite using the Hansard features to try and filter out function words, "what" appeared as a collocate to the right of health 778 times during the 1960's, as opposed to 7 for the 2000's. Looking at a sample of these political discourses showed that the words appeared exclusively in questions posed to the Minister of Health over what course of action would be taken about: safeguarding issues, hospital waiting lists, the voluntary price regulation scheme, reducing the cost of drugs, disciplinary action against those in health care professions, the provision of health care professionals such as chiropodists, along with the provision of premises and facilities. The appearance of these are significant because the contexts reveal the diverse range of activities which were dealt with by the Minister of Health prior to mainstream neoliberal practice in Britain. Looking at keywords in context show that it was not the market which determined drug prices or labour supply in health during the 1960's but the state. The same could be said when analysing the other function word 'Health whether' which appeared 435 times in the 1960's in an array of issues which were at that time primarily the responsibility of the government. These questions and statements were also addressed to the Minister of Health, further reinforcing the possibility that this post during the 1960's was re-

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97 Milne, Eugene, "The transfer of public health to local authorities suggests alternatives are possible," *BMJ*, published 31 May 2018. Accessed 26 May 2019 <https://www.bmj.com/content/361/bmj.k2330>

sponsible for many health issues. The contrast in occurrences may show a change in the quantity of issues managed by the state in relation to health, but further research would be needed by comparing how many of the subjects broached with the Minister of Health during the 1960's were still the responsibility of the state by the 2000's. It is possible that some have been delegated to other ministers or committees.

The collocates highlight other changes in job titles, for example the decrease in "Health Inspector" from 95 times in the 1960's to 0 during the 2000's, this suggests that the title was replaced, further research reveals that the position is now referred to as "local council enforcement officers."<sup>98</sup> Despite the name implying that these workers are employed by the Local Authority (or 'local council') there is evidence that these posts have now started being outsourced to private companies such as "Kingdom Services Group," this particular business has been publicly accused of targeting the poorest in society in an effort to raise revenue for Local Authorities, rather than focus on upholding health safety practices.<sup>99</sup> This would be how economic growth instead of redistributive tax has led to jobs and also revenue for Local Authorities. It also shows a shift in focusing on profit rather than health and safety. A change in language highlighted by the corpus has been indicative of changes in policy which have in this instance reflected neoliberalism as the state has intervened to create employment opportunities within the private sector.

In the 2000's discussions around 'Health Improvement' appeared in debates which criticised the Conservative Opposition for promoting private-health care as a means of achieving 'Health Improvement' instead of expanding the NHS. However, as examined in Part I, Labour MPs made this criticism during a time when New Labour were introducing mechanisms to encourage privatisation themselves, in the form of outsourcing and PFIs.

Looking at a sample of 100 for the word 'Health Council' reveals that it regularly appeared as proper noun 'Community Health Councils.' Keywords in context show that many debates were held opposing the removal of these Health Councils. The reason the collocate did not appear in the 1960's is because the councils were created in 1976, to monitor bodies of the NHS and provide advice to MPs,<sup>100</sup> however following a long period in which they were underfunded and had their rights reduced, the councils were abolished in 2003.<sup>101</sup> The high number of times they appear in political discourse may therefore be related to discus-

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98 'Food safety - your responsibilities' gov.uk. Accessed 26 May 2019 <https://www.gov.uk/food-safety-your-responsibilities/food-inspections>

99 Marsh, Sarah. Patrick Greenfield. "Firm 'uses aggressive tactics' to collect millions in fines for councils," *The Guardian*, 22 January 2019. Accessed 27 May 2019 <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2019/jan/22/firm-uses-aggressive-tactics-to-collect-millions-in-fines-for-councils>

100 Hogg, Christine, "Patient and public involvement: What next for the NHS?" *Health expectations*, Vol 10(2): p. 129, paragraph 6. Accessed 19 May 2019 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5060383/>

sions debating their abolition. The keywords in context reveal that from 2000 to 2005 many MPs and their constituents feared that this would be to the detriment of patient care.

The last collocate found to the right of 'Health' was "Professionals." Keywords in context revealed that this included: doctors, nurses, social workers, youth workers, peer educators, midwives and health workers.' The appearance of Health Professional as an umbrella term for many different titles did not appear at all during the 1960's, but appeared 523 times from 2000 to 2005. As seen in Part I, 2.A.a, the appearance of the term 'Health Care Professional' in the political discourse was part of a process by which the state under New Labour introduced coercive elements for the receipt of benefits for the sick or disabled. Its high frequency in the 2000's was part of a process in which Moral Underclass Discourse was engendered, by the state appearing to offer opportunities to the unemployed on the condition that they fulfil certain criteria including a Work Capability Assessment. This was no longer carried out by a qualified personal doctor, but an employee of a private company under the title of 'Health Care Professional.' The corpus has highlighted the appearance of this new term in the political discourse.

The effect of a general term being applied to multiple disciplines is a homogenising one, it allows various issues to be dealt with via the application of this term as highlighted in one speech: "the hon: Gentleman is fond of quoting health professionals and their confidence in the Government's ability to deliver."<sup>102</sup> However, it is not clear who exactly these workers are, which sector they belong to, nor their job status. It is therefore not possible to determine if their comments are at all pertinent to the area of government being commented upon. Furthermore 'Health Professionals' was the term used to describe employees of private companies, such as Atos, responsible for completing health assessments for the state in relation to benefit payments. Although the Health Professionals might be doctors, they may equally be nurses, occupational therapists, or physiotherapists with non-specialist knowledge of claimants' disability or illness.<sup>103</sup> Keywords in context reveal how neoliberal elements had surfaced in relation to 'Health Professionals' such as the concern that profitability was being placed ahead of patient care, this issue had surfaced in parliamentary debates by the 2000's.<sup>104</sup>

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101 "Community health councils (CHCs)" Policy Navigator. Accessed 27 May 2019 <https://navigator.health.org.uk/content/community-health-councils-chcs>

102 Hayes, "The National Health Service," 08 March 2000, Volume 345, Column 1052. Accessed 27 May 2019 <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2000-03-08/debates/e3cd4565-77c3-470a-9862-5ffea7150458/TheNationalHealthService?highlight=health%20professionals#contribution-c7385215-e1a2-4990-a624-5b51e9469626>

103 Benefits and Work, Accessed 17 July 2019 <https://www.benefitsandwork.co.uk/employment-and-support-allowance/esa-glossary/1484-healthcare-professional>

104 Mann, John, "national insurance contributions," Hansard, Vol 384, 01 May 2002 Column 994, paragraph 6. Accessed 27 May 2019 <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2002-05-01/debates/401dbe82-4ea8-48e9-a67a-92540a720936/NationalInsuranceContributions?highlight=health%20professionals#contribution-5d1ce0b0->

This may reflect the introduction of market features such as the stream-lining services, as debates surrounded how to best manage targets and maintain patient care.

## 6. Housing

It should be noted that devolution changed the political structure within Britain so that housing issues became the responsibility of local parliaments, this has an affect on the data collected for the 2000's as the debates may be more specific to housing in England. This is not the case with the aforementioned social policies Benefits/Welfare or health as the political discourse still related to these matters on a national scale.

### A Quantitative data

Figure 19. \*Housing

1960's						2000's							
	WORD/PHRASE	TOKENS 1	TOKENS 2	PM 1	PM 2	RATIO		WORD/PHRASE	TOKENS 2	TOKENS 1	PM 2	PM 1	RATIO
1	SCOTTISH	183	1	1.20	0.01	106.46	1	AFFORDABLE	1038	0	11.74	0.00	1,173.55
2	MUNICIPAL	79	0	0.52	0.00	51.96	2	SOCIAL	1009	3	11.41	0.02	578.14
3	THESE	76	1	0.50	0.01	44.21	3	SUPPORTED	24	1	0.27	0.01	41.26

The top collocates to the left of housing for the 1960's were: '**Scottish** Housing', '**Municipal** Housing', '**These** Housing'. For the 2000's: '**Affordable** Housing' '**Social** Housing' and '**Supported** Housing'.

Figure 20. Housing \*

1960's						2000's							
	WORD/PHRASE	TOKENS 1	TOKENS 2	PM 1	PM 2	RATIO		WORD/PHRASE	TOKENS 2	TOKENS 1	PM 2	PM 1	RATIO
1	SUBSIDIES	554	1	3.64	0.01	322.29	1	BENEFIT	1759	0	19.89	0.00	1,988.70
2	LOANS	93	0	0.61	0.00	61.17	2	GREEN	109	0	1.23	0.00	123.23
3	ADVISORY	96	1	0.63	0.01	55.85	3	HEALTH	56	1	0.63	0.01	96.26

The top collocates to the right of housing for the 1960's were: 'Housing **Subsidies**', 'Housing **Loans**', 'Housing **Advisory**'. For the 2000's: 'Housing **Benefit**' 'Housing **Green**' and 'Housing **Health**'.

## B. Housing, Qualitative analysis

As a devolved issue the debates within Westminster for the 2000's relate specifically to England, not so during the 1960's when 'Scottish Housing' featured needed to be addressed.<sup>105</sup> Between the years 2000-2005 the term 'Scottish Housing' appeared once to distinguish the housing market in Scotland from that of South East England. The change in collocate reflects how administration with regards to housing in Scotland has changed from being an issue dealt with by central government to being localised under devolution. During the 1960's the Special Scottish Housing Association was the organisation responsible for the provision of social housing, until it was abolished in 1989.<sup>106</sup> Between 1990 and 2005 its stock of 75,000 homes was transferred to housing associations and cooperatives.<sup>107</sup>

Municipal or public housing was "Housing built, operated, and owned by a government."<sup>108</sup> The term 'Municipal Housing' occurred 79 times in the 1960's but 0 for the 2000's showing that debates surrounding the provision of municipal housing have been reduced. This may be due to a change in terminology as 'Municipal Housing' is more commonly referred to as council housing, social housing or affordable housing which does appear. Another possible explanation for the reduction in the term could be that since the housing Act of 1996 municipal housing has not been the reserve of government, but come to include housing associations, also known as registered social landlords (RSLs).<sup>109</sup> RLS can include private landlords and private housing associations, therefore this reflects an increase in market forces in the running of municipal housing. This diversification in housing providers would naturally lead to a reduction in terms referring to: public/council/municipal/social/affordable housing as these are all synonymous with state owned housing which has been on the decrease since the implementation of neoliberalism in Britain.

'Housing Subsidies' appeared as a high proportion collocate next to housing in the 1960's due to the 'Housing Subsidy Bill' which was extensively debated before being enacted

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105 Under Schedule 5 of the Scotland Act 2012, local government and housing are devolved affairs to be decided over by the Scottish Parliament. 'Guidance Devolution settlement: Scotland' Cabinet Office and Office of the Secretary of State for Scotland. The Scottish settlement, 20 February 2013. Accessed 15 May 2019 <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/devolution-settlement-scotland>

106 Dictionary of Scottish Architects, published 8 May 2019, p. 4. Accessed 08 May 2019 [www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/architect\\_full.php?id=200991](http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/architect_full.php?id=200991)

107 Scottish Government, 'Housing statistics for Scotland - Public Authority Housing Stock' Published 21 September 2018. Accessed 08 May 2019 <https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Housing-Regeneration/HSfS/Stock>

108 Free dictionary, Falex <https://www.thefreedictionary.com/Municipal+housing>

109 Burdon, Tom. Charlie Cooper, Steph Petrie. "Modernising Social Policy: Unravelling New Labour's Welfare Reforms" Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2000.

in 1967.<sup>110</sup> Words in context reveal that in 1961 expenditure on housing subsidies was approximately £61 million, that there were debates over government cuts proposed by the Tories threatening housing subsidies and how this would affect the lowest paid in society, showing that the provision of housing subsidies was specifically aimed at helping the more disadvantaged. In the 2000's the collocate appeared once in the context of 'negative housing subsidies' during a debate about Local Authorities receiving inadequate funding and how this had been used to invest in housing stock which the government wanted to sell. The drastic reduction of the term does not mean that 'Housing Subsidies' no longer exist, for it has undergone a change of name; housing benefit.

The difference is that 'subsidy' denotes a contribution of money by the state in order to attain a certain level of something, whereas 'benefit' has the added connotation of being 'an advantage'; a subsidy is a duty, a benefit is an added bonus. Another big difference between subsidies and housing benefit is that subsidies were low-rent housing provided by councils (then housing associations) plus financial assistance to cover rent payments.<sup>111</sup> Housing benefit deals with assistance in paying rent, not providing housing. The separation of these two spheres makes it easier to designate housing to the private sector, allowing the state to focus more upon the provision of housing benefit in relation to rent. With the rise of private ownership the state is effectively funding large sections of the private housing market in this way. This has been highlighted by changes in political discourse signalled by the corpus.

Housing Loans, (30 out of the 96 results) are specifically linked to the armed forces and relate to housing provided via loans at a different interest rate to those offered to the general public. In one speech it is asked what would be "the approximate annual cost to the Exchequer of providing housing loans through the Public Works Loan Board," implying that housing loans were provided by the state. With one example it is shown that these loans were at the expense of the Local Authorities, (the borough of Bermondsey was in debt by £7 million in 1960 as a result of trying to help people 'rise their standards.')

The context reveals that many of the debates revolved around the loans enabling home-ownership and the desire to reduce interest rates on these loans so that home-ownership could be attainable for more people. The means to achieve home-ownership altered under Thatcher government: instead of housing loans being used to access housing in the private sector, there was the possibility to buy state-owned property. This was accompanied by housing prices being made low enough to

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110 Its aim was to provide financial assistance towards the provision of accommodation Housing Subsidies Act 1967, Accessed 29 May 2019 [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1967/29/enacted](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1967/29/enacted)

111 Hills, John, "Inclusion of exclusion? the role of housing subsidies and benefits," *Urban Studies Journal Limited*, Vol 38 (11) p. 2 paragraph 3. Accessed 29 May 2019 [eprints.lse.ac.uk/4231/1/Inclusion\\_or\\_exclusion%28LSERO%29.pdf](http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/4231/1/Inclusion_or_exclusion%28LSERO%29.pdf)

make owning a home possible. The funds to buy the houses were sourced not from housing loans, but from mortgages with the banks. Thus we can see how following the implementation of neoliberal policy in Britain, the financing of home ownership came from the private sphere of the banks, not the state. This would explain how in comparison to the 1960's 'loans' did not appear as a top collocate of 'housing' in the 2000's.

'Housing Advisory' appeared in the 1960's mostly as proper noun Housing Advisory Committee<sup>112</sup> The CHAC demonstrates that bodies concerned with providing specialist support and advice in relation to housing existed.<sup>113</sup> Keywords in context reveal that the CHAC was involved in a range of measures to protect citizens.<sup>114</sup> As with 'housing loans', the term 'housing advisory' did not appear in the 2000's in comparison to the 1960's, this is due to their abolition in 1975.<sup>115</sup> This may demonstrate neoliberalism effecting political discourse as it denotes deregulation in the housing sector.

It is striking that following a post-war socialist consensus in which affordable housing was built, the word 'affordable' did not appear as a collocate of housing at all during the 1960's. In comparison, by the 2000's, the term appeared 1038 times, but is there any link? 100 samples taken randomly from these speeches show that the words in context are parts of debates concerning alternatives to affordable housing, an inconsistency across boroughs in the provision of it and shortages in affordable housing. There are debates on how to tackle these issues by increasing funding and by better defining what it means. This highlights the issue of

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112 Twenty-five times to the Scottish advisory Committee and 63 times to the central housing committee

113 The committees had the task of liaising with the housing minister to bring him/her up to date with increases in tenants and overcrowding matters, to respond to any housing related questions the minister might have and in turn relay issues arising from enactments back to the minister. 'Housing Act 1957,' Legislation.GOV.UK. Accessed 29 May 2019 [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1957/56/part/VII/crossheading/central-housing-advisory-committee/enacted](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1957/56/part/VII/crossheading/central-housing-advisory-committee/enacted)

114 The CHAC collected evidence concerning standards of living, deciding options on housing management, consolidating development plans, determining what behaviour was unsatisfactory for tenants, as well as making recommendations to government about the satisfactory standards for existing dwellings. Therefore in the 1960's CHAC was involved in upholding health and safety practices as well as ensuring a good standard of living via monitoring overcrowding and living conditions. It kept records on the number of housing stock available in the social sector and it is clear from the context that housing advisory committees acted as an intermediary between Local Authorities and Government as there is mention of them considering objections from Local Authorities about the government trying to take over the allocation of local authority houses, in this way it served to protect local authority interests to some extent. Keywords in Context also reveal that the CHAC's discharged the governments' function on dealing with slums and the allocation of housing. Mellish, Council Houses 'Rents)' House of Commons, Hansard, Volume 743, 23 March 2019, Column 2003, paragraph 2. Accessed May 2019 [https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/1967-03-23/debates/1ae39499-4310-4c68-9f47-bd58449ad672/Council-Houses\(Rents\)?highlight=let%20very%20clear%20that%20housing%20subsidies%20not%20paid%20produce%20such%20inequitable%20results#contribution-a8f0cef4-bc92-49be-87af-1201c4081d84](https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/1967-03-23/debates/1ae39499-4310-4c68-9f47-bd58449ad672/Council-Houses(Rents)?highlight=let%20very%20clear%20that%20housing%20subsidies%20not%20paid%20produce%20such%20inequitable%20results#contribution-a8f0cef4-bc92-49be-87af-1201c4081d84)

115 "Abolition of Central Housing Advisory Committee" Hansard, Vol 887 column 232, 24 February 1975. Accessed 28 May 2019 <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1975/feb/24/abolition-of-central-housing-advisory>

housing provision in Britain since the arrival of neoliberalism and the selling of state owned property. It is also possible to see the effects of private contractors being made responsible for new development as they are said to have different incentives when looking to build (monetary motives as opposed to fulfilling a state obligation to provide housing). Issues surrounding planning permission are also raised.

This demonstrates that in the 2000's the state was still implicated in the provision of homes in Britain for low-income families? but the debates reveal a growing crisis in state-provided housing. The shortage in housing from 2000- 2005 and the subsequent debates over how to deal with this can be seen as a result of neoliberal policy in the decades leading up to the 2000's. In this way the corpus gives a clear indication of neoliberalism affecting political language. In the 1960's affordable housing was not an issue, but after it was made available to buy and the stock not replaced at the same rate, we can see a change in the political language used in parliament. The knock on effect of home-ownership is that by the 2000's there are far more debates than in the 1960's over this issue.

'Social Housing', revealed high changes of use between the decades. Almost half of the debates for the 2000's related to state-owned affordable housing. This is high and shows that 'Social Housing' has been used in political language within Westminster far more extensively in comparison to the 1960's and the implementation of neoliberalism in Britain. It often appears in sentences with 'affordable' to describe housing and the issues debated about are of a similar nature to those discussed above, (ie the paucity and provision of social housing stock). Looking at the keywords in context we can see that there are also comments upon the use of the term 'Social Housing' and how it might be preferable to refer to this as "accommodation."<sup>116</sup> This may reflect attempts to simplify the term due to the speaker's preference or as part of a general trend to remove associations with state-owned accommodation. We have seen in Part I that a simplification of terms can have a consequence on meaning, for example 'out of court compromise,' to 'out of court agreement.' Another reason the collocate appeared was due to discussions on how under-funding has led to local authorities placing families in temporary accommodation and the instability this creates for families, leading to "a more transient population, with the additional problems that that brings."<sup>117</sup>

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116 Lord Selsdon, "Housing Bill" House of Lords, Hansard, Volume 662 Column 118, paragraph 6, 07 June 2004. Accessed 29 May 2019 <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Lords/2004-06-07/debates/ed4dbfa2-c6ad-4485-973f-328962df0a7f/HousingBill?highlight=%20social%20housing%20%20accommodation#contribution-55969bfc-4940-46e0-a98e-e57679294f8c>

117 Thomas, Gareth, "Rural And Urban White Papers" House of Commons, Hansard. Volume 261, 26 January 2001, Column 1237, paragraph 4 <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2001-01-26/debates/197e94b2-e129-4dd5-a71a-b2d10b1ae9d5/RuralAndUrbanWhitePapers?highlight=social%20housing%20transient%20population#contribution-b9d26a69-dd99-4430-a6bd-e3bca34c34f2>

There is the subject of minimising red tape for Local authorities with regards to the monitoring of social housing, which took place during a debate entitled “Marketing Plan For Right To Buy Sale” the focus of which was how to best ensure that Local Authorities encourage ‘Right to Buy.’<sup>118</sup> In comparison to these debates, during the 1960’s social housing was mentioned 3 times within parliament: in relation to co-operative social housing and in relation to the funding given to Housing Associations as they were “great pioneers in social housing.” This was in a speech by a Conservative MP, who also reiterated the party’s commitment to promote home ownership, showing that the subject was not just a feature of Thatcher’s 1980’s government but part of Tory policy two decades prior to the launch of Right to Buy. The corpus also reveals that before neoliberalism became the main governing ideology in Britain, Conservatives such as Mr Rippon advocated the private sector being active in the housing market with regards to the provision of housing. Yet there was still a need for separate housing provided by the state, Mr Rippon was not advocating a housing market in which all housing was provided by the social sector, this reflects that in the 1960’s there was a more competitive market with more options for consumers. The MP described social housing as being for those without the desire or means to own their own home, making a distinction between that and the private Housing Associations.<sup>119</sup> This was not the case in later years (Part I, 2.C.c). The third and final occurrence for ‘social housing’ was in 1962 during a bill proposing the monetisation of social housing and the ‘concept’ of social housing, this bill was defended. The MP stated: “I should like to give a timely warning: It is possible to reduce the demand for housing by pricing it out of the working-class market.”<sup>120</sup> By viewing the language corpus, from number of times the issue of ‘Social Housing’ appeared during the 2000’s it is a clear that state-provided accommodation is a well debated subject in parliament and reflects a demand for it. This rise in the collocate could be as a result of ‘Social Housing’ becoming unaffordable, (as viewing many keywords in context reveal) but it may also reflect a change in language from Municipal Housing, more frequently used in the 1960’s, to ‘Social Housing.’

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118 Rooker "Marketing Plan For Right To Buy Sales" Volume 664, 16 September 2004. Column 1345, paragraphs 3 -6 <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Lords/2004-09-16/debates/ad1fdfcc-67fa-401f-8a93-f188a2f11236/MarketingPlanForRightToBuySales?highlight=more%20red%20tape%20burdens%20local#contribution-236c3ece-ff8a-41d7-ac05-3c4668e365db>

119 Rippon "Housing, England And Wales" House of Commons, Hansard, 02 May 1962, Volume 658, Column 1049, paragraph 3. Accessed 28 May 2019 <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/1962-05-02/debates/c5a042d8-8102-40cf-a5ee-31cfb27d0af6/HousingEnglandAndWales?highlight=great%20pioneers%20social%20housing#contribution-bfbc2a32-9e28-4cd0-b649-6a583613ba76>

120 Robertson, J. "Clause 29—(Default Powers Of Secretary Of State In Relation To Rents)" Volume 657, Column 712, 05 April 1962. Accessed 29 May 2019 [https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/1962-04-05/debates/2585422b-8178-45e7-a99c-18aec609b4cb/Clause29—\(DefaultPowersOfSecretaryOfStateInRelationToRents\)?highlight=should%20like%20give%20timely%20warning%20possible%20reduce%20demand%20housing%20pricing%20working-class%20market#contribution-cef12508-7f79-40c0-8358-de9813c7f5df](https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/1962-04-05/debates/2585422b-8178-45e7-a99c-18aec609b4cb/Clause29—(DefaultPowersOfSecretaryOfStateInRelationToRents)?highlight=should%20like%20give%20timely%20warning%20possible%20reduce%20demand%20housing%20pricing%20working-class%20market#contribution-cef12508-7f79-40c0-8358-de9813c7f5df)

This would require further research, but there is an indication that the state has intervened in the housing market to promote unfair competition and boost the private sector, as a result there are more debates surrounding the provision of social housing in the 2000's, as highlighted by the corpus.

'Supported Housing' did not exist prior to the introduction of neoliberalism in Britain. The principles of supported housing are that services are provided to those who would otherwise be homeless due to their additional needs. Supported housing incorporates housing with support for tenants to live independent lives.<sup>121</sup> In the 1960's the collocate appeared in the context of an MP advocating this form of housing. In the 2000's 'Supported Housing' appeared on 24 occasions, in some sentences this was extended to supported housing: schemes, strategy and needs.

This term appeared during the 1990's when a consultation document revealed flaws in the management of funding systems and called into question the value for money in the supported accommodation sector. As a consequence 'The Supporting People programme' of 2003 streamlined funding providers so that Local Authorities were given a single grant from which to provide supported housing, (the Act also incorporated housing benefit as a source of funding, thus effectively merged a benefit payment awarded on an individual basis with central funding from government to Local Authorities.) The result was a decrease in public funding which was detrimental to Local Authorities and service users. The increase in the term 'Support Housing' may also be indicative of a reduction of other support services which were previously distinct and identifiable, with the same aim of supporting people and thus enabling them to remain housed and live independent lives where possible.<sup>122</sup> However, further research would be needed to verify this.

A reason why this change in terminology is important is highlighted by how in 2015 Ipsos MORI tried to complete a survey across Britain to ascertain who was providing supported housing. However as this term applied to tenants outside of just Local Authority properties it was not possible to conduct a comprehensive review of the figures. This was because while some of the housing providers were 'Private Registered Providers' which could be

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121 Supported Housing Alliance, Homeless link. Accessed 28 May 2019 <https://www.homeless.org.uk/supported-housing-alliance>

122 Such services we have seen with previous collocate searches for the 1960's, such as Health inspectors, 'The Central Health Services Council' and the Authority Health workers/ centres/ services. The range of assistance these different bodies provided can be covered by 'support' and have come to be included in a comprehensive package with the housing "Supported accommodation review" Ipsos MORI on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions and the Department for Communities and Local Government. November 2016 p.25. Accessed 28 May 2019 [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/572454/rr927-supported-accommodation-review.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/572454/rr927-supported-accommodation-review.pdf)

traced and asked to participate in the report, there were many unregistered private housing providers using support services. This demonstrates how the inclusion of the private sector in the housing market for those previously provided with council housing has made it difficult to monitor the ways in which support is given to vulnerable members of society.<sup>123</sup> This was highlighted as a result of a qualitative analysis of the quantitative data provided by the corpus. It also leads to questions about how many landlords are unregistered and therefore not as easy to regulate.

For the 2000's 'Housing Benefit' appeared the most in political discourses around housing, this is a social security payment to subsidise income so that people can afford housing. Previously housing benefit would have been part of what was called 'housing subsidy' in the 1960's. As a housing subsidy the payments only related to social housing, but with the change in name came a broadening of market participants because those with private landlords could also claim Housing Benefit. There maybe some cross-over in the data presented by the corpus here and from the earlier keyword search for 'Benefit' which reveals a factor that should be born in mind when using the corpus. Viewing the a sample of 100 out of the 1759 occurrences of 'Housing Benefit,' reveals that many discussions concerned Housing Benefit fraud, highlighting that this is an important matter for parliament. Other contexts in which 'Housing Benefit' appears relate to the benefit being paid for tenancies which are unfit for inhabitation, or for tenants subject to anti-social behaviour. This reveals issues to do with ensuring property is well maintained (which would be easier to do if all landlords were RSL.) It also indicates that the MUD is present when discussing housing in the 2000's as some of those in receipt of the welfare payment are also associated with anti-social behaviour. The fact that 'Housing Benefit' is mentioned in relation to 'anti-social behaviour' links these two concepts, it would be interesting to research whether this also occurs in the political discourse of other parliaments across Britain, or in the British media.

In the Home Affairs debate of 20 November 2002, it is suggested that housing benefit payments stop being paid directly to landlords as a means to incite them to visit the premises. A simplification of the system in making just one payment also has the effect of placing the two sectors of the housing market on the same level, implying that the state has no incentive to provide financial support to one area more than the other. This is relevant because

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123 "Supported accommodation review" Ipsos MORI on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions and the Department for Communities and Local Government. November 2016 p.25. Accessed 28 May 2019 [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/572454/rr927-supported-accommodation-review.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/572454/rr927-supported-accommodation-review.pdf)

the state is effectively subsidising the private housing market when it pays housing benefit to tenants renting from the private sector. If there is not a distinct payment to private tenants separate from a benefit paid to those in social housing, thus making it harder to identify who the state is vicariously paying; Local Authorities or private landlords/housing corporations.

From the words in context we can see how there were discussions during the 2000's on how Local Authorities handled Housing Benefit and the inconsistencies across councils. In 2002 MP for Islington and future Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn claimed that in the case of his constituency the use of a private company to handle Housing Benefit payments had led to delays in payments. Subsequently private landlords were reluctant to lease to housing benefit claimants, in this way a reduction of state involvement has negatively affected the housing market.<sup>124</sup> It was also suggested by a Labour MP two years prior to this that where Local Authorities are failing to handle Housing Benefit, the work should be transferred over to the benefits agency instead of private companies. However it is in this way that the state was boosting market opportunities for private companies and at that time reducing the role of the state.

The corpus shows that during the Housing Bill debate of 2004 an unnamed Labour MP stated that "council properties are bought under right to buy with money loaned to the tenants, then rented out at exorbitant rates to people, many of whom are entitled to housing benefit." If this is the case then the state is playing an active role in the creation of market agents; via 'Right to Buy' programs and then by financially supporting landlords with housing benefit payments. Although this would require further research to verify, if true then the state is still redistributing wealth via tax collection, but it is advantageous to members of the private sector and encourages participation in this and reflects neoliberalism.

'Housing Green' occurs between the years 2000-2003, but not in relation to environmental issues. All 109 references are to the 'Housing green paper' of 2000, a consultation document produced by New Labour to address the lack of social housing available. It is proposed that this is done via reinforcing relationships between private registered Social Landlords and Local Authorities with the aim to "support people moving into work and self-dependence."<sup>125</sup> Looking at

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124 Corbyn, Jeremy 'Housing Benefit' House of Commons, Hansard, 17 October 2002, Volume 390, Column 488, paragraph 4. Accessed 20 May 2019 <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2002-10-17/debates/e3d4c3f3-7515-4458-9e0a-39b63a9a6a7d/HousingBenefit?highlight=bizarrely%20signed%20continuation%20contract%20with%20company%20called%20itnet#contribution-786f9fe6-254f-45b8-be61-d49a4c225c96>

125 "Quality and Choice: A Decent Home for All The Housing Green Paper" Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions Department of Social Security, April 2000, p.7. Accessed 29 May 2019 <https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20121029133758/http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/housing/pdf/138019.pdf>

the words in context, the paper aimed among other things stop Local Authorities from “concentrating solely on the provision of social housing.”<sup>126</sup> In this sense the paper aimed to force Local Authorities to work more with the private sector and include them in the provision of state housing. This also ensured the continuation of stock transfer and the Private Finance Initiative and the Starter Homes initiative.<sup>127</sup> The source of this information is Savills, a private housing developer which since 2014 has been “The only advisor appointed to both the (Homes and Communities Agency) Property and Multidisciplinary Frameworks.”<sup>128</sup> It could be argued that having a private housing corporation with vested interests in redevelopment acting as the only advisor to ‘Central and Local Government’ could potentially pose a conflict of interests with regards to the management of social housing, it would also be very much inline with neoliberal doctrine which advocates a reduction of the state in favour of the market, but engenders a centralisation of power to do so, reflected in the political discourse of Westminster.

The last collocate in the research was ‘Housing Health’ which appeared once in the 1960’s related to the sharing of responsibly in relation to housing health. This demonstrates the role of the state in the provision of housing health, by the 2000’s there were more housing providers and therefore more guidelines on how to ensure housing health to a diverse range of landlords. In the 56 times the collocate appeared in parliamentary debates from 2000 to 2000, all were in reference to ‘The housing health and safety rating system’. The HHSRS risk-based assessment tool used to assess the likelihood and severity of a hazard in residential housing and which was designed for “non-specialists, particularly private landlords.”<sup>129</sup> This indicates roll-back procedures in which auditing occurs and specialists, not the state, took control over health related matters, following the introduction of the HHSRS tool, however the specialists could be any landlord.

In June 2017 a fire broke out at Glenfell towers, London. Seventy-two people in the social housing died, the largest death toll in the capital since World War Two. During an in-

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126 The Green Paper also proposed providing homes for public sector workers, tackling homelessness, and introducing housing benefit reform. Raynsford, "Housing Investment," House of Commons, Hansard, 13 June 2000, Volume 351, Column 782. Accessed 29 May 2019 <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2000-06-13/debates/af5049d9-492a-4654-98a7-f78e062262bb/HousingInvestment?highlight=concentrating%20solely%20provision#contribution-95e0fd60-824b-4225-9c2b-2294dc19cbc9>

127 Jones, Mervyn. "A short history of housing green papers" 13 November 2017, *Savills Housing Consultancy*, paragraph 13, Accessed 29 May 2019 <https://www.insidehousing.co.uk/home/home/a-short-history-of-housing-green-papers-53060>

128 Dawson, Alex.J. "Savills Public Sector" *Savills.co.uk*. p. 2 Accessed 29 May 2019 [pdf.savills.com/documents/Savills\\_Public\\_Sector\\_Brochure2.pdf](http://pdf.savills.com/documents/Savills_Public_Sector_Brochure2.pdf)

129 "Guidance Housing health and safety rating system (HHSRS): guidance for landlords and property-related professionals" Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, Published 26 May 2006. Accessed 30 May 2019 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/housing-health-and-safety-rating-system-guidance-for-landlords-and-property-related-professionals>

quiry into the circumstances it was stated that the HHSRS was designated for ‘Environmental health officers’<sup>130</sup> However, we can see from the corpus results that its design had been to ensure a handing over of responsibility concerning ‘Housing Health’ to non-state agents, simplifying risk assessments and making them easily accessible to new competitors on the housing market (private landlords). The results in context show debates on how suitable the assessment tool was for non-specialists – that the twenty-nine categorisations in the tool might be too complex for landlords. The tool included additional risks not previously addressed in housing health and safety (such as damp and identifying disrepair), along with advice for Local Authorities on how to enforce health and safety practices.<sup>131</sup> However, the Glenfell towers tragedy revealed that this was not extensive enough, and that not all Local Authorities adhered to it themselves, let alone enforced its practise among registered landlords. Whether the HHSRS is enforceable on a practical level with non-unregistered landlords and how this is achieved would require further research. It should be noted that in relation to fire risk it was New Labour which introduced the HHSRS and also the regulatory reform (fire safety) order of 2005.<sup>132</sup> This passed the responsibility for fire inspection from the fire brigade to the Local Council.<sup>133</sup> In addition to this, post-devolution responsibility for fire safety and building regulations are devolved matters so the ways in which the state treats these issues is not standardised across Britain. However, following the Glenfell tragedy there was an extensive review on housing health and safety. In her foreword to the inquiry Dame Judith Hackitt cited the main flaws in the regulatory system as having been: “Ignorance – regulations and guidance are not always read by those who need to...Indifference – the primary motivation is to do things as quickly and cheaply as possible rather than to deliver quality homes which are safe for people to live in... - Lack of clarity on roles and responsibilities – the size or complexity of a project does not seem

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130 Potten, Ed. Elena Ares, Wendy Wilson, 'Grenfell Tower fire: Response and tackling fire risk in high rise blocks' *Commons Library Briefing paper*, No. 7993, 31 July 2017, p. 9, paragraph 5. Accessed 2019

131 The importance of using appropriate language is also debated in the Bill : “The name would be a good start, and the provision should at least specify the principal factors that are to be taken into account in making up the HHSRS— fire safety, energy efficiency, room dimensions, amenities...” Turner, Desmond. 'Housing Bill' House of Commons, Hansard, Volume 416, 12 January 2004, Column 602, paragraph 5. Accessed 30 May 2019 <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2004-01-12/debates/aabe4c9a-dd4f-49ad-8c28-21dcf2fd2713/HousingBill?highlight=name%20would%20good%20start%20provision%20should%20least%20specify%20principal%20factors%20that%20taken%20into%20account%20making%20up%20hhsrs%20fire%20safety%20energy%20efficiency%20room%20dimensions%20amenities#contribution-92cc064d-833a-462f-88fd-1ba38b98f155>

132 "Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005: enforcement," Gov.uk Accessed 24 July 2019 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/regulatory-reform-fire-safety-order-2005-guidance-note-enforcement>

133 Travis, Alan, "Grenfell Tower fire: was Tory austerity to blame or do problems date back to Blair?" *The Guardian*, 28 June 2017, paragraph 5. Accessed 30 May 2019 <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2017/jun/28/grenfell-tower-fire-was-tory-austerity-to-blame-or-do-problems-date-back-to-blair>

to inform the way in which it is overseen by the regulator. Where enforcement is necessary, it is often not pursued. Where it is pursued, the penalties are so small as to be an ineffective deterrent.”<sup>134</sup> It would appear that members of the public concurred, after the Grenfell Tower many blamed the Conservative government for deregulation at the expense of citizens’ lives, some accused the Tories of “doing the bidding of commercial interests or of the free market think tanks”<sup>135</sup> However, as we have seen in the corpus, debates which sought to move responsibility of housing health and safety from the state onto new, private landlords started in the early 2000’s, under New Labour and the introduction of the risk assessments. This is another way in which the corpus has revealed instances where there was state intervention to promote competition on the market, yet this was to the benefit of some market participants and the detriment of the citizen. To achieve this change there was a centralisation of power, onus may have been moved onto Local Authorities but by underfunding them, health and safety was undermined. The language corpus indicated a rise in words associated with housing which reflected changes in political discourse due to neoliberal policies entering British politics.

## Conclusion

To determine the impact of neoliberal policies on political language it was first necessary to establish whether or not this doctrine was consistently present in British politics from 1997 to 2017. In Part I it was possible to prove this was the case by examining evidence from the economic and social policies of all the governments in power during the two decades. Whilst carrying out the research it was noted how on occasions the doctrine led to a change in language. Changes in political discourse were considered alongside what political geographer Jamie Peck identifies as roll-back procedures; a way in which neoliberalism operates by disorganising alternative centres of power via restructuring institutions.<sup>136</sup> The findings in Part I concluded that the relabelling of people, places and processes served to recategorise them, often to the benefit of the market and the detriment of those less likely to benefit from neoliberal society. Examples were also found where the quantity and complexity of language was re-

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134 Hackitt, Judith, 'Building a Safer Future, Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety' p. 6 May 2018. Accessed 30 May 2019 [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/707785/Building\\_a\\_Safer\\_Future\\_-\\_web.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/707785/Building_a_Safer_Future_-_web.pdf)

135 Letters@independent "It is government, not firefighters, that is to blame for the lives lost at Grenfell" *The Independent*, 14 June 2018, paragraph 3. Accessed 30 May 2019 <https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/letters/grenfell-tower-fire-anniversary-fire-fighters-conservative-government-blame-rehouse-a8399251.html>

136 Peck, Jamie. 'Constructions of Neoliberal Reason,' *Oxford University Press*, 2010, p. 22.

duced in order to streamline legislation and therefore legal processes to the detriment of employees, welfare claimants and the environment. It was deemed that this simplification of language may also be considered a part of roll-back processes as described by Jamie Peck. Furthermore, these findings were considered alongside Nick Couldry's theory on "voice" and how alternative narratives to neoliberalism have been restricted via the reduction in platforms of expression.

Couldry's discipline, media and communications, is a domain in which identifying changes in language could be useful in signalling when a crisis of voice occurs. However, it would appear that showing changes in political discourse is seldom used as a reference point in roll-back or voice crisis theory. For this reason Part II sought to find a more rapid method to identify when large changes in political discourse occur.

The corpus has provided results which suggest areas where further research might be useful, by highlighting contrasts between the political discourse used in Britain prior to the implementation of neoliberalism and after. The contrast in words which were associated with social policies during the 1960's and the 2000's reflect the leading political ideology at those two periods in time; Keynesian economics and neoliberalism respectfully. The quantitative data generated by the corpus is a means by which potential avenues for further research could be provided, in comparison to selecting government policies and reading through the legislation to see if there might have been a change in language which reflects neoliberalism. The corpus is therefore helpful in determining which words to research.

One of the disadvantages is that there is still a lot of qualitative analysis involved due to the need to check samples from which the results are taken. This is to see the context in which words appear to try and ascertain the sense of the word, for example the coupling of 'benefit' and 'fraud' suggest a negative connotation is attached to 'benefit,' but it is necessary to determine whether these appear together due to the words being used in conjunction with a job title, a process or Bill/Act. When there is not enough information provided by seeing the words in context it is possible to source details on the original speech which the words were featured in which means further work can be carried out to gain more information. Another drawback is that although it is possible to filter the results so that the most relevant changes appear, less relevant information can still appear such as function words and also ambiguities, (for example welfare to mean well-being or benefit to signify advantageous, not a social security payment).

For the changes in political discourse to be significant they need to have occurred a high amount of times to reflect that it is not just one person repeating a phrase which matches

the collocates with the keyword which also requires close reading. A range of people using the term on a number of occasions better reflects a change in political discourse, to show that it is not just a 'one off' occurrence or a speaker's preference in terminology. Similarly the ratios have been affected by the fact that for the 2000's only half the amount of years are available, requiring the number of times a word appears to be taken into account.

It is difficult to say when high frequency collocates appear alongside a word because of a change over time in meaning and if it is because a particular issue happens to be debated at the time, for example when animal welfare was debated as a result of market competition and when it was due to a specific public health issues during an epidemic, such as mad cow disease. In these instances identifying a change in language which is specifically due to neo-liberalism as opposed to a natural evolution of language and other factors can be a little more difficult to distinguish. Furthermore tracing these back to think-tanks is not possible via the corpus. Although using a corpus is faster than going through each policy reform and investigating when changes in language occurred, verifying the circumstances in which words appeared is also time-consuming.

Occasionally there is duplication in the dataset, reinforcing the need to meticulously read through the contexts to ensure there has not been a duplication of information. Eliminating repetition within the sample sets is also time-consuming and reveals a flaw in the system's sampling system. If further research were to be done using the language corpus method then it might be more fruitful to examine only large frequency changes between decades as this would dispel some of the ambiguities. However the results do provide a 'snap shot' of issues debated in Westminster at the time researched and the presence of certain political terms may be significant when high.

The word corpus does not show all changes in language, just a change in collocates within the political discourse of Westminster, besides the sample is random and so does not guarantee an equal quantity of speeches from each of the political parties which have taken place in Parliament. It is important to acknowledge that although Westminster was the central place of decision-making for all of Britain during the 1960's, following devolution certain policies of a non-national nature became the prerogative of different Parliaments. For this reason 'the state' has come to operate in different corners of Britain in different ways; there is no longer a national standard on devolved domestic issues, although how much this is the case in matters such as health and safety for housing requires further research. The corpus does not show debates surrounding many social policies concerning health and housing which have taken place as of 1999 in Holyrood (the Scottish Parliament) nor in the National Assembly for

Wales as of 1998. This effectively reduces the data set. National political parties, such as the Scottish National Party, may have been less neoliberal than the three main political parties examined in Part I due to it being less centralist. It would require further research to ascertain how the political discourse between parliaments varied.

Nevertheless, I contend that this study still demonstrates trends which are significant and it is because they have the potential to lead to further research that it is worth considering the findings, as the corpus could be another means by which neoliberalism can be identified. The issues raised in the political discourse presents a solid amount of data which can indicate how policies shape a language as we can see a difference between the terms associated with the keywords before and after neoliberalism was implemented as the main governing political policy towards economic and social policy in Britain. For example ‘Benefit fraud’ appeared frequently in the 2000’s as this is a well-addressed subject in political debates, it could lead one to investigating how often the term ‘fraud’ was used in relation to corporations, or how often tax evasion has been addressed. Political discussions concerning benefit have changed from being about scales and how much to award claimants, to fraud and sanctions showing a more authoritarian state concerned with punishment and scrutiny of the circumstances under which state aid is awarded.

When looking at trends on in how collocate changes reflect the influence of neoliberalism in political discourse, there have been similarities between the keywords: Benefit, Welfare, Health and Housing. Names of benefits have become more strictly defined to remove any ‘middle ground’ with an increased incentive to use work related vocabulary.<sup>137</sup> Also the increase in the number of times ‘child benefit’ was mentioned in the political discourse of the 2000’s may reflect the implementation of neoliberalism in that it shows a shift from welfare-payments relating to child benefit being funded by tax redistribution, (as was the case in the 1960’s) to it being funded by economic growth by the 2000’s. One of the ways in which New Labour came to share the neoliberalism of the Conservatives was that in the 1990’s it abandoned its commitment to funding child benefit by redistributing wealth via taxation. By the 2000’s, although economic growth was supposed to be a means by which social problems could be resolved, the number of times child benefit was discussed along with the contexts

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137 We have explored how the noun ‘Benefit’ has evolved over time, previously welfare-payments were for members of society who were sick/injured, or in need of an employment supplement whilst out of work. In the political discourse of the 2000’s there is still evidence of benefit being paid in relation to sickness, but this appears under ‘incapacity’ which has a different connotation in terms of the duration and severity of illness. It was also noted that the sickness benefit of the 1960’s which covered all forms of illness and disability came to be narrowed down over time, until the state would support those on either ‘Incapacity Benefit’ or ‘Employment and Support Allowance’. The facts that ESA was designed for those who were sick but makes no reference to illness, reflects the focus on trying to move those claiming it into work.

shows that this had not been the case. Furthermore there were changes in language found in Part I to suggest a distancing of the state from its commitment to tackle ‘child poverty,’ by instead offering ‘life chances.’ In the political speeches provided by the corpus the granting of child benefit was shown to, on occasions, be discussed in relation to anti-social behaviour, which could lead to more research from the perspective of seeing when there are instances of MUD within political discourse. There were many instances when the results of the corpus corroborated the research undertaken in Part I and shows that the corpus could be a means by which policies are selected for research into changes in discourse due to neoliberalism.

There is evidence of what Peck et al. describe as “the selective appropriation of community” and the “establishment of social-capital discourses.”<sup>138</sup> These can be seen when examining social policies as narratives on community resources (such as welfare, health or housing) are increasingly compartmentalised and decisions handed over to experts rather than consulting local communities for their participation in decision making processes. Although opportunities for alternative narratives are offered through consultation groups, these are disavowed by lack of funding, resulting in what Couldry calls “voice blindness”. It has transpired in the examples examined that this is a recurring theme, from the consultation groups in housing to those in the NHS and it is also a tool used to engender privatisation<sup>139</sup> Social-affordable housing used to be the prerogative of the state before Thatcher’s right-to-buy initiative, but with economic policy revolving around austerity, cuts to local authorities have orientated these towards recovering funding via other means. ‘social housing’ has come to be disassociated with ‘affordable housing’ as highlighted by the corpus. Also the rise in debates concerning social housing is indicative of the crisis provoked by a neoliberal agenda to privatise state housing while not replacing property.

There appears to be a paradox highlighted by what the research in housing presents: the diffusion of responsibility to Local Authorities is part of a process under which the state is relinquishing control. Conversely, as the market takes ever more important space in guiding government economic and social policy, the state is required to have a tighter grip over creating the best conditions for it to thrive, requiring and leading to a centralisation of power, as suggested by Foucault. Underfunded Local Authorities, (and citizens without access to benefits and in need of money) are part of the new business opportunities enabled by neoliberal so-

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138 *Ibid*

139 Foster, Katie, “Senior doctors accuse Government of deliberately underfunding NHS to accelerate privatisation plans,” *Independent*, 26 June 2017. Accessed May 23 2019 [https://www.independent.co.uk/news/health/nhs-latest-senior-doctors-hospitals-underfunding-accelerate-privatisation-agenda-conservative-a7808591.html?fbclid=IwAR2c6dIYFGIeSBQmKqz9RYgQ5T37urPpVeka\\_rfOEYW582mK-HF0il07O94](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/health/nhs-latest-senior-doctors-hospitals-underfunding-accelerate-privatisation-agenda-conservative-a7808591.html?fbclid=IwAR2c6dIYFGIeSBQmKqz9RYgQ5T37urPpVeka_rfOEYW582mK-HF0il07O94)

cial policies. This reveals the paradox found in neoliberalism that some social policies become decentralised and localised, whilst at the same time economic policies become the domain of “meta regulatory frameworks.” i.e. the global market.<sup>140</sup> This guides governments towards dis-empowering Local Authorities and therefore communities by favouring big business. There were processes enacted by all governments by which social policies, previously made by central government, were handed over to the domain of Local Authorities which suggests decentralisation, however, in practice this is not so. There is evidence of this process entailing a process in which platforms of expression are created at a local level, but undermined by under-funding. This started with New Labour, but continued under the coalition government, then the Conservatives.<sup>141</sup> The common thread running throughout all of them is that their influence is limited due to a combination of inadequate funding and structures which hinder community decision-making.<sup>142</sup> For these reasons neoliberalism can be identified by the way in which it dominates community resources, creating platforms of expression to engage local community actors, but only as part of a perfunctory role in consultation. There have been instances of this across all of the political parties from 1997- 2017 and this has been reflected in some of the job-titles and communities. During the period studied economic policy has funded social policy, but this has not always led to social justice. We have seen that the mention of welfare or community based organisations and services have diminished in the political discourse, or undergone changes in name, as highlighted by the corpus.

Geographer Jamie Peck has highlighted that Neoliberalism is not an easily-identifiable monolithic power, rather a process of hybridisation, a policy which adapts to different parties and countries. He cites the Third Way as an example of “soft neoliberalisms (*sic*)”<sup>143</sup> this is a more social interventionist form of the ideology,<sup>144</sup>but neoliberalism nonetheless. Peck’s theory on hybridity<sup>145</sup> is reflected in the rhetoric which has been repeated consistently across parties, from The Third Way as a means of protecting the citizen, (which in reality did little to soften the blow of neoliberal consequence following the banking crisis,) to Compassionate Conservatism, in which government has more accountability. Based on the research so

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140 Peck, Jamie et al. "Neoliberalising space" *Opt. Cit.*

141 This has been evidenced in the employment tribunal reforms, in housing when communities were ‘given a chance’ to contribute to housing development following the establishment of the National Planning Policy Framework in 2012. Sibley-Esposito, Claire. *Idem* pp. 189-214, paragraph 5.

142 Features such as time constraints where communities seem to be offered the chance to influence decision making, but by not fulfilling the required quotas in the time limits set by the NPPF they are unable to challenge its power. Communities also lack the resources to form cohesive resistance to the NPPF via their inability to form frameworks and structures such as Local Development Plans.*Ibid.*

143 Peck, Jamie. Adama Tickell. *Neoliberalising space*, Blackwell Publishers 2002, p. 384. Accessed 05 May 2019 [overgaardtonnesen.dk/TEKSTERNE/03-Peck-Tickell-Neoliberalizing-Space.pdf](http://overgaardtonnesen.dk/TEKSTERNE/03-Peck-Tickell-Neoliberalizing-Space.pdf)

144 *Ibid*

145 *Ibid.*

far, this too appears ineffectual in practice with regards to legal tax-loops which keep wealth pooled in the wells of the richest and not flowing throughout society. This has been the case since all political parties abandoned taxation as a means to fund social policy, as opposed to economic growth. By prioritising the market, individual workers, consumers, taxpayers, tenants and benefit claimants are often placed in a tenuous position. The poorest members of society appear to exemplify the negative consequences of neoliberalism. It seems expedient in a society which values competition that resources such as state-welfare payments appear in political discourse in relation to fraud or sanctions, as demonstrated by the corpus. By studying the effect that neoliberalism has on language we may be able to find tangible proof of how social exclusion is reinforced.

Although we have seen changes in political language occur in multiple domains, housing would appear to be an area particularly worthy of further investigation. It would be enlightening to see what role the media play in the reinforcement of political discourse. This could be done by researching which words arise within the discourse of the press or in entertainment, more specifically the discourse from reality television in which people living in social housing are filmed within a documentary narrative.<sup>146</sup> It is clear that there is a market for viewers who enjoy watching the poorest members of society, due to the high amount of entertainment based around the “poverty porn” format. Following on from this study where it was found that housing estates are being reclassified as Brownfield land suitable for redevelopment, it would be interesting to see how the projected image of a “sink estate”<sup>147</sup> works to devalue an area so that it is more vulnerable to reclassification. Seeing which language is used in the narration of reality TV shows may reveal other means by which Moral Underclass Discourse reinforces the concept that those in receipt of state help are outside of society and therefore responsible for their own circumstances. This is particularly relevant in light of the findings that those claiming sickness benefits are under increasing pressure to be employed as revealed by the research in Part I and II. Especially when these sections of society or those claiming child benefit have been given “life chances.” If there becomes enough data available on a TV corpus it would be interesting to see which collocates arise from reality television which reflect neoliberal doctrine and how close this resembles the ethos of an individual’s moral worth being derived from their employment status which could be compared with political discourse. It would also be interesting to find to what extent the media influences political discourse, if it is

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146 Commonly referred to as “Poverty porn”.

147 A derogatory term to describe high rate-low employment areas in which people are housed in state provided accommodation such as council estates.

a “chicken or the egg” situation in how political discourse evolves. There is evidence to suggest that members of the think-tanks also write articles in the press, most notably Lord Adonis, a Labour Peer and contributor to the IPPR<sup>148</sup> who advocates housing estates being reclassified as Brownfield land<sup>149</sup> and these then being used for redevelopment for the private housing market.<sup>150</sup> Research into the use of just one term such as “sink estate” would be particularly pertinent given the way in which many state-owned housing estates in the British are presented in the media under this term, which effectively plays a role in devaluing property and making it vulnerable to redevelopment, combined with reduced funding to Local Authorities to maintain housing estates. However there would need to be a large quantity of data in order to establish clear trends and if a corpus is to be used for this, there is not one to-date with enough information. Creating a corpus is an option, but transcription software will need to have advanced greatly to collect the largest amount of information, current software such as Praat, or google auto-generated transcripts still require a large amount of human involvement and do not cope well with accents which do not conform to Received Pronunciation nor General American pronunciation. In addition to this the aforementioned problems with using a language corpus may arise, but if these issues are addressed in the future and a significant amount of data can be collected then looking at changes in language may provide useful insights to how economics shapes the words we use and the attitudes they convey.

Perhaps the evidence collected herein can best be summarized by French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu when he writes that the imperialism of neoliberal reason is evidenced in cultural products, such as:

*“ l’expert, qui prépare, dans l’ombre des coulisses ministérielles ou patronales ou dans le secret des think tanks, des documents à forte teneur technique, couchés autant que possible en langage économique et mathématique.”*<sup>151</sup>

Bourdieu raises concerns over how citizens are presented with the idea that existing social-protection systems and the overall structure of the state are the source of problems, not

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148 Adonis, Andrew. “Reshaping Britain’s Railways for the 21st Century: A Speech by Lord Andrew Adonis,” IPPR website, 07 June 2019 <https://www.ippr.org/event/reshaping-britain-s-railways-for-the-21st-century-a-speech-by-lord-adonis>

149 Allen, Kate. "Knock down London council estates, says housing minister," 10 June 2015. Paragraph 4 Accessed 15 July 2019 <https://www.ft.com/content/e764af1c-0f6a-11e5-897e-00144feabdc0>

150 Hill, Dave, "Andrew Adonis and estate regeneration: some pros and cons" The Guardian, 26 March 2015. Accessed 26 July 2019 <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/davehillblog/2015/mar/26/andrew-adonis-and-estate-regeneration-some-pros-and-cons>

151 Bourdieu, Pierre. Loïc Wacquant. "La nouvelle vulgate planétaire," *Le Monde Diplomatique*, Mai 2000, pp. 6-7, paragraph 14. Accessed 20 November 2018 <https://www.monde-diplomatique.fr/2000/05/BOURDIEU/22>

a solution. He highlights the fact that economic policies have an affect upon the amount of social justice attained in a society and that there are other means by which social justice is undermined; as presented here, these could include changes in language. Neoliberal economists can rest easy, due to the influence of members of think-tanks such as Sam Bowman (of the Centre-right ASI), or Anthony Giddens (of the Centre-Right IPPR) who undertake changes in language as part of a strategy in reinforcing a neoliberal perspective. Theoretician of the "Third Way" and close advisor to Tony Blair, Giddens places a focus upon "mechanisms of exclusion," in relation to inequality. As we have seen, the creation of a zone of "inclusion/exclusion" is a necessary part of the MUD in which people are responsible for their own position in society. Bourdieu highlights how the "mechanisms of exclusion," explored by Giddens include both ends of the social spectrum, indeed Giddens claims that "inequality is a dynamic concept"<sup>152</sup> thus placing the exclusion of the richest on the same par as those at the bottom of society. This appropriation of the word "exclusion" has the effect of disavowing the word "inequality" for the poorest of society. This is another example of when platforms of expression are limited due to a neoliberal narrative, crowding out alternatives which may otherwise suggest that neoliberalism is simply not working.

"Inequality" is not the only word to be appropriated by members of think-tanks and to have its sense obscured by an extension of its definition. In the same way as the term "poverty" was replaced by "life chances," "affordable housing" came to refer not only to state-provided rented tenancies, but to homes available to buy from the private sector. "Neoliberalism" stopped being a term used by Marxist academics to attack the neoliberal hegemony when the word became part of that hegemony.

The reason this has been possible is due to a process in which all political parties have come to accept and apply neoliberal doctrine. It would appear that indeed, since Margate Thatcher, both the left and the right wing favour markets over redistributing wealth. Changes in political discourse have a role to play in ensuring that, as Margaret Thatcher famously stated 'there is no alternative.'<sup>153</sup>

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152 3Préoccupe des mécanismes d'exclusion » qu'il découvre « au bas de la société, mais aussi en haut (sic) », convaincu que « redéfinir l'inégalité par rapport à l'exclusion à ces deux niveaux » est « conforme à une conception dynamique de l'inégalité (8) ». Les maîtres de l'économie peuvent dormir tranquilles : ils ont trouvé leur Pangloss"

(Giddens) is "concerned about mechanisms of exclusion," that he makes revelations "at the bottom of society, but also at the top (sic)", convinced that "to redefine inequality in relation to exclusion at these two levels" is "consistent with a dynamic conception of inequality (8) ". The masters of the economy can rest easy: they found their Pangloss."

*Ibid.*

153Blundell, John. Margaret Thatcher: A Portrait of the Iron Lady, *Algora Publishing*, 2008

As modernist writers explored at the turn of the last century, language is an embodied experience, changes in it may come to influence perspectives and the ability to present alternatives to neoliberal discourse. This may be one of the many reasons why despite the initial opposition to Thatcher's neoliberalism, over time the British public have come to embrace it as a concept.<sup>154</sup>

Trever Burrus states that neoliberalism is applied to both the right and the left wing, but this may be owing to the ubiquitous nature of neoliberalism, we have seen evidence of it in both the economic and social policies of all governments during a twenty year period, this is because it has become the leading economic ideology. Part of ensuring this, as Sam Bowman suggests, is via appropriating terms and changing what they mean as seen in this relatively small study. As the meaning of phrases or words are changed or removed it becomes harder to oppose neoliberalism; as narratives or forms of expression dwindle, so do alternatives.

This however, is by no means a new concept as writer George Orwell warned in his dystopia *Nineteen Eighty-Four*:

"Don't you see that the whole aim of Newspeak is to narrow the range of thought? In the end we shall make thoughtcrime literally impossible, because there will be no words in which to express it. Every concept that can ever be needed will be expressed by exactly one word, with its meaning rigidly defined and all its subsidiary meanings rubbed out and forgotten."<sup>155</sup>

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<sup>154</sup>Farrall, Stephen Emily Gray, Phil Jones. "Are We All Thatcherites Now?" *Political Insight*, June 2019  
<sup>155</sup>Orwell, George, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Penguin Books in association with Secker & Warburg, 1949

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## **Glossary**

### **Brownfield land**

This is term which is currently under going a change in definition, originally it was used to refer to disused or contaminated, previously industrial land. However there is evidence that the term started being applied to sites where there had been housing. In recent years Brownfield has been used to describe council estates where people are still living.

### **Collocate**

A word habitually juxtaposed with another with a frequency greater than chance.<sup>156</sup>

### **Corpus**

A collection of written or spoken material in machine-readable form, assembled for the purpose of linguistic research.

### **European Community Exchange Rate Mechanism**

The aim of this is to have a fixed monetary exchange rate, designed to reduce variations between the value of currency.

### **Economic policy**

Action taken by government in relation to the systems for setting interest rates, the labour market, and national ownership, it includes measures adopted by the government to achieve economic objectives.<sup>157</sup>

### **Function word**

This expresses a grammatical relationship among words within a sentence and contributes to the syntax rather than the meaning of a sentence.

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<sup>156</sup> Lexico, Oxford dictionary. Accessed 16 July <https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/collocate>

<sup>157</sup> Farlex free dictionary. Accessed 16 July <https://financial-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/economic+policy>

## **General Practitioner**

A doctor based in the community who treats patients with minor or chronic illnesses and refers those with serious conditions to a hospital.

## **House of Commons**

Lower house of the UK Parliament, the Commons is an elected body consisting of ministers of Parliament who consider and propose new laws, debate government policies by questioning ministers about current issues in either Committees or the House of Commons Chamber. Bills are proposed in the Commons before being sent to the house of Lords.

## **Hansard**

The official record of debates in the British parliament.

## **House of Commons**

The first chamber of the UK Parliament, where new laws are proposed and debated, government policies are scrutinised and ministers are questioned about current issues. The 650 Members of Parliament (MPs) are elected and represent their interests and concerns in the House of Commons.

## **House of Lords**

The second chamber of the UK Parliament and upper house, which shares the task of passing laws and checking and challenging the government's .. Members are not elected but are granted appointment or inherit it.

## **Key words in context**

The keyword/ search for word in a corpus viewed in the context of the speech it appears in.

## **Keynesian demand management**

A managed market economy, involving government intervention. Keynesian economics does include privatisation but as part of a mixed economy, in which state-owned goods and services are also present. In Keynesian economics the state has an active role in creating the consumer demand which boosts the economy and generates employment, this is to meet said consumer demands. Employment is achieved partly provided by state-owned industries. Features of Keynesian economics include Government spending on infrastructure, unemployment benefits and education, the economic model used in Britain before the emergence of Neoliberalism in the 1970's.

## **Language corpus**

A collection of written or spoken texts which can be analysed to establish patterns of grammar and vocabulary usage.

## **Local Authority**

These are Public Authorities (bodies which represent government, and form part of the state). They manage local matters such as policing, town planning, transport and housing. In England there are five types of Local Authority: county councils, district councils, unitary authorities, metropolitan districts and London boroughs. For this reason state/Local Authority-provided housing is often referred to interchangeably as 'council housing and 'social housing.' The Local Authority allocates state-provided housing to those living in its jurisdiction.<sup>158</sup>

## **Nationalisation**

When an industry or a company is owned and run by the government.

## **New Deal**

The name of a British workfare programme offering training, subsidised employment and vol-  
<sup>158</sup> Murry, John, "What defines a 'public authority' – and why it matters" Wardhadaway law firm. 15th July 2015. Accessed 19 July 2019 <https://www.wardhadaway.com/updates/what-defines-a-public-authority-and-why-it-matters/>

untary work to the unemployed. New Deal was in operation between the years 1998-2009.

### **Primary sector**

A primary sector economy sources raw materials for industry. In Britain mining was a large part of the primary sector until the 1980's, but any industry which produces raw materials that can be processed in to a finished product belong in this category.

### **Roll-back**

“Peck and Tickell (2002) identify two interrelated phases or processes: "roll-back neoliberalism" and "roll-out neoliberalism." "Roll-back neoliberalism" refers to "the active destruction or discreditation of Keynesian-welfarist and social-collectivist institutions (broadly defined)"... This process involves the retreat from previous governmental control of resources and state regulations, including public services, nationalized industries, and labor and social rights. Also known as *privatization*, it is the "sharing or delegating of authority to non-governmental agents" (Handler, 1996: 78-80). Privatization takes many forms, including the sale of public assets, voucher programs, deregulation, cutbacks in public services, and the contracting out of those services to for-profit and non-profit agencies.<sup>159</sup> Roll-back processes involve deregulating zones of bureaucratic control and disorganizing alternate centres of power via restructuring institutions. Restructuring leads to disciplining “potentially unruly (collective) subjects.”<sup>160</sup>

### **Secondary sector**

All the activities which process raw materials (manufacturing, construction industries).

### **Social Housing**

State built and provided housing for those under the jurisdiction of a Local Authority or Council. Also referred to as council housing, affordable housing, municipal or public housing.

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159 Aguirre, Adalberto. Jr., Volker Eick, and Ellen Reese “Neoliberal Globalization, Urban Privatization, and Resistance,” *Social Justice Vol. 33, No. 3 (2006)*. Paragraph 4. Accessed July 15 2019. <https://www.socialjusticejournal.org/SJEdits/105Edit.html>

160 Peck, Jamie. 'Constructions of Neoliberal Reason,' *Oxford University Press*, 2010, p. 22.

## **Social policy-making**

Includes: “child and family support, schooling and education, housing and neighbourhood renewal, income maintenance and poverty reduction, unemployment support and training, pensions, health and social care. Social policy aims to identify and find ways of reducing inequalities in access to services and support between social groups defined by socio-economic status, race, ethnicity, migration status, gender, sexual orientation, disability and age, and between countries.”<sup>161</sup>

## **Tertiary sector**

Also referred to as the service sector, focuses on the production of services or “intangible goods” instead of finished products, usually to give advice. Doctors, teachers, lawyers, estate agents, travel agents, accountants are professions found within the tertiary sector.

## **The Third Way**

The pursuit of greater egalitarianism in society through action to increase the distribution of skills, capacities and productive endowments. The rejection of income redistribution as the means to achieve this.<sup>162</sup>

## **Tories**

Members of the Conservative Party/ the Tory Party.

## **Voice**

“..The process, first of all, whereby people give an account of the world within which they act. This process is reflexive...it is embodied, it requires a material form which may be of course individual, collected, distributed...Second, voice as a value. The process of voice relies on socially produced resources, it is oriented to social exchange and that is why voice can be undermined by an organisational rationality which does not value voice; so crowding-out al-

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<sup>161</sup> Platt, Lucinda. "What is social policy? International, interdisciplinary and applied," *London school of economic and political science*. Accessed 16 July 2019 [www.lse.ac.uk/social-policy/about-us/What-is-social-policy](http://www.lse.ac.uk/social-policy/about-us/What-is-social-policy)

<sup>162</sup> Lewis, Jane; Surender, Rebecca (2004). *Welfare State Change: Towards a Third Way?*. Oxford University Press. p. 4.

ternative narratives that would authorise us to value voice. Neoliberalism is just such a voice-denying rationality. It operates with an account of the social, as a space for expanding freedom modelled only on economic competition, that lacks most of the features associated with social life.”<sup>163</sup>

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<sup>163</sup> York Neoliberalism Conference, Nick Couldry - “Voiceblind: On Some Paradoxes of the Neoliberal State,” Published on 15 Aug, 2013, 01:16- 02:45. Accessed 06 March 2019 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lchbc1l7hF8>  
03.02 -04:00

## **Acronyms**

ASI	The Adam Smith Institute
CHI	Commission of Health Improvement
CPS	The Centre for Policy Studies
DWP	Department of Work and Pension
ESA	Employment and Support allowance
FCA	Financial Conduct Authority
GP	General Practitioner
HBOS	Halifax Bank of Scotland
IEA	The Institute of Economic Affairs
IMF	The International Monetary Fund
IPPR	Institute for Public Policy Research
JSA	Job Seekers Allowance
MP	Member of Parliament
MUD	Moral Underclass Discourse
NHS	National Health Service
NIC	National Insurance Contributions
PFI's	Private Finance Initiatives
PM	Prime Minister
RBS	Royal Bank of Scotland
RSL	Registered Social Landlords
SID	Social Integrationist Discourse
SME	Small to Medium Enterprises
WCA	Work Capability Assessment
VAT	Value Added Tax

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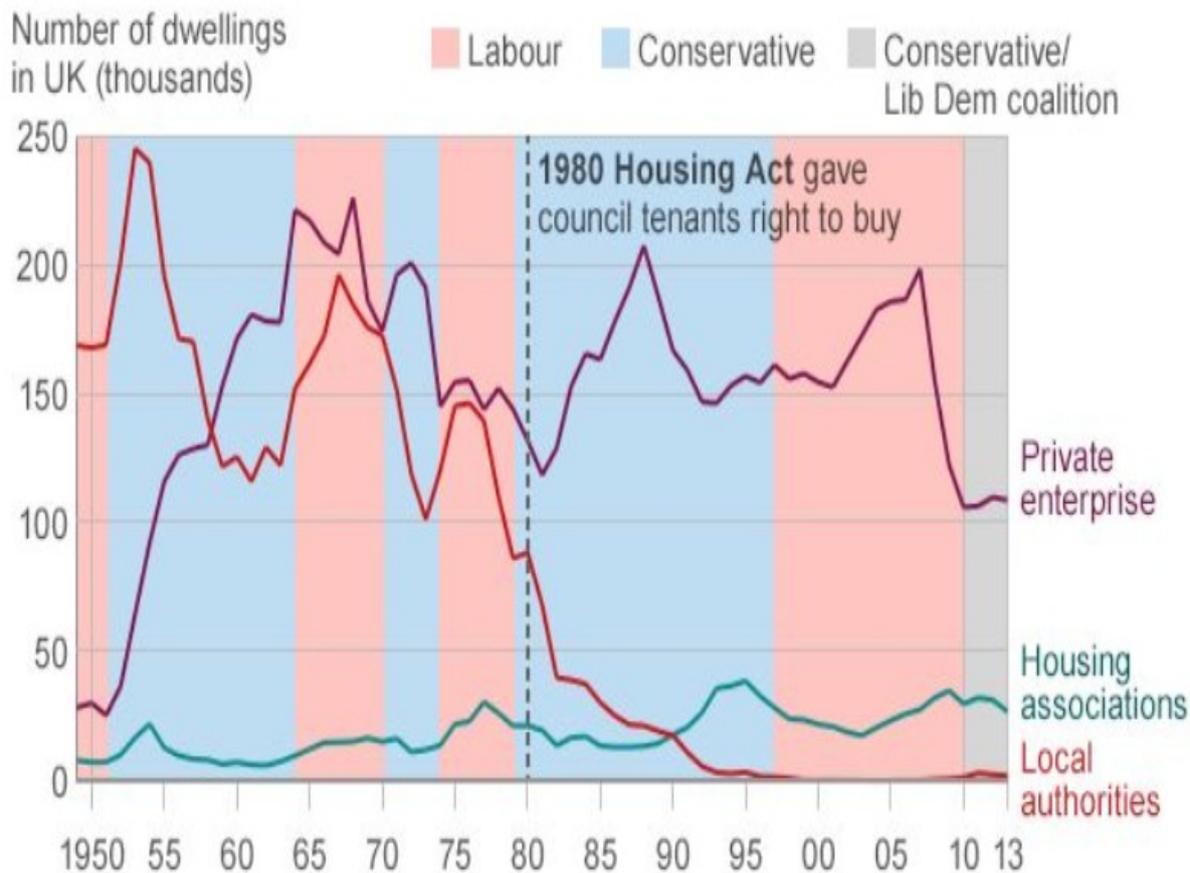
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### Annex 1

#### New homes built by private and social sectors, 1949-2013



Source: Department for Communities and Local Government  
 Wheeler, Brian, 'A history of social housing,' BBC News, 14 April 2015. Accessed 23 February 2019 [www.bbc.com/news/uk-14380936](http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-14380936)

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**MOTS-CLÉS :** Néolibéralisme, évolution du langage, politique britannique, corpus de hansard, corpus linguistique, consensus entre les partis politiques, austérité, sans-abris, logement.

### **RESUME**

Cette recherche qualitative examine les politiques économiques et, par conséquent, les politiques sociales de tous les gouvernements britanniques entre 1997 et 2017, révélant un modèle de consensus entre les partis. Quel que soit le parti élu, l'application d'une même doctrine, le néolibéralisme, a été systématique. Ce mémoire explore l'effet du néolibéralisme sur le langage politique *via* des données du corpus linguistique de Hansard, démontrant comment les changements de langage reflètent et renforcent les programmes néolibéraux.

**MOTS-CLÉS :** Neoliberalism, changing language, British politics, hansard corpus, language corpus, cross-party consensus, austerity, brownfield land, homelessness, housing, sink estates, Grenfell Tower

### **ABSTRACT**

This qualitative research examines the economic policies and consequentially the social policies of all British governments between the years 1997-2017, revealing a pattern of cross-party consensus. Regardless of which ever party has been voted into office, the application of one doctrine, neoliberalism, has been consistent. This dissertation explores the effect of neoliberalism upon political language by sourcing data from the Hansard language corpus, demonstrating how changes in language reflect and reinforce neoliberal agendas.