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Home and the Woman Question:

A Feminist Genealogy of Neoliberal Discourse

PhD Thesis

Faculty of Health and Social Care

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Abstract

This thesis is about the woman question and how it presents in neoliberal discourse through the story of home. It begins with an observation that home has an increasing visibility in popular culture and academia where it is explored, investigated and displayed. Home is also of interest to feminist theorists who recognise the struggle women have to be at home in the world and the potential of home as a critical space. In contrast to feminist theory and cultural celebration, home has a utilitarian, hidden and abstract quality in Government discourse in Britain. My argument is that the woman question threads through this abstract rendition of home, yet as home becomes more prominent, gender disappears. Questions of gendered and unpaid domestic labour, of women's rights in the public sphere, and of lived material inequalities, circulate in academic and cultural debates yet do not disrupt the story of home as it is played out in policy settings. In this study I analyse neoliberal discourse and its social turn to discern its logic, and how it works strategically through policy language to reconfigure or produce gendered subjects and social life in its own terms. Feminist theorists have uncovered neoliberal strategies and their effects, and I have drawn on their work to focus on subjectivity, agency and situation as an indication of the presence of home where it is abstract or absent as a word in neoliberal language. The study aims to bring unspoken and unwritten assumptions about home into view, so as to focus on the work that home does to constitute and regulate gender. The purpose is to make contemporary configurations of the woman question, as they filter through the idea of home, available to feminist critique and politics.

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Appendix 1

Department of Health (2010) 'A vision for adult social care: capable communities and active citizens', London: H.M. Government, Department of Health.

http://www.cpa.org.uk/cpa_documents/vision_for_social_care2010.pdf

Chapter one

Introduction

Since woman functions for man as the ground of his subjectivity, she has no support for her own self. She is derelict. She too must deal with the same loss as he... the expulsion from the warmth and security of the mother's body... She tries to take her subjectivity from being-for-him... But in the end she is left homeless with no room of her own, since he makes room for himself by using her as his envelope (Iris Marion Young, from her essay 'House and Home', 1997: 140-141).

Why is this quote troubling? It touches something close, recognisable. It is also quite devastating, not least in the sense of the injustice or unfairness it conveys. Iris Young is saying that woman gives up the possibility of being-for-herself to be the envelope of men's subjectivity, leaving her homeless. Why would she do that? Does she have a choice? Is she waiting for someone to give this to her? If she is, why doesn't she make room for herself, move into her own room? The quote touches a certain ambivalence about home in personal life and in feminism. It touches the ground of feminist politics and the struggle woman has had to get away from a place so close to her, only to find that the other place, the public sphere, is not hers either. Women spend most of their lives working and looking after others, quite often in the same moment, leaving little space or time just to be, to make room, or to care for themselves. How did this happen? After centuries of struggle why is it still happening? If, as Young argues, home is the lost ground of woman's life and the possibility of her subjectivity, what does this mean for feminist politics?

Questions of women and home are particularly pertinent in contemporary culture and politics. Since the publication of Young's essay home has become a powerful idea in popular culture and academia, where the design and experience of home is the subject of television programmes¹ and museum exhibitions²; and where home is explored and investigated widely in sociology, geography, anthropology, psychology, philosophy and history (Chapman 2001; Mallett 2004; Gorman-Murray & Dowling 2007). In parallel, and perhaps supported by this cultural and academic fascination, home also has an increasing political presence in Britain. Debates circle around issues of home, work and social care (England 2010) and the re-ordering of responsibility for welfare services (Lister 2011). Since 1997 and the start of the New Labour Government in Britain, public policy has increasingly focused on local or community based solutions to what is understood as the problem of state welfare (Clarke and Newman 1997). In recent years this focus has extended to personalised services, as in the advocacy of personal budgets for social care (Duffy 2008), and to nudging individuals in their private lives to behave more responsibly (Pykett 2012). It appears as common sense in public discourse that people would prefer to be independent or to be cared for at home by those who care about them (Chapman 2001). It also makes sense to governments who will save money if people are cared for at home rather than in public institutions. As policy debates unfold home comes into play, almost by default, as a more appropriate setting for care than large scale, impersonal institutions (England 2010).

¹ For example: *Changing Rooms*, BBC, 1996-2004 http://www.bbc.co.uk/homes/tv_and_radio/cr_index.shtml ; *The 1940s House*, Wall to Wall/Channel 4, 2001 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_1940s_House; *History of the Home*, BBC, 2011 http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/middle_ages/history_of_home.shtml ; and *At Home with the Georgians*, BBC, 2013 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00wkmmj> .

² The Geffrye Museum of the Home <http://www.geffrye-museum.org.uk/collections/> .

There are gnawing questions for women and feminist politics that hesitate through the political identification of home as a resourceful space. These include questions about what women do and where they do it. We know that today it is predominantly women who do care work, paid and unpaid and, paradoxically, that more and more women are in paid employment and are not *at* home most of the time³ (Hochschild 2003; Bryson 2007; Burchardt 2008). Since women cannot be at home and away from home at the same time, what they do and where they do it becomes conceptually unclear and can be experienced in everyday life as unworkable tension (Burchardt 2008). Feminists suggest that being present and absent at home and at work women occupy uncertain or ambivalent roles and spaces (Molyneux 2002; Hochschild 2003; Edwards 2004). They find that alongside age old and deeply taken for granted assumptions about women in relation to men, new configurations of gender are in play in contemporary situations (Adkins 2009; Simon-Kumar 2011). When I use the term gender in this thesis I refer to the gender ontology, or gender order of political discourse, that is, the social organisation of gendered subjectivities through political and binary structures.

If home, as Young argues, is the uncertain possibility of women's subjectivity and this home is identified by governments as a new resource for social care, there is a strong basis for arguing that the home is contested ground for feminist politics. Home is the ground where ontological assumptions about women's subjectivity, who they are and what they do, are made political in particular ways. This translation of ontology into

³ It is the case men and children are also carers; many women rely on other women to fulfil domestic and caring responsibilities; older people and those with disabilities both give and need care. See Social Care Institute for Excellence website for a detailed breakdown of social care inequalities in relation to age, disability, race, religion, sexual orientation and gender:
<http://www.scie.org.uk/workforce/socialcareandhealthinequalities/index.asp>.

politics, as Kimberly Maslin maintains, is where the problem of women, or the woman question in historically made (Maslin 2013: 599). In this thesis I propose that in contemporary politics the woman question can be opened up through a close reading of the story of home as it is told in political and policy discourse.

This chapter continues with an exploration of how feminists write and have written about home in relation to the woman question. After this I consider the emergence of neoliberalism as a powerful discourse in relation to gender and home. With these parallel discussions I introduce a contrast and a dynamic between feminist and neoliberal identifications with home. The focus of the chapter then turns to the research design for this thesis which is a feminist genealogy of neoliberal discourse. The aim is to isolate and question the discursive constitution of home, how gender is regulated and politicised as the woman question in contemporary politics (Bell 1999; Maslin 2013). Rather than a broad historical account of home and gender in relation to social policy, this is an inquiry into the appearance of home as a category in a particular discursive moment at the cross over between New Labour and the Conservative and Liberal Coalition Governments in Britain in 2010. The genealogy traces how home materialises in the present, in neoliberalism's social turn, as context for a close theoretical reading of policy language for the presence of home and gender in policy discourse. The text chosen for this reading is **A vision for adult social care: capable communities and active citizens**⁴ (Department of Health 2010). It is a Government, Department of Health (DH) document which lays out a vision for social care, written

⁴ See Appendix 1 for the document **A vision for adult social care: capable communities and active citizens** (DH 2010) in full. All direct quotes and key words from the document are typed in **bold** without quotation marks.

and published by the Coalition Government in 2010. The chapter then presents an outline of the structure and content of the study and concludes with a discussion of the thesis as a whole.

Home and the woman question

Feminists have an ambivalent relationship to home where experiences of domestic drudgery and economic dependence are intertwined with a longing for home or for a room of one's own (Young 1997). Contemporary feminist scholars engage with the idea of home in a range of debates about identity, biography, care, time, place, space, work, intimacy and personal life (Mallett 2004; Tronto 2005; England 2010; May 2011). Much of this work is developed in response to Young's essay (Young 1997; Blunt and Dowling 2006; Pateman 2008), with a debate about home, objects, habits of living and homemaking that is continued and developed in feminist and anthropological research (Pink 2004; Blunt and Dowling 2006). Young calls for an explicit reconsideration of home in feminist theory and politics (Young 1997). She recognises that home is difficult for feminists, as a real and symbolic place of oppression and exploitation, boredom and violence, and the sexual division of labour (Young 1997). Home is the private space from which women have endeavoured to escape to the relative freedom of the public sphere, though it is still the case that unpaid caring and household work falls primarily to women (Tronto 2001; Young 2002; Burchardt 2008). At home women strive, Young contends, to provide a place from which their loved ones can emerge daily into the world but can find no home of their own. In feminist theory the idea that women have no home is expressed in desire and rejection, which Young conveys as an ambivalent

yearning for a different experience of home. This is a sense of home as a place to be and to live from, a place where life can be explored, where freedom and peace might be found (Young 1997). In this way home is a site of feminist struggle and an expression of the woman question as it is experienced by women: a struggle to escape *from* home mixed up with a struggle to be *at* home in the world (Young 1997, 2002; Jacobson 2009; 2011).

An ambivalence towards home is present historically in feminist writing where the desire for home, or for a room of one's own, circulates as a faint parallel to powerful literature on home as oppression, boredom, violence and hard work (Martin and Mohanty 1986). In different historical moments and contexts feminists write about home in relation to yearning, freedom, creativity or sanctuary. For example, Young's essay is a contemporary expression of Virginia Woolf's argument seventy years earlier that feeling at home in the world is what women give to men. Woolf writes that '[W]omen have served all these centuries as looking-glasses possessing the magic and delicious power of reflecting the figure of man at twice its natural size' (Woolf 1928: 37). This is why, she argues, women are a problem for patriarchy since if the illusion should crumble, 'if she begins to tell the truth, the figure in the looking-glass shrinks; his fitness for life is diminished' (Woolf 1928: 37). To be creative and to think freely, Woolf argues, women need a room of their own and a modest income (Woolf 1928). In her essay a woman's room is necessary to her being herself, it protects her from patriarchy and is a place other to the world where women are a problem to be solved. Similarly, Jeanette Winterson writes:

The suffragettes believed that a woman who could vote was a woman who could change the way society operated. That hasn't happened. Instead women have become adapters to an environment that doesn't suit us. Men control the workplace and the work ethic. Now that our brain power cannot be doubted our bodies have been requisitioned. When a woman cannot feel comfortable in her own body she has no home (Winterson 2013:13).

The suffragettes' struggle for equal political rights at the beginning of the last century, Winterson points out here, was based on the idea that if women had the vote they could influence politics to change how society worked, so that it did reflect the interests and experiences both of women and men. Yet, she suggests, patriarchy is resilient and has survived, giving just enough so as to maintain deeply engrained mechanisms of power and control. Rather than altering the social or gender order to create space for women, Winterson argues, women have become expert 'adapters to an environment that doesn't suit us'. As Woolf hints in her essay, patriarchy is like the Wizard of Oz, whose power lies in keeping up the illusion of power. It is based, she suggests, on a fear that women might take a man's place and so they need to be controlled, the ceiling kept low, and to reward women less for their labour than men. The Fawcett Society point out that today:

We still have a political culture and system that too often views women's equality as a fringe issue to be dealt with by someone else - or worse an unimportant or irrelevant concern in modern Britain. But the hard facts – the

15% gender pay gap, the 4-1 ratio of men to women MPs, women making up almost 2/3rds of those earning £7 per hour or less - show otherwise⁵.

Legally and logically women claim equal pay and equal rights, but in practice neither are wholly available. Women have also been pushed and pulled between the private and public spheres, into work when the need for labour is increased as it was during the first and second world wars, and back home, as in the 1950s, when full male employment, the basis of the post war welfare settlement, was undermined by women's labour. This push and pull story has shaped the experience of women at work, nonetheless women continued and continue to work to support themselves and their families despite government policy. Governments have also shown some ambivalence about women working: whether they should really be at home or available as a reserve army of labour when economic needs press. Since the mid nineteenth century, Sally Alexander argues, working women have posed a problem for governments, when the 'working woman emerged as a "social problem"' (Alexander 1976: 60):

Because of women's very special responsibility for society's well-being, it was the woman working outside the home who received most attention from the parliamentary commissioners, and to push through legislative reform emphasis was placed, not on the hours of work, rates of pay, and dangers from unsafe machinery – although all these were mentioned – but on the moral and spiritual degradation said to accompany female employment (Alexander 1976: 61).

⁵ The Fawcett Society web page: <http://www.fawcettsociety.org.uk/activity/what-about-women/>. [Accessed 19 August 2013].

The contradictions, or dual burden, that women experience as they balance paid work, domestic and caring responsibilities might reflect a confusion in government thinking as to whether social/moral or economic contingencies have priority. For Woolf, one of the ways of dealing with the social/moral problem of women has been to keep them economically poor. With this strategy, she says, they are prevented from access to the means to power and knowledge, the space to write, to describe and inhabit the world. She illustrates the significance of economic power and resources, and the physical or material spaces we inhabit, for the creation of knowledge, culture, and of who we are, subjectivity, and what we do, agency. Of course, Woolf cannot speak for all women, since she exemplifies a British, upper-middle class status and economic privilege which relied on other women cooking, cleaning and maintaining her life. Nonetheless in her time she uses her position to express the profound injustice of gender inequality which cuts across class and other inequalities. Woolf draws attention to the material and cultural solidity of patriarchy and class privilege, the everyday acceptance of exclusion, and the established patina of economic power, of money. At the heart of Woolf's essay is the question repeated by Simone de Beauvoir in her introduction to *The Second Sex*: 'How is it that this world has always belonged to the men?' (Beauvoir 1949: 21).

Home and the woman question are weighted with assumptions that intersect the question of gender with race, age, sexuality and other social positions and inequalities. As bell hooks writes, home can also evoke sanctuary from the entrapment of public identities:

To move beyond race I ground myself in homeplace. In this house where I live race has no place. As soon as I walk out the door, race is waiting, like a watchful

stalker ready to grab me and keep me in place, ready to remind me that slavery is not just in the past but here right now ready to entrap, to hold and bind. No wonder then that I want to spend most of my life inside, in the sanctuary of home where there are no shackles, no constant reminders that there is no place free of race (hooks 2013: 185).

Many inequalities persist and grow in British society, not least inequalities and differences between men and between women. It is not to downplay these inequalities that I focus on women and gender in this thesis, but to isolate gender heuristically so as to question how the relational gender order is written into contemporary policy discourse as the woman question (England 2010). Rachel Simon-Kumar finds that 'a coherent identity of "woman"' is increasingly becoming obsolete as a category for social policy or for political engagement with the state. Women are folded in, she argues, 'with other antidiscrimination groupings' and the clarity of gender inequality can be obscured (Simon-Kumar 2011: 453-454). A range of theoretical and political reasons may account for this virtual disappearance of the category woman from public discourse (Moi 1999; Fraser 2009). It may be due to an understanding that the universal identity of woman cannot hold or express the diversity of bodies, sexuality, cultures and lived experience (Moi 1999). Or perhaps it is a belief that equality between women and men is no longer a policy issue, made obsolete through legislation and the accomplishment of individual women. Either way, Simon-Kumar argues, an overt recognition of gender as a category or operational system of inequality is slipping from political discourse. Feminist critics find that this slippage is characteristic of neoliberal discourse (Connell 2010: 33) where patriarchal power is maintained through producing

and silencing 'a new ontology of gender', and a new configuration of the woman question (Brown 2004: 16; Brown 2005: 85).

Home in neoliberal discourse

Working with feminist theory as a critical resource, this study is a theoretical inquiry into the gendered logic of neoliberal discourse. The aim is to isolate spoken and unspoken assumptions about home so as to bring into view just how gender is configured and regulated, It is to explore the idea that as home configures and regulates gender, it expresses the woman question in contemporary politics. The purpose of this inquiry is to articulate these configurations and bring them into conversation with feminist theory and politics.

Neoliberalism is an ideology, rationality or discourse that spreads through social life to legitimise the interests of free market economics (Brown 2003; Gamble 2009; Hall 2012). It is a hybrid set of ideas, a make do ideology, which forms around a mix of adaptable theories, practices and everyday common sense (Newman 2013). As an economic variant of liberalism it became currency in British politics in the 1970s as a critique of liberal democracy and the Keynesian welfare state. Conservative governments between 1979 and 1997 were motivated by 'new right economic liberalism' to secure the freedom of the market through a strong state that focused less on economic intervention and more on defence and international trade negotiations (Gamble 1988). Over time the social effects of economic liberalism: rising unemployment, homelessness and poverty, threatened social disorder and the

legitimacy of this approach (Mullard and Spicker 1998). The Labour party in opposition saw the need to balance economic liberalism with a compatible and supportive social agenda⁶. At this point the Labour party dropped its socialist critique of capitalism and engaged with theorists and policy innovators to create a new form of social democracy, known as the third way (Blair 1998; Giddens 1998; Powell 2000).

With a concern to establish a stable social order, this new social democracy balanced economic liberalism with a communitarian social agenda (Levitas 1998; Lister 1998; Everingham 2003). Policies were couched in the language of community and were 'mapped around feminist principles of relationships and mutual dependence' (Simon-Kumar 2011: 453). New Labour developed family friendly and work/life balance policies to tune society to economics, bringing feminist and gender issues to the centre of policy making (Coote 2000). In broad terms this moment, where feminist ideas began to influence the policy agenda, marked a change in neoliberalism where, instead of ignoring society, society becomes an asset to capitalism.

Home has a growing significance in neoliberal policy discourse particularly in debates about welfare and social care. Since the beginning of the New Labour Government in 1997, there has been a shift in policy making towards the idea that the state should enable communities and individuals to take more responsibility for looking after themselves. This is framed in a critique of the welfare state which legitimises the transfer of care, and its economic cost, from state to society, and from large scale institutions to communities (Everingham 2003; Beresford 2008; England 2010). Though

⁶ For example, the Commission on Social Justice, set up prior to the election of Tony Blair as Leader of the Labour party. See: Commission on Social Justice (1994) *Social Justice: Strategies for National Renewal*, London: Institute for Public Policy Research.

home as a word appears fairly rarely in policy discourse arguably it is implicit in discussions about individual responsibility, community and personal life. Where it is mentioned it tends to have an abstract or unreal quality, and to describe a kind of care, as in home care, or where care takes place, as in care homes (Martin-Matthews 2007; England 2010). New approaches to social care policy that emerged during the New Labour Government were initially taken up by the Coalition Government (DH 2010). These refer specifically to personal responsibility for designing and budgeting for care, as in the models of personalisation and co-production (Needham and Carr 2009). Home is increasingly present as an alternative setting for health and social care, in strategies to secure early discharge from hospital and to transfer responsibility for care to personal settings. The rationale for these new models is to personalise care so that it more closely fits with what people want and need, offering autonomy and choice, as opposed to the anonymity people are said to feel in hospitals and care homes. In this way home seems to connect the interests of people and politicians as the better place for personal care (Martin Matthews 2007).

The technical language of personalisation introduced by New Labour, which conveyed a partnership between state and community, is less used by the Coalition Government that seeks to withdraw, at least overtly, from organising social welfare (Lister 2011).

While personalised care is still a central feature of Government policy, personalisation as discourse and policy strategy has slightly faded into common sense, whilst the nudging of individuals towards responsible behaviour is more prominent in public debate (Thaler and Sunstein 2009; Pykett 2012). Neoliberal discourse is constantly

changing and innovative. This thesis engages with the discourse at a particular moment of cross over between New Labour and Coalition Governments.

Policies that define community and home as alternatives to welfare and institutional care are weighted with questionable assumptions about gender and home: which persons will be responsible, make decisions and deal with personal budgets? Which persons will be at home to care? Who has time to care? What kind of homes are appropriate as settings for care? Are material resources available to support home as a setting for care? (Tronto 2001; Martin-Matthews 2007; England 2010). Questions like these relate to social and political expectations of women, all women, all ages, in society. They touch on assumptions about what women do, or should do, in their different social and economic positions, for example that at different stages in their lives women are more available, more suited or more inclined towards close family and caring responsibilities (Sevenhuijsen 2002; Peace et al 2005; Bryson 2007). Assumptions about what women are suited to and do change over time not least through challenges from the women's movement and, to a certain extent, from the mainstreaming of gender issues in parliamentary politics (Coote 2000; Childs 2004; Annesley et al 2007; Newman 2013). There is perhaps an historical play off between the perceived needs of the economy and society and what women or society in general will tolerate. It is as though common sense ideas about what women are and what they do are constituted in such a way as to slide in and back up whatever is historically useful or necessary to support patriarchal power and the needs of the economy. It is as though historical necessity, defined in certain interests, produces particular manifestations of the woman question.

Home is one of the key expressions of human experience and resources in neoliberal discourse, and where the work of gendering occurs, along with the softening of hard economic policies (Pykett 2012). Home is present just enough in the discourse to provide a sense of continuity and security, of homeliness and comfort, but its absence works to wrap up gender in such a way as to make it less visible or available to critique. Feminist critics argue, however, that neoliberal discourse, presented as gender neutral, transmits a new ontology of gender (Brown 2004). I present the case that this new ontology circulates through home, occupying the same shifting political ground as feminism (Young 1997). Thus two integrated lines of inquiry are tracked in this study: the ontological and the political dimensions of home which together constitute the woman question.

Research design

This thesis presents a genealogy of home and the woman question in neoliberal discourse. It is a feminist theoretical inquiry into how home, as a category, inscribes a new ontology of gender which is politicised as the problem of women or the woman question in contemporary politics. Neoliberal discourse is the focus of this study and feminist theory and literature is the methodological resource although, as is explored below, the relationship between the two is not straightforward either in the literature or in this study. Neoliberal discourse is produced and conveyed through conversations and practices. Political actors are involved in theoretical debates, in writing and forming neoliberal ideas. People in their everyday lives pick this language up, speak and change it, use it to describe the world they live in, what they do and who they are:

Thus significations come from men and from his project, but they are inscribed everywhere in things and in the order of things. Everything in every instant is always signifying, and significations reveal to us men and relations among men across the structures of our society (from J. P. Sartre's *The Problem of Method*, 1963, quoted by Hall 1977: 20).

The purpose in this thesis is to identify and question neoliberal significations, ideas and practices and how they are inscribed and constitute a new social order (Newman 2013). This is a focus on neoliberal discourse in a particular present, in the moment of cross over between the New Labour and Conservative and Liberal Coalition Governments in 2010, a moment produced by the social turn.

Working with feminist theory, this thesis begins with an exploration of feminist epistemology and ontology, and a methodological consideration of how to exemplify home as the focus of analysis in a discourse where home as a word is largely absent. With feminist theory as a resource home can be typified in terms of subjectivity, as a second body (Jacobson 2009), as a condition for agency and citizenship (Jacobson 2010; Maslin 2013) and as the place or space we inhabit in the world (Young 1997; Kruks 2008; Jacobson 2010). To isolate and question home, ontological categories of subjectivity, agency and situation are incorporated into the relational category of home as *subject-in-situation*. This category evokes subjectivity as processes of being or becoming in location, in the world, that is in the relational, cultural, political and material context of everyday life. To capture this structural context I investigate home as subject-in-situation in the social, political and economic registers of neoliberal discourse (Fraser and Gordon 1994).

This investigation of home begins in chapter three with a genealogy of home, as subjectivity-in-situation, in neoliberalism's social turn. It takes the form of close involvement with the discourse and critical engagement with the way it is constituted theoretically, politically and in language. Genealogy is a method of questioning, of tracing, digging and finding out where ideas come from and how they emerge in the present. It is a method of tracking how ideas are used, what they signify, and how they constitute subjects and the world (Bell 1999; Jenkins 2011). The intention here is to trace the neoliberal social turn as it moves through discursive moments, and how it pulls in and makes use of theories which centre on subjectivity, agency and situation. The significance of the social turn is that ideas about what society is, how it is ordered and what kind of people make it up are introduced and over time become common sense. The purpose of this genealogy is to trace the discursive strategies and mechanisms that produced this turn. It is to become familiar with the discourse, so as to inform three close readings of neoliberal policy language across social, political and economic registers, as it describes a new economy of social care (DH 2010).

The text chosen for this analysis is written and produced by the Coalition government in 2010. This document is written in policy language that is intended to describe the Government's vision for adult social care. It is entitled **A vision for adult social care: capable communities and active citizens** (DH 2010). It is chosen for its policy focus on social care which is a highly gendered arena and so open to a feminist analysis of home and gender. It is also chosen for quality of language since it is rich with concepts and ideas in relation to home and gender. A close reading of the text as a whole document gives a sense of its order and construction, and a general understanding of

the policy vision at stake. The document is then read to isolate and analyse key words (Williams 1976; Fraser and Gordon 1994) which resonate with subjectivity, agency and situation across social, political and economic registers. In the final chapter key themes that emerge from the genealogy are considered and questioned in conversation with feminist theory and politics. The purpose at the end of the thesis is to question the analysis in the study, to expose the problem of the woman question (Franklin and Thomson 2005: 168), and to explore feminist theories as a resource for thinking about home as a critical space or ground for feminist politics.

Methodology and method

Questions are a central methodological thread in this study, and are framed in relation to feminist debates in epistemology, ontology and politics. With home as subject-in-situation, and with a research focus on language, discursive practices and material registers, the methodology draws on epistemological perspectives that link ontology and politics, language and reality, and subjectivity and the material world. For this I draw on feminist interpretations of Michel Foucault (McNay 1992; Bell 1999; Brown 1995, 2004, 2005 and Butler 2004) which offer an understanding of how gender is constituted in discourse, and the method for questioning this constitution, which is genealogy. To bring a materialist feminism into play, one that is interested in the dynamic between subjectivity and the world, I draw on feminist phenomenology, in the work of Beauvoir and those who have interpreted her theories (Beauvoir 1949; Young 1997; Moi 1994, 1999; Stavro 2000; Kruks 2008). I work these two together to account for the fluidity of experience and reality in the category home. Contemporary feminist

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materialist approaches offer an understanding of subjectivity constituted through language in the context of material reality (Coole and Frost 2010). Together Foucauldian, phenomenological and materialist perspectives suggest that feminist genealogy is the appropriate method for this inquiry. Genealogy is designed to isolate, question and disrupt deeply taken for granted ideas and practices (Fraser and Gordon 1994; Bell 1999; Coole 2009). With a focus on discourse, genealogy validates the interrogation of power and how it operates in language. The validity of feminist genealogy lies in its questioning of 'what is', in the interests of disruption and transformation of a social order that maintains gender inequality (Jenkins 2011; Bell 1999). Genealogy informs the tracing of a history of the neoliberal social turn in chapter three, and the close reading of policy language in the chosen text. To complement genealogy in this analysis of policy discourse I also draw on methods of feminist discourse analysis (Lazar 2007) and post empiricist policy analysis (Fischer 2003), both of which attend to how policy discourses articulate policy problems and legitimise divisions of labour and other economic and social resources (Lazar 2007:141).

Genealogy of neoliberal discourse

A history of the neoliberal social turn is traced in chapter three to give a sense of how home emerges in the present. I identify three moments or discursive shifts in this history as *remaking the social*, *remaking social order* and *remaking individual subjects*, which also reflect the category subjectivity-in-situation. The remaking of the social in neoliberal discourse incorporates theories and perspectives from communitarian philosophy and late modern sociology to provide a particular configuration of ideas

which legitimise key shifts in political thinking. This took the form of a new social democracy which substituted principles of liberal democracy – equal opportunity and social justice - for the community values of responsibility and reciprocity. As Nikolas Rose argues, the language of community, of obligation, morals and responsibilities shaped the policy field in this moment and entered the public imagination as common sense, providing a framework for governing individual behaviour in the construction of an ethical and ordered citizenry (Rose 2001). Missing from this politics of community was an account of how the social is ordered. To remake the social order, social capital theory was courted by New Labour in the early 2000s as a solution to the perceived problem of social breakdown and disorder (Everingham 2003; Franklin 2006). Social capital theory provides a systemic picture of how societies are organised, emphasising a network of horizontal social relationships. These social relationships or connections are lubricated by trust and reciprocity, norms and values, and are said to provide the social glue to cement social order (Putnam 2000). The discursive function of a concept like social capital is to respecify social relationships as economic and economically useful, and to stress social inclusion and cohesion, while downplaying inequality and conflict (Portes 1998). Social capital functions as an idea to distance social effects from economic causes so that individuals become responsible for their own social and economic circumstances (Portes 1998). It is a mechanism for constituting economic subjects, seemingly genderless individuals who can accrue social and economic capital and use it to their advantage and to the advantage of their community. In the social capital moment neoliberalism is transformed from a social to a social order discourse. It is a catalyst moment, a precursor to a more intensive turn to individual or personal life.

The personal turn in neoliberal discourse articulates theories of positive psychology, well being and happiness (Seligman 2002; Layard 2006) which are useful in ordering the governance of personal life (Sointu 2005). This is done in part through valorising binary distinctions of positive and negative behaviour. Subjects with problematic behaviours that combine with state interference to induce dependency on welfare benefits, are particularly noted as a focus for identification and sanction. In line with the distancing of the social from the economic these behaviours are defined as individual problems rather than as effects of social and economic inequalities (Pykett 2012). New neoliberal subjects are constituted through this logic: on the good side the entrepreneurial individual who is active and imaginative in communities and markets, and the responsible individual who is caring and reciprocal; on the bad side are those subjects who are dependent on the welfare state. Others who may be vulnerable and dependent through fault of their own, are deemed worthy or deserving of help and support.

One of key logics of neoliberal discourse in this moment is an orientation towards individual agency, or hidden potential, and personal life. Brian Heaphy notes, from a sociological perspective, that in late modernity personal life is brought centre stage as an agentic resource for social change, and as a way of bringing talk of 'core life concerns' into public discourse (Heaphy 2007: 89). In the policy document analysed in this study the core concern is the problem of dependency and the solution is to be found in the agency and potential of citizens. Dependency is the core policy problem around which a discursive case is built for the control and order of human beings.

Active individuals are celebrated in neoliberal discourse while dependent subjects, who lack agency, are derided (Newman and Tonkens 2011). This pair of good and bad

subjects have been discussed in politics and popular media as strivers and skivers, perpetuating a punishing myth that is hard to shake⁷.

Analysing policy discourse

In the context of a genealogical tracing of home in neoliberal discourse, the thesis continues with a close reading of policy discourse in the language of the document **A vision for adult social care: capable communities and active citizens** (DH 2010). Each reading takes one aspect of home as subjectivity, agency and situation respectively, in relation to one of the registers of the discourse, social, economic or political. In chapter four, entitled 'Remaking subjectivity' I explore how a generalised ontology of the social, social relationships and individual subjectivity is constituted in the document. This chapter also draws attention to the central policy problem, identified in the text, which is the problem of dependency. The reading identifies how the social and gender orders are constituted in language, words and statements. It traces the ways that a new gender order is implied through the establishment of new binary opposites that skirt over or ignore gender and other inequalities. For example the words women and men are absent in the text, replaced with the words **people** or **individuals**. Since individuals can be either women or men, the term individual appears as gender neutral, while the entrepreneurial or caring activities carried out by these

⁷ "Where's the fairness for the shift-worker, leaving home in the dark hours of the early morning, who looks up at the closed blinds of their next door neighbour sleeping off a life on benefits... We speak for all those who want to work hard and get on... They strive for a better life. We strive to help them." George Osborne, Chancellor of the Exchequer: <http://www.newstatesman.com/blogs/politics/2012/10/george-osbornes-speech-conservative-conference-full-text> [Published and accessed 8 October 2012].

individuals are more clearly gendered. The ambiguity this creates, whereby individual subjects are undifferentiated on the surface, is explored. Meanwhile, everyday assumptions about who cares, what kind of work people do, whether they are nurturing or entrepreneurial, implicitly underpins the promise of personal or individual choice based on personal or individual capacity. The chapter isolates and disrupts neoliberalism's social, relational and individual ontology with reference to feminist and other critical literature, to inform the following two chapters which attend to the political and economic registers of the discourse.

Chapter five, entitled 'Reworking agency', focuses on the political register and the constitution of a new gender order in the discourse (Brown 2004). In this reading I foreground agency and the political, in the identification of the key words or terms: **active citizens, partnership** and **freedom**. The document promotes the idea of active citizenship as the means to unleash creativity and agency which are understood to be dormant, as **untapped potential**, in local communities. Active citizenship is positioned as the key resource for the prevention of dependency and encouragement of independence. The emphasis is on choice, as the mechanism for active participation, for building community capacity and creating **happier more socially connected individuals** (DH 2010: 12). A series of new neoliberal subjects are inferred in the document, not least the active and entrepreneurial subject who is independent and makes rational choices, alongside the caring, reciprocal, compassionate and imaginative subject. Both these subjects are also flexible workers. A non-ideal individual is more powerfully evoked. This is the subject who is dependent on welfare and subject to **re-ablement** and **effective rehabilitation**, so as to **regain independence** (DH 2010: 29).

Another of the key words chosen in this chapter is **partnership**. Partnership is a description of a new model of political relationship different to New Labour's model of reciprocity between individual, community and government (Perkins et al 2010). With the Coalition model of partnership the role of government is to transfer its power to individuals and communities. Once transferred the state no longer has any responsibility, thus, as John Clarke suggests, abandoning its citizens (Clarke 2005). There is, however, some residue of state responsibility for those vulnerable individuals who have no other means of support. Otherwise the model is vague, based on a loose partnership between individuals, markets and communities. The policy aim is to transfer power from state to community, to construct a new public space, infused by personal relationships where there is potential freedom to shape and activate change. Drawing on feminist scholarship I suggest that the idea of active partnership works powerfully to constitute a new gender order as it informs a series of changing relationships and commitments to take the place of the political obligation of the state to provide accountable welfare services.

The gender order in contemporary neoliberal discourse is legitimised through the use of **freedom** which, along with **action**, is a core organising theme of neoliberalism's social and personal turn. Freedom is the agentic means to the state's withdrawal from social and economic responsibility. In the document **freedom** is the first value of a series of three core values, followed by and in relation to **fairness** and **responsibility** (DH 2010: 4). Freedom is realised through choice as individuals are given power to liberate themselves from dependency on state welfare and are encouraged to exercise their freedom through the market or common action. A focus on freedom and action

provides a legitimacy for a policy vision that seeks to create a new care economy that depends on community and market activity. This is freedom disconnected from civil and political rights, arising through the agency of individuals, and exercised through choice and imagination. In this disconnection, freedom is uncoupled from politics and the public sphere and is potentially located in individual subjects in the choices they make and what they do (Clarke 2005). Individuals are encouraged to orientate themselves towards working and consuming in the market, but also to draw on their skills and creativity to become socially independent, whilst caring for those who cannot look after themselves. Free market freedom also aligns with the disassociation of gender from subjectivity, and the de-coupling of inequalities from social and economic structures. Chapter five illustrates how neoliberal discourse depoliticises social life, as it simultaneously constitutes the social as economic utility (Jenkins 2011).

The last of these analysis chapters is entitled 'Remaking the situation' and turns to the economic register of neoliberal policy discourse to identify where the material context of everyday life and economy work through the document. In chapter six the word **everyday** is chosen as the key word in the document which most closely connects with the situation and the economic register. The idea of the everyday opens a door on how the social is shaped by economic logic and how neoliberal discourse produces and embeds a new care economy through the governance of personal life (Braedley and Luxton 2010). As with home, one of the characteristics of everyday life, as Felski argues, is that it is 'usually distinguished by an absence of boundaries' and is more an idea that refers loosely to ordinary life than to actual people, spaces or places (Felski 1999-2000: 22). I also analyse the words **personalisation** and **co-production** which describe the

policy mechanisms through which untapped community potential for the new care economy is organised. **Personalisation** is one of the key principles on which the government's vision for a modern system of social care is built (DH 2010: 8). It refers specifically to the provision of individual budgets for health and social care, and to the transfer of decision making from professionals to individuals for the kinds of social care services they need or would like to purchase, either from state, voluntary or market providers (Needham 2011). For government personalisation represents 'a positive direction for public service reforms' in contrast to what is seen as the negative impact of public welfare services on individual autonomy (Duffy 2010: 255). In a similar way to the everyday, personalisation is not located in any particular social or economic space, has no boundaries and the untapped potential for personalised and co-produced care is located in abstract persons and spaces, rather than in the material conditions of life, real home spaces. In the years before and immediately following the publication of the document in 2010, personalised and co-produced care, financed through individual budgets, became a major focus for policy development and the delivery of health and social care services (Needham 2011; Slay 2012). Arguably a commitment to personalisation persists in the Coalition government but the term is used less the more the practice is taken for granted.

In the final chapter I draw out and consider the key themes that emerge from these readings in conversation with feminist theory and politics. These themes turn around home as subject-in-situation, and the relationship between ontology and politics, the dynamic which constitutes the woman question (Brown 2004; Maslin 2013) and frames this study. Home has a powerful presence in neoliberal discourse which circulates

through social and personal space to redesign who we are, what we do and where we do it according to utilitarian and economic logic. Subjectivity as individual attribute is pared down in the discourse to degrees of economic usefulness and is split between transcendent entrepreneurial and immanent caring activities. Public and personal space is either economic/market or social/community, and subjects are positioned in these spaces as either inside or outside, good or bad actors. If home can be exemplified through subjectivity-in-situation, home is an abstract place in the discourse, disconnected from the real world, disconnected from politics and empty, though full, of people. Home, as an unreal place, expresses an ambiguous ontology of gender which wraps up the problem and the solution of women: to define and contain the problem (dependency/women) and its solution (care/women) in a private, unspecified and depoliticised arena.

Conversely in feminist theory and politics home is already and has always been a space of power, claimed and unclaimed (Newman 2012, 2013). The aim in the final section of the thesis is to disrupt the idea of the woman question, to expose the problem itself. It is to bring 'feminist imagination' (Bell 1999) to bear on the story of women and dependency, and to tell a different story that emerges from the everyday struggles that women experience (Hemmings 2011, 2012). Woman may be a problem or question in the context of patriarchal societies, but they are not necessarily a problem in themselves. The question of women's power may be problematic, but women are not the problem.

Conclusion

Feminists past and present argue that women are defined as a problem, or as a question to be solved, in a world shaped in the image of men. Two layers of the woman question can be separated out. The first is the question of how women are positioned as other, which is a question of power. The second is the public story of the problem of women as it is told in historical context. The question of power endures through time, and whichever way it is configured, whatever binaries operate to order subjects, women end up in a less powerful or valued position. Public stories told about women as a problem, differ through time. Stories have been told that women are irrational; emotional; hysterical; they are not suited to men's work; their place is at home; their place is at work; and so on. Feminists argue that in contemporary, mainstream politics the question of women's power is configured through the inclusion and erasure of gender (Jenson 2008; Jenkins 2011; Simon-Kumar 2011), and the problem of women is told through the subversive story of dependency and social care (Fraser and Gordon 1994; Tronto 2001; Fine and Glendenning 2005; Chantler 2006). The public story varies, but circles around the idea that women are more or less equal to men, that any inequality is not so much a problem of gender, but down to the effort and ingenuity of individual women. If woman is rendered homeless, powerless, in neoliberal discourse, her subjectivity surrendered to the economic, this is a story that can be challenged. In real life women struggle, support each other, organise and deal with contradictions between home and work (Newman 2013). Their struggle may be discursively marginalised, individualised but it is lived in everyday, in public, personal and intimate spaces.

Chapter two

Feminist Theory and Methodology

The idea of home can be read in so many ways, evoking strong attachments, multiple meanings and everyday experiences. Home can be a country or a building: a place far away, a house, flat, bedsit, hotel room or shop doorway. We can also think of loved ones as home or of coming home to ourselves. We might be homeless. Homes are repositories of meaning and material things in the way they are organised and decorated, and in how objects are collected and placed. The idea of home can evoke family and intimate relationships, it can be a place of creativity, terror, loneliness, love, pleasure, warmth, overcrowding, desperation and plenty. All human life can be expressed through the idea of home. It can stand for almost anything and everything, exemplified in the context of current cultural and academic fascinations with home (Mallett 2004).

With this background of home as multiple expressions of human life, the aim of this thesis is to conduct a genealogy of home in neoliberal discourse. It is to explore home as a cipher for transmitting ontological and political assumptions about gender that underpin and perpetuate gendered inequalities. The purpose is to identify and question the story home tells in the discourse about the problem of women, which is the contemporary configuration of the woman question (Brown 2004; 2005; Maslin 2013).

Ontological questions of what it is to be a woman and what women do are evoked by the idea of home which, by virtue of being a mix of emotional, relational and material activities and experiences, grounds subjectivity and agency in the world (Hekman 2008;

Coole and Frost 2010). In a material sense, home represents the situation, that is the context of our lives, our relationships with others, real places to live, and actual physical resources. Beauvoir's famous sentence that '[O]ne is not born, but rather becomes, a woman' (Beauvoir 1949: 295) situates the process of becoming a woman in such a material context. She understands how subjectivity emerges through the ways that women make sense of who they are in the social, political and economic situations available to them (Beauvoir 1949; Moi 1999).

As a political concept home tends to sit on the private side of the division between public and private spheres. Traditionally home represents a personal place where adults and children are nurtured, fed and prepared for the public world of work, school, social and cultural life. The binary division between public and private is gendered in as much as it reflects and reproduces other taken for granted binaries like man/woman, mind/body, rationality/emotion. These represent relationships of power where woman, body and emotion are other to man, mind and rationality. Even though these binaries have been subject to centuries of theoretical and political critique, they persist in common sense and are translated into experience when women, across age, class and ethnicity, continue to be paid less and perform more caring and domestic work than men (Bryson 2007; Burchardt 2008). Andrea Veltman argues that still 'the basic feature of oppression is its division of the human population into two lots: those who achieve transcendence through constructive activities and those relegated to the sphere of immanence' (Veltman 2004: 122). Assumptions about what women are, what they do, and where they do it are the gendered ontological conditions that underpin the woman question through time.

The first section of this chapter explores feminist theory for insights and tools of analysis to inform this genealogy of home and the woman question in neoliberal discourse. It begins with a discussion of epistemology and ontology. Feminist epistemologies, or theories about what can be known and by whom, offer an alternative to mainstream or established ways of knowing that systematically shape our understanding of home, gender roles and practices. I consider how home is known and understood, and how it has been problematised, sidelined and reconsidered in feminist theory and politics. Questions of ontology in feminist theory are then addressed, as debates move through different perspectives, paying particular attention to those theories that focus on subjectivity in relation to agency and to home as situation. Following these explorations of epistemology and ontology, I turn to questions of power and politics where feminist theory is read for a political perspective on thinking about the intimate relationship between ontology and politics, gender order and power, which constitute the woman question.

In feminist and mainstream political theory, home is situated on the private side of the public private divide. Current debates focus on how this divide is no longer as separated or distinct in everyday life, and how new understandings of a fluidity between public and private circulate in academic and policy settings (Adkins 2009; Newman and Clarke 2009). In the context of these debates it is arguably the case that deeply taken for granted assumptions about who does what work and where continue to inform policy making and are lived as contradictions in women's lives (Burchardt 2008). Finally, the interplay between the ontological and the political is explored, as an expression of the woman question in contemporary politics. Though the phrase the

woman question is not prominent there are grounds to argue that it persists (Brown 2004; Egeland 2011) and is articulated through current and taken for granted assumptions about home and gender.

The second section of this chapter addresses methodology. After a brief discussion of feminist methodology as a link between feminist theory and research, the case is made for adopting feminist genealogy as theoretical method. It is proposed that genealogy is appropriate for this study due to its focus on theory, thinking and language and for its attention to questions rather than solutions. Two other methodological approaches, feminist discourse analysis and a post empiricist approach to policy studies, are outlined to complement and support the broader genealogy. Feminist discourse analysis, according to Michelle Lazar, is particularly attuned to recognising gender order, or gender as ideological structure, and for an examination of how power and domination are produced in language (Lazar 2007). A post empiricist approach to policy analysis examines the relationship between knowledge, politics and interests as they are woven through policy language. This approach to policy research is thought to be more suited to the investigation of power and discourse, than an enquiry into the usefulness, rationality or value of policies themselves (Fischer 2003). The parameters of feminist genealogical method are then outlined to indicate the appropriateness of this method for a close reading of home in neoliberal discourse (Pillow 2003).

Home in feminist theory

The purpose of the genealogy of neoliberal discourse is to isolate and question the presence of home, and the ontological and political assumptions that home conveys in the discourse which constitute the woman question. Feminist literature across time, discipline and perspective (Hemmings 2011) is uniquely placed to untangle strands of thought, discourse and practice that hold gender inequalities in place, and to disrupt deeply embedded and taken for granted assumptions about women in the world. Feminist theory offers a broad spectrum of ideas reflecting 'all the fractures and fractions of current disputes in the humanities' (Benhabib 1993: 100-101). In its diversity, nonetheless, gender is a continuous thread through these theories and practices even though it may be explained or interpreted in different ways (Benhabib 1993: 101).

Questions of epistemology

Home can be a powerful cipher or metaphor for questions of gender in mainstream and feminist theory and politics. Epistemologically these are questions about what home is and what status it has in our knowledge or understanding of society, politics and everyday life. Unravelling the idea of home a little more there are questions of perspective: whose ideas about what home is are to be acknowledged or believed? Can it be a statement of fact, for example, that a woman's place is at home? Can it be that women have a place at all? How can it be true, as Young argues, that women have no home? (Young 1997). How is it that women are expected to identify and engage with

the daily renewal of life? Epistemology is defined as a theory of knowledge, of the status of truths and questions as to how knowledge can be known, how it is produced and by whom (Letherby 2003: 5). Feminist epistemologies offer alternative perspectives to mainstream or established ways of knowing that systematically shape gender roles and practices. An understanding of how knowledge production is gendered means that feminist research, as Gayle Letherby discusses, is necessarily 'grounded in political as well as academic concerns' (Letherby 2003: 5). Neoliberal discourse, under scrutiny in this study, represents dominant political ideas and processes, which produce certain kinds of gendered knowledge and gendered subjects (Brown 2003; 2004; 2005). With discourse as the site of the production of gendered knowledge, the chapter continues with an exploration of how knowledge and understanding of home and gender are filtered through language and discourse, in relation to material reality so as to bring the situation into play.

Language and reality

Feminist theorists have worked closely with the work of Michel Foucault who drew attention to language and discourse as the transmitters of power and knowledge (Foucault 1978). Feminists have developed Foucault's perspective on power to question how gender inequalities are inscribed and maintained (Butler 1990; McNay 1992). For Foucault power does not necessarily operate hierarchically and is not fixed in the institutional form of sovereignty or government (Foucault 1977). Rather power only exists in its exercise, as it is encountered between me and you, doctors and patients, teachers and students. Power has an immanence or spontaneity, in Foucault's

understanding, circulating through all human relationships, and these relations of power are inextricably entwined with knowledge. The combination of power/knowledge, which are one and the same, is transmitted through discourse operating as a web of interactions (Foucault 1978; Hall 2001). Stuart Hall suggests that for Foucault, discourse is more than language or conversation, it means 'a group of statements which provide a language for talking about - a way of representing the knowledge about - a particular topic at a particular historical moment... Discourse is about the production of knowledge through language' (Hall 2001: 72). For Foucault discourses 'rule in' certain ways of talking about things to limit and restrict other ways of talking (Hall 2001: 72). In this way 'discourse produces objects of knowledge' like sex, gender and home (Hall 2001: 73). Hall explains how discourse constructs the topic at hand:

It defines and produces the objects of our knowledge. It governs the way that a topic can be meaningfully talked about. It also influences how ideas are put into practice and used to regulate the conduct of others (Hall 2001: 72).

Alongside and through objects of knowledge like home and gender, discourses create and label historical subjects like the hysterical woman or the homosexual, and orders them hierarchically through systems of categorisation and regulation. Hence the binary distinction of man/woman, straight/gay, white/black, young/old, where a universal, primary or normal category is separated by a slash from the second, which is other and less than, to the first. These either/or categories lodge into common sense so that they come to be understood as deeply and unquestionably true. While feminists engage in critical debate with Foucault (McNay 1992) his understanding of power/knowledge and

discourse have provided the analytical tools to disassemble taken for granted relationships of power that constitute and maintain gender inequalities. This, as Lois McNay argues, presents a challenge to feminists to reposition feminist politics 'outside of the binary of sexual difference upon which...it has been based' (McNay 1992: 114).

For this study of neoliberal discourse, feminist theories offer an understanding of how political language shapes reality and how discourse operates to produce knowledge and regulate power (McNay 1992, 2000; Hekman 2000). Recent debates in feminist theory have sought to align this understanding of language with a contemporary interpretation of materialism, discussed more fully below (Rahaman and Witz 2003; Alamo and Hekman 2008; Coole and Frost 2010; Howie 2010; Bauhardt 2013). As Susan Hekman suggests, a feminist materialist approach draws attention to the dynamic between linguistic constructions of gender and how gender is played out in everyday life, in relation to others and to the material world (Hekman 2008: 3). The task of feminist theory, Hekman contends, is to incorporate the insights of linguistic constructionism without rejecting the material, thus recognising that language and reality intertwine (Hekman 2008: 4). The idea that language constructs reality persists, Hekman argues, but this is not the whole story since language 'interacts with other elements in this construction'. What is needed, she states, 'is not a theory that ignores language as modernism did, but rather a more complex theory that incorporates language, materiality and technology in the equation' (Hekman 2008: 91-92). These ideas inform a feminist epistemology that recognises how reality is constituted materially *and* linguistically, and moves 'towards a feminist theory of action which recognises language and materiality as being of equal value' (Bauhardt 2013: 367). The

interplay between language and reality is the epistemological basis of this study which focuses on how language constitutes the idea of home, and regulates gender in neoliberal discourse, in the context of the social, economic and political conditions of everyday life.

For the reality or situation side of the epistemological framework for this study, I draw on phenomenological perspectives in feminist theory which bring the material into play through an understanding of the significance of 'the situation' (Coole and Frost 2010: 3; Stavro 2000). In a similar way to the linguistic turn in feminism after Foucault, phenomenology questions the taken for granted or common sense in everyday knowledge about things, ourselves, each other and the world. Phenomenological epistemology rests on the understanding that we can only know the world through our senses and that knowledge about the world reflects and is produced in social and historical context, in situations. A phenomenological methodology is based on the idea that human beings create the world they live in through the information they receive about who they are, in relation to the people and conditions that surround them. Phenomenology also offers the concept of being-in-the-world which denotes the subjective ways that individuals know, understand and attach themselves to the world, and following Beauvoir, the grounding of the subject in the real world, or situation (Moi 1999). The phenomenological method predates and aligns with Foucauldian perspectives in some ways, in its purpose to question what is known in recognition that other ways of knowing are possible outside of immediately known common sense (Berger and Luckmann 1967).

Foucauldian and phenomenological perspectives in feminist theory offer an integrated approach to language and reality, and thread through the theoretical and methodological context of this study. The first offers an understanding of how power/knowledge is transmitted through discourse which constitutes things like home and gender, and creates the possibilities of what can and cannot be known. The second grounds subjectivity in an understanding of situation, of being in the world. By incorporating the situation, or the material world, into my analysis of language and discourse, the aim is to bring the contingent realities of women's lives into theoretical and political conversation (Hekman 2008).

The key methodological theme of this work is questioning, to question home and its constitution through language and reality; to question the ontological assumptions that home carries in neoliberal discourse, and to expose the woman question in contemporary politics. Foucauldian and phenomenological perspectives are appropriate since they are geared specifically towards questioning the taken for granted. Together they support a focus on home as a device or expression of the woman question in contemporary politics. Both approaches inform feminist genealogical method, which is the chosen method for this inquiry. Vikki Bell suggests this approach when she writes that:

As genealogists, we may interrogate some small aspect of this present...interrogate boundaries that make up the order of things in this present. One cannot think of all that happens in the present, but the purpose is not to understand all, so that one might 'go to the source', and affect a totalised change. Instead, the purpose is to follow those "lines of fragility in the present"

so as 'to grasp why and how that-which-is might no longer be that-which-is'
(Foucault 1988: 36 quoted in Bell 1999: 146).

Theories and principles of feminist genealogy are explored later in the chapter. In the following paragraphs I look at how home has been theorised and understood in feminist theory across different perspectives and historical moments. This provides the epistemological context for more focused attention on ontological and political debates.

Understanding home in feminist theory

Home moves in and out of focus in feminist theory across disciplines and perspectives. It threads through theories relating to subjectivity and agency, extending into questions of social structure, to public/private distinctions, the world, material life, social change and more. At times home is prominent and specifically addressed, at other times it is less visible. While there are problems in dividing feminist theory into 'waves' or neat historical periods (Hemmings 2011), it is helpful to use three overlapping, ideal type moments - modern, post structural and late modern - as an analytical device to notice changing theoretical images of home in time. Though historical, these moments speak to the present in the ways home can be *problematized*, *sidelined* and *reconsidered* in feminist theory. In modern feminism home is problematized as the place from which women need to escape drudgery, inequality, boredom, exploitation and violence (Friedan 1963; Oakley 1974; Rowbotham 1973; Hanmer and Itzin 2000). With the phrase 'the personal is political' feminists challenged the assumption that 'women's close

association with responsibility for the domestic sphere was natural and inevitable' (Okin 1998: 123). Feminists pointed to the structural connections between women's domestic role at home, and their inequality in the workplace and brought a critique of family to the centre of feminist theory and politics (Oakley 1976; Okin 1998). The problematisation of home is a spur to recognise the potential of the public sphere for women, as the source of economic independence, self fulfilment, exploration and creativity. Once in the public sphere, however, women experience inequality and discrimination which have been the driving force behind campaigns for equal pay and equal opportunity, social rights and equal treatment, and economic independence and recognition. In the modern mode, the motivation or trajectory in feminism tends to be towards the relative economic freedom of the public sphere as a space of potential for women.

Home is sidelined in feminist theories that are less concerned with structural social or economic inequality. Following Foucault, post structural feminism turns to culture and everyday practices, to focus more on the discursive or social construction of subjectivity, to identify and challenge binary oppositions which order the world through language. Feminists challenge the binaries that we assume to be true, as in male/female, man/woman, masculine/feminine, hetero/homosexual through which the modern subject is thoughtfully or theoretically constructed (Butler 1990). They 'attend(ing) to the historical processes that, through discourse, position subjects and produce their experiences' (Scott 1992: 25). In this view female subjectivity is continually constituted through language and discourse. There are no essential or constant features to being a woman that can be pinned down to provide the basis for the

emancipatory politics of modern feminisms. If power/knowledge works to constitute female subjectivity, women's bodies and experiences are contingent rather than stable or essential. Feminists critical of this approach have argued that attention to culture and discourse skews feminism towards the theoretical and isolates feminist theory from the real world of feminist politics (Hekman 2000, 2008). Toril Moi, for example, argues that post structural critiques of the modern feminist subject have taken women's sense of self and experience and made it problematic to the extent that there has been a theoretical 'thinning down' and 'disappearance of women from the world' (Moi 1999: 9). These debates are background to a social and material turn in feminist theory (Hekman 2008; Coole and Frost 2010).

Home is reconsidered in feminist theories that attempt to integrate insights from modern and post structural accounts of subjectivity and agency (McNay 2000; Hekman 2000). Theorists develop understandings of the processes through which subjects are formed in the relationship between the self and the body, the self and others, and the self and the world (Young 1997; Moi 1999). A set of conceptual relationships emerge from a mix of ideas found in either modern and/or post structural perspectives outlined briefly above. These suggest balancing the foundational certainties found in modern social theory with the uncertain flux of post structural thought. New dichotomies emerge in the balance of certainty/uncertainty, or stability/contingency, which evoke how subjectivities are configured in the dynamic between the need for a stable sense of self living in the world and a recognition of the contingency and instability of subjective states (Hekman 2000; McNay 2000). To articulate this dynamic feminists have drawn on the existential thought of Beauvoir, linking subjectivity with situated experience and the

concrete world of women's everyday lives (Moi 1999; Kruks 2001). More recently, some of the emphasis has moved from female subjectivity and situated bodies to a specific reconsideration of women in the world, and to women and home (Young 1997; Pateman 2008; Kruks 2008). This work coincides with a material turn in feminist theory and methodology, that 'brings the material back into the forefront of feminism', with a shift from language to reality and from knowledge (epistemology) to being (ontology) (Alamo and Hekman 2008: 11). What is described as a 'renewed' or new materialism, Diana Coole and Samantha Frost argue, offers a 'practical, politically engaged social theory, devoted to the critical analysis of actual conditions of existence and their inherent inequality' (Coole and Frost 2010: 24-25). Hekman points out that feminists 'want to be able to make statements about reality – that women are oppressed; that their social, economic and political status is inferior to that of men... If everything is a linguistic construction, then these claims lose their meaning. They become only one more interpretation of an infinitely malleable reality' (Hekman 2008: 3).

Home stands at the cusp of these debates in feminist theory, holding a tension between language and reality, knowledge and being, subjectivity and situation (Hemmings 2012). I am concerned to draw attention to the dynamic between woman and her situation (Veltman 2004), and to bring the weight of real life into my analytical framework. As Hekman suggests, the 'challenge that confronts us.. is to... deconstruct the language/reality dichotomy by defining a theoretical position that does not privilege either language or reality but instead explains and builds on their intimate interaction' (Hekman 2008: 3). To attempt this, I align feminist approaches to genealogy informed by the work of Foucault with feminist approaches that draw on Beauvoir's

existential phenomenology. I propose that these offer the tools for a critical engagement with discourse and language as they constitute home in relation to context or situation, that is home as material reality and expression of social, political and economic inequalities. In the following section, I explore questions of ontology in feminist theory as they relate to home and to this study, to develop the argument that home holds a tension or an 'intimate interaction' between language and reality (Hekman 2008: 3).

Questions of ontology

Questions of ontology are intimately linked with epistemology, with how things can be known and who can know them (Hemmings 2012). Feminist ontologies are theories of being or existence, which focus on how subjectivity is constituted, and are concerned with the question 'what is a woman?' (Beauvoir 1949: 15; Moi 1999). With home as an ontological category in this study, as subjectivity-in-situation, I explore feminist debates that lead towards an understanding of subjectivity as being-in-the-world (Young 1997; Moi 1999).

Aligned with epistemology, feminist ontology interrogates mainstream theoretical and political assumptions about gendered subjectivity. This interrogation has developed in critique of seventeenth century Cartesian dualism which distinguishes mind and body as separate entities, each with its function of rationality (mind) and emotion (body) (Prokhovnik 1999: 21). The philosopher René Descartes was of the view that the capacity to think makes us human, and that existence comes into being with a thought,

I am. With this understanding, Raia Prokhovnik points out, Descartes 'explicitly fused rationality and (an abstract and universalised) subjectivity', (Prokhovnik 1999: 61). Cartesian logic, as feminist writers have argued since Mary Wollstonecraft (1792), is gendered in as much as mind and rationality are assumed to be masculine, while body and emotion are designated as feminine. Translated into politics rationality is a claim to freedom, and is 'the criterion by which some individuals and groups have been, spuriously, denied subjectivity (Prokhovnik 1999: 61). Liz Stanley and Sue Wise argue that 'feminist ontology is concerned .. with rejecting Cartesian binary ways of understanding the relationship between body, mind and emotions' (Stanley and Wise 2002: 4). Feminist epistemologists have deconstructed Cartesian binaries, the common sense belief that there are sharp distinctions between mind/body and reason/emotion, and the idea that human life is necessarily patterned or structured through binary opposites (Kemp and Squires 1997; Prokhovnik 1999). Alongside this critique, feminists have also questioned their own understanding of sex, gender and subjectivity (Butler 1990; Barrett and Phillips 1992). Many have argued, following Judith Butler, that modern feminist concerns with challenging patriarchy within social and economic contexts assumed an essential female subject as the basis for collective political action (Butler 1990, 1995; 2004; Kemp and Squires 1997). Butler challenges the idea that sex and gender are pre-given or essential characteristics of existence, and argues that both are produced through discursive categories that are already positioned in relationships of power. Just as Cartesian dualism privileges the masculine subject, feminists have argued that the category woman also privileges a white, heterosexual, European and/or middle class identity that excludes a range of differences and experiences between

women, not least around race, ethnicity, age, class, sexuality and disability (Tanesini 1999).

Controversies in feminist theory continue as to what might have been gained or lost in focusing less on woman as a coherent subject (Moi 1999; Marshall and Witz 2004; Alamo and Hekman 2008; Coole and Frost 2010). Certain aspects of these debates are significant for this thesis: not least the apparent fragility, or 'thinning down' of woman as a subject in ontological debates, which, as Moi argues, potentially heralds the 'disappearance of women from the world' (Moi 1999: 9); and the central concern in feminist ontology to challenge binary distinctions which fix gender. Butler reveals just how subjectivities are constituted through binary oppositions of man/woman; sex/gender, and how these categories, sedimented through time appear, and are experienced, as though they have always been (Butler 1990; Salih 2002: 46). Through these oppositions and categories subjects are produced in hierarchical order, so that on entering the world we are categorised and designated as particular subjects. Butler comments on Beauvoir's claim:

If there is something right in Beauvoir's claim that one is not born but rather *becomes* a woman, it follows that *woman* itself is a term in process, a becoming, a constructing that cannot rightfully be said to originate or to end. As on ongoing discursive practice, it is open to reinvention and resignification. Even when gender seems to congeal into the most reified forms, the 'congealing' is itself an insistent and insidious practice, sustained and regulated by various social means. It is for Beauvoir never possible finally to become a woman... (Butler 1990: 43).

In Beauvoir's existential philosophy existence precedes essence so that a woman's subjectivity is not a question of who or what she is to begin with, but a question of her situation and her lived experience, how she makes sense of her situation sedimented through time, through her interactions with the world (Moi 1999: 63). What can be captured here is an ontology of becoming in discursive and material context.

Subjectivity and the lived body

An ontology of becoming is developed by feminists who engage with Beauvoir's philosophy to situate emergent subjectivity in the lived body. Moi, for example, argues that 'it makes no difference at all whether the woman's difference is taken to be natural or cultural, essential or constructed', since 'a woman is a concrete embodied human being (of a certain age, nationality, race, class and with a wholly unique store of experiences)' (Moi 1999: 35). Moi uses the term lived experience to convey 'the whole of a person's subjectivity', including 'the way an individual makes sense of her situation and actions' (Moi 1999: 63). Subjectivity, in this sense, can only be embodied, and can only exist in situation. Moi writes that:

When Beauvoir writes that the body is not a thing, but a situation, she means that the body-in-the-world that we are, is an embodied intentional relationship to the world. Understood as a situation in its own right, the body places us in the middle of many other situations. Our subjectivity is always embodied (Moi 1999: 65).

In a similar way to Butler, Moi's argument places individual ontology, woman-in-the-world, 'as open ended becoming' in a situated relationship with gender. By introducing the dynamic between subject and situation as body, attention is then drawn to the material reality or situation of power and material resources through which bodies move in the world. The idea of the lived body, or being-in-situation concretely expresses the relationship between individual agency and social/economic and political forces (Stavro 2000: 146). In Beauvoir's analysis, as Sonia Kruks suggests, the situation is externally made or constituted though it is subjectively experienced and negotiated. In a sense, gender is out there, concretely produced in the world. The situation 'is not brought into being by women's project. It is, moreover, a condition which is *general* to women as a certain social category of human beings' (Kruks 1987: 116). In this sense, the argument is not that women have the same subjectivity which arises from sharing bodily characteristics, but that they share experiences of being positioned as other to men. Veltman argues that Beauvoir offers a powerful framework for understanding the relationship between agency and structure, providing 'an illuminating critique of continuing gender inequalities in marriage and divisions of domestic work' (Veltman 2004: 121). For Beauvoir:

..the situation of woman is that she – a free and autonomous being like all other human creatures – nevertheless finds herself living in a world where men compel her to assume the status of the Other. They propose to stabilize her as object and to doom her to immanence since her transcendence is to be overshadowed and forever transcended by another ego (*conscience*) which is essential and sovereign (Beauvoir 1949: 29).

Feminists writing about subjectivity as a sense of becoming within an unsuitable environment, as Winterson argues (Winterson 2013: 13), evoke the idea of the lived body as the literal embodiment of subjectivity-in-situation. The concept of the lived body Young argues, unites the

..idea of a physical body acting and experiencing in a specific socio-cultural context; it is body-in-situation. For existentialist theory, *situation* denotes the produce of *facticity* and *freedom*. The person always faces the material facts of her body and its relation to a given environment (Young 2002: 415).

Furthermore,

The idea of the lived body recognizes that a person's subjectivity is conditioned by socio-cultural facts and behaviour and expectations of others in ways that she has not chosen. At the same time, the theory of the lived body says that each person takes up and acts in relation to these un-chosen facts in her own way (Young 2002: 418).

Young writes that there is potential in the concept of the lived body as a replacement for gender (Young 2002: 410). In itself, she argues, subjectivity is not gendered since gender only comes into play when it engages with the world. Young contends, however, that gender has an important theoretical role, which is 'to draw attention to how gender is constituted through structural dimensions of inequality, including: sexual divisions of labour; normative heterosexuality; and hierarchies of power (Young 2002: 410). Thus Young sees that the concept of gender is problematic for theorizing subjectivity, since gender only hits when the world hits, nonetheless, she emphasises

that gender is crucial in theorising structural inequalities, the character of the world (Young 2002: 411).

Subjectivity-in-situation

Situating subjectivity in the lived body is taken a step further by feminists whose work shifts from a focus on female subjectivity and situated bodies to a consideration of women-at-home-in-the-world, and home as a second body (Young 1997; Pateman 2008; Kruks 2008; Jacobson 2009). Kirsten Jacobson extends the idea of the lived body as body in situation, when she argues that '[O]ur home is a second body for us' (Jacobson 2009: 361). As with the idea of the lived body in situation, home as second body is lived differently in different situations, as ways-of-being-at-home-in-the-world (Jacobson 2010). To illustrate this Jacobson writes about home for those experiencing agoraphobia: 'although the agoraphobic's fears ultimately arise from issues of being-at-home....the lived stance of the agoraphobic reflects a fundamental inability to *be at-home*' (Jacobson 2010: 231). Jacobson suggests that for women 'it is her inability to be at-home that creates in her an inability to go beyond the house' (Jacobson 2010: 236). Thus to be at home in the world is a condition of subjectivity and of politics. Jacobson points to intimate connections between ontology and politics (Maslin 2013) when she writes that the

..model of the person that denies that they are first at-home, instead taking us first and foremost to be individuals – as the modern conception arguably does – fails to adequately address our human nature, and in so doing, opens the

possibility for gross mistreatment of the very citizens it is attempting to describe and cultivate. Political space can be universal only through a reconciliation of what is originally in tension rather than through a given equality of indifference (Jacobson 2010: 245).

Jacobson questions conventional ideas about home, and theorises home as an ontological and a political space. We are 'essentially beings who need to be at-home', she argues, with 'a sense of belonging, of having familiar pathways' (Jacobson 2010: 223). As individuals, she suggests, we need 'a secured sense of ourselves and what is ours' (Jacobson 2010: 223). Jacobson identifies home as a way of being-in-the-world that is 'situated' and 'orientated'. Home is, she argues, the material 'anchoring point that allows us to navigate among the multitude of places, things, customs, people... that are pointedly not familiar to us – that are other' (Jacobson 2010: 223). In making a specific link between ontology and politics, Jacobson argues that we can only become citizens or public beings in a shared space, 'by emerging from our familiar personal territories – our homes' (Jacobson 2010: 219). It is in being at home that we develop 'passive elements of our experience...that slip into the background to become the stability on which we depend without the need to pay heed to it' (Jacobson 2009: 371).

Jacobson is clear that it is passivity, rather than activity, that is the ground of freedom, since it is passivity that allows us to be open to what is outside of us (Jacobson 2009: 372). Thus, citizenship is learnt through experiences that arise only 'through our way of being at-home-in-the-world' (Jacobson 2010: 221). Following Jacobson, it might be argued that home as second body, as subjectivity-in-situation, holds a lived tension between closing and opening, security and vulnerability (Jacobson 2009: 372). Her work

brings an understanding of the contingency of subjectivity, premised on a home good enough to provide the space for stability and passivity.

In addressing the intimacy between the ontological and the political, Jacobson's work resonates with Maslin's analysis of Hannah Arendt's philosophy and her understanding of the necessary conditions for political action (Arendt 1958; Maslin 2013: 599). Arendt theorises three kinds of activity: labour, which provides the necessities of life; work, which refers to craftsmanship and the making of the world of things; and action, which is a combination of thinking, talking and acting politically directing towards starting something new, to natality (Arendt 1958). Arendt writes that

..of the three, action has the closest connection with the human condition of natality; the new beginning inherent in birth can make itself felt in the world only because the newcomer possesses the capacity of beginning something anew, that is, of acting. In this sense of initiative, an element of action, and therefore of natality, is inherent in all human activities. Moreover, since action is the political activity par excellence, natality, and not mortality, may be the central category of the political, as distinguished from metaphysical, thought (Arendt 1958: 9).

This understanding of becoming, making something new, birth or natality is akin to the phenomenology of Beauvoir (1949), when she argues that:

Woman is not a completed reality, but rather a becoming, and it is in her becoming that she should be compared with men, that is, her possibilities should be defined. What gives rise to much of the debate is the tendency to

reduce her to what she has been, to what she is today, in raising the questions of her capabilities; for the fact is that capabilities are clearly manifested only when they have been realised (Beauvoir 1949: 66).

Jacobson argues that the condition for becoming, for political subjectivity, is passivity, the time and space for being. This is precisely, as Burchardt argues, what women do not have (Burchardt 2008). Finding this understanding in Arendt's work, Maslin points to her thinking that working the double shift, domestic and paid employment, 'requires one to be constantly engaged in labour and renders solitude, hence self reflection, exceedingly rare'. Arendt, Maslin argues, finds that 'the "woman problem" is a unique form of loneliness in which an individual lacks the space and solitude necessary for thinking, and in this thoughtless existence, a hollow identity emerges' (Maslin 2013: 599). To have the space to think is of prime concern for Arendt, since thinking leads to questioning which is, for her, the essence of politics. Maslin writes that for Arendt

..one's way of being profoundly affects one's prospects for political engagement...Moreover, the mechanism by which political rights can be assured is *action*. Yet for the individual in a state of ontological loneliness, political action is all but impossible. Therefore if individuals in a marginalised group find themselves in a state of utter loneliness, the prospects of addressing a lack of political rights are slim. Arendt's feminism is gender neutral in the sense that the ontological dynamic at work challenges stable notions of gender since it also comprises an issue of human existence more widely (Maslin 2013: 599).

The image of political subjectivity, as contingent and always becoming, is at odds with the ideological constitution of political subjects or notions of citizenship that occur

within nation states (Arendt 1951). Where states have the power to determine who is and who is not a citizen, who is and is not viable or useful, and where or where not human beings might go, individuals are shoehorned into subject positions through which only certain forms of activity are possible (Arendt 1958).

This study is located in intimate spaces between the ontological and the political and devoted to the study of 'the underlying beliefs about existence that shape our everyday relationships to ourselves, to others, and to the world' (Coole and Frost 2010: 5). It is informed by the debates explored above and to 'a critical and non-dogmatic reengagement with political economy, where the nature of, and relationship between, the material details of everyday life and broader geopolitical and socioeconomic structures is...explored afresh' (Coole and Frost 2010: 7).

Questions of power and politics

At the centre of feminist theory and politics, Anne Phillips argues, there are 'three common starting points: that mainstream definitions are saturated with gender; that this saturation has worked in such a way as to legitimate women's lack of political power; and that much of the process of mainstream politics depends on a particular way of conceiving the public-private divide' (Phillips 1998: 6). Whatever the starting point, Phillips argues, 'feminism is politics' and is primarily concerned with social transformation (Phillips 1998). There seems to be a consensus in feminist scholarship that the purpose of politics is to challenge, dismantle or transform gender relations, though there is also considerable debate as to strategy. These debates are mapped

around two feminist stories (Fraser 2005; Hemmings 2011). First, where feminists engage with gender in social and economic contexts, the focus tends to be on the transformation of patriarchal structures that produce gender inequality. The aim of feminist politics in this scenario is to campaign to transform structural inequalities through equalising the gendered distribution of power and resources. Second, where differences between women, and individual or group identity is the focus of feminist politics, campaigning is centred on raising awareness of discrimination through claims for recognition. Clare Hemmings argues that these stories more or less tell the tale of changes in feminist theory and political strategy over the last half century, but do so by constructing a narrative that condenses or omits a range of alternative ideas and actions (Hemmings 2005; 2011; Newman 2013). Between these two possibilities for feminist politics, Hekman argues, 'there is no middle ground between the metaphysical modernist subject on one hand and the total deconstruction of identity on the other' (Hekman 2000: 290). Both positions, she suggests, limit rather than open up spaces for political action.

Spaces for political action, Wendy Brown argues, are there to be claimed or carved out by feminist politics (Brown 2005:49-50). These spaces seem to be squeezed or crowded out in feminist debates about the character of neoliberal discourse, and its uncomfortable association with feminism (Newman 2013). For Nancy Fraser, neoliberal politics moves in a close and uneasy alliance with feminism (Fraser 2009). She is interested in the way that 'capitalism periodically remakes itself in moments of historical rupture, in part by recuperating strands of critique directed against it' (Fraser 2009: 109). In the case of feminism this is initiated, Fraser argues, through a co-

incidence in feminist and capitalist critiques of patriarchy: the first critical of patriarchal power which 'stood in the way of women's emancipation'; and the second of old patriarchal landed interests that resisted the growth of capitalism (Fraser 2009: 115). Though different, these critiques of traditional authority, she argues 'appear to converge' in useful ways for neoliberal policy making (Fraser 2009: 115). Fraser refers to the gendering of policy discourse, where feminist agendas around home and work align with economic strategies to strengthen labour market flexibility as, for example, in New Labour third way politics (Coote 2000). As feminist ideas are incorporated into neoliberal policies, Fraser and other feminist observers argue that a transformative feminist agenda is absorbed and diluted (Wilkinson 1998; Coote 2000; McRobbie 2000). Fraser identifies the theoretical and political processes through which this occurs, in the transition from modern to post structural feminist theory and politics (Fraser 2009: 99). Her argument is that the turn away from redistribution and towards 'recognition dovetailed all too neatly with a rising neo-liberalism that wanted to repress all memory of social egalitarianism' (Fraser 2009: 109). Feminism, Fraser suggests, has been unwittingly complicit in supporting new and emerging forms of capitalism, and that '..cultural changes jump started by the second wave have served to legitimate a structural transformation of capitalist society that runs directly counter to feminist visions of a just society' (Fraser 2009: 99).

Fraser's argument is compelling, she theorises and puts into words something elusive or hard to grasp in contemporary feminist politics (Coote 2000; Franklin 2000b; McRobbie 2000; Molyneux 2002; Hawkesworth 2009). Her analysis offers feminists a conceptual frame for understanding and thinking through just how a feminist political

agenda is flattened into useful economic processes. Other feminists have studied this configuration of feminism and neoliberalism to work out precisely how this happens through theoretical and political processes. Some argue that feminist ideas have been hooked into neoliberal social policies through a coincidence between feminist and communitarian, or late modern social theories, where feminist radicalism is softened by conservative reason (Frazer and Lacey 1993; Franklin 2007). This is the process, Mary Hawkesworth argues, whereby neoliberalism pulls feminist ideas into its rationality, simultaneously incorporating and erasing feminist knowledge (Hawkesworth 2009). Others point out how this depoliticises gender, and also how theoretically complicated and ambiguous this process is: at the point where feminist knowledge is erased, or women are written out, gender is simultaneously folded in to government policy and public discourse (Jenson 2008; Simon-Kumar 2011). Janet Newman points out, however, that these theoretical complications and debates sometimes miss the day to day engagement of women, feminist activists, campaigners, and front line workers with neoliberal political realities. Newman argues that women do carve out spaces for political action, they work the neoliberal environment and are active in shaping changes to its logic (Newman 2012, 2013).

Theory, politics and practice are deeply intertwined in this complex relationship between feminism and neoliberalism, but there are coincidences between feminism and neoliberalism that need to be understood for this study. As I explore in more detail in the following chapter, many of the faces of neoliberal rationality appear in public discourse via an integration and alteration of a range of useful and oppositional ideas and theories. In practice, as with the case of New Labour, women were key players,

involved in negotiating the integration of feminist and neoliberal politics, having campaigned for years to bring feminist issues to the centre of Labour party politics in Britain, and to represent women, all women, in parliament (Childs 2004). So an interesting question here, as Newman points out, is just how did this happen? (Newman 2013: 202-203). In other words, feminists were actively involved, and had an impact on how neoliberal policies were formulated (Coote 2000; Franklin 2000b; Childs 2004). So it was not only, as Fraser argues, that feminists might have 'unwittingly supplied a key ingredient', but that feminists and other actors in neoliberal politics worked to integrate a feminist ingredient, albeit in a pragmatic form (Newman 2013). What Fraser doesn't take account of, Newman suggests, are the ways that neoliberalism has itself been transformed by feminism, has had to 'adapt and flex to take account of feminist projects'. (Newman 2013: 207)

One might..depict feminism as functional to neoliberalism in two different and contradictory ways. In the first the expanded role of female labour – more flexible, less unionised and more suited to the service economy – can be viewed as constitutive of a new economic order of flexible accumulation. In the second, women are viewed as integral to advanced neoliberal strategies of governing the social, sustaining the domestic economy that reproduces the conditions of capital accumulation (Newman 2013: 207).

Through neoliberal policy making, Newman argues, feminism has had an impact on social and economic life. Working time policies have meant that '[E]mployers come to bear the "costs" of equality governance, parental leave and more complex patterns of work demanded by women's entry as full-worker citizens' (Newman 2013: 207).

Similarly, the welfare state has invested 'in development, empowerment and training and to launch a multiplicity of "social" programmes in order to enable women both to contribute to the economy and to manage care work' (Newman 2013: 207).

More than this though, Newman has documented and conceptualised how women politicians, campaigners and activists have, and continue to, generate and occupy "'spaces of power"' at the intersection between changing political and governmental forms on the one hand and social movement and activist struggles politics on the other' (Newman 2012, 2013: 211). Feminist political agency, however managed, is working inside and outside neoliberal politics. So what can seem like theoretical tightness is opened up by empirical research precisely at the cusp of inside/outside, where feminists 'lever to open cracks or spaces within the dominant' (Newman 2013: 211). Brown has argued similarly that what 'feminist politics requires are cultivated political *spaces* for posing and questioning feminist political norms', she writes that:

Our spaces, while requiring some definition and protection, cannot be clean, sharply bounded disembodied, or permanent: to engage postmodern modes of power *and* honour specifically feminist knowledges, they must be heterogeneous, roving, relatively non-institutionalized, and democratic to the point of exhaustion (Brown 1995: 50).

These spaces of power, levered, inhabited, worked and imagined, are neither wholly public nor private, they occupy a different ground, within and outside of dominant discourse and power. Meanwhile the public/private dichotomy, which reflects and sets up traditional patriarchal authority continues to order gender in neoliberal discourse.

Home enters this scenario in interesting ways. Cultural expressions and everyday

experiences of home, make home neither public nor private, though home is still presumed to be situated within houses in private spaces in policy discourse. In the next section I explore how feminists theorise home in relation to the public/private dichotomy.

Home-in-the-world

Home carries a range of unquestioned assumptions in everyday life, policy, politics, culture and academia. The recent explosion of interest in home has created large amounts of data and knowledge about houses, home and personal life (Mallet 2004; Pink 2004; Blunt and Dowling 2006). Much of this work brings home into view in challenging ways, but still this is a production of information about home that tends to infuse and expand existing common knowledge. This knowledge situates home in social, political and economic imagination, shaping how we think about home in public and private lives. Although home is firmly situated on the private side of the public/private dichotomy in mainstream theory and politics (Prokhovnik 1999; Pateman 1989), feminist writers point to the instability and fluidity of boundaries between private/public and home/work (Okin 1998; Clarke et al 2007). Despite movement between and challenges to private/public distinctions, home continues to represent personal space where women and children, nature and emotion are separated from the public world of work, men, public life, science and rationality (Prokhovnik 1999; Blunt and Dowling 2006). These oppositions, as Blunt and Dowling argue, 'valorize one side and devalue the other' (Blunt and Dowling 2006: 17). Work, rational thinking and public life are the condition for freedom, creativity, individual autonomy, for transcendence,

and are superior in this frame to home, emotion, immanence and privacy (Prokhovnik 1999, Blunt and Dowling 2006). This separation is supported by the historical disassociation of home and work during the upheavals of the industrial revolution (Ehrenreich and English 1979). Barbara Ehrenreich and Deirdre English argue that home life is transformed during this time along with changing expectations of what women do. They point out that though women were subordinated in the 'old patriarchal order' they had a degree of power derived from what they knew and what they did (Ehrenreich and English 1979). This power, they suggest, diminished as women's productive and reproductive knowledge and skills split between paid work in the factory and unpaid responsibilities at home. Conceptually home becomes women's space, and reproduction women's natural role. Even though women, and children, are working in factories, they are expected to tend to the earthy, natural, bodily, routine and messy aspects of living. At the same time, at least conceptually, men are then freed from the necessities of the day to day, to think and do, to be productive in economic and political life⁸ (Okin 1998: 118). The fantasy that women are fundamentally connected to home makes working for a living more difficult for them (Ross 1993).

Feminist writers have been critical of the public/private distinction in a number of ways. Liberal feminists demanded and struggled for the right to own property, to vote and to participate fully in the public sphere (Bryson 1992). Socialist feminists saw the cause of their oppression and exploitation in the capitalist mode of production, and aligned their cause to that of working class men (Kollantai 1909). Both these positions were

⁸ Historians of working class experiences of the Industrial Revolution might disagree that this was a privileged position, see Engels, F. (1892) *Conditions of the Working Class in England*, London: Panther Books; and Thompson, E.P. (1963) *The Making of the English Working Class*, London: Penguin Books.

informed by the lives of women who negotiated the unrealistic split between private and public life, and the problem of how to look after children *and* earn money and create a public life. The split between home and work has been characterized as women's dual burden (Oakley 1974) or 'second shift' (Hochschild 1989). Arlie Hochschild argues from her research with American families that as women move into the labour force they work a second shift of housework and childcare, which can amount to an extra month's work a year (Hochschild 1989). This time is not recognized by the time frame of industrial capitalism, and the work done in this time, along with the time taken, remains hidden (Bryson 2007; Sevenhuijsen 2002; Hochschild 2003). This is partly due to the ways that domestic and caring tasks can be fragmented and woven into other processes rather than being 'done' as identifiable and discrete activities. As such they often involve doing more than one thing at a time, sometimes described as multitasking (Bryson 2007: 137), and often require 'being there' rather than 'doing anything' (Nowotny 1994; Bryson 2007: 131). In practice, public and private; work and home; formal paid work and informal care work are not delineated activities or categories, but intermingle in layered connections (McKie et al 2002), 'situating home [at] the nexus of public and private spheres of paid and unpaid care' (Martin-Matthews 2007: 229).

The sexual division of labour at issue here, Young maintains, is one of the 'basic axes of gender structures' which sits at the 'core of a gendered division of labour in modern societies .. the division between private and public work' (Young 2002: 422). Care giving, Young argues, is melded into the gendered structure of public/private. This caring 'for persons, their bodily needs, their emotional well being, and the maintenance

of their dwellings – takes place primarily in unpaid labour in private homes’ (Young 2002: 422). Crucially, ‘it is still the case that this unpaid caring and household work falls primarily to women. The operations of the entire society depend on the regular performance of this work, yet it goes relatively unnoticed and little valued’ (Young 2002: 423). Young points out that despite ‘many significant changes in gender ideas and ideology in contemporary societies, there has been little change in this basic division of labour. Indeed neoliberal economic policies across the globe have had the effect of retrenching this division where it may have loosened’ (Young 2002: 423).

Hochschild disrupts the picture of the woman at home and the man at work, in her evaluation of the relationship between home and economy and what she calls the ‘commodity frontier’ that connects them. As capitalist economies evolve, Hochschild argues, the reproductive work that women do, their skills and activities as wives and mothers, are gradually taken over by the market (Hochschild 2003:34-36). This increases with necessity as more and more women move into the labour market. As the market takes over, Hochschild argues, public and private resources for care are depleted, and home and family become a unit of consumption rather than the production of care. With women and men at work and children in nursery and school, home as a place ‘to be’ is minimalised, hollowed out, so that a situation is reached where there is literally no-one at home (Hochschild 2003: 38). Lisa Adkins argues slightly differently that as more women work and their activities are relocated to the public sphere, the logic of the domestic division of labour and of the public/private dichotomy is undermined (Adkins 2009: 330). For women to work in the public sphere, social reproduction is divided into commodified tasks, cooking, cleaning, childcare,

shopping and financial upkeep, and is often provided by other women of different class and ethnicity (Adkins, 2009). As care moves from 'inside to outside' from home to market, divisions between women, rather than between women and men begin to shape the logic of social reproduction, and the private sphere is 'deprivatised' (Adkins 2009), though it is still primarily women who organise the provision of care by others. Now, Davina Cooper points out, 'the intangible presence of intimacy, sexuality and domestic relations ..saturate, circulate through, or simply emerge within public life' (Cooper 2009: 275). We see, Cooper argues, a 'reversal of earlier feminist work intent on unpicking the myth of a free, unregulated private, to trouble assumptions about the public, exploring the ambivalent presence within it of ostensibly private concerns' (Cooper 2009: 276). Theorists focus on the transformation of private concerns into public issues (Heaphy 2007) and point to new conditions of public-ness (Newman and Clarke 2009; Mahony et al 2010), where home, or the private, is somehow pulled into its other.

With these 'shifting landscapes of care', Hochschild notices, 'individuals increasingly keep an anxious eye on what seems like the primary remaining symbol of abiding care – the mother' (Hochschild 2003: 39). The symbol of mother can be seen to align with home in nostalgic fantasies which support political projects like neoliberalism in attempts restore social order and economic security (Franklin 2007). Governments and political discourses continue to require of women that they provide comfort and care, while at the same time requiring that they are in full time paid employment. If home is empty of mothers and daughters and is also the nexus of care, women are secure in neither place, disassociated from public and private spaces while required to be active

in both. Nostalgia works politically to dis/associate women to/from home, through a fantasy of the past that was probably never wholly true. To replace nostalgia and describe a more agentic version of attachment to home, Young suggests remembrance, the affirmation of what brought us here, which contains the possibilities of renewal and something else to come. Remembrance for Young is embedded in the activity of preserving home as the site of the construction and reconstruction of self, and the safeguarding of meaningful things in which one sees the stories of oneself embodied. Equality for women, Young argues, requires a revaluation of the private and public work of the preservation of meaningful things and the de-gendering of these activities (Young 1997: 154).

Feminist theory has problematised the association of women with home, nature, body, immanence and social reproduction, and feminists have struggled to escape home for the economic independence and individual freedom of the public sphere. Rather than escaping home, however, women continue to experience and embody the contradictions between home and work in gendered divisions of labour, inequalities in earnings, and the double shift (Perrons 2010). Theorists also argue that the increasing number of women in paid work has placed home in a different relationship with the market (Adkins 2009). The intimacy of home has been colonized and commodified, and private emotions have migrated to and infused the public, leaving home empty, and mother as a safe and nurturing fantasy (Hochschild 2003). Other writers suggest that the contradictions women embody as they move between work and home continue to create tensions exacerbated by current welfare to work policies in Britain, where women, even when parenting alone, are expected to engage in paid work and to look

after or organize care for their children or dependent adults (Bryson 2007; Burchardt 2008; Coote and Mohun 2013). For many women this dual responsibility for home and work is exacerbated in the current political situation in Britain, where radical cuts in public spending fall disproportionately on women, since 'women make up the majority of those in low paid jobs', and 'across the board, women earn an average of 15% less than men'⁹. Research from the Fawcett Society, points to 'the triple jeopardy' for women, who bear the brunt of job and benefit cuts, and have to 'plug the gap, as public services are rolled back'¹⁰. Though the dualisms or distinctions between public and private have been thoroughly challenged and subverted across economics, politics, theory and everyday life (Bargetz 2009; Marshall 1994; Butler 2004), they are perhaps still taken for granted *enough* to continue to regulate gendered divisions of labour and perpetuate the invisibility of home and the woman question in current policy discourses.

The woman question

Contemporary debates about home and gender across academic and political contexts weave ideas about what women are and what they do into the stuff of political discourse. In this way they constitute what can be termed the problem of woman, or the woman question, which is 'the political manifestation of an ontological condition' (Maslin 2013: 599). As a political problem, the woman question is located in specific

⁹ From the Fawcett Society <http://www.fawcettsociety.org.uk/cutting-women-out/>; Accessed 8 March 2013

¹⁰ Fawcett Society (2013) 'The Triple Jeopardy', Fawcett Society, <http://www.fawcettsociety.org.uk/the-triple-jeopardy-2/>; Accessed 8 March 2013

historical political projects in Britain and while there are some indications of its re-emergence as a phrase in the literature (Grand Jenson 1996; Brown 2004; Egeland 2011), it is not widely used currently in either feminist or mainstream politics. So the phrase the woman question draws attention to historical feminist narrative, and the question of whether it belongs to a politics of the past, or might be a question for the present (Foucault 1988: 262; Egeland 2011). The woman question certainly has associations with home as exemplified in feminist writing in different historical moments, discussed in the previous chapter. In terms of its prominence in political campaigns, the woman question moves in and out of focus over time, emphasising different questions or aspects of feminism and gender politics. For Lucy Delap the woman question flourished as 'a set of debates within political, literary and social thought in the nineteenth century, where the focus of theory and politics was on extending civil and political rights to women, based on the liberal assertion of woman as a rational creature' (Delap 2011; Prokhovnik 1999). It has been the focus of feminist scholarship in relation to women's political and civil rights since Wollstonecraft's *A vindication of the rights of woman* in 1792 and John Stuart Mill's essay *The Subjugation of Woman* (1869). Both of these texts Brown argues 'base their arguments for women's equality on the exploitation of a strong Cartesian split between body and mind' (Brown 2004: 12). 'Taken together' she contends, 'Mill and Wollstonecraft can be seen to argue for a feminine subjectivity that is at once androgynous and different: androgynous in the rational, civic, and public order of things where mind alone matters, and saturated with its sex difference in the private realm where bodies, temperaments, emotion bearing and "instinct" are thought to prevail' (Brown 2004: 14). For Brown, the woman question in nineteenth century Europe was informed by 'a roughly common and

strikingly new ontology of gender' (Brown 2004: 16). This ontology emerged to integrate and deal with the 'act of women's sex difference and the logic of a Cartesian rationality that 'that permits the separability of mind and body', and that 'was difficult to elaborate for men and refuse to women' (Brown 2004: 16). These debates open up the public sphere as a potential space for the flourishing of women's equality, based on their rationality, transcendence of attachment to the domestic, and on their similarity with men.

Marxists and feminists over the turn of the 19th and 20th century focused on the struggle for social and economic equality, and the question as to whether women's struggle for equality in relation to men had the same revolutionary status as the class struggle. This focus on the social and economic basis of women's inequality has roots in the concern of Frederick Engels' *Origins of the family, private property and the state*' (Engels 1884) and Alexandra Kollontai's *Social Basis of the Woman Question*, including the debate as to whether patriarchal gender inequality reflects, is different from, or cross cuts economic class inequality (Kollontai and Holt 1909: 36). The woman question has since evolved in relation to historical and political contexts, connected to the constitution of the nuclear family and the separation of home and work in the early days of the Industrial Revolution (Ehrenreich and English 1979; Martin and Mohanty 1986). The women's liberation movement grew through the 1960s and 1970s when the woman question was reinvigorated as 'the problem that has no name' (Friedan 1963), bringing housework and reproductive labour into view in the struggle for economic and social equality (Oakley 1974; Evans 1982; Adams and Cowie 1990). Feminist struggles shaped mid twentieth century culture and politics and become incorporated

into a social/liberal agenda for change in Britain with the Equal Pay Act of 1970 and Sex Discrimination Act of 1975. Feminists and mainstream politicians have made efforts to solve the problems that affect women in relation to gender and inequality, moving between campaigns for nurseries to be available 24 hours a day, and for equality of domestic and child care responsibilities. Feminists have analysed women's social and economic inequalities in relation to time and gendered subjectivity, and in calls to democratise and value care and unpaid labour as much as work in the paid economy including wages for housework, and flexibility and reduction of working hours, and more (Bryson 2007; Burchardt 2008; Coote and Franklin 2013; Coote & Mohun Himmelweit 2013). But the situation that women embody, experience and struggle with differently and in different social and economic contexts on a daily basis, doesn't change to the extent that it is in any way solved. It may improve with different schemes and political agenda, in relation to class and income, and an equalisation of gender roles within families, flexible working arrangements, moving between public and private spaces, and more, but it is a struggle, where women and the caring work they do, are still seen to be a problem to be solved (Sevenhuijsen 2002).

At the core of the woman question was, and still is, a range of taken for granted assumptions about women's role and status in society, her subjectivity, agency and situation (Moi 1999). These assumptions continue to be challenged, in theory and practice, and continue to shape contemporary societies and women's lives. Many inequalities persist in British and global society, not least inequalities and differences between women. These differences are especially cogent in the context of this study where the focus of analysis is on neoliberal policy language in the arena of social care,

where older women are increasingly the subjects of care and caring, where young women are carers of children, and middle aged women are sandwiched between caring for children and older relatives¹¹. Without discounting these and other positional differences in society, there is a case to be made for focusing specifically on generalised ontological and political assumptions that underlie the woman question. The purpose here is not to disregard specific subjectivities as they are lived and constituted in neoliberal discourse but to focus specifically on gender as politically and socially produced hierarchy and inequality. Even though struggles to solve the woman question have resulted in significant social, political and economic change, the doggedness of gender inequality hints that there is something taken for granted that still needs to be questioned. The proposal in this thesis that the woman question is posed and solved in neoliberal discourse through home which emerges as the contemporary 'political manifestation of an ontological condition' (Maslin 2013: 595).

Methodology

In her reconsideration of home, Young writes that her aim is 'to weave together several thematic threads. All of them wind around meanings of subjectivity or identity' (Young 2005: 124). In the strands of feminist scholarship explored here home evokes intimacy between the self and the world, between subjectivity and material reality, and between ontology and politics. To translate theory into methodology, home is exemplified in this

¹¹ Carers UK argue that 'across the UK there are an estimated 2.4 million 'sandwich carers' - as around a fifth of 45 to 60-year-olds are actively supporting parents while their children are still at home : <http://www.carersuk.org/newsroom/item/2852-sandwich-caring-families-under-pressure>

study as subjectivity-in-situation, a plural category that also shapes the analysis of neoliberal discourse and policy language. One of the key motivations of this feminist inquiry is to follow Foucauldian and phenomenological epistemologies to question taken for granted assumptions about home and gender ontology that are transmitted in political discourse. From my discussion of epistemology, ontology and politics earlier in this chapter, feminist genealogy seems to offer the most appropriate methodology and method for this questioning. First, the focus of this research is discourse, written and spoken statements which transmit power and knowledge through language. As a theoretical method genealogy is appropriate since it is specifically designed to isolate, question and disrupt deeply taken for granted ideas and practices (Bell 1999; Coole 2009). Second feminist genealogy offers a rationale and a confidence to this research, that it is worthwhile to interrogate power and how it operates through language, and to question assumptions about home and gender even when, or especially when, these words are absent from the dominant political discourse (Jenkins 2011). I begin this section with a brief discussion of the appropriateness of feminist methodology for this study.

Feminist scholarship develops methodologies to challenge its own, as well as other epistemological and ontological assumptions, so as to inform 'a critical consideration of the research process' and to question traditional research practices (Letherby 2003: 160; Tanesini 1999; McLeod and Thomson 2009) There have been long debates in feminist methodology as to whether feminist research is, or should be objective, and debates as to the possibility of objectivity in feminist research (Harding 1991; Letherby 2003). Feminists argue that the objectivity or the value neutrality attributed to the scientific

method is already biased since 'hidden subjectivities' or interested positions of knowing sit behind what are seen as given and immediately observable facts (Code 1995: 28). It is argued that the separation of fact from the values and dispositions of the researcher allows empiricist or positivistic approaches to hold on to the possibility of objective truth, whereas, as Lazar points out, feminist 'scholarship makes its bias part of the argument', to claim that the standpoint of women offers a stronger kind of objectivity, where knowledge and understanding gained through experience of particular standpoints is methodologically valid (Lazar 2007: 146). Feminist critique of value neutrality is relevant for this study, where the aim is to question and trouble deeply taken for granted statements presented in public discourse as truth or fact. Feminist methodologies also chime with mainstream qualitative approaches in social research where it is understood that human behaviour cannot be decisively known or predicted, and that the meanings people attach to their actions are significant (Ribbens and Edwards 1998). Qualitative research methods, particularly ethnography, have shaped research into the meaning and experience of home and everyday life in anthropology and sociology (Pink 2004; 2012; Blunt and Dowling 2006). In taking meaning and value into account processes of reflexivity, a researcher's critical understanding of how her own subjectivity shapes her research, offers the possibility of bracketing out researcher bias, so that the experience of the researched can speak for itself (Hemmings 2012). However, it is also recognised in feminist methodologies how the relationship between the researcher and researched generates meaningful data, and looks to value and explore, rather than dismiss or sideline, what arises within this researched relationship (Ribbens and Edwards 1998; McLeod and Thomson 2009). Indeed feminist research, Letherby argues, 'can be distinguished by the questions feminist ask, the location of the

researcher within the process of research, and within theorizing, and the intended purpose of the work produced' (Letherby 2003: 5). All in all, as Letherby writes, 'whatever theoretical and epistemological position feminists hold, it is fair to say that all feminists take a critical position on the "woman question"' (Letherby 2003: 4).

There is thus is a relationship between the academic and the political in feminist research, since there is always 'a political commitment to produce useful knowledge that will make a difference to women's lives (Letherby 2003: 4). While the focus of this thesis combines the theoretical and political, it does so with an understanding that theory arises from the empirical, doesn't float above it. Feminism is rooted in praxis, an active combination of theory and practice. Furthermore, in the view of this researcher and in the context of this study, the purpose of feminist theory is its usefulness to feminist practice, to interrogate the world so as to create spaces for questioning how the world is and for imagining how it might be, so as to change it. Feminist academic study values highly conversations between the theoretical, the empirical and the political:

Politics is everywhere, always already in the everyday lives that we research, in the relations within which we do our academic work and in the spaces of formal politics which sequester the political of the everyday in the construction of narratives that are fed back to us all (Franklin and Thomson 2005: 168).

Genealogy

At least three methodological themes, or rationale for choosing genealogy as research method, emerge in the first section of this chapter. These themes are: first, the

attention to theory; second, attention to politics; and third to questioning as a key motif or shaper of research design. As I argue above and more fully below, feminist genealogy emerges as an appropriate overall method since theoretical analysis, politics and questioning are its central themes (Fraser and Gordon 1994; Bell 1999; Butler 1990, 2004; Brown 2001; Coole 2009). Moreover the purpose of feminist genealogy is to attend to taken for granted ideas, to language, to the discursive constitution of subjects, and to new truths as they emerge in political discourse. In concert with genealogy the study is also informed by feminist perspectives on the analysis of discourse and by a feminist post-empiricist approach to analysing policy language (Bell 1999). This section continues with a discussion of the methodological themes: theory, politics and questioning, that emerged from discussion of home and gender in feminist theory above.

Genealogy as theoretical method is appropriate for this research since the aim of the study is to isolate and question taken for granted ways of understanding home and gender, which are transmitted through written and spoken statements in neoliberal discourse. The value of a theoretical approach for this study is, as Brown argues, that theory

..depicts a world that does not quite exist, that is not quite the world we inhabit. But this is theory's incomparable value, not its failure. ...Theory violates the self-representation of things in order to represent those things and their relation – the world – differently. Thus, theory is never 'accurate' or 'wrong', it is only more or less illuminating, more or less provocative, more or less of an incitement to thought, imagination, desire, possibilities for renewal (Brown 2005: 80).

Feminist theory in all its diversity attends to gender and, critically for this research, feminist theory is also specifically attuned to politics, as well as being a form of political intervention in itself (Phillips 1998). For Butler, feminism 'is about the social transformation of gender relations' (Butler 2004: 204). Her view is that alongside 'interventions at social and political levels', alongside campaigning, marching, policy work and intervention, feminist theory has a transformative role to play. This role, she argues, is to question the assumptions or 'presuppositions of social and political practices' (Butler 2004: 204-205). It is, she continues, to question 'the norms that govern gender .. and in particular, how they constrain and enable life, how they designate in advance what will and will not be a liveable existence' (Butler 2004: 206). Butler's point is that the way we describe and know the world is as important as practical action and debate. It is important not just to act within these terms or norms, but to question the language, terms and norms which shapes the world we inhabit. The purpose is to 'unfix the terms of the contemporary political situation' (Brown 2001:120) as they make the world.

Questioning is a key methodological motif of the study. As Tania Murray Li has pointed out, politics, policy making, and policy analysis tend to skew towards identifying policy problems and their solutions, though these solutions are seldom realised in practice (Murray Li 2007). Rachel Thomson also challenges the impulse to look for solutions:

Traditionally the role of theory has been to provide answers to basic questions posed by the canon. Feminist critique not only has challenged the universality of the answers provided, but has gone further in challenging the questions themselves. So, for example, in challenging the question of 'what is man?',

feminist theory not only found the answer 'not a woman' but also went further to deconstruct the universality of the category of woman. By arriving at the place of there being no single answer, feminist theory exposes the problem of the question. The challenge for the project of theory then is to move from the provision of answers towards asking questions (Thompson, in Franklin and Thomson 2005: 168).

Feminist genealogy offers a theoretical and political method to identify and question policy problems and solutions present in neoliberal discourse. As Brown writes genealogy 'doesn't tell us what is to be done or even what is to be valued', rather 'it questions whether truths and convictions make up the right ethos for critical political consciousness' (Brown 2001: 120). Questioning is facilitated in this study through close attention and analysis of the truths that neoliberal discourse configures and transmits through policy language, and is broadly informed by principles of feminist discourse analysis and by a feminist post empiricist approach to policy investigation.

Analysing policy discourse

Discourse analysis is a wide field, and there are many examples to draw on across and within disciplines (Wetherell et al 2001). Generally it involves an examination of which types of discourses are privileged and which are excluded (Fischer 2003: 74). This makes discourse analysis appropriate to this research which attends to the presence and absence of home in the language of policy making. Discourse analysis also examines those discourses which become 'unreflectively taken for granted' so that they are

'scarcely noted by the actors who employ them' (Fischer 2003: 74). This involves identifying policy narratives or story lines 'that construct the realities to which policy responds' (Coole 2009: 275; Fischer 2003). As Lazar usefully points out:

The relationship between discourse and the social is a dialectical one, in which discourse constitutes (and is constituted by) social situations, institutions, and structures. The notion of constitution applies in the sense that every act of meaning-making through (spoken and written) language and other forms of semiosis contributes to the reproduction and maintenance of the social order, and also in the sense of resisting and transforming that order (Lazar 2007: 149-150).

Lazar outlines the feminist principles and insights that inform a critical feminist discourse analysis, and which are useful in this study. In the reading of discourse, Lazar tells us, the task is to be alert to 'gender as ideological structure' (Lazar 2007: 146), that is, to the way that gender is taken for granted, built in to the binary orientation of common sense knowledge about politics and social life. She writes, that from 'a feminist perspective, the prevailing conception of gender is understood as an ideological structure that divides people into two classes, men and women, based on a hierarchal relation of domination and subordination, respectively' (Lazar 2007: 146). It is the work of feminist discourse analysis to 'examine how power and dominance are discursively produced and/or (counter-) resisted in a variety of ways through textual representations of gendered social practices' (Lazar 2007: 149). She point out that the 'intersection of gender with other systems of power based on race/ethnicity, social class, sexual orientation, age, culture and geography means that gender oppression is

neither materially experienced nor discursively enacted in the same way for women everywhere' (Lazar 2007: 149). Whilst recognising the political significance of inequalities between women, I have argued in this chapter that differences between women do not alter the persistence of gender as an ordering principle of contemporary society, of generalised woman in relation to generalised man. This order is the frame within which differences and inequalities between women are played out (Moi 1999; Simon-Kumar 2011). The decision to isolate and examine gender order in this study is to focus on its continuing presence and disappearance from public discourse (Jenson 2008; Simon-Kumar 2011).

A post empiricist approach to policy analysis (Pykett 2012; Simon-Kumar 2011; Fischer 2003) emerges in critique of a rational social science model that judges whether or not policies are appropriate or are working in particular ways (Fischer 2003:4; McKee 2009). A post empiricist approach takes its cue from critical theory and Foucauldian approaches to knowledge in its purpose to identify the relationship between knowledge, power and interests (McKee 2009; Fischer 2003). Critical feminist policy analysis has shown how gender order can be written seen and unseen into seemingly progressive [and well intentioned] policy discourses (Frazer and Lacey 1993; Kovalainen 2004; Sointu 2005; Adkins 2005a; Franklin 2007; Jenson 2008). A feminist genealogy, informed by a post empiricist methodology of policy analysis allows for an interrogation of how gender is ordered and how this ordering is reflected in social relationships and individual lives (McKee 2009; Fischer 2003).

Feminist discourse analysis and a post empiricist perspective informs an interrogation of 'the complex workings of power and ideology in discourse in sustaining

hierarchically gendered social orders' (Lazar 2007:141). It looks for gendered structures, relationships and notions of subjectivity. It can uncover normative and political assumptions about how individual subjectivities are constituted and governed; how societies are ordered; and how policy discourses are set up to legitimise social and economic divisions of labour and the distribution of economic and social resources. A critical feminist approach is alert to the ways that policy discourses legitimise a set of rationales for defining policy problems and answers to improve the situation (Murray-Li 2007). The following section outlines how the study works with genealogy and discourse methods to approach the close reading of neoliberal policy language.

Genealogy and discourse analysis

Genealogy is both akin to and more than discourse analysis. Pillow writes that 'genealogy as policy studies methodology offers not only an analysis and critique of the policy problem at issue, but also an on-going analysis and critique of the arena of policy studies itself' (Pillow 2003: 150). Genealogy, as outlined above, is a form of critical inquiry that provides a forum for decentring what we think we know and for tracing how we come to know it, taking into account how this knowledge is enmeshed with power relations (Pillow 2003: 149). Overall the method of genealogy in this study is involvement with the discourse, to enter into critical conversation with it, and to question the work it does in constituting gender ontology and the woman question in contemporary politics through the category of home. The aim is not to analyse the incidence of the use or non use of the word home, but to focus on the generalised language, to become familiar with home as a category and then to make home

'strange' and unfamiliar (Bell 1999: 150; McLeod and Thomson 2009: 49) to question how gendered relations of power are settled. Crucially for this study feminist genealogy attends to 'what is silenced' and to understanding 'how these silences are perpetuated and reproduced' (Pillow 2003: 152). It does so through challenging assumptions that are almost beyond imagination to challenge. Genealogy offers the possibility of thinking about the problem of the question rather than policy solutions (Franklin and Thomson 2005: 168), to interrogate and puncture taken for granted questions that arise in the discourse analysis, and which have been erased in public discourse. This entails articulating the disappearance of the problem of gender from the policy discourse and the dissembling structures of welfare that once sought to solve questions of gender inequality. Jenkins argues that the critical purpose of genealogy is to untangle embedded forms of knowledge, to trace their emergence and effect and 'to intervene in certain struggles over meaning through a provocative style' (Jenkins 2011: 164). The provocation for this genealogy is the proposition that what we think home *is* may not be what home *is* at all (Bell 1999).

Conclusion

Since home as an idea can hold a vast range of experiences and material conditions, I have worked with feminist theory in this chapter to identify those particular aspects of home that resonate with or evoke gender ontology and the woman question. This began with a discussion of feminist epistemology as a backdrop to tracing how feminists have problematised, sidelined and reconsidered home across different theoretical positions and perspectives. One of the many reasons home is interesting is

that it cannot be known as a thing in itself, but stands potentially for all human experience: for how we feel about home, the actual or real places that we live in, who we live with, or the objects that mean home to us, whether we want to stay or get away from home. Home can express the interplay between subject and world, narrative and reality, and between knowing, being and material life. Questions of ontology in feminist theories draw attention to subjectivity in relation to the lived body and to home as being in the world. Like layers of an onion, the ontology of home, of subjectivity and being in the world, is further situated or wrapped in the political. Following Jacobson (2010, 2011) and Maslin (2013) it is proposed in this thesis that the interplay between the ontological and the political in relation to home expresses the woman question in contemporary politics. A discussion of feminist methodology and method of genealogy followed in the second section of the chapter. Genealogy questions taken for granted assumptions present in 'the picture that holds us captive' (Moi 1999: 119). The purpose in this study is to question that picture over the following chapters, so as to be

..released from the futile task of trying to answer questions that can have no answers because they do not make sense We see, as it were, that the problem was the way we posed the problem. Once we realise this, it is pointless to remain obsessed with the old problem. We find that we are free to ask new questions (Moi 1999: 119).

Chapter three

A Genealogy of Home in Neoliberal Discourse

Home does not appear very often as a word in neoliberal discourse but it is an undefined space in neoliberal descriptions of local and personal life. Home is also present in government policies that transfer responsibility for welfare from public to personal settings¹². In this chapter I explore how home emerges as an ambiguous category in neoliberal discourse, to detail the intricate ways that common sense about home is constituted in a discourse which influences public debate and governs policy making. Given the attention to personal responsibility and personal location in neoliberal discourse and policy prescription¹³, it is significant that home seems only to be present as a disassociated or abstract category. It is also of note that this relative absence of home in political rhetoric seems to run counter to the celebration of home in popular culture and the close observation of home in academic study. Perhaps a public fascination with home goes some way to facilitate the incorporation of home into neoliberal discourse as an private alternative to public welfare.

This chapter has two main sections. The first traces the emergence of home as an idea or category through the intricacies of a social turn in neoliberal discourse and politics (Tonkiss 2000: 72). Attention is drawn to the social elements in the discourse since it is

¹² See 'Home space? Public and private in new welfare settings', a series of five seminars based at the Open University, funded by the Economic and Social Research Council, taking place between 2012 and 2014: <http://www.homespaceseminars.org/>

¹³ Personalisation, as will be more fully outlined later in chapter six, refers to the provision of individual budgets for health and social care, and a degree of autonomy and individual choice as to how budgets are spent, see H.M. Government (2007) 'Putting People First: A shared vision and commitment to the transformation of adult social care': http://www.cpa.org.uk/cpa/putting_people_first.pdf

here that terms like community and individual, social space and subjectivity are configured. These are the terms which align with the expression of home as subjectivity-in-situation, the analytical framework for this study which is explored and outlined in the previous chapter. The social turn in neoliberal discourse was initiated by political actors in the Labour Party in Britain in the 1990s when social exclusion or social breakdown, seen to be the social effects of Conservative Government policies in the 1980s and 1990s, began to threaten the legitimacy of free market economics (Levitas 1998; Lister 1998). To make this social turn, and to create an election winning political programme, the Labour Party drafted a new political settlement known as the third way. The third way referred to a pragmatic, middle line between left and right politics, designed to take 'what works' from both sides (Blair 1998; Giddens 1998; Powell 2000). In the third way between society and economy New Labour crafted a relationship of reciprocity where society is redefined to support and accommodate the changing needs of capitalism (Levitas 1998; Rose 1999a; Lister 1999). This mode of purposeful redefinition is a recurring theme of the third way and of the current Conservative and Liberal Coalition Government. In a speech made by David Cameron, prior to his election as Prime Minister, he said that:

..in the fight against poverty, inequality, social breakdown and injustice I do want to move from state action to social action. But I see a powerful role for government in helping to engineer that shift. Let me put it more plainly: we must use the state to remake society¹⁴.

¹⁴ David Cameron: The Big Society, Hugo Young lecture at The Guardian, Kings Place, London on 10 November 2009

http://www.conservatives.com/News/Speeches/2009/11/David_Cameron_The_Big_Society.aspx

The active remaking and innovation of ideas and practices has been identified as characteristic of neoliberal discourse as it accommodates to economic contingency and incorporates alternative perspectives (Fraser 2009; Newman 2013). The aim of this chapter is to isolate and question where and how home is absent and present in these moments of discursive innovation where society, social order and social subjects are redefined. The trajectory of these moments is traced to detail the theoretical and political constitution of social space and social actors, to complement and inform a close reading of home in policy language, in the following three chapters.

In the second section of this chapter the text chosen for this reading, **A vision for adult social care: capable communities and active citizens** (DH 2010), is introduced. This is a Government policy document published in the early days of the Coalition Government in Britain in 2010, and outlines the Government's vision for adult social care. The document is chosen for its focus on vision, the formation of political ideas and values which are the material for this genealogy, rather than detailed policy prescriptions, which are not the focus of this study (Fischer 2003). The document is also chosen for its attention to social care, a gendered policy arena that deals with activities predominately carried out by women (Sevenhuijsen 1998; Tronto 2001; Bryson 2007). Following a description of this document and its political status and significance, the analytical framework and research strategy for reading of the document is outlined. The chapter continues now with a discussion of neoliberalism, and the theories and debates which attempt to come to grips with what it is and how it operates as a discourse.

What is neoliberalism?

Opinions vary as to what neoliberalism is, whether it can be identified in any concrete way and whether the term still stands adequately for the dominant political discourse in British politics (Gamble 2009; Hall 2012). What neoliberalism *is* substantively is hard to grasp since it is constantly inventive and changing, so its operational characteristics are perhaps easier to identify. One aspect of what we call neoliberalism is that it is a complex, hybrid interaction and incorporation of ideas, theories and practices. It is easy to slip into discussion of neoliberalism as though it has intention or subjectivity, or that there are theorists in an Oxbridge or Downing Street room constructing its logic (Connell 2010; Newman 2013). Both, or neither, may be more or less true. Unlike feminism or socialism say, which are advocated by feminists or socialists, individuals or groups are rarely described as neoliberal-ists though politicians may say that they support the freedom of the market and other aspects of neoliberal ideology. This is an indication of differences between neoliberalism and other established political ideologies. Socialism, feminism and liberalism, for example, all have their origins in oppositional political activism in conversation with intellectual debate. While it is possible to identify individuals and groups with neoliberal interests, neoliberalism manifests as an alignment of ideas, rather than a political movement, geared to the legitimation of the interests of the powerful rather than the powerless. With a political ideology that is transmitted though language, common sense and practice, there is uncertainty as to the extent to which the discourse is purposefully constructed.

Arguably neoliberalism is a mix of 'ideological and political project' (Gamble 2009: 86) which creates a hegemonic buy-in to free market capitalism, and a discourse which

transmits a form of governance of individual and social norms and behaviour conducive to strategic economic interests (Brown 2003; Connell 2010; Pykett 2012). Understanding neoliberalism as a discourse, or as an ideology that is transmitted through language and practices, clarifies the issue of its subjectivity to some extent given that, as Foucault infers, subjectivity like power, has no foundational essence but exists in only its exercise (Foucault 1977; 1978). As a discourse or narrative neoliberalism is exercised or operates through an altering of the way ideas are expressed in language, which in turn constitutes knowledge and experience of the world. As Hall points out, neoliberalism 'is not a satisfactory term' but has 'enough common features to warrant giving it a *provisional* conceptual identity, provided this is understood as a first approximation' (Hall 2012: 9). Similarly, Andrew Gamble suggests, it is

..better to analyse neoliberalism by breaking it up into the different doctrines and ideas which compose it, and then exploring how they are related to particular practices and political projects, rather than treating "neoliberalism" as though it is the source of everything (Gamble 2009: 8).

So, broadly neoliberalism refers to an ideology, discourse or rationality that underpins and legitimises the continuing growth of capitalist economics and its supportive political interests (Brown 2003; Newman 2013). As a variant of liberalism, a political philosophy of individual rationality and freedom, neoliberalism appeared in the United States and Britain through the 1970s and 80s as a 'repudiation of Keynesian welfare state economics' (Brown 2005: 37) and an assertion of free market economics against public provision of welfare services. Over the last forty years or so, Brown argues, a neoliberal consensus has grown and has shaped global politics, not only

'foregrounding the market' but also 'extending and disseminating market values to all institutions and social action' (Brown 2005: 39). For Brown,

..neoliberalism is not simply a set of economic policies; it is not only about facilitating free trade, maximizing corporate profits, and challenging welfarism. Rather, neoliberalism carries a social analysis, that, when deployed as a form of governmentality, reaches from the soul of the citizen-subject from education policy to practice of empire. Neoliberal rationality, while foregrounding the market, is not only or even primarily focused on the economy; it involves *extending and disseminating market values to all institutions and social action*, even as the market itself remains a distinctive player (Brown 2005: 39-40).

A distinction is made in the literature between economic neoliberalism as it began to dominate British government policy in the 1980s and early 1990s, and a post- or social neoliberalism that emerged with the New Labour project in the mid 1990s (Simon-Kumar 2011; Pykett 2012). The purpose of this distinction is to note a social turn in neoliberal discourse, seen as a strategic response to a crisis in political legitimacy brought about by the expanse of free market economics at the expense of social cohesion (Everingham 2003; Simon-Kumar 2011). This strategic response has produced a different set of common sense ideas about what society is, how it is organised and how it works, so that it fits and responds to free market economics in a more flexible, purposeful and positive way (Everingham 2003). The language that works to reshape our understanding of society in neoliberal discourse is initially informed and legitimised by social theories of late modernity (Heaphy 2007) and communitarian political philosophy (Avineri and de-Shalit 1992). Both theories attend to social change and offer

political actors useful perspectives on the character of modern society, along with vocabularies that provide a linguistic framework for this emerging political discourse. New words and phrases to describe society, tangentially linked to these social and political theories, are then reproduced by actors in the political world including political parties, think tanks, trades unions, academia, third sector, and media organisations. This new social language is then transmitted through the strategic use of concepts, ways of speaking and writing about society in theoretical and policy texts, public speeches and media reports (Fischer 2003; Lazar 2007). Spoken in public this language is taken up by journalists, public sector workers, and people in their everyday lives where, for example, talk of community and responsibility is now more likely than talk of society, class conflict or rights. New descriptions of social life come to shape everyday language through repetition and recognition. Policy documents use this new language to open up spaces for certain kinds of action and actors and close down others (Clarke 2005; Newman 2013). Through these discursive means the social is constituted or mapped to reflect economic interests, seemingly to create a flexible workforce and responsible communities, and to turn social life into economic value (Adkins 2005a). With the social turn economic liberalism is legitimised by the addition of a social/moral register, and the constitution of new subjects through 'the compulsive and compulsory cataloguing of the details of marginalised lives' (Brown 2005: 85). Brown points out that

..when discourses that are born of exclusion and marginalisation are annexed by those unitary discourses to which they are in putative opposition, they become a particularly potent source of regulation, carrying as they do intimate and detailed knowledge of their subjects (Brown 2005: 90).

One of the key features of neoliberal discourse is that, as it innovates and adapts, it reworks and mimics ideas that are different, critical or oppositional to economic purpose. As Fraser has noted, the strategy of capitalism is to 'remake itself in moments of historical rupture, in part by recuperating strands of critique directed against it' (Fraser 2009: 109). Feminism has been one of the key sets of ideas and practices that have been adapted and mimicked in this way. The designers of New Labour included feminists, like Patricia Hewitt and Harriet Harman, who brought feminist issues and concerns to the political table, and introduced policies that were designed to address inequalities between men and women, work and home (Wilkinson 1998; Franks 1999; Coote 2000; Lister 2001). In the early days of New Labour feminists in the Party were enthusiastic for change and participated in an energetic recruitment of women as parliamentary candidates and in policy review (Coote 2000; Childs 2004; Squires 2007). A realisation occurred fairly early on after the General Election in 1997 that although there had been a sizeable shift in government thinking towards gender equality, not least with the first Minister for Women¹⁵, feminist ideas had been softened and made useful in policies that were geared more to economic contingency than social change (Coote 2000; Lister 2001). There is some debate in feminism as to the extent to which gender issues shaped Labour policy and as to the longer term theoretical and political effect (Fraser 2009; McRobbie 2009; Newman 2012, 2013). Thinking this through feminists have also analysed how New Labour's commitment to equality was geared towards similar treatment for men and women rather than a commitment to

¹⁵ Harriet Harman MP was the first Minister for Women in the New Labour Government in Britain, attached to the Government Equality Office and the Department for Social Security 1997-1998. Subsequently Ministers for Women have been attached to different departments. For example, Theresa May was Minister for Women and Equalities in addition to her office as Home Secretary in the Coalition Government 2010-2012.

neoliberalism in that they both have something to say about society, modernity and social change, and both are informed by, and are subject to, feminist critique (Frazer and Lacey 1993; McNay 2000; Adkins 2002).

The sociology of late modernity is complex and contested, though in general seeks to map and understand social change rather proclaiming it good or bad (Heaphy 2007).

Communitarian philosophy is a broad spectrum of ideas ranging from radical participative democracy to conservatism, though in general it is critical of liberalism and of modernity (Avineri and de-Shalit 1992; Mulhall and Swift 1992). In working these together New Labour constructed a political orientation (Heaphy 2007) which continues to influence the language and discourse of policy making. While other disciplines like positive psychology, rational choice theory and behavioural economics have also been influential (Pykett 2012), sociological and communitarian perspectives focus on the reconstruction of the social and the personal, and between them they constitute the social dynamic of neoliberal discourse.

Late modern sociology (Giddens 1991, 1992; Beck 1992, 1997; Beck et al 1994) theorises social change and draws attention to the reconfiguration of the personal and the intimate in late modern societies, pointing to the ways that traditional or accepted patterns of social life are challenged and transformed in a post, or late modern setting. The reconstructive orientation of late modern sociology, Heaphy argues (Heaphy 2007: 71) resonates with the logic of renewal and potential, and is debated around two key ideas: 'detraditionalisation' (Heelas et al 1996) a concept which captures the erosion of traditional patterns of life, and the disruption of social structures and modern institutions; and 'individualisation', the ways that individuals generate and respond to

structural change. Key to both these concepts is the logic of potential - of agency freed from structure. Processes of late modern society, the argument runs, work to erase the modern experience and the idea of sexual or gender inequality. The women's movement and reforms of the welfare state have, in this view, undercut and transformed traditional identities and life patterns so that women and men are free to 'write their own biographies' (Beck 1992; Giddens 1991). For New Labour's project this sociology adds a sense of change and modernity, possibility and novelty, to a neoliberal reconstruction of the social and of politics. It adds a legitimising historical account of individualisation, and an emphasis on individual agency in the making of personal life (Heaphy 2007).

Sliding close to this reconfiguration of society and agency is the equally reconstructive communitarian thread. However where the sociology of late modernity emphasises change as potentially agentic and freeing, the communitarian sensibility mourns the passing of tradition and the erosion of social norms and values. Where the social theory of late modernity identifies the women's movement as a trigger to change, communitarian theorists tend to blame the women's movement of the 1970s and the 'me generation' for the 'breakdown' of the modern social order (Putnam 2000). Communitarian thought is nostalgic for a pre-modern world, before modernity marred community life, and yearns for those values that make the world a safe and predictable place. A hybrid version of communitarian philosophy influences neoliberal discourse (Mullard and Spicker 1998) in the development of a set of ideas that are critical of liberal individualism which place individual rights and responsibilities in opposition to each other. From a communitarian perspective liberal rights and freedoms are

unrealistic since they are based on abstract universal principles, whereas in real life people derive their identity, morality and world view from the family or community in which they live. The liberal individual whose autonomy does not depend on others is seen by communitarians to bear little or no relation to real life, and therefore provides no legitimate basis for politics or policy making (Mullard and Spicker 1998). This argument stands in contrast to the liberal democratic consensus that legitimised the politics and policy making of the post war welfare state, where a balance is recognised and negotiated between individual autonomy and collective responsibility, enacted through a series of universal rights and entitlements. In its replacement of liberal democracy, Brown argues, neoliberalism is legitimised by communitarian principles that give priority to individual and social responsibility, categorically separating social life from rights to political and economic security (Brown 2003; Frazer and Lacey 1993). A combination of these perspectives creates a series of paradox and contradiction in the play off between the free or reflexive individual of the sociology of late modernity and the responsible, embedded individual in communitarian perspectives. These two nascent individuals, the one transcendent and entrepreneurial and the other embedded and immanent, can be identified as ideal typical emergent and gendered subjectivities of a new gender order in neoliberal societies.

Sociological and communitarian perspectives also produce a distancing of politics from a concern with economy and society. Anthony Giddens argues that a new kind of individualised politics emerges in late modern societies which replaces collective, emancipatory politics that belongs to the past. Emancipatory politics was focused towards the liberation of social groups from structurally oppressive relations of power,

whereas for Giddens, 'life politics' refers to the reflexive choices individuals make about who to be and how to live (Giddens 1991, 1992, 1994). Political agency in this account is located in individual life-political decisions about identity rather than in class politics, for example, which involves the emancipation of the working class from economic exploitation. Heaphy points to the powerful implications of this sociological shift in orientation towards agency in personal life (Heaphy 2007). He argues that 'these new theories of modernity and especially that of Giddens, have reintroduced the theme of agency in a particularly powerful way, through theorising the heightened reflexivity (or self awareness) of the current period of modernity' (Heaphy 2007: 70). Heaphy argues that personal life is brought centre stage in two ways. First 'as a way of talking about the interconnections between changes at the institutional level of modernity and developments in day to day life'; and second personal life is 'a way of talking about core life concerns that were put aside.... as "private" in modernity but that came to the fore – as public and private issues – in reflexive modernity' (Heaphy 2007: 89). Communitarian ideas root this free floating reflexive individual in community, thus offering neoliberalism, Laura Jenkins argues, 'deconstructive and politicising potential with respect to the agency and identity of situated subjects' (Jenkins 2011: 163). She writes that

Encumbered selves are theorised as constituted by identifiable communities, which are presumed to act positively and supportively. This return to communities is credited with the production of a sense of belonging, and "natural" self-government. However, communitarianism depoliticises by disowning and distancing itself from dissonance, contingency and conflict. It

neglects the plausible possibility that identities (and politics) are often constituted through or generated from non-identification, resistance or to contestation with communities, antagonists and adversaries (Jenkins 2011: 163).

Together late modern sociology and communitarian philosophy offer neoliberalism an ambiguous combination between the new, different and energetic on the one hand, and something nostalgic and timeless on the other, a desire for a way of life that existed before the upheavals of modernity. A configuration between the two theories constitutes a positive/negative dynamic, which creates a kind of common sense neutrality. With this framing neoliberalism can celebrate agency whilst containing and controlling social action, since freedom and capacity is already embedded in the social norms and values of nostalgic community. Neoliberalism is, in this sense, a discourse of community which, Rose suggests, redefines the social world and describes a space of interaction based on neighbourhoods and networks within which people's lives can be ordered and governed (Rose 2001, 2007). The language of community, of obligation, morals and responsibilities provides, Rose argues, an ethical framework for governing individual behaviour in the construction of an ordered citizenry (Rose 2001). In this way neoliberal discourse articulates the parameters for an idealised, nostalgic, agentic and un/gendered, inclusive public space of community.

Coincidences between neoliberal and feminist perspectives across communitarian and sociological theories are recognised by feminist scholars (Frazer and Lacey 1993; Fraser 2009). In their critique of communitarianism Elizabeth Frazer and Nicola Lacey observe how the liberal idea of the individual is as problematic for feminism as it is for communitarianism, since it relies on a universal and essentially male subject, making

women either invisible or seen as other to men. Communitarianism is critical of the liberal individual and the rights that individual possesses since, it argued, rights separate people from each other and promote selfish individualism (Frazer and Lacey 1993). Post structural feminisms share with communitarianism the notion that there is no pre-given or essential understanding of social categories (gender, sexuality, family forms) and that individuals take on identities and live in families that are socially constituted (Frazer and Lacey 1993). Frazer and Lacey argue, however, that while communitarianism describes the constructed or social basis of women's roles and experiences, this description has no critical purchase on whether these social practices are coercive, oppressive or demeaning. There is nothing in the communitarian perspective, they contend, that allows for the view that there is anything problematic about gender divisions (Frazer and Lacey 1993). While feminism may be in tune with a communitarian understanding of the significance of social life in shaping social action and identity, Frazer and Lacey suggest that feminism is uncomfortable with a communitarian approach to politics since it fails to deliver the critique which this understanding makes possible (Frazer and Lacey 1993: 138).

The similarity between feminist and communitarian perspectives, where they appear to occupy a similar terrain, is useful to neoliberal policy making, and so is emphasised over the key critical difference between them. Communitarian sensibility offers neoliberalism theoretical tools to misrecognise, slide over, or depoliticise gender and, specifically due to a similarity, feminist critiques of these perspectives are complicated to navigate (Frazer and Lacey 1993). In her evaluation of late modern sociology, Adkins argues that individualisation does not get rid of gender inequality, or other structural

inequalities. In her view there has not been an 'emptying out of gender' as Giddens suggests, or a democratisation of gender relationships (Adkins 2002; Giddens 1992). When the shake-up of gender and sexuality settles, Adkins argues 'a 'reconfiguration' of inequalities and social structures emerges (Adkins 2002) in new forms of social domination produced through community and networks (Adkins 1998: 47). For feminists gender is present still and problematic in late modern politics (Hekman 2000; McNay 2000; Brown 2004).

Theories of late modernity and communitarianism provide a combination of late/post modern and pre-modern sensibilities, that glide between and align positive and negative accounts of agency and social change. These ideas are instrumental in setting boundaries of knowledge about subjectivity, agency and situation that shape neoliberal discourse and common sense rationality about social and personal life (Brown 1995; Franklin 2006, 2007). This neoliberal terrain is where gendered subjectivity, agency and situation are configured.

Tracing home in neoliberal discourse

The purpose in this chapter is not to produce a detailed history of home in neoliberal discourse (Béland 2011) but to trace the emergence of home as an ontological and political category. Since home as a word is either absent or abstract in the discourse, the analytical frame of subjectivity-in-situation captures a particular feminist reading of home as who we are (the 'we' as I/me as woman, and the 'we' as women collectively and differently) and what we do in context, as a phenomenology of being-at-home-in-

the-world (Young 1997; Moi 1999). Subjectivity-in-situation also captures the interplay between agency and the material in structural context, and so between ontology and politics (Alamo and Hekman 2008; Coole and Frost 2010; Maslin 2013). With an analytical focus on this expression of home in discourse and language, attention is paid in this genealogy to how theoretical logics and concepts transmit political ideas about gender and home: ideas about what home is, what women do and where they do it (Bell 1999). Attention is paid also to the theoretical and discursive mechanisms at work, for example, a tendency, as described above, to amalgamate and/or blur oppositional categories and theories, including gender, class and other structural inequalities. Another tendency is to undermine or sideline conflicts and contradictions that persist and frame late modern societies and to produce a certain kind of willing political subject (Pykett 2012).

This genealogy is approached with an awareness of the influence of the range of theoretical and academic ideas that circulate in neoliberal narratives, and to the day to day movement of ideas in think tanks, policy environments, media and everyday life, all of which shape, and are shaped by, discursive practices. The strategy is to engage in close conversation with neoliberal discourse to isolate and question how it orders the world, and to engage with its political rationality in its own terms. The aim is to trace the trajectory of neoliberal rationality and to map the logical limits to its theoretical construction (Brown 2001). As Butler writes, the purpose of genealogy is to test 'the limits of its credibility and to observe where it 'meets its breaking point', the 'moments of its discontinuities and the sites where it fails to constitute the intelligibility that it promises' (Butler 2004: 216). Both Brown and Butler argue that these moments of

fracture or fragility are politically powerful, where unexpected openings can occur which disrupt the discourse and create space for critical thinking and practice (Brown 2001; Butler 2004; Newman 2013).

The following sections trace the emergence and progression of neoliberal discourse from the lead up and start of the New Labour Government in 1997 through to the beginning of the Conservative and Liberal Democrat Coalition Government in 2010. Emphasis is on the constitution of this discourse, the political manoeuvring of systems of thought, shifts in common sense understanding, and the pliability of these ideas in adapting to political pragmatism as they change shape to accommodate economic contingency. The purpose of this mapping is to become familiar with the broad theoretical and political patterns of the discourse so as to isolate and trace the absent presence of home and gender. The trajectory of neoliberal discourse fractures and changes in three significant moments: a social turn from a discrete economic ideology in the mid 1990s to remake the social as community; a shift from a focus on community to social relationships and social order, with the idea of social capital around 2000; and a shift from social relationships to the idea of discrete and responsible individuals around 2008/10. My argument is that in these moments home emerges, relatively undefined, as a private, personal, economic and political space. The following analysis of the remaking of the social marks New Labour's break with the old left and its bold alliance with neoliberalism.

Remaking the social

The social turn in neoliberal discourse emerged in the national political context of Britain in the 1990s, when the Labour Party were in opposition and were engaged in a project to modernise their political principles and policy outlook. Their aim was to present a credible alternative to new right individualism which defined the Conservative Government's political agenda through the 1980s and early 1990s. Ostensibly to move along with public opinion, the goal was to redefine Labour's position and provide a critique of the 'me society' that was seen to characterise Conservative Britain at the time. The Labour Party's arguments for changing its economic analysis and constitution were based on the idea that the economic individualism of the new right was losing credibility with the increase in poverty, homelessness and unemployment. The Labour Party was keen to define a new Labour politics without going back to the socialist principles of old labour which were thought to be as politically unpopular as the Conservative new right was then (Powell 2000). Two key questions were identified by the Labour Party to be of public concern at this time: how to build and maintain economic credibility, essential for winning an election and for a place in the global economy; and how to create and maintain a cohesive and settled society, essential for social order and economic efficiency (Miliband 1994; Hutton 1996). The architects of what would become New Labour began to redefine and reframe social democracy to coincide with what they perceived to be the needs of a rapidly changing and insecure society (Blair 1998; Giddens 1998).

To do this New Labour took a social or communitarian turn in making its third way in British politics. It defined itself as neither new right nor old left but as pragmatic, taking

'what works' from traditional right and left perspectives (Powell 2000: 39). It has been suggested that Tony Blair, the then leader of New Labour, took this idea of the third way from President Clinton in the United States and then turned to the 'debate among intellectuals keen to put theoretical flesh on a concept that has been defined in terms of what it is not – that is different from the old left and the new right' (Broadbent 2001: 183). This intellectual flesh, as is discussed above, was taken from contemporary debates in sociology and political theory. To counter the emphasis on the 'me society', communitarian ideas were drawn into the frame. Relevant here is a debate in academia at the time around the argument that compatibilities could be found between the abstract liberal individual and embedded communitarian individual. Arguments, which reached back to Plato and Aristotle, circulated around the 'need to formulate a liberal position that is sensitive to aspects of the communitarian critique' (Mulhall and Swift 1992: vii). The trigger to these debates was the question of how to manage the contradictory social effects of free market individualism (Miller 1990). They mirrored and informed New Labour's desire to move beyond left and right, offering an authoritative place to stand between liberal individualism and communitarian collectivism. Social and political theories provided a rationale and a theoretical strategy for turning political opposition and conflict into consensus and cooperation, moving opposing positions closer together, by incorporating aspects of both into a pragmatic ideology.

The organisation of oppositional social and political theories into a pragmatic political programme changed the political dynamic of the post war welfare state consensus which had sought to manage conflicting interests between liberal individualism and

socialism in a different way. Post war social democracy recognised the existence of social and economic conflict and set up institutional mechanisms, like the welfare state and corporate government, to ensure that the interests of capital and labour were politically recognised and represented. Keen to minimise economic and social conflict, New Labour eased itself away from socialism and towards communitarianism. While there are similarities between the two, they are also distinct, with significant political differences. One of these differences is that socialism is critical of capitalist economics and draws attention to the contradictions and inequalities that it produces, and the policies required to prevent poverty and exploitation; whereas communitarianism is a conservative philosophy that is relatively compatible with capitalism, tending to place responsibility for inequalities with individuals and communities.

Communitarianism offered a social perspective to counter a socialist critique of new right, economic individualism that threatened the legitimacy of capitalism. It offered politicians and policy makers a different social policy rationale that drew attention to society rather than to capitalist economics as the cause of social inequality, and away from conflictual class politics. Under the banner of legitimacy that communitarian theory offered, New Labour could shift the emphasis from social and economic rights which had been the basis of the welfare state and liberal democracy, to individual and social responsibility as the legitimate goal for politics and policy making (Mullard and Spicker 1998). In this shift priority comes to rest with individual and social responsibility, categorically separating social life from rights to political and economic security (Frazer and Lacey 1993).

The potential political fallout of this shift in emphasis from rights to responsibilities was averted, in part, through reference to debates in social theory. Giddens argued, for example, that traditional political perspectives and positions were also shifting 'beyond left and right' (Giddens 1994). In late modern politics a turnaround was taking place, he argued, where conservative politics becomes radical and radicalism becomes conservative (Giddens 1994). With this turnaround came the invitation to 're-invent' politics (Beck 1997), to craft a political paradigm whose legitimacy lay in its practicality rather than in a swelling up of grass roots opposition to dominant forces. This theoretical debate in sociology (Giddens 1994; Beck 1997; Bauman 1999) offered a sociological rationale for moving beyond the dynamic between the emancipatory politics of old style social democracy and the new right critique of welfare (Giddens 1998). In the third way ideological conflict becomes less significant and models of mutuality and partnership more crucial. For example Giddens urges thinking beyond the old incompatibilities between state and market provision since '[M]arkets do not always increase inequality, but can sometimes be the means of overcoming it' (Giddens 2000: 33). This theoretical manoeuvring opens up the possibility for the state and market to work together in a new mixed economy involving 'a synergy between public and private sectors' (Giddens 1998: 100). In practice and with hindsight many have argued that this legitimised the state as the arbiter of economic interests (Connell 2010). However, Giddens advocated a 'social investment state', a partnership between the state and civil society (Giddens 1998: 79) which entails neither the direct involvement of the old social democratic state, nor the minimal state of the new right model, but a relationship of mutual responsibility (Franklin 2007). Finally, in moving away from emancipatory to life politics Giddens offered New Labour a re-interpretation

of equality and social justice (Giddens 1994; 1998). For Blair, echoing Giddens' late modern sociology, equality was less to do with economic structures and resources, and more to do with life chances and individual opportunity:

We govern for all the people, young and old, black and white, poor and affluent. I see the nonsense written in the media about the electorate, as though policies on jobs appeal to one section of the community, policies on the economy and enterprise to another. We were elected to serve the whole country, those who voted for us and those who didn't. That is what we will continue to do (Blair 1999).

Thus, what Rose refers to as 'the politics of life itself' replaces the politics of emancipation and social justice (Rose 2001, 2007; Everingham 2003). For Rose discourses of community work in the strategic, economic interests of government to provide an ethical framework for governing individual behaviour in the construction of an ethical and ordered citizenry (Rose 2001). Responsibility lies with individuals to take up the opportunities offered in the partnership between individual, community and government. This partnership is defined in terms of social democracy and the politics of social justice. In this way the language of the post war settlement stays in place but the taken for granted definitions change.

In this discursive moment New Labour altered the systemic shape of political settlement in British politics, claiming that interests of capital and labour, right and left, men and women were no longer at odds and could be expressed in one ideology, one political party. Whether or not this was intentional, arguably the effect has been to

make these structural positions, and the power relations that characterise their relationship, less clear. The assumption of consensus, where there is none, introduces ambiguity into previously defined economic, political and social conflict and dichotomy. The value of a communitarian flattening, or supposed disappearance of conflict in favour of consensus, is emphasised by Amitai Etzioni in his definition of community:

Community is defined by two characteristics: first a web of affect laden relationships among a group of individuals, relationships that often criss-cross and reinforce one another.... and second, a measure of commitment to a set of shared values, norms and meanings, and a shared history and identity – in short to a particular culture (Etzioni 1996: 127).

A language of mutuality and consensus, responsibility and affect laden relationships softens and feminizes political discourse in stark difference to the hard language of class, inequality, opposition, conflict, and strikes. As argued above, an assumed feminisation of this discourse is problematic since crucial and defining, critical aspects of feminism are absent. Nonetheless policies which recognised the need for flexible working hours, parental leave, and life/work balance were introduced by New Labour and seemed to embrace the feminist challenge to recognize and value women's work in public and private spheres. Feminist critics pointed out that politicians were also motivated by what was seen as a more powerful economic challenge to reduce the welfare bill and create a flexible workforce, with paid work as a route out of poverty (Lister 1998; Franklin 2000a; Bryson 2007). Family friendly and work/life balance policies were said to lack the punch to change fundamentally or challenge gender inequalities (Franklin 2000a; Everingham 2003, McRobbie 2009; Lister and Bennett 2010). Despite

the increase of women in the labour market and cultural shifts around the changing role of men during the New Labour period, there was no matched movement of men into care work at home (Coote and Mohun Himmelweit 2013). With New Labour policies feminist issues were taken on board and had some effect but the structural conditions of gender equality, as with the public/private dichotomy, meant that women still had responsibility for either carrying out or organizing caring work (Franks 1999; McKie et al 2002). In the discursive space between policy and practice, public recognition and personal life, the experience of women as carers is taken for granted.

Feminists have long argued that the personal is political, but have struggled for public recognition of the structural relationships of power that infuse personal as well as public life. In neoliberal translations of the political into the personal, identity becomes a matter of personal choice and responsibility rather than linked in to the experiences of others in similar structural positions. For political theorists like Arendt, this personalisation of the political might also be seen as a negation of the political, since it is only in public that political equality or citizenship can be recognised and conferred (Arendt 1958). For Arendt, Maslin argues, the invisibility of women at home is particularly problematic: 'since it is the activity of being seen and heard by others that validates one's existence, this interaction serves as a tether of sorts between the individual and the world' (Maslin 2013: 597). With the personalisation of politics in neoliberal discourse, Maslin suggests, the choices women face between work and home, economic independence and family responsibility, become a series of impossible choices:

Women must renounce either social equality or economic independence; they must accept either enslavement in their own home or the dissolution of their families; women must either be constrained by biologically grounded tasks or renounce reproduction and family life; women must proclaim motherhood the most satisfying experience of a lifetime despite chronic sleep deprivation and the prevalence of depression. This denial of lived experience is often accompanied by an escape into the private realm. Though the private realm and the activities that take place there (thinking) are important preconditions for a public presentation, there is a profound danger in occupying either the private or the public realm exclusively (Maslin 2013: 597).

From this perspective neoliberalism's turn to the social creates a conceptual distancing of the ontological from the political and, following Maslin, creates a situation where gender inequality is denied and lived in impossible ways. To question what is actually going on here in terms of governmentality, power and disciplinary practices brings home into view as a potentially dangerous space for neoliberal politics. If home is a condition for political agency, home and the social may be seen as a threat to neoliberal politics since they hold possibilities for citizenship, political action and public dissent (Young 1997; Jacobson 2010). Such is the threat perhaps, that a neoliberal sensibility invites a remaking of the social as a series of consensual, responsible and economically productive spaces. James Conroy is of the view that the social 'has always held the potential to disrupt the political because behind closed doors, who knows what thoughts lurk in the home?' (Conroy 2010: 328).

Remaking social order

New Labour co-ordinated a social turn in British politics which redefined social life to meet the needs of the economy. An emphasis on the social has also re-worked certain aspects of the political through altering the terms of political action. The conceptual shift from emancipatory to life politics moves the direction of politics from recognition of social identities and redistribution of resources, to individual and community responsibility for choice and behaviour. If agency is located in life politics rather than emancipatory politics then the space of action is local or personal and is disassociated from wider social and economic contexts.

What began in New Labour politics as a turn to the social and to community, was enhanced by the idea of social capital, a concept that describes social connections and their social and economic value. Social capital theory provides a functionalist approach to understanding society, one that draws on a range of perspectives including behavioural economics and rational choice theories (Coleman 1988; Portes 1998; Fine 2001). Central to the development of social capital theory in its functionalist form¹⁶, are the social or behavioural economics of Gary Becker (Becker 1964). Becker is described as 'a pioneer of applying economic analysis to human behaviour in such areas as discrimination, marriage, family relations, and education'¹⁷. Made popular in British

¹⁶ Pierre Bourdieu's theory of capitals (1986), which includes economic, social, symbolic and cultural capital, is a critical understanding of how these forms of capital work to create and maintain social inequalities of power and resources. Bourdieu is not recognised by mainstream social capital theorists as a contributor to social capital theory (Fine 2001; Edwards et al 2006).

¹⁷ From the publicity blurb for Becker, G. S. (1964/1993) *Human Capital: a theoretical and empirical analysis, with special reference to education*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press: <http://www.press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/H/bo3684031.html>

politics through the work of Robert Putnam (1993, 2000) social capital is an economic theory of society that complements the communitarian agenda in neoliberal politics (Portes 1998; Fine 2001). It provides a systemic picture of how societies are ordered as a series of social networks rather than vertical or hierarchical relationships of class and other social inequalities. In social capital theory, following Putnam, social connections are voluntary – not determined by external forces - held together through the norms and values that sustain trust and reciprocity (Putnam 2000; Halpern 2005). These qualities are understood as capitals to be exchanged and maximised in social life as a means to making connections with others that lead to community cohesion and economic success. New Labour policy makers were drawn to this approach, attending conferences, initiating public debate¹⁸ and developing methodologies within Government at the Office for National Statistics for measuring and increasing social capital in communities¹⁹ (Harper 2001; Halpern 2005). Social capital is said to foster social cohesion, a sense of security and belonging, and to offer economic opportunity. Putnam asserts that the more social capital individuals possess the more they are likely to get involved in community life, and to become economically active and prosperous (Putnam 2000).

¹⁸ A key international conference on social capital was organised at Exeter University in 2001: "EURESCO Conference on 'Social Capital: Interdisciplinary Perspectives', sponsored by ESF and EC (plus a £3,000 contribution from the OEOS ESRC Programme)": <http://socialsciences.exeter.ac.uk/politics/staff/castiglione/research/>. [Accessed 12 September 2013]. Speakers included Robert Putnam and David Halpern, a policy advisor to Tony Blair and now to David Cameron (Benjamin 2013).

¹⁹ David Halpern was Senior Policy Adviser at the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit at the time of publication of *Social Capital*, where the impact of the idea is described on the back cover: 'The concept of 'social capital' is currently the focus of an explosion of interest in the research and policy community. It refers to the social networks, informal structures and norms that facilitate individual and collective action. This explosion of interest is driven by a growing body of evidence that social capital has enormous effects on economic growth, health, crime and even the effectiveness and functioning of governments' (Halpern 2005).

To explain different forms of social capital Putnam uses the concepts of 'bonding' and 'bridging'. Bonding social capital is based around family, close friends and near kin, and its importance lies in creating a secure and cohesive social base. Bonding social capital is also said to reinforce the exclusivity and homogeneity of social groups, enabling people to 'get by' (Lowndes 2004). Bridging social capital refers to the art of making connections with people outside bonded social groups, so that individuals can make links to more distant networks and generate broader identities and wider reciprocity. Bridging social capital is also described as the means to 'get ahead' (Lowndes 2004). In social capital theory concepts of bonding and bridging are said to capture potential processes of integration within and between communities. The underlying purpose of these social processes is the development of active economic networks of exchange and reciprocity (Fine 2001).

The discursive function of social capital is to provide a common sense view of how society is ordered as a series of potentially consensual communities. It is also to clarify a symbiotic relationship between economy and society, where interests of each are shared and not in conflict. In this vein, social capital theory also provides explanations of how problems of social breakdown are socially and not economically created, and that social rather than economic policies are required to solve them. It is this logic that secures the neoliberal sense that it is the choices and behaviours of individuals that create conditions of poverty and family breakdown. This is exemplified in the work of the Conservative think tank, the Centre for Social Justice which was set up by Iain Duncan Smith, the now Secretary of State for Work and Pensions in the Conservative and Liberal Coalition Government (2010-). The Centre's website states that there are

'five pathways to poverty' which are 'family breakdown; educational failure; economic dependency and worklessness; addiction to drugs and alcohol; and severe personal debt'²⁰. As Ruth Lister and Fran Bennett argue:

The Conservatives' diagnosis of the problem of poverty is framed by the two tropes of 'broken Britain/society' and 'big government vs. big society'. Like New Labour, Cameron's Conservatives understand the power of language. They deploy it skilfully to represent the problem of poverty and its causes and solutions in ways which place the main responsibility on the individual and on communities rather than on government (Lister and Bennett 2010: 88).

For Putnam the prime cause of social breakdown is the decline in social capital since the second world war. This is exacerbated by individualisation, the 'quest for the ideal self', and the 'free-agency' of the 1960s generation, a phrase which carries an implicit reference to feminist, student, liberation and class politics in Britain and the United States (Edwards et al 2006). The low stock of social capital held by communities or nations, Putnam suggests, contributes to economic decline, so that governments need to intervene to build social capital through policies like family and community friendly workplaces, supporting participation in local politics and decision making.

Paradoxically, Zygmunt Bauman argues, though community may be desired as an ideal place to live, a longing for security, trust and reciprocity, translated into New Labour politics, conversely tends to individualise and separate people from each other:

²⁰ Centre for Social Justice: 'Social breakdown and poverty'
<http://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk/about-us/social-breakdown-and-poverty> [Accessed 12 May 2014].

If they fall ill, it is because they are not resolute or industrious enough in following the health regime. If they stay unemployed it is because they failed to learn the skills of winning an interview or because they did not try hard enough to find a job or because they are purely and simply work-shy (Bauman 2001: 47).

Feminists argue that social capital theory seeks to explain and discipline the very aspects of social life that are of central concern to feminist scholarship (Franklin and Thomson 2005). Maxine Molyneux, for example, points to the gender bias of social capital theory which, she argues, hides the social mechanisms through which gender roles are produced and maintained, making 'gender present and absent in troubling ways' (Molyneux 2002: 72). Un-gendered social capital theory silently places women un-problematically at the centre of community as good mothers, good local activists and good social capitalists (Franklin and Thomson 2005). While some feminists have found the concept useful and have opened it up to gender and other social inequalities (Kovalainen 2004; Lowndes 2004; 2006), others assert that feminists should be wary of using the concept at all (Franklin and Thomson 2005; Adkins 2005a, 2008). Adkins argues, for example, that feminist critiques of social capital have been trapped within a "correctionist mode" of thinking', reproducing a romanticised idea of women as the creators of collective social goods (Adkins 2005a: 195). She warns that we need to be alert to the re-configurations of class and gender as they emerge, recognising links between new kinds of economic insecurity and new forms of structural inequality (Adkins 2004, 2005). Social capital theory adds weight to a rationale for identifying and valuing certain social subjects, the social entrepreneur who develops bridging social capital to invest in social innovation and social enterprise; and the individual who

creates the bonding conditions as the springboard to innovation²¹. What needs to be emphasised here is that the usefulness of social capital for neoliberal politics is that it provides a legitimate theory for explaining social life through an economic lens, to maximise the economic value of individual behaviour and social interactions (Fine 2001; Franklin 2007).

Remaking individual subjects

The ideas of community and social capital provide a structured understanding of how the 'good society' works through encouraging shared values and supportive communities. To cement reciprocal relationships and emotional connection to people and place, the idea of belonging was momentarily significant notably in relation to debates about multiculturalism (Goodhart 2004; Cordes and Hothi 2008). Where social capital refers to social connections or networks and the trust and reciprocity (Putnam 2000) the idea of belonging provides a mechanism to unite individuals behind a common story (Cordes and Hothi 2008). Belonging also adds another dimension. If social capital as trust is something that inheres between people, belonging opens up a pathway between how we feel inside and how we act outside, the relation between the 'in-here' and the 'out-there', also resonant of Giddens' sociology of late modernity (Heaphy 2007). The pathway between the in-here and the out-there, also indicates the

²¹ A mixed language of third way and social capital can be found in descriptions of a variety of social enterprise organisations. For example, The Young Foundation say on their website that '[A] key part of our mission is to empower and enable others to design and deliver their own solutions to become the social innovators of tomorrow. This means supporting creativity and innovation while rigorously analysing what works and exploring new investment models that deliver sustainability and value for money': <http://youngfoundation.org/our-work/social-innovation-investment/> [Accessed 12 May 2014].

relationship between subjectivity, social relationships and situation; and a universal need for belonging. Neoliberal discourse or politics uses ideas of belonging to access how people feel inside and to articulate how individuals understand, or govern themselves in the world. The ways that subjectivity as belonging is enmeshed with the economic are to be seen in this quote from Phil Wilson, from a contemporary publication outlining ideas for a post-Coalition Labour government:

We want our children ...to live in a community where they belong and do not feel left out. We want them to be independent and own their own home. Owning is something which can also make us feel secure and belong to the mainstream, and it should be something we all have the right to do and feel comfortable about doing (Wilson 2013: 64).

Social capital and belonging lay the ground for a change in neoliberal focus towards a discursive politics of individual behaviour, of governing individual lives, from the outside community to the inside of the private self (Rose 2001). The communitarian and social capital rationale is developed in tension with the liberal notion of individual freedom, leaning instead towards the reciprocity and values which connect individuals to each other. The individualisation or personalisation of neoliberal discourse still resonates with social values but political and policy emphasis changes towards the character of individuals, their assets and attributes, and their subjective well being²².

Theories of positive psychology, happiness and resilience circulate to influence this

²² For example, the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Wellbeing Economics called witnesses to a meeting in December 2013 on Culture and Wellbeing, including participants from 'Happy Museum'. 'It emerged from the discussion that evidence about wellbeing could be used to ...make the case for increased spending on culture by attaching monetary values to the benefits created by participation in cultural activities'. <http://parliamentarywellbeinggroup.org.uk/>

change in emphasis offering a language for explaining and ordering human behaviour (Seligman 2002; Layard 2006). With this personal turn neoliberal discourse increasingly attends to individual psychology, to value positive rather than negative behaviour, and more intensely to life politics (Rose 2001, 2007). There are a range of silent assumptions that underpin this shift not least about gender roles and behaviour, and a distinction between 'us' policy makers and 'them' or those with problematic behaviours that lead to unwanted outcomes (Lister and Bennett 2010). Such outcomes, like obesity, drug and alcohol dependency, are defined as individual problems rather than as the interactive effects of social and economic inequalities (Pykett 2012).

The language of well being has been influential in legitimising neoliberal political critique. The individual or positive psychology which shapes the well being agenda is also useful in framing a critique of Keynesian economics and the welfare state, providing an alternative rationale for government goals and strategies (Sointu 2005; Shah and Marks 2004). The subjective well being approach enabled New Labour policy makers to look beyond external, objective measures of social well being like inequality and income distribution, to focus on what is working well for individuals from their point of view (Shah and Marks 2004; Layard 2006). This valorises individual subjectivity and resources, and purports to see people as assets rather than as problems to be solved (Stephens et al 2008). The well being agenda is also supported by a growing assertion that material resources are not enough to satisfy individual subjective or psychological needs (Layard 2006), and that the aim might be to enhance individual resilience and capacity as an alternative to increasing state provision (Craig 2007). Again this argument rests on a critique of welfare, that individual and community

capacity has been run down by the welfare state and benefits system, stripping people of agency and resilience, and creating dependent subjects (Bartley 2006). From this perspective the purpose of government strategy and policy is to change the welfare culture to emphasise individual and community assets and capacities and to downplay needs, which are seen to be negative and indicative of dependency (Cameron 2009; Dean 2010; Coote 2010a; Wainwright 2010; Ransome 2011). Gary Craig points out that the language of capacity building carries the Government strategy along discursive lines that seem to correspond with what individuals and communities value for themselves (Craig 2007).

New Labour's social turn was reworked by the Conservative Party in opposition under the leadership of David Cameron with a Conservative version of communitarian politics:

What Cameron is here gesturing towards is an older Tory tradition of intermediate structures and the politics of community and reciprocity. Instead of the vertical sanction of the state, which citizens can only experience as an act of external coercion, a good politics requires the horizontal sanction of our peers, friends and colleagues. Crucial to a revival of virtue is the restoration of genuine liberty, which must be organically embedded in particular social formations with particular privileges and duties (Blond 2010: 171-172).

In this quote Phillip Blond introduces the idea of liberty, a particularly communitarian form of freedom, which New Labour had not overtly proclaimed as one of their key principles. This is evident in David Cameron's big society idea which is to liberate society from the state (Cameron 2009). The key idea of the big society is that the state should roll back its hold on society and become smaller to enable the capacity of civil

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society to get bigger, so that people in communities take more responsibility for themselves and each other. The success of the big society depends on the growth and expansion of third sector organisations and an increase in volunteering, where philanthropy and charitable giving take the place of taxation (Cameron 2009; Coote 2010a; Keohane et al 2011). The language used in describing the big society is less jargonistic than it was with New Labour's more technocratic vocabulary. With the big society there is less of a tendency to overtly control the social world through technical language and policies and more of a letting go, a use of everyday language as a means to metaphorically, as well actually, distance the state from social and economic life. In letting go, the aim is to give society a chance to get itself together and the use of words like innovation, entrepreneurialism, freedom and agency is the means to express this. Below is a quote from a speech made by Iain Duncan Smith which exemplifies the use of common sense language that flows between the economic and the social, public and private, and between energy and creativity on the one hand, and conditionality and work-readiness on the other:

A greater level of personalised support also means more people will be work-ready as the jobs market picks up, so over time we will get a higher return on investment, as well as producing greater life changes for the individual. To make sure we get the best value for money, we will also be changing the framework to bring the ideas and energy of the third sector and the private sector to the forefront of the process. We will reform the regime so that we properly reward the providers who do best at creating sustainable jobs that help people move out of benefits and into work. But we are not prepared to pay for anything less.

At the same time, we will also make sure the system is fair by ensuring that receipt of benefits for those able to work is conditional on their willingness to work. So to be fair to the taxpayer, we will cut payments if they don't do the right thing.²³

In emphasising individual agency in community and market contexts neoliberalism in this mode redefines and slides over, in emotional and interpersonal terms, the financial and structural pressures experienced by poor families day to day. Val Gillies argues that the big society narrative works 'to buffer and reinforce relations of oppression and exploitation by hiding them under the cloak of nature , benevolence and meritocracy' (Gillies 2013: 92). The big society narrative masks the economic cause of deep public spending cuts and austerity politics by asserting that they are caused by the social problem of welfare and dependency (Coote 2000a; Wainwright 2010; Slay and Penny 2013).

Feminist considerations

Neoliberalism's social and personal turn outlined here frames contemporary political and social discourse, seeping into everyday, common sense ways of thinking about society, about ourselves and our relationships with others. The relationship between feminism and neoliberal politics and discourse is complex and contradictory. Feminist politicians, activists and theorists work in different ways to navigate the contradictory ideas and practices that collect at the edge between them (Fraser 2009; Newman 2013).

²³ From as speech by the Rt Hon Iain Duncan Smith, 'Welfare for the 21st Century, 27 May 2010: <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/welfare-for-the-21st-century> [Accessed 7 May 2014].

In national and local government feminist politicians have had input into writing and enacting policies to bring feminist issues to the centre of policy development (Coote 2000; Childs 2004; Squires 2007). Feminists engage continually in policy contexts to 'work the boundaries of neoliberalism', to maximise the potential or limit the detrimental effects of government policies (Newman 2012). Feminist scholars endeavour to theorise the precise nature of the contradictory affinity between neoliberalism and feminism. Fraser, for example, unravels what she sees as the uneasy alliance between feminism and capitalism (Fraser 2009) which evolves through a coincidence between feminist and capitalist critiques of patriarchy. For feminism patriarchal power 'stood in the way of women's emancipation'; just as patriarchal landed interests stood in the way of capitalist expansion (Fraser 2009: 115). Though different these critiques of traditional authority 'the one feminist, the other neo-liberal appear to converge' (Fraser 2009: 115). The effects of this convergence are, Fraser argues, 'double edged: on the one hand feminist ideas of gender equality ... now sit squarely in the social mainstream: on the other hand they have yet to be realized in practice' (Fraser 2009: 98). The coincidence of critique is also thought to neutralise feminist knowledge and politics, as it 'obscures more complex and disturbing possibilities' (Fraser 2009: 99). Contentiously, Fraser argues that feminism has been unwittingly complicit in supporting new and emerging forms of capitalism (Fraser 2009: 99). Similarly McNay argues, that neoliberal politics uses feminism, as it picks up 'a simplified understanding of subject formation, identity and agency in the context of social hierarchies, in particular, gender' (McNay 2008: 2). Others feminist theorists argue that in the constitution of a feminized policy discourse there has been a reordering of the public-private, production-reproduction dichotomies (Bakker 2007; LeBaron 2010;

Simon-Kumar 2011) which appears to open up possibilities for women, while keeping a strategic organisation of gender and power in place.

Just how feminism and neoliberalism are entwined is a matter of contemporary debate which seems to hinge on the extent to which feminism has inadvertently colluded with neoliberalism (Fraser 2009); how feminist knowledge has been erased as a consequence of neoliberal discourse (Hawkesworth 2009); or how empirically women continue to work 'the spaces of power' configured by neoliberal discourse (Newman 2012, 2013). Feminists are working through a troubling relationship with a powerful discourse that more or less effects a re-ordering of gender in government policy so as to alter social and political life (Simon-Kumar 2011). This re-ordering, Simon-Kumar argues, requires a new kind of feminist critique since it cannot be understood through 'dichotomies of male-female/masculine-feminine' which 'are no longer the pertinent categories to understanding gender relations' in these new forms (Simon-Kumar 2011: 458). Jenkins argues that feminist genealogy is the appropriate method for deciphering how gender is reordered, written in and written out, of neoliberal discourse. Both theorists suggest that the terrain has been changed so that instead of gender being a visible indicator of inequality it has been dissolved into discursive categories that 'analytically disembodied women' and separate them from home and social reproduction, the 'conventional sites and activities that have disadvantaged them' (Simon-Kumar 2011: 458).

The purpose of genealogy in this chapter is to trace the remaking of the social, social relationships and social subjects to provide a theoretical key for a close reading of home in neoliberal policy language. In neoliberal ideology and politics, analysed in this chapter, women and the work they do are deeply taken for granted and disconnected

from social spaces, from where feminised activities take place. This separation disaggregates home as subjectivity-in-situation. It symbolically disrupts the relationship between women and the material world, and the struggles through which women make something of themselves in the situations available to them. Just as feminism is ambiguously present in neoliberal policy, politics and discourse, home as a gendered setting of care is ambiguously present on the edge between community and personal, public and private spaces (Brown 2005; Newman 2012, 2013).

Towards an analysis of policy discourse

In the context of the analysis above and explorations of feminist theory and methodology in the previous chapter, this section begins with a description of the policy document **A vision for adult social care: capable communities and active citizens**²⁴ (DH 2010) which is chosen as an appropriate representation of neoliberal policy language for this study. The document is chosen for its focus on the policy arena of social care which most closely touches home and gender, and for its specific attention to policy vision. The policy context for the document's publication is described, namely the evolving critique of the welfare state and the identification of welfare dependency as the core policy problem, both of which can be identified in the document. Following this, the research strategy for approaching the identification, isolation and analysis of key words in the document is outlined, with an overview of how each of the subsequent three chapters is organised to focus on subjectivity in the

²⁴ See Appendix 1.

social register, agency in the political, and situation in the economic register. The chapter ends with a discussion on policy language as the focus of analysis.

Introducing the document

The document was published by the Conservative and Liberal Democrat Coalition Government in Britain in 2010, and represents an arrangement of Government ideas or vision in the arena of adult social care. The foreword to the document is written by Andrew Lansley MP, the then Secretary of State for Health, and Paul Burstow MP, the then Minister of State for Care Services. Otherwise the authorship of the document is unstated though it is published by the Department of Health. The document is available on-line via the Department of Health website, alongside an 'easy read version' and is published by the Central Office of Information for the Department of Health. The 'target audience' of the document is stated as 'PCT CEs, Care Trust CEs, Directors of PH, Local Authority CEs, Director of Adult SSs' (DH 2010: 2). The initials in this list refer respectively to primary care trusts (PCTs); chief executives (CEs); public health (PH); social services (SS). Thus it is assumed that readers of the document will be working at executive level in governmental and non-governmental organisations involved in the delivery of health and social care. Other readers might also be anticipated in various constituencies including policy makers and experts from think tanks, academia, charitable and third sector organisations; those interested professionals such as health and social care managers; clinical and social care practitioners in formal institutional and community settings; and interested members of academia and the public. The document is referred to in the following pages in full, as 'the document' or 'the text',

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and quotes from the document are **written in bold** when specifically quoted, to distinguish them from quotations from other sources.

The document is chosen as the focus of analysis for this study for three strategic reasons. First, it is a statement of policy approach or perspective and as such it presents the Government's core social policy narrative. Second, the policy focus in the document on social care has been identified as synonymous or coincidental with home and gender (Sevenhuijsen 2002; Bryson 2007). Third, the language used in the document is expressive of neoliberal discourse and the analytical categories of subjectivity, agency and situation that express home, including words like individual, community, action, dependency, personal, freedom, responsibility and care. Overall the document represents a statement of policy vision or approach rather than specific policy options expressing the underpinning values of **freedom, fairness and responsibility** in which the Government's vision for adult social care is grounded. The document is structured around seven alliterated principles: **prevention; personalisation; partnership, plurality; protection; productivity and people** (DH 2010: 8). Each section of the document is introduced with a short statement of what these principles mean in practice, followed by a more detailed explanation and practical example of where these activities are already taking place. For example, in the first section on **prevention**, the introduction states:

Empowered people and strong communities will work together to maintain independence. Where the state is needed, it supports communities and helps people to retain and regain independence (DH 2010:9).

In this and in the detailed explanation that follows, key policy concepts and categories are introduced, which, as Daniel Béland has argued, are 'involved in the inherently political drawing and redrawing of the contested boundaries of state action' (Béland 2011: 1). For example the word **independence** features twice in this short paragraph quoted above, indicating a strong commitment to the principle of independence as the means to minimalise state involvement in community support. In the detailed explanation that follows a second tier heading of **Active citizens and strong communities – the Big Society** is introduced (DH 2010:9). Under this heading are indications of where responsibilities lie for the enactment of this policy approach, alongside practical examples of how **community capacity** is built as an alternative to state provision (DH 2010: 10). Each section concludes with paragraphs under the heading **Making it happen** where local and national government plans are stated, including legislation, finance, pilot projects and partnerships between agencies, communities and individuals.

All sections follow a similar structural pattern, introducing other key concepts and categories as the document continues. One of the central ideas in the document is that **those who are actively involved in care are the best people to decide how these services should change** (DH 2010: 9). Care, it is stated, can be transformed **not by looking upwards to the state, but outwards to communities – by empowering individuals and unlocking the power and creativity of neighbourhoods to deliver the Big Society** (DH 2010: 9). It is unclear in the document who these empowered individuals might be, since the language of **individual** or **people** belies differences of gender and age. Feminists point out that care policy is often written in a language that

holds deeply engrained assumptions about those who care and those who are cared for (Estes et al 2003). It is also well documented that it is predominantly women who care for and about children and dependent or elderly relatives (Bryson 2007; Burchardt 2008; Coote & Mohun Himmelweit 2013). There is no indication in the document of which people care or are cared for, so that **care** and **people** are catch all, catch nothing categories. However since the document is explicitly about care, and women of all ages are the main carers in British society, it is implicitly about women and the gendered relations of care (Sevenhuijsen 1998; Tronto 2001; Williams 2001).

While the policy focus of the document is social care it also strongly states that the central policy problem to be solved is the problem of **dependency**. The document introduces big society policy solutions to the problem of welfare dependency:

A Big Society approach to social care means unleashing the creativity and enthusiasm of local communities to maintain independence and prevent dependency (DH 2010: 10)

Thus the document, published in the early days of the Coalition Government in 2010, reflects and builds on the assumptions, language and politics of the New Labour and neoliberal orthodoxies outlined earlier in this chapter.

The document in policy context

In principle, Governments make policies that are intended to translate their ideals or goals for society and economy into practice. They come into power with a political

project to create the kind of society that reflects their political perspective and with a manifesto which reflects those goals in practical policy statements and proposals. They will have an ideology or set of principles and values to bring to policy making, a view of how society should be organised; a view of human nature; a view of the purpose and methods of political activity; and an economic perspective. Policy makers draw on these ideas to define the relationship between the state and the individual, between the state and the market, the distribution of resources in society and the role of the individual, family and community. Policy discourse thus constituted forms a rationale for defining policy problems and policy answers to improve or solve them (Bacchi 1999; Murray Li 2007). Policies are also one of the mechanisms through which discourses constitute and transmit common sense language and ideas (Fairclough 2000a, 2000b).

..two key connected elements which must be delivered in achieving what we want, are a community based approach for everyone and the personalisation of care and support (DH 2010: 7).

The document is a statement of principles and values, and outlines the Coalition Government's core policy narrative. It also outlines the policy mechanisms that will translate these ideas into practice, and identifies where responsibility for social care lies. Since the beginning of the New Labour Government in 1997 responsibility for social care has undergone a series of shifts from institutional welfare to local community settings and practices (England 2010). A key idea in the document is that of shifting responsibility for welfare from the state to individuals and communities. The stated rationale for this shift is based on a critique of the deficit model of the welfare state

which is seen to encourage dependency on state organised social security benefits. The policy answer to dependency is big society, through which welfare or care can be

..transformed - not by looking upwards to the state, but outwards to communities – by empowering individuals and unlocking the power and creativity of neighbourhoods to deliver the Big Society (DH 2010: 9).

The statement **outwards to communities** in this quote alludes to spaces in communities where social care takes place but the document makes no mention of particular concrete buildings or institutions, nor does it mention the kinds of material resources that might be appropriate or necessary for the activity of care. The word community could evoke local residential care, or cottage hospitals, or day care centres, or home care. From a feminist perspective all of these places are sites of gendered work, paid and unpaid (Charles 2000; Bryson 2007; Fawcett Society 2010). The title of the document refers specifically to **adult social care** as the central concern of capable communities. The care of older and vulnerable adults primarily falls to women, often those of the 'sandwich generation' who have responsibility for children and elderly parents, as well as paid work²⁵. The document states that these busy people, front line care workers or those caring informally **are the best people to decide how these services should change** (DH 2010: 9).

²⁵ See Dalia Ben-Galim and Amna Silim (2013) 'The sandwich generation: older women balancing work and care' published by Institute for Public Policy Research, London. The report argues that 'Balancing care responsibilities and work is becoming increasingly difficult, particularly for older women: a 'sandwich generation' is emerging, whose members are caught between providing care for both grandchildren and elderly parents, often while continuing to earn and pursue their career': .
<http://www.ippr.org/publication/55/11168/the-sandwich-generation-older-women-balancing-work-and-care>

Focusing on language

The introduction to the document above highlights the work that language does in constituting problems of care and dependency and their solutions (Béland 2011). There is plenty of scope for a different kind of analysis of this document, not least in the assumptions it makes about women in different stages of their lives or about how men and masculinity are constituted in the discourse. For the purpose of this study, which is to conduct a genealogy of home and the woman question, attention is primarily focused on home as a metaphor for gender ontology; and on how the problem of women, or the woman question might be constituted in neoliberal policy language.

The language used in the document describes the Coalition Government's **vision** which involves the introduction of 'policy concepts' that come to be 'integrated into a country's existing ideological and institutional landscape' (Béland 2011: 3). Béland advocates the use of 'key words', in the analysis of these concepts. Following Raymond Williams (1976) and Fraser and Gordon (1994) concepts involve 'key symbolic struggles' (Béland 2011: 4) and the slippage of meaning as words are used in different academic, political and everyday contexts (Williams 1976: 14). For example, in his book *Keywords* Williams writes that:

Community can be the warmly persuasive word to describe an existing set of relationships, or the warmly persuasive word to describe an alternative set of relationships. What is most important, perhaps, is that unlike all other terms of social organisation (*state, nation, society*, etc) it seems never to be used unfavourably, and never to be given any opposing or distinguishable term (Williams 1976: 76).

Inspired by Williams, Fraser and Gordon identify keywords to shape their genealogy of dependency in welfare policy in the United States (Fraser and Gordon 1994). They 'assume that the terms that are used to describe social life are also active forces shaping it', making 'a crucial element of politics...the struggle to define social reality' (Fraser and Gordon 1994: 310). Fraser and Gordon argue that '[K]eywords carry unspoken assumptions and connotations that can powerfully influence the discourses they permeate – in part by constituting a ...taken for granted common sense or belief that escapes critical scrutiny (Fraser and Gordon 1994: 310). While Williams, and Fraser and Gordon, analyse how the use of their keywords change over time, the focus of genealogy in this study 'does not consist in a deep historical narrative' (Béland 2011: 4) but in the analysis of one policy document, in a single moment of political history for the inclusion/exclusion of home and the woman question in policy language (Bogren 2010). Attention is paid in this analysis to key words that are used to define social actors and policy problems, and which work to include, exclude or 'erase feminist knowledge' (Hawkesworth 2010). The aim is to be curious about, and to question, the relationship between ideas, politics and policy language in the document since '[S]ocial policy concepts are subject to many interpretations, partly because they are changing historical constructions' (Béland 2011: 1).

The role of ideas in social policy, Teun van Dijk argues, is to transmit and reproduce the operation of power through the control of language (van Dijk 1993: 254). So the analysis in this study is alert to the ways that power relationships and 'dominance may be enacted and reproduced by subtle, routine, everyday forms of text and talk that appear "natural" and quite "acceptable"' (van Dijk 1993: 254). Van Dijk writes, usefully

for this thesis, that one of the ways that analysts might access discursive strategies is by attending to how elites control 'the situation', that is, shaping 'time place, setting and the presence and absence of participants' (van Dijk 1993: 260). Lastly van Dijk offers an understanding of how inequalities come to be justified in powerful discourses which, he argues, 'involves two complementary strategies, namely the positive representation of the own group, and the negative representation of the Others' (van Dijk 1993: 3). This positive/negative dichotomy emerges in neoliberal discourse and is transmitted in the document where a deficit model of dependency contrasts "'our" tolerance, help or sympathy' with 'negative social or cultural differences..attributed to "them"' (van Dijk 1993: 262).

Research strategy

The genealogy of home and the women question, presented over the following three chapters, is informed by feminist genealogy (Bell 1999; Butler 1990, 2004; Brown 2001; Coole 2009); feminist discourse analysis (Lazar 2007, Bacchi 2005, Hawkesworth 2009); and a post-empirical approach to policy analysis (Fischer 2003) outlined in chapter two. These methodologies inform a strategy for this research which is a theoretically informed, generalised approach to reading and analysing the language in the text, rather than a focused discourse analysis of the incidence of words or interpretation of meaning. The purpose of the analysis is to adopt 'a political theoretical focus on the ways in which issues are given a particular meaning within a specific social setting' (Bacchi 2005: 199). A feminist 'political theoretical' gaze is adopted to engage with the discursive constitution of subjectivity, agency and situation in the document. Carol

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Bacchi offers two useful points of guidance in this regard, first that 'discourses *contain* subjects' (Bacchi 2005: 200), and second that 'those interested in the analysis of discourses often pay heed to the use of metaphors and speech patterns within the text studied' (Bacchi 2005: 200). The purpose in this analysis is to identify concepts, metaphors, speech patterns and policy problems in the document that evoke home and the woman question. It is to isolate and question hidden assumptions about gendered subjectivity, agency and situation, and the problem of women and how to solve it. The purpose is not to examine policies and their effects, nor is it to conduct a comparative or historical analysis that sets out to place the document in social context or in relation to similar documents or policies. The research focus is on the document in itself, in its particular time, and for its particular purpose, as it represents and captures a moment in the development of neoliberalism's social turn after New Labour and in the early stages of the Coalition Government.

Analysis of the presence and absence of home in the document is guided through the representational category of subjectivity-in-situation, separated out as subjectivity, agency and situation (Fraser and Gordon 1994; Howarth 2010: 316, 326). Each category is the focus of analysis of one of the following three chapters, in the context of social, political or economic registers of the discourse (Fraser and Gordon 1994) where they may, or may not, completely fit. In chapter four the document is read for the presence of subjectivity in the context of the social register. Chapter five analyses the text for the presence of agency in the context of the political register. Chapter six is an analysis of the presence of situation in the economic register. Each chapter consists in a layered questioning of the language, rather than the substance, of politics and policy, in two

stages of analysis. The first stage is a reading of the document for the identification of key words which evoke subjectivity, agency and situation. In chapter four, where the focus is on subjectivity and the social register, the key words chosen for analysis are **community** which expresses social life; **reciprocity and care**, which represent the order and activity of social relationships; and **people**, which refers to the identity of social subjects. In chapter five where the focus is on agency in the context of the political register, key words are chosen for their expression of political subjectivity; the public private dichotomy and the principles that shape political life. These are **active citizen, partnership** and **freedom**. In chapter six the focus is on the economic register where situation is evoked as the material experience of **everyday life** alongside the key words **personalisation** and **co-production** which describe a new economy of care and represent the organisation of gendered resources of care (DH 2010: 8). Running through the document, and through each of the following three chapters is the core problem of dependency:

People's expectations are changing, and neither those who provide the services nor those who receive them expect to trade autonomy for dependency (DH 2010: 4).

In each chapter the policy narrative is outlined as it relates to the analytical categories and key words chosen. The strategy and purpose of the policy approach is then identified and questioned in relation to critical and feminist literature, so as to unravel the gendered complexity of the discourse and to offer alternative interpretations as a means of contrast and critique. For example, in chapter four the key word **community** is traced through the document to question the taken for granted assumptions about

subjectivity and the social that it conveys. The aim is to isolate and question assumptions about home and the woman question that are evoked in the social ontology expressed in the document. Each of the three chapters provides a different layer of analysis, so that the social, political and economic are separated but overlaid.

Murray Li argues that governments only propose policy solutions to questions they think they can solve (Murray Li 2007). This makes the framing of the question and its solution potentially fragile, 'in the conditions under which expert discourse is punctured by a challenge it cannot contain; moments when the targets of expert schemes reveal, in word or deed, their own critical analysis of the problems that confront them' (Murray Li 2007: 11). While the purpose of this interrogation of discourse and policy language is to isolate and question the framing of home and the woman question, in the final chapter of this study a broader questioning of home sets out to disrupt the neoliberal narrative, to emphasise its fragility (Jenkins 2011: 8) and the taken for grantedness of the woman question itself.

Conclusion

This chapter has traced the social turn in neoliberal politics and discourse, to give a sense of how home emerges in the reworking of society, social relationships and social subjects, moment by moment towards intimate and personal spaces. It also draws attention to the central problem of dependency which threads through the social turn as a judgement on community capacity or individual behaviour. From a feminist perspective the problem of dependency can be construed as inherently gendered

though this diagnosis is not straightforward in a neoliberal context due to a reworking of the binaries that describe social and economic life. Neoliberal binaries are constituted through the same re-working logic that informs the politics of community, the third way and big society. In theoretical and political terms this logic amalgamates differently ordered ideas like liberalism/communitarianism; capitalism/social democracy; sociology/economics and in the process drops their problematic aspects, notably those which refer to inequality or conflict. The binaries which derive from conventional theoretical positions like liberalism gave contested structure to social difference and to political spaces, for example man/woman denotes a relationship of identity and power, and public/private denotes a separation of public (either political, economic or social space) and private (personal and family space). Neoliberal binaries, derived from a process of theoretical and political amalgamation, are characterised by a mixture of social and economic attributes like positive/negative or strong/broken; or by different spaces as in inside/outside; or inclusion/exclusion. Social identities of gender and other inequalities are less prominent, so that either women or men may be independent or dependent. In this way subjectivity is detached from the binaries that order social and economic life in neoliberal discourse. These binaries are explored in greater detail in the following chapters.

In the second section of this chapter the document **A vision for adult social care: capable communities and active citizens** (DH 2010) was introduced along with an outline of the analytical framework and research strategy for the genealogy of home and the woman question in policy language. The next three chapters form a close reading of the document across social, political and economic registers of the

discourse. The following chapter focuses on remaking of the social, social relationships and social subjects in the social register.

Chapter four

Remaking Subjectivity

This chapter presents the first of three readings of the document **A vision for adult social care: capable communities and active citizens** (DH 2010), which provides the text for a close analysis of home in neoliberal policy discourse. Since home as a word is largely absent in this document, the analysis focuses on key words that are chosen for their closeness to the category of home expressed as subjectivity-in-situation. As discussed in chapter two, this category is devised to signify the relationship between ontology and politics, relating in this chapter to the character of society, social relationships and social subjects in the context of the social register. Attention is also drawn to the central policy problem identified in the text, which is the problem of dependency. The chapter is divided into three main sections which form the substance of analysis and critique. Each section is defined by a key word, words or a phrase in the document which evokes social ontology in the social register. In the first of these sections, entitled 'Remaking the social', the key word chosen is **community** which represents the character and organisation of society as a whole. For the second section, entitled 'Remaking social relationships', the key words chosen are **reciprocity** and **care** which represent, respectively, the mode of social interaction and one of the core activities that occur between social subjects in the document. In the third analysis section, entitled 'Remaking individuals', the key word chosen is **people**, which refers to the identity of social subjects who populate social relationships and society as a whole.

Reading the social register

In the context of a feminist methodology explored in chapter two, the document is read with the political organisation of the social and social relationships as context, being alert to the ways that discourses can carry 'the complex workings of power and ideology' that sustain 'hierarchically gendered social orders' (Lazar 2007:141). The aim is to identify gendered structures, relationships and notions of subjectivity in the context of an assumed social world. It is to uncover normative and political assumptions about how social space is constituted in the discourse (Molyneux 2002) and how the social is harnessed in 'the changing nature of governing practices' (Pykett 2012: 234). It is also to be alert to how policy language legitimises social and economic divisions of labour and the distribution of economic and social resources. The focus, as Fischer advises, is on how words and phrases are influential 'in framing both policy questions and the contextual contours of argumentation, particularly the ways normative pre-suppositions operate below the surface to structure basic policy definitions and understandings' (Fischer 2003: 14). As Hawkesworth reminds us, it is often through pre-supposition that 'crucial feminist policy insights.. are routinely erased from mainstream scholarship' (Hawkesworth 2009: 269).

The genealogical method is one of close involvement with the discourse, so as to isolate and question its mechanisms and strategies, and to identify the work it does in producing gender ontology and order. The analysis of neoliberal discourse in chapter three provides points of reference for this approach. One of these reference points is an understanding of how the social is politically constituted in the discourse through a reworking of binary oppositions that, in turn, structure everyday knowledge and

practice. These binaries, which include oppositional categories of right/left, man/woman, public/private, are sidestepped in neoliberal discourse in favour of binaries that denote social space, as in inside/outside, or social action, as in good/bad or active/passive. In the switch to binaries that distinguish between more mundane spatial, judgemental or human attribute categories, social and economic inequalities of power and resources are diffused. The political effect of linguistic and boundary shifts, especially as they reformulate policy narratives, is that they come to affect public common sense. Brown points to this tendency in neoliberal discourse to deflect or mask conflicting interests and power relations, with the view that 'disciplinary power politically neutralises entitlement claims' (Brown 1995: 59). The following three sections of the chapter address the remaking of the social, the remaking of social relationships, and the remaking of social subjects.

Remaking the social

The reading of the document begins with the key word **community** which is chosen for its function in framing the social register and for its representation of society as a whole, including social relationships and social subjects. The word community is in the title of the document, as in **capable communities**, giving communities some capability that might be recognised and strengthened, since:

How well we look after each other says a great deal about the strength and character of our society (DH 2010: 4).

The answer to this challenge of how to care for each other lies within communities, the document states, rather than with the state :

The answer is to strengthen communities, while changing the role and our relationship to the state. It is a new vision for government which does not simply look to the state for answers to the issues we face, but outwards to communities (DH 2010: 4).

Communities are to be **set free to run innovative local schemes and build local networks of support**. This freedom comes from **a real shift of power from the state to people and communities**. Freedom is also extended to **professionals to have the freedom from local authority procedures and to be able to work more closely with people who use services**. The government, described as **we** in the document **need a social movement to form around these values, with different organisations and communities coming together to develop new ways of caring for people (DH 2010: 4)**. The language of community in the text is inherently political, where it is proposed that freedom is delivered from the state to community and the government looks to social movements to form around the idea that communities are best placed to care for people:

If power and control is devolved to communities, then people – including the most vulnerable – can lead more independent and fulfilled lives. This is the challenge at the heart of the vision (DH 2010: 7).

It is recommended in the document that communities need to be strengthened, and to work **in a partnership between individuals, communities, the voluntary and private sectors, the NHS and councils – including wider support services such as housing** (DH 2010: 8). The state will provide support and give away power so that: **Empowered people and strong communities will work together to maintain independence** so as to contribute to **unlocking the power and creativity of neighbourhoods to deliver the Big Society** (DH 2010: 9). The idea of the big society is outlined in a speech by David Cameron, as his core belief and framing idea (Cameron 2009). As explored in chapter three, the diagnosis is that society is broken and needs to be mended, the state is too big, and the bigness needs to be transferred to society with 'a new focus on empowering and enabling individuals, families and communities to take control of their lives so we create the avenues through which responsibility and opportunity can develop' (Cameron 2009). The role of government is to 'actively help people take advantage of this new freedom'. The solution is to use the state to 'remake society' and to 'use the state to help stimulate social action' (Cameron 2009).

One of the core elements of the Coalition Government's big society approach is that social care can be formally or informally organised through unleashing **the creativity and enthusiasm of local communities to maintain independence and prevent dependency** (DH 2010: 10). Thus stating that the prevention of dependency is a central concern of the Government.

The narrative in the document turns around community as **untapped potential, capability and capacity**. All these words denote power, agency and resources, be they

within or between **people**. Communities are capable, the document makes clear, of acting to create independence and to prevent dependency. Community is also a local place, where individuals can access **information, advice and advocacy ... to support their local choices** (DH 2010: 19). Community also has a economic role to play as the demand side of a **plural market** in social care since:

People will demand the services they want to meet their needs, creating truly person-centred services. These will be delivered by organisations, including social enterprises and mutuals, that can respond to the demands of their communities. This can include niche and specialist providers. It can also include more mainstream and universal service providers – for instance, those offering transport or leisure options, or employment and education support – which are able to cater for people’s needs without operating exclusively in the social care sector (DH 2010: 21).

Communities will also have responsibilities: **We want to support and encourage local communities to be the eyes and ears of safeguarding, speaking up for people who may not be able to protect themselves.** Not only is it **everyone’s responsibility to be vigilant** (DH 2010: 25) but also to work with local government to **hold organisations ... and councils to account** (DH 2010: 33, 34). Overall **communities** have an active role to play alongside **social enterprises and others** to **develop a diverse range of preventative and other support that will reduce isolation, improve health and well being and, by doing so, better manage the demand for formal health care.** It is not up to the state but **is now up to councils, working with**

their local communities and those who already provide care as a carer, family member or neighbour, to make a reality of this vision (DH 2010: 39). There is a subtle rearrangement of accountability in this discourse, where the political accountability of the state is reworked as community responsibility for safeguarding²⁶.

In the document the language of community emphasises a desired moral social order where people co-operate, reciprocate and have responsibility for each other. This version of community lays claim to a social order that is unlike a society that has experienced industrialisation and modernity. It evokes a sense of neighbours and networks, and people judged on their trustworthiness. As a social force community reads like a kind of exhausting and frenetic subject, busily caring for others, being vigilant to abuse, supporting social enterprise, monitoring local councils, and finally becoming the free and independent creature it has always been, though kept down by the state. Furthermore, this picture of co-operation and mutuality embeds a sense of potential consensus where differential claims for resources and recognition are not described. This first reading of community brings at least three strategic effects of the word into play: it carries a generalised understanding of what community is or should be; a sense of how community orders social life; and a sense of community as an active social and economic subject.

²⁶ Replacing political accountability with social safeguarding is problematic, for reasons including a potential depoliticisation of responsibility for welfare. As Broadhurst et al note "responsibilities and morality have become increasingly important to policy-related discourses and policy interventions. In this sense, New Labour have gone further than previous Conservative administrations in structuring welfare interventions through concerns with moral standards and the responsibilities of individuals and families' (Broadhurst et al 2009 :6).

What is community?

As Williams points out community is rarely seen in a bad light (Williams 1976). It evokes a nostalgia for the past or a longing for something settled and sustaining in the present. The word community transmits the air of a good society, one that stands for and values personal intimacy and emotional depth, moral commitment, social cohesion and, above all, continuity over time (Nisbet 1966: 47). The idea of community is comforting in this way, has echoes of tradition, safety and security in a troubled world, a reminder of something lost or desired (Adkins 2005a). Sociologically community is not the same as society, where society is the whole and community is the particular, operating at different levels and scales of activity (Ransome 2011: 3:2). The distinction between society and community is confused, Paul Ransome suggests, in the big society rhetoric. He points out that David Cameron²⁷ mixes up and conflates 'critical differences between 'society', 'state', 'government', 'community' and 'neighbourhood'' (Ransome 2011: 3:1). Ransome points out that Cameron overlays Ferdinand Tönnies understanding of *Gemeinschaft*, translated as community, made up of families and neighbourhood, with *Gesellschaft*, societies characterized by individualism and instrumental relationships based on contract (Nisbet 1966: 74; Tönnies 1955). Cameron, Ransome argues, also confuses society with the state, making the distinction between the 'family-like emotional or 'natural bonds' which characterise community and the more formal and objective relations or 'synthetic' bonds of the state' (Ransome 2011 3:2). Ransome points out that 'Cameron's target is not so much big government or the state but the welfare state' (Ransome 2011). The confusion of society and community

²⁷ David Cameron is Prime Minister of the Coalition Government in Britain at the time of writing.

can be understood as an effect of the hybrid quality of neoliberal discourse where, as argued in chapter three, theoretical ideas are picked for their usefulness regardless of their foundational logic. The underlying rationality for adopting a communitarian notion of society lies in its conservatism and malleability, where the social can be designed in such a way as to produce economic value for capitalism in crisis (Portes 1998; Everingham 2003). The project of the current government to 'remake' society (Cameron 2009), illuminated in this document, can be understood in these terms.

Feminists have pointed to the casual ways that communitarian perspectives diffuse gendered power relations and claim an undifferentiated understanding of social life. Discourses of community, feminists argue, brush aside at least a century of feminist and critical scholarship that has brought gender and social inequalities to the centre of mainstream social and political theory (Franklin and Thomson 2005; Adkins 2005a). In the neoliberal remaking of society as community, society becomes a collective noun for a flattened hierarchy, or network of communities, be they working class communities, local, Muslim, banking or virtual communities. Different communities, which may, or may not be, geographically placed, come to be defined in relation to the presumed cultural identities of the individuals who make them up (Franklin 2007: 7).

Within communities individuals are predominantly identified as **people** who access resources through the connections they make with each other within and between communities. Use of the term people is legitimised through a position initially taken by New Labour, that policies should be written with the assumption that people are equal. On first reading, this sounds just. It is a principle that supports the policy rationale that

equal treatment delivers equal outcome. The problem is that this position doesn't take account of existing inequalities, as it conflates principle with reality. In principle feminists would more or less agree that all people are and should be equal, while in reality individuals are born into different circumstances and British society is characterised by a range of social and economic inequalities. With community, social hierarchies or binary opposites are neutralised and little account is made of differences in situation or access to resources (Frazer and Lacey 1993; Everingham 2003; Franklin and Thomson 2005). The absence of socially and economically structured ontological difference in the language of community creates a discursive situation where these differences have to be *made* visible and available to critique.

How community orders social life

The language of community in the document, with its amnesia of gender and desire for cohesion, omits difference, change, dissent and passion in its description of social and political life (Mouffe 2002). Instead feelings of reciprocity, personal life and intimacy are evoked in a language that slides close to feminist discourse and the terrain of feminist ethics and politics of care (Tronto 1993; Sevenhuijsen 1998, 2003; Fine and Glendenning 2005). Like the confusion between society and community in big society rhetoric, this coincidence of terms masks gender relations and the contradictions between feminist and neoliberal claims to intimacy. With the third way, earlier described, New Labour made a point of aligning with feminist politics in the party, with a commitment to family friendly policies and to increasing the number of women members of parliament (Coote 2000; Childs 2004). New Labour explicitly brought work/life and gender issues to the centre of policy making, albeit with economic interests to the fore (Hutton 1996;

Lister 1999). In the Coalition document reviewed here there seems to be a change of strategy. While it is not overtly declared in the text that it is the role of the state either to incorporate or dismiss feminist concerns, a continuing softening or feminisation of policy discourse can be found in the language, along with a valuing of emotional and affective relationships (Pykett 2012).

In the document it is stated that the means to stronger communities and to tackling vulnerability and dependency lies in the power transferred from the state to **people** to care for and support each other:

..we need a Big Society approach to social care – one that gives people the power to support each other and meet the challenges they face. This not only leads to better and more creative solutions, it also makes our communities stronger and people less isolated and vulnerable (DH 2010: 9).

It is also made clear in the document that it is the connections between people that can create better neighbourhoods and improve the quality of life for individuals:

Happier, more socially connected individuals have more pride in their neighbourhoods, which can enhance quality of life, health and well-being (DH 2010: 12).

The concept, or word, **people** masks gender and every other social or economic difference or position. With **people** the binary difference between men and women is

merged into an androgynous subject, so that the term can be read as either gendered or gender free. On the surface the concept **people** is undifferentiated, so that either men or women might be involved. Meanwhile implicit assumptions circulate as to who cares, and what kind of work people do. With community as flattened social structure, gendered distinctions hover between those who are **creative** and innovative, who find solutions to the challenges people face, and those who support each other. Those who are vulnerable, dependent, isolated, are to become less so with this creative and caring attention. A series of new binaries flow through this language around independence/dependence which, as Mark Lymbery points out, 'is deeply problematic, particularly in casting dependence as such a pejorative concept' (Lymbery 2010: 16). This is particularly problematic, he argues, in relation to older people who 'may not wish to undertake the activities upon which self-directed support depends – nor indeed be capable of undertaking them' (Lymbery 2010: 17). The document casts an idealised sense of positive activity as the central characteristic of community life. Such a normative account of how communities should be denies a more political understanding of community life as 'the product of work, of struggle.. inherently unstable, contextual .. to be constantly re-evaluated in relation to critical political priorities' (Martin and Mohanty 1986: 210).

Communities as active subjects

In neoliberal discourse, and reflected in the positive texture of the document, communities are presumed to be active subjects, with agency waiting to be **unleashed**.

Community agency is located in the binary between the independent and entrepreneurial subject, and the caring, intuitive and volunteering subject. So that the

kind of agency waiting to be unleashed is either the capacity to invent new social enterprises for care²⁸ or the capacity to care itself. Community is the new site of welfare production, the alternative to large scale welfare institutions, having the **potential** and value that waits to be **unlocked**. A coincidence is presented between **people's expectations changing** (DH 2010: 4) and the Government's policy agenda, making it seem as though this policy vision is responding to popular demand for more independence, and to set society free from state interference. The assumption in the document that community capacity is underused or waits to be unleashed, is not unlike the motivation for community action groups, who work to empower local people to be active in their community and to increase the resilience of voluntary and community sector organisations²⁹. Between everyday and strategic understandings of capacity a coincidence emerges between what people seem to want for themselves and the vision or strategy of governments:

The big society agenda has lost its way, with many people seeing it as little more than a cover for cuts. But almost everyone can agree the UK would be a better place if we had stronger communities that could do more for themselves, especially at a time of severe cuts (Keohane et al 2011).³⁰

²⁸ See Rachel Addicott (2011) in a report published by the Kings Fund on Social Enterprise in Health Care, where she writes: 'There are opportunities for social enterprises to play a significant role as providers of health care. The question is whether these new organisations and their leaders have the necessary competencies to manage the risks and establish themselves as viable organisations in this increasingly competitive context'.

²⁹ For example, Community Action Southwark, an umbrella organisation for the voluntary and community sector in Southwark who state on their website: 'We equip the sector with tools to make a difference in their communities'. See <http://casouthwark.org.uk/about-us> . Accessed 10 April 2014.

³⁰ From online summary of the report Keohane, N., Parker, S. & Ebanks, D. (2011) 'Realising Community Wealth: Local Government and the Big Society', London: New Local Government Network:

Questions of which communities are under scrutiny; which communities lack capacity, draw attention to an implicit labelling of certain communities as deprived, dependent or inactive. Research shows, however, that what actually occurs in areas of deprivation is far more complex. Gwen van Eijk finds that it is not the case that those living in so called 'problem neighbourhoods' are necessarily dependent or inactive. As with all neighbourhoods, she points out, a multiplicity of relationships and experiences abound. Too often, van Eijk argues, a false picture is painted 'of already stigmatised neighbourhoods', which 'perpetuates the view that there is something wrong with how people in problem places interact with each other, or that there is something wrong with *them* – and that residents need to take up more responsibilities in order to solve local problems' (van Eijk 2012: 3023-3024). Craig also criticises the simplicity of dominant discourses of community capacity building that miss the complexity of social life. He argues that that 'the continuing focus on small "deprived" areas labelled as communities can run the risk of diverting attention away from wider political forces which cause and maintain concentrations of poverty and unemployment in these areas' (Craig 2007: 337). The assertion in the document is that problems sit with communities and individuals and the purpose of policy is to reinforce their capacity to deal with them:

Care must again be about reinforcing personal and community resilience, reciprocity and responsibility, to prevent and postpone dependency and promote greater independence and choice (DH 2010: 5).

<http://www.nlgn.org.uk/public/2011/realising-community-wealth-local-government-and-the-big-society/>. Accessed 7 May 2012.

The words **resilience, reciprocity and responsibility** are each heavily weighted with assumptions about the capacity of communities and individuals to live positively in detrimental circumstances. As Brigit Obrist and her colleagues point out these are the 'values and goals of those who define them', in this case Government actors. Obrist et al advise that in using these terms, in practice or research, some care and sensitivity is required as to how people understand their own circumstances (Obrist et al 2010: 287). Like Craig, they identify how the meaning and practice of resilience and capacity are always shaped by broader social forces and are 'always embedded in larger social, economic and political contexts' (Obrist 2010: 287-288; Craig 2007). In times of rapid change and insecurity, Obrist et al find, those with fewer resources often show greater amounts of resourcefulness in struggles to survive (Obrist et al 2010: 289-290). So, rather than the potential to unleash pent up agency, the arguments outlined here suggest that the Government's **vision for adult social care** works to delineate, and potentially to limit possibilities of action, channelling agency in a particular way to suit Government priorities.

The gendered character of this channelled agency is not hard to identify, but there is no mention in the document as to whether carers may be women or men, children or older people. The document states that

We need the whole workforce including care workers, nurses, occupational therapists, physiotherapists and social workers, alongside carers and the people who use services to lead the changes set out here (DH 2010: 8).

The workforce described here may be employed in caring professions, may be informal carers and/or service users. This paragraph suggests that there needs to be co-ordination and co-operation between them. The task of local councils is to unlock the potential of such caring networks:

Local councils should work to enable people, their carers, families and communities to support and maintain full and independent lives, This means unlocking the potential of local support networks to reduce isolation and vulnerability. Social care has a long history of building community capacity. A renewed emphasis on this goes well beyond the social care sector and must focus on what people can do for each other (DH 2010: 10).

It is not clear, as Lister argues, where this latent capacity for independence and care is to be found, since women are already doing this work (Lister 2009). The potential for care is said, in the document, to rest in the skills and capacities of communities and people, and the value of this capacity, paid or unpaid, seems to be that it is available and is what people want to give and to receive (Land and Himmelweit 2010). It is also the case that this kind of work has been undervalued in the past. As Lister points out:

The kind of skills typically associated with the work that women are more likely to do are generally accorded a lesser value than the kind of skills associated with the work that men are more likely to do. In particular, the skills associated

with care work, in both public and private spheres, are often not even recognised as skills – after all care is what women do naturally (Lister 2009).

When Leader of the Opposition in 2009, David Cameron spoke about the capacity for caring in terms of human attributes rather than skills. He talked of kindness, generosity and imagination as attributes that are 'steadily being squeezed out by the work of the state' (Cameron 2009). Attributes like these have been described as resources for the social, care or core economy:

..the human resources that comprise and sustain social life. These resources are embedded in the everyday lives of every individual (time, wisdom, experience, energy, knowledge, skills) and in the relationships among them (love, empathy, responsibility, care, reciprocity, teaching, and learning). They are 'core' because they are central and essential to society. They underpin the market economy by raising children, caring for people who are ill, frail, and disabled, feeding families, maintaining households, and building and sustaining intimacies, friendships, social networks, and civil society (Coote 2010b: 3).

This understanding of the core economy, debated in think tanks and community politics moves in the same discursive territory as the document, but sometimes with a different rationale. While some community activists would more or less agree with the Government's perspective³¹, others attempt to work with dominant ideas about

³¹ For example, at an event at the Royal Society of Arts, 'Building the core economy', Edgar Cahn, founder of the Time Banking movement, argued that 'we need a new economy – an economy of meaning, in which

community and local activity whilst attempting to hold on to some critical attention to gender and inequality. Anna Coote, for example, accepts the necessity for developing the core economy when government commitment is reduced, but is also aware of the gendered politics of time in welfare practices:

Most of its transactions involve women working without wages – a pattern that generates lasting inequalities in job opportunities, income and power between women and men. These are often compounded by age, race, ethnicity, and disability ...Time is a key resource in the core economy. Everyone has the same amount of time but some people have a lot more control over how they use their time than others. Some people – mainly women – have low-paid jobs as well as caring responsibilities, so they are poor in terms of time as well as income. Notably, around half of lone parents can't earn enough money to stay out of poverty while making sure their children are looked after (by themselves or someone else), however long or hard they work. How paid and unpaid time is distributed between men and women and across different social groups will help to narrow or widen inequalities (Coote 2010:4).

Feminist policy actors like Coote above, and Lister (2009), operate inside and outside of dominant policy discourse, working the language and timeliness of policy frameworks to skew them towards feminist as opposed to communitarian agendas (Newman 2012).

people contribute to the welfare and well-being of each other through acts of reciprocity': <http://www.thersa.org/events/audio-and-past-events/2011/building-the-core-economy> [Accessed 12 May 2014].

This is a troubling place to work precisely due to the ambiguities inherent in the language of community, people and individuals, which has to be constantly unravelled so that inequalities of power and resources can be recognised in practice.

Following this analysis of the ontological character of the social as community, the reading of the document turns to the social relationships that make up community life. Lister points out that 'the way in which policy divides up a population can actually constitute and shape the social relationships' (Lister 2011: 76). As has been argued above, the language used to describe how society is divided up does not, on the surface, attend to social and economic inequalities. Instead there is reference to networks, families and supportive neighbours. To focus on the quality of social relationships in the document the key words chosen for this analysis are **reciprocity** and **care** which refer to the character of interpersonal life and to the activity that arises in intimate settings.

Remaking social relationships

To transform **care** the Coalition Government looks to **unlock the potential of local support networks** (DH 2010: 10), and encourages people with similar needs to support each other. An example is given of a **scheme in Japan** where **families in the same situation.. 'adopt' each other's responsibilities, meaning less need for so much state intervention**, and allowing **people to exchange different kinds of support** (DH 2010: 10). With the method of exchange, the language of the market is used to express social relationships. Time banking is one such method of exchange, where:

Local people 'deposit' their time by sharing their skills, one hour of giving earns them one time credit. They can then spend their time credits on any of the skills and support on offer from other local people. Resilient social networks are formed that people can rely on and trust (DH 2010: 10).

In these sentences an economic vocabulary of deposit, credit and skills mingles with a social vocabulary of local people and resilient social networks, and a moral vocabulary of reliance and trust. This language is derived from communitarian and social capital theories, and expresses relationships of exchange in the core economy and 'the generation of social capital – the reciprocal relationships that build trust, peer support and social activism within communities' (Needham and Carr 2009: 1). As Lister argues, people as 'citizen-consumers are also increasingly expected to be active citizens in the "co-production" of welfare' (Lister 2011). Co-production, a term that evokes social mutuality and economic production, was identified by New Labour as a means to reform the expert/patient relationship within public services (Kendall 2001; Lister 2011). The term co-production is similar to the policy mechanism of personalisation which has a place in the document as one of the seven principles on which the Government's **vision for a modern system of social care is built** (DH 2010: 8). Co-production is 'a new form of collaborative contract between state and citizen, based on concepts of responsible and active citizenship' (Lister 2011: 67). It refers to how health and social care can be designed and delivered through an equal sharing of knowledge between user and professional (Needham 2007). The potential of co-production for policies that support the disengagement of the welfare state from social care is that it promises to produce new and valued kinds of reciprocal caring relationships:

The transformation level of co-production in social care has the potential to create new relationships between people who use services and staff and to facilitate new and durable forms of peer support (Needham and Car 2009: 9).

Co-production, mentioned only once in the body of the document (DH 2010: 11), also has the potential to transform existing relationships, since it

..demands renegotiation and restructuring of relationships between people who use services and professionals, which in turn requires the empowerment of both parties (Needham and Car 2009: 17).

Reciprocity is the preferred character of social relationships, since it is with co-operation and the sharing of assets that social care can be produced through co-production. It is not clear in the document, however, who actually performs this negotiation and who cares. The question as to which people have the time, the resources and the motivation to carry out care work raises the issue of responsibility. The welfare state, Ransome argues 'was founded on the idea that intervention could only be managed at the level of society, not community, which is 'why a new kind of state, the welfare state, emerged at that particular historical junction' (Ransome 2011: 3:2). However, as discussed in previous chapters, neoliberal states seek to transfer responsibility for welfare from the state to community, and to individuals who may or may not be in a position to carry out caring work. The transition of responsibility for

welfare from state to individual gives rise to a series of confusions and dilemmas as to who cares and where this activity happens.

Young argues that caring, and caring work, whether informal or formal, cuts to the quick of sexual divisions of labour (Young 2002: 422). Care sits in and between binaries of public/private, home/work, social/economic reproduction. 'On the one hand', as Hilary Graham argues, 'the experience of caring and being cared for is intimately bound up with the way we define ourselves and our social relations. On the other, caring is an integral part of the process by which society reproduces itself, and maintains the physical and mental health of the work force' (Graham 1983: 13). So that in 'gender divided societies like ours, caring tends to have particular consequences for the identity and activity of women' (Graham 1983: 14). The meaning and social value of caring is unrepresented in gendered policy discourses where, economically, care work has a low commodity value (Adkins 2009), and as Fraser and Gordon point out, 'the increased stigmatising of dependency in the culture at large has also deepened contempt for those who care for dependents, reinforcing the traditionally low status of the female helping professions such as nursing and social work' (Fraser and Gordon 1994: 326). Nonetheless the document states that:

We can transform care... by empowering individuals and unlocking the power and creativity of neighbourhoods to deliver the Big Society (DH 2010: 9).

Care must again be about reinforcing personal and community resilience, reciprocity and responsibility, to prevent and postpone dependency and promote greater independence and choice (DH 2010: 5).

These statements suggest that to care is the means to reinforcing resilience, so it does have an economic role to play in intervening in transforming human nature and action, in encouraging independence. Care is also described in terms of choice where empowerment lies in making that choice to care. It is individuals that are to be empowered through the unlocking of their resilience and reciprocity, so that they will work to create independence and to avoid dependency. In this scenario,

..women are subjects of and subject to the social welfare system in their traditional capacity as unpaid caregivers. It is well known that the sexual division of labour assigns women primary responsibility for the care of those who cannot care for themselves. ..Such responsibility includes child care, of course, but also are for sick and/or elderly relatives, often parents....Thus, as unpaid care-givers, women are more directly affected than men by the level and character of government social services for children, the sick and the elderly. As clients, paid human-service workers and unpaid care-givers, then, women are the principal subjects of the social-welfare system (Fraser 1989: 148-149).

Care work, paid and unpaid, is central to the constitution, or reproduction of independent people, and so is of economic value in capitalist economics and neoliberal discourse. Care work has a constitutive and supporting role, and though its status is

raised in this policy document to assert the economic and psychological value of caring, it remains both prior and secondary to the entrepreneurial subjects that it creates and maintains. In the following section the focus of analysis is on the remaking of social subjects as they are defined or assumed in the document under review.

Remaking social subjects

..a common-sense notion of an ideal person in a rapidly changing global economy is the focal point of personalisation (Pykett 2009: 385).

Ideologies and discourses, as Fischer points out 'supply people with different social identities (Fischer 2003: 77). Discourses of community and social responsibility that shape the policy narrative discussed here, support the encouragement of neighbourliness and active participation in the care of vulnerable people. They support a peculiar kind of collective or social responsibility, only necessary when dealing with vulnerability, while at the same time valuing independence as the preferred condition of individual life. Though **people** are seen to be embedded in community they are undifferentiated in the document and so have an abstract quality. None of the **people** mentioned appear to be men or women, old or young, middle or working class, and none of them seem to be mothers, or daughters, or grandmothers which, from a communitarian perspective, are all good relational categories. Rather we are presented with homogeneous people living in homogeneous communities, **families** and **neighbourhoods**, all with an untapped desire to support each other. These categories, **people, families** and **neighbours**, are as abstract as universal rational man in classical

liberalism, though they are categorically embedded in communities and have a series of assets or attributes that may or may not be unlocked. Dig a little deeper and the assets they need to possess to participate in community activity and caring - **skill, compassion and imagination** - give a clue as to the gender and age of those who make up the workforce. These attributes or assets fall on the emotional, uncommodified, unpaid, feminine side of binary distinctions discussed earlier.

In the document the activity of caring is an activity of citizenship³², the responsibility of individuals to engage voluntarily in community life and to develop **community skills** (DH 2010: 35). Where voluntary activity replaces paid with unpaid labour in policy discourse, Lister points out, the idea of active citizenship again 'raises questions about the gendered division of labour and time and also about the regulation of paid working time, which are unlikely to be on the government's agenda for the Big Society' (Lister 2011: 68). Who has this time to be actively and voluntarily involved in caring for others?

Active citizenship takes time, and time is very much a gendered resource for citizenship, which impacts on and is mediated by the public-domestic private divide, with implications for men and women's active citizenship in various guises. This is particularly the case for those who cannot afford to outsource domestic work to poorer women' (Lister 2011: 68).

The community narrative in the document supports a policy that seeks to produce an individual who, when well, engages in community activity in partnership with care

³² Active citizenship is explored in more detail in chapter five.

professionals, and when vulnerable is able to make choices, again in partnership with others, about what s/he needs and what services s/he wants to buy and participate in to meet her/his needs. This is a narrative that carries a confusion as to whether individuals are making choices or being responsible, in market or community settings, as citizens or consumers, on their own or in partnership with others (Clarke et al 2007). As Lister argues, policy is 'used to encourage or require mainly the less powerful to exercise responsibilities and obligations' (Lister 2011: 69). It is also unclear as to whether the freedom to act or be responsible is derived from the state, from markets, or from some inherent capacity of individuals to make choices and/or be responsible. Big society, Stefan Collini argues, 'speaks to individuals' sense of themselves as trying to get on, but hides from them the reality and power of the social patterns that determine their ability to do so' (Collini 2010: 34).

Nonetheless the document uses the language of active citizenship and so attaches to a common sense understanding of shared rights and responsibilities. In this way, Lister suggests, citizenship is used 'as a disciplinary tool to promote behavioural change and regulate behaviour' (Lister 2011: 70). The Coalition Government, she states, declares that 'our government will be a much smarter one, shunning the bureaucratic leers of the past and finding intelligent ways to encourage support and enable people to make better choices for themselves' (Cameron and Clegg 2010: 7-8 in Lister 2011: 70). For Lister this contrasts with a feminist understanding of citizenship that has 'challenged dominant constructions of obligation and responsibility at both a philosophical level and with regard to their implications for social policy' (Lister 2011: 77). Feminists, like Selma Sevenhuijsen, ground citizenship in an ethic of care which 'takes the idea of self-

in-relationship as a point of entry for thinking about responsibility and obligation' (Sevenhuijsen 2000: 10; Lister 2011: 77). Here, Lister argues, 'the emphasis is very much on the social relations of citizenship as located in the private domestic as well as the public sphere'. Following Lister's argument we can see how citizenship takes on a disciplinary function in neoliberal policy discourse, whereas in feminist literature it 'represents an emancipatory concept for marginalised groups and social movements' (Lister 2011: 77).

The focus on individual people in the document reflects and perpetuates a story about community which separates the psychological (self/behaviour) from the material (social and economic conditions) and draws attention to the moral/economic register of the policy narrative. Feminists tend to dispute the rationality of these separations, along with the 'naturalised, "psychologised" and moralised person generated by the discourse of personalisation...' who 'obscures our socialised or spatialised positioning as people' (Pykett 2009: 391). Feminist sociologists and social policy writers assume that individuals exist *only* because there are already existing networks of care and responsibility (Sevenhuijsen 2002; Taylor 2006). It is not duty that guides us through recurrent moral dilemmas but rather 'situated questions of responsibility and agency' (Sevenhuijsen 2002: 131; Williams 2001; Bryson 2007). There is an assumption in neoliberal discourse, present in the document studied here, that individuals need to be encouraged into social/caring roles, where the idea of obligation is needed to 'forge a new relationship between individual and community' (Sevenhuijsen 2002: 130-131). Sevenhuijsen points out that 'metaphors of reparation for something that has been lost' are frequently used in this context, as in Giddens' proposal 'that third way politics

should *re-establish* continuity, *re-create* social solidarity and *repair* the civil order. A feminist ethic of care denies such oppositions between individual and society' (Sevenhuijsen 2002: 131).

The problem of dependency

A Big Society approach to social care means unleashing the creativity and enthusiasm of local communities to maintain independence and prevent dependency (DH 2010: 10).

The core problem of dependency is the central policy problem to be solved in the document (Bacchi 2005). The problem is framed in relation to the vision of a big society, where individuals are freed from the debilitating hand of the state which creates dependent subjects. The dependent subject is contrasted with independent individuals and is inactive, unemployed and, unless vulnerable, psychologically dependent on welfare services paid for by taxation of independent people. The policy aim is to prevent dependency, and to create independent and active citizens:

..empowered people and strong communities will work together to maintain independence. Where the state is needed, it supports communities and helps people to retain and regain independence (DH 2010: 8).

It is always far better to prevent or postpone dependency than deal with the consequences (DH 2010: 9).

When people develop care and support needs, our first priority should be to restore an individual's independence and autonomy (DH 2010: 12)

Lister points out that 'the terminology of welfare dependency' was imported from the United States by Margaret Thatcher's Conservative Government in Britain in the 1980s. The use of dependency in policy terms coincides with a devaluing of the idea of welfare, which previously in Britain had referred more positively to the safety net of the welfare state. It is, Lister argues,

.. the use of "welfare" as a noun, synonymous with social security, that is problematic because of its association with a stigmatised US-style residual form of poor relief. It is all the more stigmatising because of the constant coupling with 'dependency', so that in many people's eyes receipt of social security is now equated with a 'dependency culture' that research does not in fact substantiate (Lister 2013³³).

In their genealogy of dependency Fraser and Linda Gordon have traced the historical emergence of dependency as a negative subjective state in discourses of welfare since

³³ Lister, R. (2013) 'Benefit cuts: how the language of welfare poisoned our social security', *Comment is Free, The Guardian*, Monday 1 April 2013: <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/apr/01/language-welfare-social-security> [Accessed 1 April 2013].

the nineteenth century in Britain and the United states (Fraser and Gordon 1994). They argue that dependency is an ideological term that has been, and continues to be, attached to those on benefits, to lone parents, unemployed, marginalised or vulnerable people, and to the deserving and less deserving poor. They also find that,

..from the time of the industrial revolution, along with paupers, woman were new personifications of dependency.. combined to constitute the underside of the working man's independence. Henceforth, those who aspired to full membership of a society would have to distinguish themselves from the pauper, the native, the slave and the housewife in order to construct their independence (Fraser and Gordon 1994: 317).

A thread of argument running through this study points to the constitution of a new gender order in neoliberal discourse. This order is articulated through a series of binary opposites that denote either human attribute or spatial position. With the human attribute binary independent/dependent, dependency is judged in opposition to independence as a negative character trait and a drain on community resources, since dependent individuals show a 'lack of will power or excessive emotional neediness' (Fraser and Gordon 1994: 312). The negative positioning of dependency as moral and/or economic failure stands in contrast to a feminist understanding of dependency as an always present and significant feature of social life. The binary of independent/dependent assumes a division or distinction that is not recognised in feminist literature (Sevenhuijsen 2002), where all human beings are understood to be dependent, interdependent and independent at different times in their lives and often

all at the same time (Fine and Glendenning 2005) Welfare discourses of dependency reflect and perpetuate 'a sexual division of labour that assigns men primary responsibility as providers or breadwinners and women primary responsibility as caretakers and nurturers and then treats the derivative personality patterns as fundamental'(Fraser and Gordon 1994: 332). This fixes social relations of dependence and doesn't allow for the emotional complexities of informal and intimate caring relationships, or for the social and economic situations through which they are shaped (Miztal 2005). Lister argues that

..the opposition in this debate lies not so much between dependence and independence, with interdependence representing the synthesis (though that argument is part of the debate), but between dependence and independence on the one hand and interdependence on the other. Central to this debate is the issue of women's *economic* (in)dependence, which in turn needs to be related to *physical* and *emotional* (in)dependence, which are also significant in the construction of women as autonomous citizens (Lister 2003: 107).

As a core policy problem, dependency is constituted in the discourse as moral failure and a drain on resources. The document positions those who are dependent and vulnerable on the bad side of a positive/negative divide. Furthermore this negative judgement of dependency devalues and disregards a central feature of individual and social subjectivity that feminists value as characteristic of being at-home-in-the-world (Chantler 2006; Jacobson 2010).

Conclusion

The genealogical focus of this chapter has been on the remaking of society, social relationships and social subjects in social register of the policy discourse, identified in the document **A vision for adult social care: capable communities and active citizens** (DH 2010). The problem of dependency has also been identified as one of central concern in the document, and so for Government policy. The purpose of this analysis has been to isolate and question where home is present in the discourse as subjectivity-in-situation, in the ontological assumptions about society. Informed by the previous chapter, the key words **community, reciprocity, care** and **people** have been identified for a critical reading of how society is remade in the document to emphasise a communitarian version of the social as a potentially cohesive and resourceful producer of economic value (Portes 1998).

Close analysis of policy language and slippages in the discourse convey a social order that relies on a gendered division of labour that is absent through evoked in the vocabulary used in the document. The capacity for this gendered activity is written as potential agency, as untapped resources that wait to be unleashed through the power that the state can give to communities. Gendered resources, paid and unpaid, constitute the core economy, or a new economy of care, and are expected to relieve pressure on the welfare state. The discourse in the document neutralises women's work, but still relies on women's capacity to nurture and sustain those who require care. The language in the document also constitutes a series of binary changes that effect clarity of thinking about relations of power and knowledge, creating an ambivalence, that makes it harder to identify where exploitation is taking place.

This chapter has provided a broad analysis of social, relational and individual ontology in the document, to inform the following two chapters which attend to the political and economic registers of the discourse. The next chapter focuses more intensely on the constitution of a new gender order and on the key words that express political subjectivity. It conducts a reading of the political register of the document, drawing attention to the political, the intensification of agency in the language of active citizenship, with partnership as the mode through which power is transferred from welfare state to community, and finally freedom, one of the core political values expressed in the document.

Chapter five

Reworking Agency

In this chapter I continue my analysis of policy language in the document **A vision for adult social care: capable communities and active citizens**, focusing on the second layer of analysis which attends to agency and the political register of the discourse. To reflect theoretical and methodological aspects of this study the document is read to isolate and question key words or phrases that express political subjectivity, the public private dichotomy and the principles that shape political life. These are **active citizen**, **partnership** and **freedom**. The chapter begins with a discussion of the political context of the analysis. With each of the key words I outline the story told in the text, ask what is going on here strategically, and draw on critical and feminist literature to unravel the gendered complexity of what is written as a seemingly simple discourse. Throughout, the chapter draws on feminist literature to comment on the analysis and to identify the central aspects of the political in the discourse.

The document promotes the idea of active citizenship as the means to unleash the creativity and agency dormant in local communities. Active citizenship is written in the document as the policy key to preventing dependency and encouraging independence. The emphasis is on choice as the mechanism for active participation, for building community capacity, and creating **happier more socially connected individuals** (DH 2010: 12). It is possible to identify at least three kinds of ideal individuals that are inferred in the document: the active and entrepreneurial subject who is independent and makes rational choices; the caring, reciprocal, compassionate and imaginative

subject; and the flexible worker who balances paid and unpaid work. These ideal individuals are characterised by activities or attributes rather than by social identities, and so sit on neither side of power binaries comfortably. It is also unclear as to where neoliberal subjects sit in relation to political institutions, or what kind of social or economic position they inhabit. There is also some confusion in the discourse over whether people are clients, patients, consumers or citizens; and as to whether individual autonomy is linked to the idea of market based consumerism or is an important aspect of citizenship (Clarke 2005; Clarke et al 2007). Further, as Newman argues, since neoliberal discourse is innovative and adaptive to changing circumstances, it is unclear as to what other kinds of subjects or agents might emerge as 'new policy logics' come into play (Newman 2013: 205-6). Two other subjects are explicitly described, rather than inferred, in the document in terms of their lack of agency or capacity. These are vulnerable individuals who are considered to be blameless since they **may lack capacity** (DH 2010: 26) and so are to be cared for, supported (DH 2010: 15) and safeguarded from abuse (DH 2010: 25); and dependent individuals who are subject to a **re-ablement programme** and **effective rehabilitation** so as to **regain independence** (DH 2010: 29). By virtue of their vulnerability and dependency these two subjects are subject *to* – and so not free *from* – the care and/or the will of others. Dependent subjects, as Nadesan suggests, are 'bad subjects, who are judged to be risking and/or are perceived as incapable of rational self-government' or they are 'capable only of limited self-government' (Nadesan 2008:21). Dependent subjects are specifically 'targeted for increased surveillance and disciplinary normalisation' (Nadesan 2008:21).

The second key word in the document, chosen for analysis, is **partnership**, which denotes the structural relationship between individuals within communities, between

communities and between communities and local/national government. The word partnership also expresses the desired attributes of social relationships, that of reciprocity, cooperation or co-production. With the aim to transfer power from state to community, partnership can be seen to enable a new public space, different from the public sphere since it inheres between **active citizens** and has no guaranteed political legitimacy beyond the capacity of individuals to create it. This public space is infused by personal relationships where there is, the document tells us, potential freedom to shape and activate change, brought about by cooperation or partnership between active citizens. Together the words **active citizens** and **partnership** constitute a specific kind of relationship and a series of formal and informal commitments that take the place of the obligation of the state to provide welfare services. This relationship is infused with power, not least in that it assumes a gendered understanding of what kind of care provision is acceptable. The **partnership** of **active citizens** is legitimised through the use of **freedom** as the organising principle of policy development.

Freedom is the third key word for analysis in this chapter. In the document freedom is **the first value**, followed by and in relation to **fairness** and **responsibility**. The key word **freedom** is used to focus on human activity and create legitimacy in the free market, where freedom is accessed through work and creative participation in community partnerships and activities. Freedom in this sense is disconnected from the political freedom to live freely within a system of civil and political rights. In the document the Government is said to be ready to empower individuals to liberate themselves from dependency on state welfare and to realise their freedom through the market. This liberation from the state is also an uncoupling of freedom from politics

and the public sphere, so as to locate the potential of freedom in individual subjects, in the choices they make and what they do. Individuals are encouraged to orientate themselves towards working and consuming in the market, but also to draw on their skills, creativity and imagination in becoming socially independent, whilst caring for those vulnerable individuals who cannot, through any fault of their own, look after themselves.

Reading the political register

The context for this analysis of agency is the changing nature of the political and its 'peculiar (dis)organisation of social, political and economic life' (Brown 1995: 31). This 'late modern politics' Brown writes, is constituted by 'a mode of governance encompassing but not limited to the state, ... that produces subjects, forms of citizenship and behaviour, and a new organisation of the social' (Brown 2005: 37). Further this politics is suffused with an economic rationality that priorities the market, though is not only concerned with economy but with 'extending and disseminating market values to all institutions and social action' (Brown 2005: 40). Simon-Kumar makes a distinction between economic neoliberalism as it began to dominate policy in Britain in the 1980s and 1990s, and 'post-neoliberalism' that emerged with the communitarian or social turn (Simon-Kumar 2011). She argues that the social investment state under New Labour worked initially to 'counter individualism of the neoliberal state through deliberate mechanisms of political inclusion that recognized collectivized engagement between differentiated communities and the state' (Simon-Kumar 2011: 452). New Labour 'reconstituted the responsibilities of citizenship through the construction of subjectivity of the active citizen, that is, a political actor located in

the intersections between the state, market, family and community' (Simon-Kumar 2011: 452). With the Coalition Government the relationship between the individual and the state is one of desired detachment, so that the individual can be free to engage in social/community, and economic/market spheres. The detachment of citizens from the state is potentially a road to un-freedom if political freedom is understood to be guaranteed by the state. Active citizenship, Simon-Kumar argues, is specifically located in communities in the form of volunteering and 'participating in government defined engagement strategies (such as partnerships and consultations) through which individuals and communities feed into and seemingly, co-create policy' (Simon-Kumar 2011: 453). This kind of citizenship she suggests, is also 'ostensibly "feminized"' since it is 'mapped around feminist principles of relationships and mutual dependence, and can meaningfully engage ordinary people in public governance by extending activities undertaken within their familial spaces'(Simon-Kumar 2011: 453). Similarly Jessica Pykett argues that this social turn, particularly in its focus on behaviour, is gendered. She finds that it constitutes a soft libertarian paternalism or 'the new maternal state', and a 'gendered politics of governing through behavioural change' (Pykett 2012: 217). The detachment of citizens from the state, and the presence and absence of gender in neoliberal subjectivity and agency (Molyneux 2002, Ahmed 2010) marks a troubling landscape for the woman question and frames the political register of this analysis of policy language.

Reworking agency

In the analysis of social ontology, in the previous chapter, moments of discursive adaptation can be identified, as neoliberal engagement moves from society, to social

relationships, and then to individual subjectivity and personal life. This is an individualising trajectory that shifts awareness from social structure and inequality to individual responsibility and agency, so that the focus of concern in the document is less about the social, probably since community is already established, and increasingly about activity or individual attributes. The turn to agency holds, reflects and extends sociological and communitarian perspectives explored in chapters two and three. With the individualisation thesis in the sociology of late modernity, influential in designing the third way (Clarke 2005) it is argued that individuals take increasingly reflexive and agentic responsibility for their own lives as the institutional legitimacy of the welfare state fades (Adkins 2002; Heaphy 2007). In this scenario structures of inequality like class and gender are said to lose their hold as individuals realise their existential capacity to choose who they want to be and how they want to live (Giddens 1992). In academic debate an alternative account of agency follows and extends Foucault's understanding of how subjectivity is discursively constituted through governance of individual choice and behaviour, and in the play of emotions and their affect (Pykett 2012). In debates between reflexive individualisation and Foucauldian theories, McNay argues, a problematic split emerges in the literature between a positive and negative account of agency and subjectivity (McNay 2000; 2003; 2008). The positive/negative dynamic that McNay identifies in academic debate is distinct from a similar dynamic in neoliberal discourse. The academic debate hinges on the question of whether individuals are compelled to make themselves in late modern, contingent situations; or to inhabit and/or resist subjective positions available to them. The neoliberal dynamic is normative and hinges on whether individuals are independent and active, which is positive and celebrated, or whether they are dependent and passive, which is negative

and to be discouraged. This neoliberal angle on agency contains a moral judgement on behaviour which is informed by the argument from positive psychology that individuals just need a little policy 'nudge' to encourage them to behave in ways that will increase their happiness and well being (Seligman 2003; Thaler and Sunstein 2009; Pykett 2011). Stepping back a little from these debates it is possible to see that, though they work around different theoretical axes, they share a focus on agency and behaviour: on action, doing, creativity or performativity. The reading of document continues in the political register with the key phrase **active citizens**.

Active citizens

Councils should exploit the many opportunities to improve preventative services by: developing community capacity and promoting active citizenship, working with community organisations and others across all council services, establishing the conditions in which the Big Society can flourish (DH 2010: 14).

The promotion of active citizenship is at the heart of the big society story (DH 2010:14) and crucial **to unleashing the creativity and enthusiasm of local communities to maintain independence and prevent dependency** (DH 2010: 10). The use of the term in the document is a continuation of the language of New Labour policy which emerged, as explored in chapter three, when neoliberal politics took a communitarian turn. The framework of the third way attempted to balance economic individualism and social communitarianism, both splitting and marrying economic freedom and social

responsibility. The language of policy making became increasingly individualised with the view that individuals should take back responsibility from the state for their well-being, and that it made no principled difference whether services were provided by the state or private enterprise. Crucially this meant a new kind of active citizenship, as Clarke points out, merging and conflating the identities of citizen and consumer (Clarke 2005) and obscuring the distinctiveness between political and economic identities and principles. Personal responsibility was the 'prime motto of the new politics' (Powell 2000: 47). For Clarke, 'New Labour's enthusiasm for the activated citizen is a hybrid, drawing on social democratic and communitarian conceptions of the citizen, but dominated by neoliberal concern to "liberate" the citizen from the state' (Clarke 2005: 448).

The Coalition Government's focus on active citizenship is both a continuation of and a departure from New Labour's approach (Clarke 2005). Active citizenship is still the ideal, though the framework for active citizenship has changed. With New Labour's position citizens made choices within the context of a partnership between government, community and individual, with a commitment to social inclusion. In the current context, and in the document under review, the responsibility of the state is transferred to citizens and it is up to individuals to harness their capacity for action, to **take control of their care** (DH 2010: 8). Partnerships developed between individuals, the voluntary sector and market providers, will create the **conditions in which the big society can flourish** (DH 2010:14). As with the New Labour category of active citizenship, the Coalition is focused on the transformation of 'citizens from passive recipients of state assistance into active self-sustaining individuals' (Clarke 2005: 448). In the document passivity, dependency and state are the antithesis to active citizenship:

..we can draw on a workforce who can provide care and support with skill, compassion and imagination, and who are given the freedom and support to do so. We need the whole workforce, including care workers, nurses, occupational therapists, physiotherapists and social workers, alongside carers and the people who use services, to lead the changes set out here (DH 2010: 8).

The policy goal is to create independent **active citizens**, who are empowered through mechanisms like personal budgets, to **make choices about how to live their lives and to decide for themselves which services they need from third sector and market providers** (DH 2010: 26). Here choice is the preferred mechanism for organising public services (Clarke et al 2008). Choice is the means through which individuals can gain autonomy, and services can be distributed fairly through the market and voluntary sector. As Clarke et al point out, choice 'works as a figure in policy discourse' that evokes 'fantasies of exercising power and control' and these fantasises run close to a common sense idea '(that may be shared by politicians, journalists and users of public services)'(Clarke et al 2008: 246). As a mechanism for organising and distributing public services choice is described as an inherent individual capacity, constrained by the state, and that once released has the potential to re-invigorate the market in social care. To turn this common sense around, there are grounds in the literature to argue that the idea of choice, like that of citizenship, is attached to abstract subjects or individuals. Rather than a release from state dependency, this mechanism disconnects individuals from welfare rights and ignores the social and economic conditions that produce the

inequalities of power and resources that constrain choice (Ferguson 2007; Clarke et al 2008; Newman and Tonkens 2011).

The meaning of choice in neoliberal discourse is more or less attached to market freedom, though there is some choice involved in the act of becoming independent from the state and in participating in local care networks. Choice is used as 'a rhetorical device that conceals other political intentions –the process of privatisation being a critical element here' (Clarke et al 2008: 247). Further there is more than a hint of democracy in the word choice that comes from the neoliberal association between markets, freedom and democracy. Choice evokes the idea of fairness and equality, in that every individual has the capacity to decide what is good for them, despite, as Clarke et al argue, 'much evidence that the poor make more, and tougher, choices than the affluent' (Clarke et al 2008: 249). They see 'an elision' in neoliberal discourse, 'between the capacity to make choices and the capacity to realise choices' and point out that economic, cultural and social inequalities 'affect both the range of choice available and the ability to make desired outcomes materialise' (Clarke et al 2008: 249).

The emphasis here is on **making choices** and on building the capacity of citizens to be active and creative, an emphasis that **goes well beyond the social care sector and must focus on what people can do for each other** (DH 2010: 10). It is this agency and what people do that will create contented citizens, where **[H]appier, more socially connected individuals have more pride in their neighbourhoods, which can enhance quality of life, health and well-being** (DH 2010 12). In neoliberal context, Simon-Kumar suggests, there are two potential routes for enacting citizenship, as a

worker and as a consumer (Simon-Kumar 2011), or in the document examined here, a conflation between worker/consumer and carer/consumer (Clarke 2005). The subject positions inferred in the document enact particular kinds of rational choice, agency and attribute: to be innovative and entrepreneurial, or skilled and compassionate, or hard working and flexible. The task or activity of the non-ideal individual 'driven by emotional forces and biological motivations' (Pykett 2012: 220) to dependency, is to **regain their independence after a crisis** (DH 2010:29). In the document degrees of agency determine citizenship status rather than social identity and/or access to social, political and economic rights. The ideal and non-ideal individuals that populate the document are on the surface free from ascribed social identity. It could be argued that this un-nuanced language allows for differences between women, older, black or working class individuals to be recognised but not to be assumed. Many women work, and can be described as independent, innovative and entrepreneurial. Many men have caring responsibilities, or are unemployed and dependent on the state, so that social analysis becomes less relevant. While on the surface this argument holds weight, a closer reading shows a turn toward a 'feminized, relationship based, and gender-aware norms of policy making' that masks an 'ambivalence toward women as a political constituency' (Simon-Kumar 2011: 457).

What can be seen as a simple case for enabling individuals to release their potential through choice, hides a complex theoretical pattern and political logic. For Clarke the analysis of active citizenship moves between a series of theoretical and/or political positions (Clarke 2005:4). As described above, these are: a sociological attention to reflexive agency in late modern societies and a Foucauldian understanding of

governmentality. Crudely, while sociologists of late modernity see individualisation as an opening of individual agency in relation to structure, governmentality theorists understand this as the construction of particular subjects in the strategic interests of dominant articulations of power. It is the conceptualisation of the citizen as active, empowered and responsible, Clarke argues, that turns attention from what is actually going on, where the 'the real dynamic of abandonment' is masked. The dismantling of the welfare state and the negative press given to dependency on benefits and services (Lister 2013) leaves citizens abandoned to care for themselves, regardless of the material, social or economic contexts of their lives. Through the ideological language of policy making, Clarke contends, 'intentional misrepresentation and mystification' takes place, 'concealing real purposes and interests' (Clarke 2005: 5). Such purposes are framed by government policies that are infused by economic interests. From this perspective '*activation* is understood as making people into market ready workers, available to the extended hire and fire flexibilities demanded by corporate capital' and of creating a marginalised, vulnerable class of "'contingent" workers such as unregistered migrants' Clarke 2005: 453). This attempt to shape individual action through a 'moral utilitarianism' (Brown 1995: 36), blames certain individuals for their dependency on state services. This makes individuals responsible for systemic problems and agentic in defining their economic and social location and experience (Bakker 2007: 551).

Joan Tronto argues that 'models of citizenship define the boundaries between public and private life and determine which activities, attitudes, possessions and so on are to be considered worthy in any given state' (Tronto 2005: 139). The activity of caring is specifically drawn into the repertoire of citizenship in the document, to be carried out

by a caring and skilled subject. Citizenship is differentiated according to activity and attribute, and along lines of gender and other social and economic inequalities. Care does not seem to be the activity of transcendent or reflexive entrepreneurial subjects whose role is to innovate or engage in creating new care markets for the new care economy. Care is the activity carried out by caring, skilled, imaginative and responsible citizens, presumably women as mothers, daughters, grandmothers and neighbours who are predominant in organising and carrying out paid and unpaid care work³⁴. With care attached to specific subject or citizenship positions in the document, questions are raised for feminist politics: just how is caring an act of citizenship? Which citizens do this work? Where does this care take place? Is caring an activity for which all citizens have responsibility?

Differentiated in this way citizenship defines the boundaries between public and private life and designates spaces of care (Tronto 2001, 2005). With the policy vision outlined in the document, the intention is for care take place in unspecified local and community settings. It is unclear in the text precisely where care will take place, but it is clear that these spaces will be more personal and intimate, characteristics which apply to home. The transition from public to private spaces – private in the confused sense of either/or personal and market – the boundaries between public and private begin to dissolve. Significantly, care becomes a private rather than a public issue, an activity for personal

³⁴ See for example Ben-Galim, D. and Silimm A. (2013) 'The sandwich generation: older women balancing work and care' London: IPPR: <http://www.ippr.org/publications/the-sandwich-generation-older-women-balancing-work-and-care> - which reports that women are more likely than men to give up work in order to take on caring responsibilities; and that 'the increasing number of older women in work, combined with an ageing population, means that serious 'care gaps' are emerging in the UK - particularly in childcare'.

spaces, and yet, as Tronto argues, feminists have long argued that care is an intrinsic aspect of all human life:

Care consists of everything we do to continue, repair and maintain ourselves so that we can live in the world as well as possible...In its broadest meanings, care is complex and multidimensional: it refers both to the dispositional qualities we need to care for ourselves and others, such as being attentive to human needs and taking responsibility to meet such needs, as well as to the concrete work of caring. To care well requires that both of these elements be present: a disposition to care and care work. Care thus always involves thinking about who is responsible for what caring, and about what that responsibility means (Tronto 2005: 130).

With care at the centre of social and political life it is precisely not an activity that is specifically located in personal or intimate spaces of home and community but threads through all social, political and economic experience (Tronto 1993; 2005). For Tronto care is not an issue to be addressed by politics or economics but is the perspective through which politics and economics should be addressed (Tronto 2005). In practice the neoliberal caring subject is a fantasy, and at best can only represent certain aspects of human intention and activity. Similarly communities and homes may or may not be reciprocal or adequately resourced spaces for personal and intimate care. Women, encouraged into the workforce, are less and less available to do care work and have to run the double or triple shift to get everything done (Bakker 2007). Homes are emptied out with women and men at work, and are less likely to be resourceful places for care and comfort. Homes can also be sites of deprivation, violence or isolation. Hochschild

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argues that as, public and private resources for care are depleted and the market takes up more time and space, home and family become more like a unit of consumption and hurried activity, than a place of warmth, nourishment and care (Hochschild 1989, 2003).

The language of care and responsibility in the document also masks the significance of care for neoliberal economics. To be clear, social care is a key political issue at stake here, specifically the paid or unpaid care of older and vulnerable adults, which is largely carried out by women who may also be caring for children, or may be older themselves (Peace et al 2005; Bowlby et al 2010; Lymbery 2010; Land and Himmelweit 2010). Social care is a crucial issue for a Government seeking to transfer responsibility for care from the welfare state to local voluntary, market or informal provision. In other words the core, or new care economy requires new subjects or agents of care (Newman 2013).

In the document agency and citizenship are constituted to attend to economic interests of Government, especially those involved in the introduction of a new, localised care economy. Citizenship is disconnected from political institutions and has various economic and social subject positions rather than a universal political identity. While it may be that national citizenship has never been truly universal, and particular groups are marginalised or denied the rights attached to state citizenship, the act of detaching citizenship from politics and state institutions in policy development is significant. The market can only offer certain kinds of choices and freedoms, which largely depend on availability of financial resources. The freedom to act in community and market settings is not political without political accountability.

In neoliberal discourse agency or subjectivity becomes the material of policy making, how to shape, remake, and create political subjects. From a late modern sociological perspective this can be understood as a positive release from a constraining dependency on the state and moribund social institutions. From a more critical perspective it heralds a passage towards increasing control and construction of subjects. Neither pays close enough attention to material life or to structures of inequality as they are changing in relation to agency, nor to personal in relation to public lives (Adkins 2002; Mills 1959). The neoliberal configuration of contradictory theories and politics, explored in earlier chapters, tends to produce contradictory effects in policy ideas that obscure political differences, critique and resistance. With agency and citizenship disconnected from institutions and political rights, subjectivity disconnected from objective realities, subjects become free floating individuals.

The following section focuses on the key word **partnership** which is chosen for its representation of new political boundaries or relationships.

Reworking the political

Partnership working means individuals, communities, statutory organisations, the voluntary, private and community sectors, all working together. It must also mean ensuring that a joined up approach is taken within councils, including for young disabled people, making the transition from children's to adults services, and identifying wider individual and

family needs, in particular safeguarding children. The greatest benefit of partnership working is better outcomes for people. Alongside this, however, efficiencies can be achieved through a joined-up approach between social care, housing, employment and other sectors (DH 2010: 23).

The policy aim here is to transfer power as agency from the state to communities, constructing a new public space infused by personal relationships where there is potential freedom to innovate and enact change,

We want to see a real shift of power from the state to people and communities...Social care is not solely the responsibility of the state. Communities and wider civil society must be set free to run innovative local schemes and build local networks of support. There are already some hugely successful examples of how this approach can help reduce people's dependency on care services (DH 2010: 4).

This power is linked to the capacity of **empowered people and strong communities** to **work together to maintain independence** (DH 2010: 8). There is a minimal role for the state, to step in when needed, to help people to **retain and regain independence** (DH 2010: 9). It is specifically not the central role of government to provide welfare services, this responsibility rests with the creativity and agency of individuals in neighbourhoods:

Local government and adult social care in particular have a key role to play, working in partnership to determine local public health needs and to integrate the commissioning and delivery of services wherever this makes sense locally (DH 2010: 38).

The state will be watching, and willing to step in **to provide direction and leadership, ensuring that the law is clear, proportionate and effective** (DH 2010: 25). There is also a case for the intervention of national government

..in relation to those who lack mental capacity, and their welfare and safety must be a priority. However, the state's role is to strike a balance – allowing people to make decisions about risk without becoming intrusive or overbearing. People tell us they wish to be safe, but equally they do not want to be over-protected and denied their independence (DH 2010: 25).

The document states that the purpose or **greatest benefit of partnership working is better outcomes for people. Alongside this, however, efficiencies can be achieved through a joined-up approach between social care, housing, employment and other sectors** (DH 2010: 23). The capacity for citizens to live independently depends on **good partnership** where **working between health and social care is vital for helping them to manage their condition and live independently** (DH 2010: 23). This model of partnership develops a new professional/person relationship, where **professional partnerships of social workers, voluntary sector organisations and private sector organisations independent of the council that operate as social**

enterprises (DH 2010: 36). This relies on the making of a **big and open society**, that **shifts the power from the state to the citizen, from Whitehall to the town hall and from provider to citizen** (DH 2010: 21).

This idea of partnership, as discussed above, is a step away from the partnership model used by the New Labour government between individual, community and government. In this partnership, individuals and communities were responsible for taking opportunities up offered by government and for their own lives. The role of the welfare state was to act as a springboard to opportunity for the many, and as a safety net, to catch the vulnerable. This partnership between state and civil society constituted New Labour's social investment state (Giddens 1998). The aim was to open up the possibility for the state and market to work together in a new mixed economy involving 'a synergy between public and private sectors' (Giddens 1998: 100), focusing on 'what works' as a measure of efficiency and effectiveness (Perkins et al 2010). The task was still joined with the project of the welfare state as well as to encourage active social participation and harness social value in the joint interests of the economy and society. In policy terms these ideas were framed in debates about work/life balance, family friendly and flexible working arrangements (Franks 1999). They appeared to embrace the feminist challenge to recognize and value women's work in both spheres, in balance with a more powerful economic challenge to create a flexible workforce, and to rely on paid work as a route out of poverty (Bryson 2007). Despite the increase of women in the labour market and cultural shifts around the changing role of men, these policies still translated into women still taking responsibility for either carrying out or organizing caring work (Franks 1999; McKie et al 2002).

Sevenhuijsen has argued that with the recognition in policy discourse of the dynamic between work/family, public/private, two intertwined processes are taking place, the relocation of care and the relocation of politics' (Sevenhuijsen 2003: 179). New Labour's concept of active citizenship, from her perspective, invited people 'to interpret a wide range of activities for themselves as citizens'.. 'as members of a political community' (Sevenhuijsen 2003: 181). With active citizenship, Sevenhuijsen argued, care is rebalanced from women to men. As women increasingly relocate to the public from the private sphere, men take a greater role in caring for children and dependent adults. What also happens when women increasingly work in the public sphere is that the location for taking and giving care shifts from moves from inside to outside home, where 'caring activities that used to take place in the home are now being relocated to the world outside, to collective and commercial services (Sevenhuijsen 2003: 181). Though the feminist agenda loses its potency in this combination, it is argued that New Labour embedded a 'reliance on collaborative and relationship based policy' in the arena of care, which Simon-Kumar suggests, changed the culture of policy (Simon-Kumar 2011: 456). This constituted a change in policy norms from 'the de-humanising masculinised forms of working that feminists had been critical of ' towards 'ways of governing that are commensurate with feminized attributes of caring and interdependence'. This, she argues, is 'characteristic of the feminization of the processes of government' (Simon-Kumar 2011: 456).

The partial inclusion of feminist concerns in New Labour politics, overlaid with a communitarian commitment to individual responsibility over welfare rights, not only changed the culture of policy, but also legitimised a new gendered partnership

structure for welfare services. For the Coalition Government the idea of partnership releases the state from responsibility and is located in civil society where the boundaries between voluntary, market and individual activity are diffused. In relation to my discussion above of active citizenship floating free of attachment to political rights and institutions of the state in this discourse, here is an attempt to imagine a social and economic partnership that is free from social and economic contingencies. Through the idea of partnership in the document we get a sense of a fluid, agentic and amorphous space of interaction between voluntary, market and community sectors all working together. A unspoken diffusion is assumed between public and private spaces of welfare as the relocation of politics and care across and between public and private becomes a feature of the reordering of the social and political that began with New Labour (Bakker 2007: 549; Simon-Kumar 2011).

This agentic partnership in neoliberal discourse assumes a new gender order (Bakker 2007: 542) constituted through 'the restructuring of the micro level of society' which involves 'the reconstitution of the self and the subject/citizen at the deepest level' (Bakker 2007: 550). At the meso level reconstituted subjects work in partnership to reframe the structures of government and governance. At the macro level the state detaches itself from civil society, and **[R]eform cannot and will not be top down** (DH 2010: 7). The idea of partnership informs a series of changing relationships or structural commitments, loosening and transferring state obligation for welfare, to individuals and communities. An ideal space for citizenship is constituted, as that which operates in and between the state, market, family and community:

The answer is to strengthen communities, while changing the role and our relationship with the state. It is a new vision for government which does not simply look to the state for answers to the issues we face, but outwards to communities. This is why we talk about building the 'Big Society'. This approach underpins our vision for social care – a vision grounded in the Coalition Government's values (DH 2010: 3).

State detachment is achieved through the displacement of responsibility for assessing need, organising and distributing resources and safeguarding children and vulnerable adults from state to civil society, from politics to economics. In this process the defining principle of social justice as the shaper of welfare policies is disassociated from politics, just as the services on offer are disassociated from democratic design and political accountability. To describe this new gender order (Bakker 2007), feminist political economists contribute to a macro analysis of the 'reconfigurations of power and production' that support these processes. They identify an emergent re-ordering of the public-private, production-reproduction dichotomy (Bakker 2007; LeBaron 2010; Simon-Kumar 2011). This reordering is in tune with the effects of partnership which diffuses the relationship between state, market and civil society where public-private no longer reflects an ideologically fixed 'separation of state and domestic sphere' but is 'constituted relationally' through state policies and discourses (Simon-Kumar 2011: 449). As such distinctions between production and reproduction continue 'to be a critical axis to appraise normative constructions of gender roles, activities, and representations that impact on the relative social positioning of women' (Simon-Kumar 2011: 449).

The emerging neoliberal production-reproduction order is potentially a new terrain for feminist politics though the dynamics are ambiguous. In this order the 'debate about women's emancipation' is confined 'to one of participation (or not) in the labour market' (Simon-Kumar 2011: 449) where the market is the only legitimate space for agency. Even though people who are caring, reciprocal, compassionate and imaginative are valued in neoliberal discourse for their capacity to care for others, the entrepreneurial, active and independent citizen is more valued and closer to market freedom. These subject positions are gendered though there is less concern over whether it is women or men who inhabit either of them, so they constitute structural inequality on the one hand whilst disqualifying any differential in public/private, productive/reproductive arenas on the other (Simon-Kumar 2011: 449). This ambiguity writes gender as productive of disadvantage out of the discourse. Similarly the conflicting relationship between 'the imperatives of capitalism and the necessities of material life or between capitalist production and social reproduction' are unspoken (Le Baron 2010: 890). We encounter a re-ordering of subjectivity and 'landscapes for social and gender relations in the home, economy and polity' (Simon-Kumar 2011: 458). Simon-Kumar argues that'what is becoming apparent...is that the dichotomies of male-female/masculine-feminine are no longer the pertinent categories to understanding gender relations. Class, age, and ethnicity are more likely to throw light on the current modalities of gender relations within contemporary forms of Western democracy' (Simon-Kumar 2011: 458).

The reordered landscape of the political and political subjectivity incorporates gender and dismisses women in all their differences, while continuing to rely on women's labour at work and at home. With gender 'no long the primary criterion of structural disadvantage' Simon-Kumar argues, 'what emerges is not so much the exploitation of women as their erasure and their irrelevance' (Simon-Kumar 2011: 458). She gives a sense here of how the abstract, de-gendered citizen in neoliberal discourse floats above structural inequalities or binaries and bears no resemblance to real women or real life (Moi 1999). In this discourse women become detached or 'de-linked from conventional sites and activities that have disadvantaged them' and 'there is a lack of clarity regarding women's emancipation in relation to these sites' (Simon-Kumar 2011: 459). For Simon-Kumar the 'woman in the post-neoliberal state' is analytically disembodied, since 'she is independent of the conditions of subordination that have defined gender oppression for decades'. Contemporary feminist theorists engaging with this conundrum are exploring different approaches to analysing discourses that 'efface "women only" analysis (Simon-Kumar 2011: 459). In the dynamic between inside/outside, inclusion/exclusion, gender has shifted from outside in, and women from inside out. Simon-Kumar suggests that that conventional frameworks of analysis 'such as exclusion, individualization, exploitation' are increasingly less able to capture 'the workings of contemporary masculinity'. Rather, as 'the women question appears to be losing relevance' she argues, 'a feminist analytics in the times of inclusion is needed' (Simon-Kumar 2011: 459).

Reworking freedom

The first value is Freedom. We want to see a real shift of power from the state to people and communities. We want people to have the freedom to choose the services that are right for them from a vibrant plural market. That is why this vision challenges councils to provide personal budgets, preferably as direct payments, to everyone eligible within the next two years. We also want professionals to have freedom from local authority procedures and be able to work more closely with people who use services (DH 2010: 4).

The analysis in this chapter now turns from the dynamic between agency and structure in the neoliberal order to its legitimisation through the use of freedom as the organising principle of policy development. In the above statement freedom is **the first value**, followed by and in relation to **fairness** and **responsibility**. The key word freedom has a presence throughout the document both as freedom from, perhaps negative freedom, and as freedom to, positive freedom (Coole 1993). The talk is of **new freedoms** for professionals to be found in relation to authority as in freedom from institutional bureaucracy, from **burdensome procedures and over regulation**, that **reduce social workers discretion to exercise professional judgement**. The government, the document states, will **give more decision making authority back to social workers and allow staff to exercise judgement with skill and imagination** (DH 2010: 35).

This freedom from state bureaucracy and regulation is expressed in positive terms in relation to the market, choice and creativity: **We want people to have the freedom to choose the services that are right for them from a vibrant plural market** (DH 2010: 4). A second positive freedom is expressed in relation to power, to **devolving power from central government to communities and individuals**. For front-line workers in the delivery of personalisation, **we want to give them the freedom and responsibility to improve care services and support people in new ways** (DH 2010: 6). Finally freedom is also expressed in relation to risk and security, where **risk is no longer an excuse to limit people's freedom** (DH 2010: 8, 25); and **[W]ith choice and control, people's dignity and freedom is protected and their quality of life is enhanced. Our vision is to make sure everyone can get the personalised support they deserve** (DH 2010: 15). Freedom is couched in positive terms in the document as freedom to choose and act, which becomes available on release from the state, bureaucracy, regulation and the excuse of risk or contingency.

The freedoms expressed in these quotes are all relational, attached to the market, and expressed in relation to autonomy and to its other dependency, for example: **People's expectations are changing, and neither those who provide the services nor those who receive them expect to trade autonomy for dependency** (DH 2010: 4). In the document's conclusion it is stated that:

This vision for social care demonstrates the Government's values of freedom, fairness and responsibility, shifting power from central to local,

from state to citizen, from provider to people who use services (DH 2010:

38).

Freedom is also the first value framing the government's vision for social care, so questions arise as to what kinds of freedom are valued, and whose freedom is at stake? With an awareness of the extent of historical, philosophical and political literature on freedom, this analysis focuses on the strategic use of freedom in shaping policy discourse in the document. The configuration of freedom in the document has its roots in classical liberalism where the primary principle is individual freedom and a rejection of freedom as emancipation (Giddens 1998) rearranged in line with communitarian and market principles. This idea of freedom finds its expression through the market and relates to a capacity to act which is embodied in the active citizen explored above. Unlike classical liberal theory where freedom is secured through civil and political rights, freedom in neoliberal discourse loses attachment to the political and finds its place in the market.

The principle of freedom has long shaped politics and policy making in Britain. In the post second world war years of the welfare state social policies reflected a tension between the liberal principle of freedom and socialist commitment to equality. Liberal democratic governments sought, more or less, to balance these principles in policies framed to generate equal opportunity and social justice: an equality of individual freedoms secured through removing barriers to opportunity, and the redistribution of power and resources to tackle social and economic causes of class inequalities. Though it swayed right and left this post war form of equal opportunity was the guiding principle of policy in the liberal democratic consensus which held up to the late 1970s.

Liberal market freedoms in opposition to principles of equality and social justice became a key idea for Conservative governments in the 1980s and 90s. After which New Labour's third way reframed the post war balance of equality and freedom moving beyond the dynamic between liberalism and socialism, taking what works from each (Perkins et al 2010). A key aspect of this reframing is the way it turned around a communitarian or community embedded sense of freedom detached from abstract notions of individual rights. Equal opportunity for New Labour was a balance of equality as social inclusion and freedom of choice to take up and make something of opportunities offered by governments and markets. Freedom in this sense is thought to arise spontaneously through the active participation of individuals as citizens in community life (Heaphy 2007; Rose 2007) but is also embedded in, and dependent on, a strong network of reciprocal obligations rather than political and civil rights (Frazer and Lacey 1993). Attention turns away from freedom as a universal principle to freedom as both spontaneity and rootedness in community, re-written into a balance of rights and responsibilities.

Economic freedom

In neoliberalism the market is the expression of human freedom and, left to itself, guarantees fairness and equality. This idea has entered common sense understanding as more or less true but as Rose points out the market is constructed by financial and management experts and is not some kind of natural occurrence. These experts work

..to establish the conditions under which the "laws of supply and demand" can make themselves real, to implant ways of calculating and managing that will

make economic actors think, reckon and behave as competitive profit seeking agents, to turn workers into motivated employees who will freely strive to give of their best in the workplace, and to transform people into consumers who can choose between products'. This coincides with the availability of psychological therapists to 'sort out the difficulties that arise when personal life becomes a matter of freedom and choice (Rose 1999b: 65).

In the mix of communitarian and economic ideas, social entrepreneurial and market activities are the means to individual freedom. A configuration of community and market provides a reciprocal interaction between individuals as family members and individuals as paid workers replacing conflict or opposition between labour and capital. On the surface family friendly or work/life balance policies provide flexibility for labour and capital, a closer look shows how this flexibility leans towards the interests of capital (Franks 1999; Franklin 2007). New Labour's third way creates a conceptual, almost neutral, space between capital and labour, men and women, freedom and equality which potentially feeds a new consensual politics. Outwardly New Labour achieved this by seeming to listen to feminist and other arguments for working life policies that took women's dual burden into account (Coote 2000). Inwardly the third way instituted neoliberalism's social turn achieving a common sense connection between active citizenship, work and individual choice. In its articulation of feminist demands neoliberalism's social turn softened the hard economics of the neo-conservative/neoliberal dynamic of Thatcherism to pull social life into neoliberalism's economic slipstream (Simon-Kumar 2011; Pykett 2012).

In this context economic freedom is not to be freely had but is contingent upon social responsibility. The assumption in the discourse that people can be empowered to take responsibility and exercise freedom is transmitted through a rhetoric that masks the 'systematic stripping of forms of power and protection' that had been 'institutionalised in the welfare state and 'embodied in social citizenship' (Clarke 2005: 453). The notion of responsibility in relationship to rights, Clarke argues, is a 'smokescreen behind which the state is systematically divesting its responsibilities in managing the economy, safeguarding citizens, and regulating capital'. Thus 'abandonment' rather than freedom 'best describes the process of changing the relationships between economy, society and the state to the greater advantage of capital in its global and local forms' (Clarke 2005: 453).

Freedom cut loose from the political

With a softened or feminised version of neoliberalism where the market seeps in to all aspects of social and political life, the value of freedom is cut loose from the political where 'human rights and equality under neoliberalism are the rights and equality to compete, but not the right to start from the same starting line, with the same equipment' (Braedley and Luxton 2010: 8). There is a disassociation in neoliberal discourse of economic freedom from political principle and accountability. The belief 'that individual freedom of choice is maximised through competition' is enhanced by a growing common sense idea that such competition is 'a naturally occurring social good, and the best method of social organisation, enacted primarily through mechanisms of price' (Braedley and Luxton 2010: 8). Competition in the neoliberal view is also 'the least restrictive way of distributing inequality, which is perceived as

inevitable' (Braedley and Luxton 2010: 8). The uses of freedom in policy discourse are to focus human activity and create legitimacy in the free market, where freedom is accessed through work and creative participation in community partnerships and activities.

Without a conceptual or political connection to civil and political rights freedom arises, inheres and is legitimised through the agency of individuals, and exercised through choice and imagination. The state releases its hold on citizenship to transfer and confer power to individuals to liberate themselves from dependency on state welfare and to realise their freedom through the market. This uncouples freedom from politics and the public sphere and locates its possibility in individual subjects, in the choices they make and what they do. Individuals are encouraged to orientate themselves towards working and consuming in the market, but also to draw on their skills, creativity and imagination in becoming socially independent, whilst caring for the vulnerable who cannot care for themselves. The act of de-politicisation is celebrated in neoliberal discourse as empowerment or liberation, as it neutralises gender, struggle and conflict. The legitimacy for uncoupling the political comes from communitarian ideas in loose association with feminist critique (Frazer and Lacey 1993) which, as Jenkins suggests, offers a sense of subjectivity that is self governing and at the same time distanced from 'contingency and conflict', from the political (Jenkins 2011: 163).

Freedom in feminist theory and politics

The idea of freedom in relation to subjectivity and agency is of close concern to feminist theorists of different perspectives (Hirschmann 2003). Feminists have written

about the place of freedom in structures of political theory and philosophy where it is seen to reside in the masculine public sphere aligned with rationality and individual autonomy, and where it relies on the feminine nurture of the private sphere (eg Dietz 1998). Others analyse the social construction of choice and freedom (Hirschmann 1996, 2003; Friedman 2006): the freedom of the liberal individual from coercion through the achievement of political and civil rights; and the socialist understanding of freedom as emancipation in relation to equality (Coole 1993; Hirschmann 1996; Fraser 2013).

Feminist debates about the parameters and spaces of freedom indicate how distinctions between negative and positive freedoms are not necessarily oppositional but are gendered, reflecting and assuming distinctions between rationality and emotion, mind and body, external and internal, objective structures and subjective agency. This language which limits the boundaries of freedom, Hirschmann argues, needs to be challenged 'to empower women to create new contexts that allow women greater autonomy and choice' (Hirschmann 1996: 145).

One of the threads of debate in contemporary feminist theory, as outlined in chapter two, concerns a rethinking of the dynamic between subjectivity and material life, that is, to understand agency and freedom in the context of reality (Coole and Frost 2010).

Some of this work is influenced by Beauvoir who developed an understanding of how freedom, agency and choice are exercised in situations (Young 1997, 2002; Moi 1999).

Elaine Stavro argues that 'Beauvoir's theorisation of the situation allows for the interplay of "subjective" factors, free will, and "objective" ones, the contours of forces which condition the individual's actions' (Stavro 2000: 146). 'Choices', Stavro writes, 'are made but they arise within situations, which in part we structure but in part are

structured outside us'(Stavro 2000: 136). For Young the situation holds the dynamic between the material facts of living in the world and the ontological freedom for women to construct themselves in relation to this facticity (Young 2002: 415).

Situation, then, is the way that the facts of embodiment, social and physical environment appear in the light of the projects a person has. She finds that her movements are awkward in relation to her desire to dance....To claim that the body is a situation is to acknowledge that the meaning of a woman's body is bound up with the ways she uses her freedom' (Moi 1999 :65 in Young 2002: 415).

In her discussion of freedom in situation, Beauvoir makes a distinction between the immanence of domestic life and the transcendence of public life, where woman is locked into immanence by the situation patriarchy inflicts upon her – and she is not necessarily responsible (Kruks 1987: 114). Whether or not this analysis still holds in late modern societies (Stavro 2000; Thiele 2010) a binary opposition between transcendence and immanence characterises and genders neoliberal subject positions whether they are inhabited by women or men: the transcendent, independent and entrepreneurial subject and the immanent caring, imaginative and vulnerable subject. The gendered split of public/private continues to en-gender spaces for individual agency towards economic freedom and social responsibility, reinforcing rather than dissolving gendered binary oppositions. At the same time active citizens are genderless in that as individual women and men they are freed in the market from social identity, as individualised people, to choose which space to occupy. The traditional liberal

structure that located men in the public and women in the private sphere is de-gendered in neoliberal policy discourse, whilst the linking of economic production and social reproduction continues to govern gender and power relationships. Nonetheless, Gressgård writes, according to Wendy Brown the liberal concepts of liberation and autonomy are 'fundamentally – rather than contingently – gendered by virtue of being constituted in opposition to necessity/encumbrance and dependence/dependents, respectively' (Gressgård 2008: 258). With a discourse that positions gendered subjectivities and avoids assigning gender, 'women's struggles and accomplishments' are reframed 'as a purely personal matter, thus obscuring the social and material conditions faced by different groups of women' (Lazar 2007: 154). In this re-alignment of what Lazar refers to as 'post feminist' concerns there is a transfer of agency from we to me, from collective to individual agency, 'an inward looking focus, and contentment only in the achievement of personal freedoms and fulfilment. A self focused "me-feminism" of this sort shifts attention away from the collective "we-feminism" needed for a transformative political programme' (Lazar 2007: 154). Again freedom is unhooked from politics and is the achievement of personal agency.

In neoliberal policy discourse the juxtaposition of communitarian and sociological ideas uncouples freedom from politics, producing contradictory spaces of freedom and agency, where they are both limited and infinite. As Jenkins argues, 'libertarian political theory is easily conceptualised as depoliticising, as it seeks to reconcile us to ordering our lives and goods according to the "natural" principles of market mechanisms, even if they are "freed" from state interference' (Jenkins 2011: 164). The idea of the 'disruptiveness of politics' underpins 'much of liberal, libertarian and communitarian

political theory. Order, closure, agreement and consent are valued above political engagement, contingency, contestation, conflict and struggle' (Jenkins 2011: 164). Thus the gendered structuring of social, political and economic life is sustained, where freedom is tied to responsibility.

In making individual freedom contingent on responsibility the discourse asserts equality and freedom for women and men through the market, overlaid with 'an *explicit* moral imperative' to social responsibility which works to 'govern citizens through their freedom'(Pykett 2009: 392). Brown argues that 'the will to institutionalise freedom, to resolve its contingent character and render it permanent, metamorphoses freedom into its opposite, into a system of constraints by norms of routinization and calculability, into unfreedom as the pinnacle of the project of rationality' (Brown 1995: 23-24). Active citizens, those who conform to standards of independence, employment, creativity and or to skill and imagination are the winners, in relation to the losers, those who are dependent on the state 'who supposedly lack autonomy – and thereby lack the freedom of choice – are regarded not only as intolerable, but also in themselves non-tolerant, illiberal and uncivilised' (Gressgård 2008: 261).

As Brown argues, 'The disciplinary institutions and discourses generative of obedient, disciplined subjects confound the premise of most emancipatory narratives: when discipline becomes the stuff of our desire, we cease to desire freedom' (Brown 1995: 19). Similarly, Rose urges a retreat from understanding freedom in relation to domination, towards an analysis of 'how power also acts through practices that "make up subjects" as free persons' (Rose 1999b: 95). Freedom, Rose argues 'is central to a

genealogy of contemporary regimes of government because it is a structuring theme of contemporary government itself' (Rose 1999b: 63). He makes a distinction between 'freedom as an ideal, as articulated against struggles of particular regimes of power' [as in feminist struggle], and 'freedom as a mode of organising and regulation: freedom here is a certain way of administering a population that depends upon the capacities of free individuals' (Rose 1999b: 64). While the aim of the policy discourse analysed here is to move away from politics, where politics is seen as state control and interference, the act of removal is politicising in as much as it works to discipline, constrain and constitute a particular kind of citizen or subject. Yet from a critical perspective, Jenkins argues, the 'object of politicisation is to confront domination, when power relations become blocked or depoliticised in ways in which we can imagine no alternative' (Jenkins 2011: 169).

This understanding of the complexity of de-politicisation/politicisation offers a conceptual framework for analysing the neoliberal arena that constitutes the presence and absence of gender and home in policy discourse. Where the aim is to depoliticise welfare relationships, Jenkins argues, politics is seen as partisan and oppressive, 'politics is not valued, in contrast to neutrality, impartiality and "fairness" which are perceived positively. Such cases often conjure a negative conception of the political as a duplicitous, manipulative, strategic, ruthless and disreputable form of conduct, or envisage a realm free of political interest' (Jenkins 2011: 160). Jenkins argues convincingly that critics might "'respecify' the field, to show how this negative notion of politics pervades, dressed up as a positive move... towards utilitarian agency, happiness, well being. Jenkins asks us to focus on 'the relationship between politicising and

depoliticising dynamics, or the conception of the political on which it draws" (Jenkins 2011: 157). The classification of politics or liberty as negative or positive, neutralises distinctions between consensus and conflict. To respecify the political and political agency as a site where stability and insecurity, coherence and conflict interplay offers a vibrancy missing in the neoliberal framing of politics. The economic colonisation of the social has politicised social life as a space other to the state editing out struggle and conflict. Neoliberal discourse constitutes a consensual and politically useful social sphere, when politics is the bearer of economic interests. Jenkins articulates the ambivalence that operates here as freedom is disassociated and associated with politics, where 'the analytic theory of justice and communitarianism may involve (limited) (re)politicisation but this is predicated upon acts of de-politicisation' (Jenkins 2011: 162). Neoliberal discourse sets up a space where political struggle is written out of the story of politics. Even though agency is celebrated it is a particular form of agency linked to freedom produced by markets. There is no language in the discourse for women to describe their lives so that feminist theory has a struggle to find a language and a space from which to speak (Hemmings and Treacher 2006; Fraser 2013).

Conclusion

In this chapter I have isolated and questioned the key words **active citizens**, **partnership** and **freedom** in the document **A vision for adult social care: capable communities and active citizens** (DH 2010). I argue that these words express agency in the political register of the discourse, evoking the presence and absence of home and gender in policy language. Analysis of the assumptions that underpin categories of

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active citizenship, partnership and freedom suggests that a key feature of the policy discourse is a process of de-politicisation and politicisation, contesting and shaping public and private spaces of freedom and action. The text outlines the vision of detaching citizenship from the state as a means to empower and free individuals to make choices and to act autonomously in their own interests. This de-politicisation, as freedom from the state and the disassociation of freedom from political rights, works in favour of free market interests and aligns with the de-linking of inequalities from social and economic structures. As LeBaron points out, it unsettles gender as it inheres between 'the imperatives of capitalism and the necessities of material life or between capitalist production and social reproduction' (Le Baron 2010: 890). The discursive effect, Simon-Kumar argues is to 'analytically disembodiment women', and separate them conceptually from home and social reproduction, the 'conventional sites and activities that have disadvantaged them' (Simon-Kumar 2011: 459).

The legitimacy of the policy discourse examined here rests on the idea of freedom and active citizenship. It specifically rests on agency in the context of community life, rather than on those political, economic and social structures that specify spaces for freedom and agency. It slides close to feminist theories and debates, celebrating transcendence and public life but also acknowledging the significance of immanence and care. This is why Simon-Kumar argues that feminist critique should focus on where gender is written in as much as it is written out (Simon-Kumar 2011: 459; Jenkins 2008). Following Simon-Kumar's and Jenkins' arguments outlined above, this insight informs a re-specification of the field of feminist politics to focus not so much on how women are exploited and kept outside, as on how they are included and erased. Erasure of women

in policy discourse is achieved in part through the neutralisation of political language which asserts consensus and edits out women's struggle to be at home in the world.

The following chapter builds on this analysis, focusing on the situation and the economic register of the discourse, on everyday life as it is re-made through policies of personalisation and co-production.

Chapter six

Remaking the Situation

With this chapter the focus of analysis turns to the situation and the economic register in the document **A vision for adult social care: capable communities and active citizens** (DH 2010). Attention to the economic is problematic since, as explored in chapter three, neoliberal discourse tends to mask the economic in its social turn. There are no direct references to economic matters in document, nor is there any reference to the relevance of the context or situation in which lives are led. There are, however, two references to **everyday** which is a concept used in feminist, anthropological and sociological study to represent day to day life in the context of social relationships and social/economic settings (Bennett and Watson 2002: ix). To identify where material reality and economy are present though not stated in the document I work with **everyday** as the key word which most closely connects with the situation and the economic register. As with the word community there is no clear definition of the everyday. It can be evoked to study relations of power and inequality as much as more communitarian concerns like social behaviour or social capital (Coole 2009). In this analysis the suggestion is that the everyday evokes the economic as it is socialised in neoliberal discourse. In addition to **everyday**, I also identify the key words **personalisation** and **co-production**. These refer to policy mechanisms that are designed to individualise or personalise social care. The reason for choosing these as key words is that they describe a new economy of care, evoked in the document, and represent the organisation of gendered resources of care. **Personalisation** is one of the key principles on which the Government's **vision for a modern system of social care**

is built (DH 2010: 8). In recent years personalised and co-produced care, financed through individual budgets, has become a major focus for policy development and the delivery of welfare services (Needham 2011; Slay 2012).

Personalisation means that the person who needs support should have real choice and control to get the support that works for them. It can involve people having personal budgets or direct payments to directly purchase support, but it also includes a focus on person-centred thinking, and the principles of independent living (Slay 2012: 2).

Co-production is akin to personalisation and is a 'way of working where people and professionals work together in an equal and reciprocal way to get things done' (Slay 2012: 2). Co-production tends to be less oriented towards saving public money and more towards an equalisation of knowledge and power in the relationship between people and social care professionals. Nonetheless the language of co-production tends towards a neoliberal focus on individual capacity and assets, as resources to alter 'the delivery model of public services from a deficit approach to one that provides opportunities to recognise and grow people's capabilities and actively support them to put these to use individually and in groups (Slay 2012: 2). While personalisation and co-production share an emphasis on individual autonomy and involvement, in decisions about what kind of care people need and how it is provided, they have become more distinct since personalisation became a government mechanism for shifting responsibility for care from the state to individuals and communities. As Julia Slay points out, the

..original vision for personalisation was set out under the last Government through the Putting People First programme³⁵, which outlined four domains for transformation: choice and control, universal services, social capital, and early intervention and prevention. This combination of policies was seen to be essential to the success of personalisation. But most aspects of the four domains have proved difficult to implement in practice, and have often been marginalised at the local level in favour of a narrower focus on personal budgets (Slay 2012: 2).

Advocates of co-production are wary of close association with personalisation and its interface with market principles (Needham and Carr 2009). They emphasise how the principle of equalising power and knowledge between people and professionals can get lost when personal budgets are seen as the route to autonomy. While debates between advocates of personalisation and co-production continue however, critics point to how both practices tend to assume that power and resources can be equally shared. They also tend to presuppose a resource-full private space, a fully informed and independent welfare subject, adaptable professionals and a ready army of women to deliver social care (Barnes 2011; Sevenhuijsen 2002).

This chapter continues with a discussion of the economic register as the context for this analysis, particularly how feminist economists understand neoliberal governance of social reproduction and gendered labour. The idea of the everyday is explored to

³⁵ See Department of Health (2007) 'Putting People First: A shared vision and commitment to the transformation of adult social care', H. M. Government: http://www.cpa.org.uk/cpa/putting_people_first.pdf

discuss its usefulness in expressing ordinary day to day life as the focus of neoliberal economic governance. The everyday is said to be re-made in neoliberal discourse through processes of personalisation and co-production (Needham and Carr 2009: 17). The narrative of personalisation and co-production in the text is then outlined to question the economic order of gendered resources and its strategic effect. This is followed by an analysis of the assumptions and gendered effects of these policy mechanisms and the neoliberal economy of care. Paying closer attention to the situation, the economic side of home is explored, as it is expressed in the category of the household. Household is an economic term used to denote the number of persons, the kinds of activities and resources that occur within living spaces. This is followed by a feminist analysis of how neoliberalism restructures households and transforms the work women do (LeBaron 2010).

Reading the economic register

The focus of analysis in this chapter is the economic register or the constitution of the economic order in neoliberal policy discourse (Fraser and Gordon 1994). As is argued in chapters four and five, the economic register has a primary significance in the discourse as it transmits power through political legitimacy and colonisation of the social (Portes 1998). The analysis of the social and political registers in earlier chapters supports an interrogation of the everyday economic situation; and personalisation and co-production as policy mechanisms that organise or order gendered resources. Preceding chapters have described how a communitarian approach to policy making adds the social dimension to neoliberal economics. This soft paternal, maternal (Pykett 2012) or post-neoliberal (Simon-Kumar 2011) politics shapes the social world through economic

logics. There is an extensive literature on personalisation and co-production offering a rich and challenging account of their complex stories (eg Needham 2008, 2009, 2011; Barnes 2011; Duffy 2010). In this analysis I am not looking to explore 'how policy is being implemented and with what effect' (Barnes 2011: 155), but to pay attention to how personalisation and co-production organise, or re-order, gendered resources and relations of re/production.

Previous chapters have explored how social life is described through an economic logic and language in neoliberal discourse, so that it seems as though the interests of the two spheres are compatible. A slippage in the meaning and significance of language occurs to redefine social democratic concepts like equality, social justice and needs through utilitarian market principles (Seligman 2002; Brown 2005; Dean 2011). The seeming compatibility between social and economic registers also shapes critical debate about personalisation and co-production (Lymbery 2010). The effect of this compatibility is to draw attention away from the economic to locate policy problems, like that of dependency, poverty and inequality, solidly in the sphere of social resources. Rather than focus on a defence of the social in the face of economic logics, this analysis follows the advice of Simon-Kumar (2011) to attend to what is sidelined or marginalised, and to processes of marginalisation. Drawing on feminist theory (Adkins 2008, 2009; Pykett 2012) and feminist economics (Bakker 2007; LeBaron 2010), the economic context or situation of everyday life is examined.

Genevieve LeBaron argues that feminist economics relates politics and power to economy, allowing for a focus on the relationship between economic production and

social reproduction. She claims further that this structural or materialist focus is enhanced by an understanding of 'the governance processes that underpin them' (Le Baron 2010: 889). Similarly Isabella Bakker draws attention to the 'links between power, production and social reproduction', arguing that the relationship between governance, governmentality and social reproduction' makes it possible to bring gender, agency and subjectivity into view by challenging the 'ahistorical, generic conceptions of the individual, on the one hand, and, on the other, communal and reciprocal notions of the individual and society'. Bakker points to the ways that neoliberalism produces a new gender order through an intensification of 'the privatisation and reprivatisation of social reproduction' (Bakker 2007: 542).

In feminist economics these arguments support an interrogation of the economic character of the social, both in structural and discursive terms, through an analysis of households (LeBaron 2010) and everyday life (Bakker 2007). There is an interesting distinction between household and home. Household is a focused economic category that is useful for analysing who and how many individuals live in each household, who does what, what resources are available and how they are used. More than this, for feminist analysis, as LeBaron points out, there is also an argument for 'situating the household in wider economic context, as an integrated conceptual category that expresses the dynamic between structure and agency (LeBaron 2010: 889). The idea of the everyday is increasingly used in feminist literature (Braedley and Luxton 2010), to describe policy and practice (Barnes 2013) and in anthropology (Pink 2012) as a concept that more or less stands for the day to day experiences of ordinary people

(Bennett and Watson 2002). Bargetz points to the advantages of the notion of the everyday in contrast to the public/private. For her the everyday has potential for opening up ways of theorizing how everyday life is a site of power relations and a continually politically contested field. She also recognizes that the everyday shares negative and gendered connotations with the private when it is taken for granted (Bargetz 2009). With a methodological presence in sociology, the everyday constitutes an 'area of inquiry in which the study of the forms of social behaviour and social interaction that take place within everyday social settings and the analysis of more general social processes and relationships meet and intermesh' (Bennett and Watson 2002: ix). The association with social setting, behaviour and relationships slides close to communitarian assumptions and the language of community, social capital and well being. As such the everyday is a useful concept in the construction of a consensual view of the social world (Sointu 2005; Coole 2009). Methodologically, in this study the everyday opens a door on the economic, on the ways that neoliberal discourse embeds and is produced through personal life. Similarly the category of household opens up the economic aspects of home in terms of resources and inequalities. It allows for an analysis of the dynamic between production and reproduction and for situating gendered labour in the context of material life. For an understanding of how home is situated in wider economic contexts and to evoke the 'integrated nature of people's daily lives, the everyday standpoint can help' (Bakker 2007: 550).

Remaking the everyday

The word **everyday** appears only twice in the document in an example of the **power of personal budgets**:

Lynne was diagnosed with epilepsy after receiving a head injury and the impact of seizures on her everyday life was huge. Everyday tasks suddenly became hazardous to her. At her local Epilepsy Action branch she learned how Seizure Alert Dogs can warn epilepsy sufferers of imminent seizures. Lynne now uses her direct payment to fund the upkeep of her dog, Dougal
(DH 2010: 17).

Everyday is a term used fairly casually in policy language in relation to personalisation and co-production. For example:

..engagement and co-production will grow only out of a deeper, richer understanding of how services relate in practice to people's everyday lives
(Parker and Heapy 2006: 16).

Co-producers can be 'everyday makers' as well as "expert citizens", participating in ways that improve their everyday lives, "concretely and personally", rather than getting involved in parties or grassroots organisations (Needham and Carr 2009: 17).

The re-making of the everyday is a prime focus of neoliberal discourse where the goal is 'not advancing social justice and equality, but is instead re-inscribing, intensifying, and creating injustices and inequality' (Braedley and Luxton 2010: 6). The everyday has no boundaries (Felski 1999-2000) and so potentially refers to everywhere. It can substitute or stand in for binary opposites like public/private (Bargetz 2009) and social/economic to replace distinctions of equality like gender, class, age, sexuality and ethnicity, with a common sense understanding of shared community life.

Personalisation and co-production have close association with the everyday since they are designed to produce and reproduce values and activities that create this common sense life materially and discursively (Bezanson and Luxton 2006). This contributes to an intensification of the social, political and economic, as they meld together in creating a gendered, communitarian everyday. A complex understanding of the everyday in feminist economics stands in contrast to its more ordinary connotations in political discourse. A recent report from the Institute for Public Policy Research, a centre-left think tank that has been influential in shaping New Labour politics, proposes a new politics of everyday democracy. It is worth an extensive quote to give a sense of the language used:

An everyday democracy is a society in which we continuously forge new, deep, and powerful relationships with those with whom we live. It offers a politics in which we discover shared goals even with those with whom we usually disagree. It builds a nation in which we overcome the deep tensions that always threaten to divide us. In an everyday democracy, we learn how to work with our neighbours, with our colleagues, and with those we sit with on the bus to work

to develop real relationships that cross social boundaries and allow for new forms of action. It is only such relationships, I will contend, that can provide the opportunities that we seek as a nation today. It is these relationships that can help us overcome our hostility to one another and can take the edge off our self-defeating materialism. It is these relationships that can inspire new and more productive patterns of collaboration at work. And it is these relationships that can assist in improving our health and well-being, making us more resilient in the face of the challenges that inevitably face us (Stears 2011: 6).

In this quote, the idea of the everyday expresses a human desire for co-operation, reciprocity and shared values, for binding people together in a shared space. It is written in ordinary language, and is situated in ordinary everyday activities, so it is hard to disagree with its human sentiments. It seems negative in the face of this promise or hope to carp that the language is simple, common sense, and masks complex inequalities and power relations. Everyday language places feminist critique in a position of negativity, as attention is drawn to different dimensions of the everyday, to how common sense combines and obscures difference in the 'we' and the 'challenges that face us'.

As a methodological device the everyday has the capacity to hold and convey the dynamic between social, political and economic registers. It draws attention to the situation, the material context of the relationship between individual agency and wider social and economic forces (McNay 2008). The everyday also holds the notion of practice and the taken for granted in phenomenology and sociology, which allows for

an understanding of how the conceptual language of policy making shapes and is shaped by everyday life (Smith and Rochovská 2007). The category of the everyday is where differences collide to make some activities visible and valorised and others invisible (Fraser and Gordon 1994; Simon-Kumar 2011), notably the gendered division of labour and the activities of social reproduction (LeBaron 2010, Braedley and Luxton 2010). It also brings practice, material conditions and, crucially, resources into play (Fischer 2003; Bourdieu 1986, 1990). Finally the everyday is the communitarian focus of neoliberal policy making as it expresses the ambivalent presence and absence of home in policy discourse (Smith and Rochovská 2007).

Increasingly, Le Baron argues, tensions or conflicts in the everyday dynamic between the economic and the social, between production and reproduction are transferred in neoliberal discourse from public view to personal lives, not 'at arm's length from, or even outside of, broader relations of production', but actually where 'the household and reproductive labour are integrated' (LeBaron 2010: 890). As the neoliberal state restructures welfare and the labour market, LeBaron contends, it promotes 'private and individual rather than public and collective strategies of social reproduction'. Gendered relations and resources are also reordered in this process since 'the neoliberal state's aggressive reordering of people's daily lives extends too, into the household and spheres of reproduction' (LeBaron 2010: 890). The reordering of gender occurs through a silencing of potentially conflictual relations of power and resources that occur in the 'sexual division of labour, the axis of gender inequality (Young 2002) that shape everyday life. Le Baron argues that this understanding throws 'into sharp relief the limitations of analysis that is silent about or premised upon a static conception of

households' (LeBaron 2010: 890). With the everyday as economic context, the key words **personalisation** and its partner **co-production** - potential everyday makers - are examined as they are expressed in the document. These words are most expressive of the silence of households, of gendered labour, and so of home as situation, subjectivity and agency, in their presupposition of the adequacy of material spaces, of material resources, of caring relationships between individuals and of women's unpaid labour.

Personalisation and co-production

Personalisation: individuals not institutions take control of their care.

Personal budgets, preferably as direct payments, are provided to all

eligible people. Information about care and support is available for all

local people, regardless of whether or not they fund their own care (DH

2010: 8).

The idea and principles of personalisation were introduced by the New Labour Government³⁶ and have been accepted and extended by the Coalition Government from 2010, as in the document examined here. **Personalisation** is the second of seven **principles** outlined in the text to inform the Coalition's **vision for a modern system of social care** (DH 2010: 8). It refers to the provision of individual budgets for health and social care and the transfer of decision making from professionals to individuals for the kinds of social care services they need or would like to purchase, either from state,

³⁶ H.M. Government (2007) 'Putting People First: A shared vision and commitment to the transformation of adult social care': http://www.cpa.org.uk/cpa/putting_people_first.pdf

voluntary or market providers (Needham 2011; Duffy 2010). Catherine Needham argues that '[P]ersonalisation is primarily a way of thinking about services and those who use them, rather than being a worked out set of policy prescriptions' (Needham 2011: 22). For Simon Duffy the word suggests a process, a combination of vision, policy and practice (Duffy 2010: 254), offering **people** rather than professionals or institutions, **choice and control about their care** (DH 2010: 15) in a move to protect **dignity and freedom** (DH 2010: 15) and to produce **outcomes of greater choice, control and independence, and ultimately better quality of life** (DH 2010: 18). Personalisation in government policy represents 'a positive direction for public service reforms' in contrast to what is seen as the negative impact of welfare state, paternalistic public services on individual autonomy (Duffy 2010: 255). This positive/negative distinction between individually directed and state welfare provision has a strong legitimising presence in the narrative. Personalisation makes welfare an everyday or individual matter with a growing emphasis on the idea of the expect citizen (Kendall 2001) and of individual capacity and responsibility (Pykett 2012).

Personalisation is closely related to the idea of co-production which is mentioned once in the text in an example of practice,

Connected Care is Turning Point's model of community-led commissioning, one that integrates health, housing and social care. Through a rigorous process of community engagement and co-production they narrow the gap between commissioners priorities and the needs of the community (DH 2010: 10-11).

and once in a footnote:

You can find the best practice papers at: www.dh.gov.uk/socialcare. The documents are: Practical approaches to improving the lives of disabled and older people by building stronger communities; Practical approaches to market and provider development; Practical approaches to co-production; Practical approaches to safeguarding and personalisation and; Personal Budgets – Checking the Results (DH 2010: 7, n6).

Co-production refers to the involvement of people in the design and production of their own services in equal partnership with professionals. It is worth emphasising that co-production is little mentioned in the document since it seems to be understood less in terms of policy prescription and more as an informal or 'practical' way of taking collective responsibility outside of government control. Yet, as Needham argues, the potential in co-production to reduce government spending has been recognised in the past as a means to reduce public expenditure. In the 1970s, for example, co-production was seen as a potential response to 'urban fiscal cutbacks in the United States at a time of rising public expectations of services' (Needham 2008: 221).

As neoliberal policy mechanisms or practices personalisation and co-production combine oppositional and incompatible perspectives. The drive towards personalised or co-produced services came initially from at least two seemingly related, though critically distinct sources (Beresford 2008; Needham 2009, 2011; Lymbery 2010: 15). The

first is driven by campaigns like the Independent Living Movement for self directed services for people with disabilities. These are based on arguments for the recognition of disability rights to independence and autonomy, where personal knowledge is valued and decision making is taken back by service users from professional control and judgement (Duffy 2008; Duffy et al 2010). From this perspective individuals can be seen as citizens with rights or entitlements to autonomy and self direction, made possible through access to, and control over, resources. Together personal budgets and co-production provide the mechanism through which the assets of individuals are recognised, and resources are available for people to identify their own needs and decide how they will be met and by whom (Stephens et al 2008; Duffy 2010; Needham 2011).

Campaigns for personalised services have provided legitimacy for governments to look to the creation of markets for self directed services. New Labour and Coalition Governments have added economic argument to ground up demands for personalisation, seeing it as an efficient way of targeting resources. Since the 1980s welfare policies have increasingly focused on individuals as active consumers of services alongside an introduction of market principles and mechanisms into welfare practice. With New Labour there was a commitment to increasing individual choice in welfare services. In a speech in 2004, the New Labour Prime Minister said:

We have the opportunity to develop a new generation of personalised services where equity and excellence go hand in hand – services shaped by the needs of those who use them, services with more choice extended to everyone and not

just those that can afford to pay, services personal to each and fair to all (Blair 2004³⁷).

As Lymbery points out, arguments for personalisation which arise in campaigns for rights and recognition are adopted by policy makers who have a different outcome in sight. Policy makers 'appropriated the language of user movements, and applied it within a consumerist version' (Lymbery 2010: 15). The two arguments for personalisation, the one based on recognition of individual autonomy and the other on developing efficient care markets outside of public provision, legitimise the transference of responsibility for social care from state to individual. The coincidences between the two, as Pykett argues, create an 'unlikely alliance between the so-called "progressive" or alternative approaches ... and proponents of the free market' (Pykett 2009: 388). The combination of recognition claims of social movements, like the disability movement, and government arguments for efficiency, McNay points out, 'legitimises policies that foreclose any recognition of how they reproduce social and economic inequalities (McNay 2008). In her book *Against Recognition* (2008) McNay suggests that arguments for recognition and economic efficiency can appear to be compatible but are actually different and contradictory. Julia Slay argues that personalisation starts off as a claim to autonomy and recognition but in practice is potentially all about budgets (Slay 2012).

³⁷ From a speech on public services delivered at Guy's and St Thomas' Hospital, London, on 23 June 2004, http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/3833345.stm [Accessed 10 May 2014].

Personal budgets and, specifically, long assessment processes associated with awarding them, make it more difficult to provide support for people with rapidly changing conditions or circumstances (for example, those with fluctuating mental health or people whose condition is episodic). More insight is needed into what process and type of support works best for people in crisis situations or who have rapidly fluctuating conditions (Slay 2012: 4).

Needham argues persuasively for a distancing of academic critique from the practice of personalisation where, she argues, personal budgets can make a positive difference to people's lives (Needham 2011). She suggests that in practice the situation is less clear cut. Nonetheless, contradictions between recognition (citizen) and efficiency (consumer) create ambiguities which can be played out in practice and undermine the clarity of persons, places and resources in the welfare state. Personalisation oils the transfers of responsibility for welfare from state to individual, but contributes to the confusion over whether people are clients, patients, users, consumers or citizens (Clarke 2005). Co-production, as a spontaneous activity, has no solid location but inheres somewhere between public/private, state/market, and purports to equalise the distinction between people and professionals so that individuals have no formal identity, linked to structural place, as carers or clients say, but get to act in both roles as practitioners. As with agency and freedom discussed in the previous chapter, the emphasis in the document is more on social responsibility, individual capacity and choice. The literature about personalisation puts forward the argument that responsibility for shaping new relationships of care lies initially with professionals who are called upon to shift from being 'fixers who focus on problems to enablers who

focus on abilities' (Stephens et al 2008: 13). Professionals have to 'be prepared to trust the decisions and behaviours of service users, and the communities in which they live, rather than dictate to them' (Bovaird 2007: 856). The call to economic efficiency tends to create barriers to any recognition of what is going on in individual circumstances. As McNay argues, the neoliberal framing of claims to recognition are based on 'a reductive understanding of power' and rest 'on a simplified understanding of subject formation, identity and agency in the context of social hierarchies, in particular, gender' (McNay 2008: 2). McNay is critical of how neoliberalism collates 'a cluster of loosely related formulations' around an issue like social care where 'recognition is naturalised and universalised', foreclosing 'anything but the most limited understanding of identity and agency in the context of the reproduction of inequalities of gender' (McNay 2008: 1-2). In an article on education which is also an arena where co-production is advocated, Pykett argues that 'Personalisation leaves little room for the geographically located person who learns through their gender, class and ethnic social position and who can only mobilise the resources required to 'coproduce' their own education in relation to the capacities afforded them in particular geographical contexts' (Pykett 2009: 391). She suggests that there is 'an *explicit* moral imperative at the heart'... of the personalisation agenda which began with New Labour, 'to govern citizens through their freedom'... as such she argues, personalisation is '*generative* of a moral purpose' in shaping the social world in such a way as to subordinate 'moral obligations to economic ones' (Pykett 2009: 392, quoting Ball 2007: 185). Pykett usefully points out that with a moral imperative personalisation adjusts 'questions of social justice or fairness of policy agendas' to 'problems of a natural, psychological and moral nature rather than subject to political contestation and critical analysis' (Pykett 2009: 393).

There is a lack of clarity in the document as to whether care is a formal or informal activity, or whether care relationships are personal or professional. Nor is it clear where care takes place, in the shifting sands of public or private contexts, at home or in the community. It seems as though, for example, community based co-production is outside of the market and outside of public provision of welfare. Unlike personalisation which tends to be an overtly individualised, market focused mechanism, co-production is said to assume 'collective, collaborative and deliberative' processes including the pooling of individual budgets and the sharing of risk (Needham 2008: 229; Stephens et al 2008). As such co-production is less easily placed in public, market or private spheres (Duffy 2010; Armstrong 2010: 200), seeming to hover in spaces between them.

Needham writes that, '[R]ather than separating out the consumption and production of government services, co-production emphasises the role that the service users can play in both the consumption and production of public services' (Needham 2008: 221). Thus the practice of co-production is seen to be not wholly in or out of market, public or private spaces as traditionally defined. There appears, in the literature, to be a separation and combination of market activities within co-production, which diffuses and re-orders the differences between them, thus re-ordering the economic sphere as it interacts with the social. Arguably in structural terms co-production sits at a depoliticised nexus between public, market and personal spaces (Martin-Matthews 2007; Milligan 2009) where, detached from policy it expresses the kind of freedom explored in the last chapter. This detachment from policy and politics leads again to questions as to where this activity takes place, how it is accountable, and who does the

work - questions which are largely unspecified and uncontested. It is because of a kind of spontaneity associated with co-production that it can do the work of enabling the detachment of the state or (de)politicisation, explored in chapter five, legitimised through the notion that individuals and communities recognise the benefits and desire this for themselves. In her research which explores people's experiences of social care, Slay relates that:

The language used in social care is a key area of contention. Many people who use services feel the way they are described puts them in a passive, consumerist role, yet they had a strong sense of citizenship, and wanted to be active participants in an explicitly recognised social contract. The use of terms such as 'service user', 'client' and 'customer' were often seen as words which re-enforced people's role as consumers of services, rather than active citizens who can contribute to and work alongside professionals in shaping support (Slay 2012: 4).

The political potential of co-production in the neoliberal context lies in the way it speaks of action rather than passivity, of engagement and autonomy for citizens and front line workers, whilst 'offering scope for services to be delivered more effectively and at a lower cost to the state' (Needham 2008: 229). Personalisation and co-production effect depoliticisation through disassembling political subjectivities and diffusing political agency, drawing 'attention to the central importance of the person' in personalisation (Duffy 2010: 255). The idea of the person as the 'focal point of personalisation' rests on a taken for granted, or 'common sense notion of an ideal

person', explored in previous chapters (Pykett 2009: 385). For Marion Barnes the concept of the person in personalisation is unclear, as is the extent to which this abstract individual 'reflects the lives and circumstances of social care service users' (Barnes 2011: 157). As is argued in chapter four, in the document **people** 'are addressed in gender neutral terms' with 'no explicit recognition of the gendered nature of caring responsibilities, nor any discussion of the way in which gender, class and culture impact on and give meaning to the experience of both care giving and receiving' (Barnes 2011: 157). Barnes concludes that the 'image of the independent choice maker ... embodies masculinised "virtues" in contrast with the feminised, dependent welfare subject' (Barnes 2011: 157). These subjects are unlike the liberal universal subject where 'the self-actualising individual was a male income earner with a wife who provided unwaged care to a family' (Braedley and Luxton 2010: 12). With a lack of clarity as to the identity of neoliberal persons or where they are located, women's work is 'counted on but not counted'³⁸.

Though the term person in **personalisation** suggests that both men and women might be involved in care work, the gendered/de-gendered androgyny of the concept masks the expectation and reality that women do the majority of care work (Bezanson and Luxton 2006). Feminists have argued convincingly that care work constitutes a care economy which should be politically recognised on a par with the production economy (Sevenhuijsen 2002). However this equivalence might be problematic in neoliberal settings. Adkins argues that 'the structural equivalence currently being forced between

³⁸ <http://www.neweconomics.org/blog/2012/04/04/counted-on-but-not-counted-women%E2%80%99s-roles-in-the-new-austerity-and-the-big-society>

socially reproductive work and productive activities is an erroneous methodological move' (Adkins 2009: 324). She finds that subtle structural movements associated with social change might provide more critical purchase on the dynamic between production and reproduction (Adkins 2008, 2009). In her analysis Adkins points to sociological arguments that the individualised person, inhabiting late modernity, choosing in a context of insecurity and risk, is 'freed from the constraints of the social' (Adkins 2008: 147). This capacity, she suggests, is conversant with the masculine subject which is distinguished from the feminine. The masculine subject inhabits late modernity while the feminine subject continues to inhabit modernity with its contradictions and tensions, and connections to, rather than freedom from the immanence of social life. For Adkins the masculine subject in late modernity transcends and privileges freedom whilst relying on a nostalgic association with the feminine subject who is located in an over-determined way in the social sphere (Adkins 2008: 147-148). The paradox here, as Adkins points out, is that 'in the UK, *regardless* of domestic commitments the majority of women are now in waged work', and that 'good mothering is now defined less by the continual occupation of the home and the selfless performance of care but by employment' (Adkins 2009: 330). In effect women carry the baggage of modernity that puts them at a disadvantage in the culture of reflexivity, risk and uncertainty. Locating women in modernity, Adkins argues, associates women with the attributes of 'industrial society', for example, 'social-determination...collective categories of belonging and the traditions of class and gender' (Adkins 2008: 153). These are precisely those attributes valued in a communitarian reading of the social that shapes a neoliberal social agenda (Franklin and Thomson 2005).

Adkins puts forward an understanding of a gendered disjuncture in the theory and history of social and economic change, where women are systemically excluded from new social and economic forms as they emerge, and are entrenched in traditional ones. She suggests that rather than being excluded in the public sphere, women have an absent presence a 'disentanglement of gender from the person' (Adkins 2005b: 120). She adds a social theoretical layer to the feminist economists discussed here, for whom, 'an analytical framework based on social reproduction makes possible a range of questions and reveals an array of theoretical assumptions that lead to new ways of understanding women's situation and its relationship to the economy' (Bezanson and Luxton 2006: 7). Both strands of analysis, the social theoretical and economic, point to the significance of structure or situation, whether social, cultural or economic, in understanding the subject or person in neoliberal discourse. They both draw attention to the social through an economic lens and draw out the contradictions at play as women work in the public and private sphere. Both allow for tensions between 'reflexive man and social woman' embodied in the person of personalisation (Adkins 2008, 2009).

Untapped potential

Personalisation can also be achieved by harnessing the untapped potential of communities' (DH 2010: 17).

This quote speaks of the role of Adkins' social woman in producing welfare in a dynamic between individualised market choices and the skills and capacities located in

nostalgic communities. Welfare is thus co-produced in everyday spaces in and between the future and the past, between markets, public and private spheres. In policy language individual budgets are a kind of springboard to activity, supposedly to enable agency to flourish and to offer financial resources for people to use in the identification and satisfaction of their own needs. The market for social care is stimulated or launched with government backing, and is meant eventually to become detached from state support. Co-production as a mechanism for bringing individual choice and collaborative action together has a range of functions or 'advantages' over traditional service provision (Needham 2008: 222). First the value of co-production is seen to lie partly in the interaction between front line workers and service users, which foregrounds personal relationships as key to the efficient production of welfare. Second co-production has the capacity to 'transform citizen attitudes in ways that transform service quality' (Needham 2008: 223). This capacity emphasises 'user agency and empowerment rather than dependence', marking a positive distinction from a more negative 'traditional client model' and 'creates more involved, responsible users' (Needham 2008: 223). Third, Needham points out, this also emphasises 'user input into the productive process' rather than the extent to which social needs are satisfied. Thus co-production makes sense for a government inclined to detach itself from involvement in welfare services, since it has the capacity to 'build trust and communication between participants' that will produce activity and independence (Needham 2008: 223) and to nurture and support the entrepreneurial and innovative reflexive subject.

One of the characteristics of everyday life, as Felski argues, is that it is 'usually distinguished by an absence of boundaries', and is more an idea that refers loosely to ordinary life, than to actual people, spaces or places (Felski 1999-2000: 22). Similarly co-production is not located in any particular social or economic space and has no boundaries, though it produces and has access to **the untapped potential of communities** potentially located in abstract persons and spaces, rather than subject positions in the material conditions of life. The resources on which personalisation relies overtly are the resources of individual agency, while necessary material conditions and resources are taken for granted. So the idea of personalisation relies on agency and the abstract availability of **untapped** social and material resources, including presumably gendered time and unpaid labour (Burchardt 2008). The combination and compatibility of agency resources and material resources is assumed, as agency is celebrated and material resources are taken for granted, included but excluded in the language of personalisation and co-production.

In contrast to this compatibility, Pierre Bourdieu argues that material and non material resources in the form of capitals: economic, social, cultural and symbolic, work to maintain and sustain social hierarchies and unequal distributions of power (Bourdieu 1986). He draws attention to the ways that these inequalities are entrenched and unchallenged, taken for granted and enmeshed in everyday practices,

..the coincidence of the objective structures and the internalised structures which provides the illusion of immediate understanding, are characteristic of practical experience of the familiar universe, and which at the same time

excludes from that experience any inquiry as to its own conditions of possibility
(Bourdieu 1990: 26).

Luxton argues similarly that there is a 'perverse individualism' at the heart of the neoliberal discourse, whose strength 'lies in its articulation and production of a commonsense hegemonic ideology based on the fundamental liberal concept of self actualizing individuals whose relative successes in the competitive labour and consumer markets depends on the rational choice they make and their own skilled and diligent work' (Luxton 2010: 180). In everyday life, she suggests, people tend to accept that they are individually responsible for their own circumstances, and that this is a solid reality rather than an ideology constructed in the interests of a neoliberal economy. Luxton contends that people find it hard to imagine that things might be different 'rendering them politically inactive'. She asserts that the 'extent to which people accept personal responsibility reveals the depth to which neoliberal ideologies have penetrated personal life and shows the centrality of such ideologies for the success of neoliberalism' (Luxton 2010: 180). This sense of individual responsibility is enhanced by a shared 'responsibility to care for others and a vision of a world in which people provide care for each other' (Luxton 2010: 180). In contrast Smith and Rochovská find that those 'in the most marginal households' find ways of making their lives, shaped by neoliberal policies, 'more tolerable through everyday practices and livelihoods' (Smith and Rochovská: 1163). Those at the hard edge of everyday life have least resources to rely on, and yet have to be the most imaginative in the struggle to meet their needs and live a life. In practice, Land and Himmelweit reflect, the 'policy, adopted in the early 1990s, of targeting home-care services at the most dependent

people, means that those receiving home care funded by local authorities are now far more likely to have complex needs and higher levels of dependency than in the past' (Land and Himmelweit 2011:13).

Inequalities shaped in everyday situations by access to material or social resources are not addressed in strategies of personalisation and co-production which emphasise individual capacities, assets or behaviours. In the co-production model these behaviours are located in the person as resilience or capacity where 'people are not merely repositories of need or recipients of services' but bring their experiences and resources, and more potential than state welfare systems allow, to shape and change their lives and the world around them (Stephens et al 2008). Again, going back to Needham's point, within the context of neoliberal economy and politics individual capacity is valued by co-production practitioners and makes local differences to people's lives (Needham 2011). Missing in this positive rationale for co-production are the discrete operations of power and resources on which it depends. It is precisely these gendered experiences and resources that mesh with market mechanisms as public provision of welfare diminishes.

The variety of people's needs is matched by diverse service provision, with a broad market of high quality service providers (DH 2010: 21).

The current alliance between neoliberal economics and communitarian social policy, Hartley Dean argues, promotes a 'thin discourse of need', where people are responsible for meeting their own needs regardless of the social context of their lives or the

resources available to them. As Dean points out '[W]hat is currently happening is, on the one hand, a "hollowing out" of the sphere of the public and of the state as in the developed economies of the world provision for human need is shifted increasingly from public to private and/or personal spaces' (Dean 2010: 92). In this process needs come to be seen as negative, to denote passivity and dependency. Instead personalisation is legitimised through a turn to capacity or assets, to what individuals can do and their capacity for resilience and independence, as opposed to their dependency on others. In personalisation practices 'tensions in the balance between needs and rights', between users and providers, users and carers are less significant (Lymbery 2010: 116). Individuals are now detached from public responsibility and, as Lymbery argues, for 'the strategy of personalisation to work it is presumed that' cared for and caring individuals 'will be able to act as both reasonable and responsible consumers' (Lymbery 2010: 116; Clarke et al 2007). Policies that seek to solve the problem of dependency, to enhance positive individual assets and build community capacity assumes a negative or deficit model of working class life. Craig argues that 'the continuing focus on small "deprived" areas labelled as communities can run the risk of diverting attention away from wider political forces which cause and maintain concentrations of poverty and unemployment in these areas' (Craig 2007: 337).

Personalisation and **co-production** mask power and inequality and privilege agency, in a rejection of needs and welfare state practices which are seen as negative, and in favour of positive capacity and assets which open up new markets in social care. Behind the screen of untapped positive agentic activity lurks the project of privatisation, arguments for which are precisely built on 'claims that individuals and their families

should take more responsibility for their own care, that government provision of services is inefficient and costly, that reliance on state services weakens individual initiative and undermines family and community ties, and that caregiving is best arranged through voluntary familial and community networks' (Luxton 2010: 163).

As Raewyn Connell argues, with the 'strategy of endless commodification of services, needs formerly met by public agencies on the principle of citizen rights, or through personal relationships in communities and families, are now to be met by companies selling services in a market' (Connell 2010: 22). Through the lens of privatisation, we can see

..the simultaneous commodification of some services that were previously provided by non profit and public organisations and the decommodification of others that must now be provided by families and individuals. The commodification/decommodification process spreads the burden of work unevenly and restricts access to services in unequal ways (Armstrong 2010: 197).

In the blurring between and within public/private, 'what is public in the sense of shared responsibility and services is not only increasingly narrowly defined but it is also increasingly penetrated by private for profit business and practices' (Armstrong 2010: 197). The success of this project, Luxton argues, depends on the extent to which people buy into the idea that 'individuals and their households must absorb more of the work necessary to ensure the livelihoods and well being of their members'. She continues, that as 'various levels of government have implemented specific neoliberal policies, people have typically had fewer supports and resources available to them, making

personal caregiving more difficult and fraught' (Luxton 2010: 163). Both 'by default *and* by design, families, particularly women within them' pick 'up the work not provided publicly and not affordable personally' (Bezanson and Luxton 2006: 5).

Situating homes and households

Policy mechanisms of **personalisation** and **co-production** proposed in the document articulate practices for individualised subjects that effect a neoliberal organisation or ordering of gendered caring relationships. They constitute a new positive care economy located in opposition to welfare state practices seen as negative. The new care economy exemplified in the document relies on women's unpaid labour, gendered practices and resources which align with, create and support new markets of care. Hovering around the idea of community and social responsibility, like co-production, the neoliberal care economy relies on **untapped resources**, presuming or taking advantage of real women and real places.

For this study home represents the situation or the context for subjectivity and agency, where the situation is the world, the shifting ground, in or with which we make something of what the world makes of us. Situation 'allows for the interplay of "subjective" factors, free will, and "objective" ones, the contours of forces which condition the individual's actions' (Stavro 2000: 146). Like the concept of the everyday, the situation deals specifically with 'lived experience' (Moi 1999). Home is the situation of relationships with others, real places to live, emotional and material resources (Moi 1999: 72). Home is referred to in the document's text and footnotes, as the setting where care might happen in informal ways, with the use of technology. Carers or those

who need to be dependent don't seem to be present. The people in these quotes appear to be mostly living on their own.

New technology opens up new horizons for care. From community alarms to sophisticated communication systems, telecare can help people stay in their own homes and live independently for longer..We know that re-ablement can help people to continue to live independently in their own homes without the need for an ongoing social care package... 'Supporting People' provides housing related support to help individuals to live independently in their own home and avoid more costly interventions. These preventative services improve outcomes for individuals and return savings to other areas, such as housing, health, social care and the criminal justice system (DH 2010: 13).

Better use of existing community-based services, for example, step-down re-ablement or home improvement and adaptations, can also reduce demand for nursing and residential care (DH 2010: 31).

These quotes represent just about the sum total of references to home as home. Here home is a two dimensional place to **live independently for longer, without the need for ongoing social care**, so as to **avoid more costly interventions and return savings to the criminal justice system**. This language suggests that home is seen as an individualised place, an option for caring for oneself and with a positive outcome for saving public money. The private or intimate qualities of home, who is at home, who

cares, what are homes like, are missing. Home becomes a place where people live on their own, **a simple way of helping people to help each other:**

Homeshare is a model which allows people to stay in their own homes for longer. It is a simple way of helping people to help each other. A Homeshare involves two people with different sets of needs, both of whom also have something to offer. Firstly, people who have a home that they are willing to share but are at a stage in their life where they need some help and support. Secondly, people who need accommodation and who are willing to give some help in exchange for somewhere to stay (DH 2010: 31).

Homeshare seems to rely on community reciprocity, on individuals **with different sets of needs**, who are happy to open their homes for others. Homes, with all their untapped resources, are alternatives to public institutions and public finance. Models like 'Hospital at Home'³⁹, and 'virtual wards'⁴⁰ are set up to ease transitions from hospital and institutional social care settings, to support safe discharge with

³⁹ **Hospital at Home aims to:** avoid admission to hospital - for example by providing a proactive approach, including social work support, to help prevent the need for hospital admission

<http://mylifemychoices.wigan.gov.uk/i-need-help-with/health,-recovery-and-wellbeing/recovery-from-illness/hospital-at-home.aspx> ; and

<http://www.kingsfund.org.uk/sites/files/kf/Avoiding-Hospital-Admissions-Sarah-Purdy-December2010.pdf>

⁴⁰ Denis Campbell (2013) "Virtual wards' urged as answer to strain on NHS: Report urges patients to opt for 'virtual ward', saying they can be back at home within hours after treatment", *The Guardian* 30 May 2013

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2013/may/30/virtual-wards-hospitals-nhs-patients>;

appropriate care delivered in the patient's home. It is reported that 'evidence suggests that patients who are cared for in the comfort of their own home can benefit from a speedier recovery'⁴¹. This transition is designed to foster greater autonomy, choice and control in people's lives. The implicit assumption underpinning this transition is that home is a comfortable and nurturing place where individuals wish to be cared for by responsible adults in the context of adequate material resources. Home is identified as an intrinsically valuable space of care, preferable to impersonal institutional settings.

Yet research shows that home is extrinsically undervalued and unrecognised as the site of unpaid, gendered time, care and domestic work (Bryson 2007; Burchardt 2008). With the combination of more women in paid employment being 'less available to provide care at home and in their communities' and the 'dwindling supply of publicly funded or subsidised care', the need for care expands, while the supply of care contracts 'creating a "care deficit" in both public and private life'(England 2010: 132). Where home is the setting of formal and informal care, it is neither a wholly public or private space. It is *both* a workplace for professional carers *and* a personal space where caring relationships are continually negotiated, a 'unique aspect of home care is that the workplace of the care provider is the home of the care recipient' (Martin-Matthews 2007: 233). This opens up questions of governance: who is responsible, who is accountable, who has power, who is in control? Research also shows that relationships of care are complex, and the complexities of personal relationships are associated with being at home (Backett-Milburn and Harden 2011). It is argued that 'within each family

⁴¹ <http://www.publicfinance.co.uk/news/2013/03/hospitals-should-be-reserved-for-critical-health-problems-say-nhs-bosses/>

there is a continuing and complex history of how care is negotiated between people of different generations' (Bornat and Bytheway 2011: 1). Some will welcome staying home for health and social care, or an early transfer from hospital to home. Others may find the prospect unsettling, difficult or problematic, since home represents different kinds of relationships and different levels of material resources.

Where home is the setting, the quality of care is also shaped by the availability of material resources. Some of these resources are brought in by professionals, for example, bath hoists, therapeutic beds and chairs, commodes, and increasingly medical technologies like monitors or intra-venous equipment. The setting itself is also crucial to good quality care. Home is a marker of social and economic inequality, giving rise to questions as to the adequacy or condition of housing, heating, and food, of basic human needs (Dean 2010). For those in relatively secure family settings, with adequate housing, financial resources and reciprocal relationships, home care may or may not be valued. For those living alone, in insecure or even abusive relationships, in inadequate housing, or with family members unable for whatever reason to provide informal care, it may be an added burden or even frightening and unsafe. In short, home as a place of security, comfort and nurturing care cannot be taken for granted as questions arise as to who is at home to care for sick or ageing relatives, and to the availability of time and material resources (Southerton 2003).

Home is also thought of as an early site of economics (Arendt 1958), and is a location in politics and economics, as the private side of the public/private divide. As I have explored in earlier chapters, Beauvoir makes the distinction between the immanence of

domestic life and the transcendence of public life. For her woman 'is locked into immanence by the situation *man* inflicts upon her – and she is not necessarily responsible (Kruks 1987: 114). The notion of immanence resonates with bodies, the material, necessity, emotion and feeling, affect, birth and renewal, reproduction and life lived in the moment. All of these are words are evoked in the context of care, caring and everyday life and are absent in the document. Immanence is of the real, the spontaneous here and now, whereas transcendence is abstract and removed, like the liberal individual, from the stickiness or messiness of life. With neoliberalism's social turn immanence features as active citizenship or creative imagination. The immanence of home or household is reconstituted in abstract terms as spontaneous and creative, rather than as drudgery and repetition.

In feminist economics attention is drawn to the neoliberal restructuring of the household, which 'has entailed the transformation and reconstitution of households and the relationships and labour within them' (LeBaron 2010: 903). This transformation, LeBaron argues, is 'characterized by the reprivatisation of social reproduction, the decline of the family wage model, the fluidity of public and private spheres and the increasing polarization of women' (LeBaron 2010: 903). She points to what Dean refers to as the 'hollowing out' of the public sphere, and the 'socially reproductive activities which formerly took place in public spaces such as hospitals, schools, elderly homes, day care centres' (Le Baron 2010: 903). These LeBaron argues 'have been relocated into the private household' where 'women have disproportionately assumed the labour and costs associated with them' (LeBaron 2010: 903). These compound and increase the work women do in households where they tend to take overall responsibility for house

and care work in families, at the same time commanding lower pay in the labour market and – often because of this, take part-time jobs when they have children, leaving more time for unpaid childcare and housework. There is a circular effect, reinforcing norms and expectations, perpetuating inequalities in income and time and shoring up the general assumption (if not the reality) that men are the main breadwinners for their families. In a world where market-based values predominate, this combination leaves women with less money and power than men, and little scope to do things differently. A situation then arises where those with the least resources carry most of the burden of change (Coote et al 2010). Feminist economists argue that the household is embedded in the social relations of capitalism and increasingly so, as they have adapted to neoliberal restructuring by assuming responsibility for social reproduction, often by going into debt'. Women tend to take responsibility for managing money and debt in lone- and two-parent households, where limited resources leads to 'tight money control, juggling, piecing together, highly focused shopping, going without or going into debt' (Lister 2006: 2)

LeBaron draws attention to household practices, in her suggestion that 'the gendered and unpaid labour in the household has allowed social relations of production to unfold in particular ways' (LeBaron 2010: 907). She argues that 'households in neoliberal states do not exist outside of capitalist social relations', nor are they 'fully subsumed by them. Rather there is a need to more clearly establish variations on households over time and how these shifts have been shaped by, and shape, the social relations of capitalism' (LeBaron 2010: 890). Adkins argues differently that as more women work and their activities are relocated to the public sphere, the logic of the

domestic division of labour and of the public/private dichotomy is undermined (Adkins 2009: 330). For women to work in the public sphere, social reproduction is divided into commodified tasks, cooking, cleaning, childcare, shopping and financial upkeep, often provided by other women of different class and ethnicity (Adkins 2009). As care moves from 'inside to outside' from home to market, divisions between women, rather than between women and men begin to shape the logic of social reproduction, and the private sphere is 'deprivatised' (Adkins 2009). Now, as Cooper suggests, 'the intangible presence of intimacy, sexuality and domestic relations ... saturate, circulate through, or simply emerge within public life' (Cooper 2009: 275). We see a 'reversal of earlier feminist work intent on unpicking the myth of a free, unregulated private, to trouble assumptions about the public, exploring the ambivalent presence within it of ostensibly private concerns' (Cooper 2009: 276). This is exemplified, Adkins points out, in the work of Linda McDowell (2008) who argues that 'the home is now increasingly a site for commodified interactions and how this is especially so for the case of middle class women for whom childcare is increasingly provided by socially unrelated others – often divided by class and ethnicity – in individual homes or in state or market provided facilities' (Adkins 2009: 330). Adkins argues that this 'suggests that the work of social reproduction may be increasingly less subject to a logic of male–female exchange and is increasingly subject to a logic of commodification, a logic which in turn is linked to new social divisions between women' (Adkins 2009: 330). To open the door to the logics of subjective positions and complex encounters within and between households, Hemmings writes:

Let us take the example often given in standpoint of the dual consciousness of a woman who earns a living by cleaning the house of others. Her standpoint is different from that of the man, woman and children whose house she cleans...because she – unlike them – knows both her own house and theirs, her own secrets and theirs, her own children and theirs, and likely her own language(s) and theirs. She knows more than they do, and she also knows that what she knows is not valued: it does not lead to authority. The woman, the man and the children whose house is being cleaned may also know different things and differently from each other.the woman of the house knows different things and differently because of her relation to caring and reproductive labour, and the children might know the relationship between violence and authority most intimately of all. In other words, this house is filled with subjects who know different things, know more than one another, and where authority is likely to be in inverse proportion to what the material conditions of existence have required its occupants to know (Hemmings 2012: 156-157).

In this depiction Hemmings illustrates circulations of knowledge within household relationships which, she argues, can be taken for granted, ignored, or recognised from different subjective positions (Hemmings 2012: 157). She writes, 'this house is filled with subjects who know different things' bringing it to life and showing how public and private inequalities permeate household walls, and how knowledge and subjectivity interact. In practice, Rosemary Hennessey argues, the affective relations generated in everyday life, are 'embedded in the extraction of surplus labour', intimately connected

to 'capital's monstrous outside' (Hennessey 2009). Affective relations, she continues, 'permeate the unmet needs that capitalism requires and thrives upon in the squeeze on social bonds exerted by over-work and in the narrow cultural categories that explain, justify, and mediate who we are' (Hennessey 2009). Affective relations are not just 'filtered through inherited cultural meanings, but..... permeate the standpoint from which an alternative way of knowing and surviving can be built' (Hennessey 2009).

Conclusion

In this chapter I have analysed the presence and absence of home and gender in neoliberal policy language as it relates to the situation and to the economic register. The economic is present in the discourse in the remaking of the social through an economic lens, though it is largely absent in the words used to constitute a new economy of care. So to locate the economic I have identified the key word **everyday** to represent the ordinary day to day world that neoliberalism colonises to constitute a new care economy utilising the **untapped potential of communities**. This resource potential ostensibly refers in the document to the **compassion** and **imagination** of caring people, to **a skilled and responsive workforce** and to **the vulnerable members of our society who may lack capacity** to define and participate in their own care – a virtuous circle of reciprocity. Mechanisms to produce this economy of care include **personalisation and co-production** chosen as key words in the document to refer to processes through which untapped community potential is harnessed and delivered. Examples are given in document of where these work well for people, eg:

Charlie is a young man living in the countryside with a diagnosis of Paranoid Schizophrenia. After treatment for his mental health needs in hospital he returned to stay with his family but spent most of his time indoors. He felt unable to live in his own house, and had regular contact with mental health services. A Personal Budget enabled him to live at home with the support of personal assistants he and his family employed. Now he helps out on a local farm, his mental health has improved and he is living more independently (DH 2010: 17).

On first glance the idea that people should have more say in their care and that vulnerable individuals prefer to be looked after in familiar places and by people they know, seems to be common sense. Also as Needham points out, critics should recognise that where personalisation works it can work well for people who previously felt done to rather than doing (Needham 2011). However these mechanisms can only work if there is access to the untapped gendered resources freely given in private and intimate spaces of care. Although the quote mentions home, we have no sense of what his home is like, why, for example, did he feel unable to live in his own house? How did he feel about home and about his family and personal assistants? Home and gender are missing in this quote, silently constituted in the logics of the new care economy, where questions as to who does the unpaid labour and what kinds of material resources are available are missing. People and communities are unpopulated and abstract categories, creating ambivalence as to who cares or where care work happens. Arguments for personalisation and co-production float in and between persons, communities and markets without resting anywhere in particular, so that the situation is

undefined and unrecognised. If homes or households are to be relied on to deliver the resources and the space for social care, they are either absent in the text or seem abstract and unfamiliar. The document concludes:

Our ambition is to foster the conditions in which communities, social enterprises and others can develop a diverse range of preventative and other support that will help to reduce isolation, improve health and well-being and, by doing so, better manage the demand for formal health and care. The Spending Review prioritised resources for social care and partnership working with the NHS, including a transfer from the NHS rising to £1bn by 2014/15. This demonstrates the importance that the Government attaches to social care services. It is now up to councils, working with their local communities and those who already provide care as a carer, family member or neighbour, to make a reality of this vision (DH 2010: 39).

The Government attaches importance to social care but it is now up to local councils and individuals to make it happen. The document delivers an image or vision of how this will work. It describes a new economy of care by evoking presumptions about the potential of home and community as a backup for local provision and to carry on as 'carer, family member or neighbour'. The document celebrates the immanence of personal and intimate relations but does so in a way that distances and abstracts home as subjectivity, agency and situation. In this way neoliberal discourse makes the immanence of the situation that Beauvoir speaks of, removed or transcendent,

mirroring other forms of disconnectedness described in earlier chapters, including subjectivity disconnected from the person, and agency disconnected from the political. The state is relying on but withdrawing from immanence of personal life by reconstituting it as an abstract, transcendent space in ways that seem familiar but are actually strangely stripped of reality. Homes or households unmentioned are not simple, or even complex, accumulations of persons, activities and resources, but can be relatively unstable, reflect social and economic inequalities, can be contingent day to day, and made up of one or many adults of different ages and/or children, they can be potentially transient or volatile sets of gendered relations and resources, not necessarily suitable enough as an alternative to the welfare state.

Chapter seven

CONCLUSIONS

Home is an intriguing concept to work with since it weaves through all aspects of life and expresses the wealth of human experience. Home is also hovering at the edge of neoliberal discourse as an alternative resource for social care, little mentioned overtly in policy terms, but deeply taken for granted. My argument in this study is that home, present as an abstract unnuanced category in neoliberal discourse, conveys a new gender ontology as a means to express and to solve the woman question in contemporary politics. Working in neoliberalism's favour, in the interests of capitalist economics, is the fascination and pervasive interest in home in contemporary culture and politics. Along with home becoming a preferred work place and a hub for work/life balance, this means that a new cultural common sense chimes with how people feel or are encouraged to feel about home. This is the social and cultural background to this thesis, richly explored in other contexts (eg Blunt and Dowling 2006), as are differential experiences of home in relation to social care (Bowlby et al 2010; England 2010). My concern in this study is with the obscurity of gender and the woman question in neoliberalism's attachment to home, and the implications of this for women and feminism. What I have found is that the ambiguity of home as it is present and absent in neoliberal discourse, mirrors an ambiguity about home in feminist theory and politics.

As I have commented in previous chapters there is some uncertainty in the literature as to the extent to which neoliberalism is deliberately constructed by political actors in

play with common sense, or has some intrinsic motivation as a discourse (Gamble 2009; Connell 2010; Newman 2013). At times in this thesis I have written about neoliberal discourse as though it has agency, since it seems to present as a co-ordinated project especially around gender. Connell writes that as a project it is 'undertaken by multiple social actors, not just one', and that it 'has multiple sources of energy. The drive for wealth and power of new echelons in business is the most obvious' (Connell 2010: 33). She also writes that with 'few exceptions, neoliberal leadership is composed of men', and that 'from the 1980s on offered middle class men an indirect but effective solution to the delegitimation of patriarchy and the threat of real gender equality' (Connell 2010: 33-34).

Neoliberal rationality certainly displays an ambivalent pre-occupation with gender, the measure of which is how gender is erased from its vocabulary but also incorporated in to its neutralised language (Jenson 2008; Simon-Kumar 2011). In this thesis feminist scholarship has provided the insights and tools of analysis to articulate the linguistic strategies through which this silencing of gender occurs (Bell 1999; Simon-Kumar 2011). The genealogical method has offered a rationale for isolating and questioning home in neoliberal discourse as a 'small aspect of [the] present' to open up a space to 'interrogate boundaries that make up the order of things in this present' (Bell 1999: 146). Through opening up this small aspect of home new binaries have been identified which turn around subjectivity, agency and situation to configure the gender order in ambivalent ways. Genealogy is also a political method, or strategy through which the core problem of dependency can be politicised so as to clarify just how it constitutes the problem of women in neoliberal discourse and how, tautologically, home is set up

as a means to solve this very problem (Jenkins 2011). In this final chapter I draw on my analysis of neoliberal discourse and policy language to isolate these strategies and the gender ontology or binary order that configures the woman question, so as to challenge the neoliberal story. The second half of the chapter steps aside from this close engagement with neoliberal discourse to think about home and the woman question in themselves, and to trouble a sense of home that situates women and gender in particular ways. Again, following Jenkins who argues that 'genealogical critique as a useful strategy for politicisation' (Jenkins 2011: 157) this is an attempt to challenge the (de)politicisation and economisation of subjectivity, agency and situation. The aim is to 'expose the problem of the question' of women (Franklin and Thomson 2005: 168) to explore the potential of home as a critical space for women and feminist politics.

Home and the woman question in neoliberal discourse

Throughout this study I have analysed neoliberal discourse and its social turn to unravel the logic of its rationality and to consider how power and knowledge are worked strategically to reconfigure or produce subjects and social life in its own terms (Brown 2003). Neoliberalism is not fixed or constant but changes through a series of interwoven, strategic operations which alter and shift continuously. These are sporadic alterations which circulate through epistemological, ontological and political axes. As knowledge and power, epistemology and politics circulate through the repetition and enactment of neoliberal language. Through this circulation, ideas and practices that may be critical or useful like feminism or community politics are picked up, are altered

by and alter neoliberal logic. In the process complex argument or critique is simplified in a language that re-signifies or subtly alters meaning. This 'language politics' (Hall 2012) is a struggle over knowledge where the power and critical agency of social movements can be deflated and absorbed by the strategic operation of the dominant political rationality or discourse (Brown 2003; 2005). Feminist theorists have noted how neoliberal discourse tunes into circulating feminist knowledge and retunes to the economic (Fraser 2009; Simon-Kumar 2011; Pykett 2012). With this a sense of uncertainty or ambiguity is created as, for example, when New Labour policy making addressed feminist issues of work/life balance without altering the political or economic basis of gender inequalities (Wilkinson 1998; Coote 2000; Lister 2001). The flexibility of family friendly policies, including changes to parental leave and an increase in child care provision, brought more women, as flexible workers, into the labour market (Lister 2001; Land and Himmelweit 2010). This left some confusion over the extent to which social and economic policies are compatible and whose interests are better served (Franks 1999; Hutton 2003). A policy framework which attempts to balance interests that are not fundamentally balanced will tip towards the more powerful or vociferous. In this context home opens up a chink in neoliberal logic through which the order and balance of interests can be scrutinised.

Ontology and politics

New Labour sought to move beyond oppositional politics of right and left and to create balance between social and economic interests. With this conscious alteration of political boundaries the oppositional binary distinctions that had previously shaped

knowledge, power and the distribution of resources were also skirted over, and slipped out of political language. These distinctions had not actually been resolved and continued to produce social and economic inequalities which could not be articulated or recognised in the new political discourse.

The legitimacy for moving beyond oppositional politics came from late modern sociology and communitarian theories and the effects of this theoretical amalgamation can be identified in the ontological remaking of the social as community in the third way. Hierarchies of power, inequality and potential conflict are substituted in this social turn for horizontal community networks of circulating reciprocity, responsibility and consensus. Thus, not only is the social ordered to provide a cooperative and flexible environment for capitalism but also a decidedly different dynamic between the social and economic is produced. Rather than a balance between social and economic interests, the social is remade to reflect and produce favourable conditions for capitalist economics. A new economic/social dynamic is constituted in a discursive shift from the idea that the economic shapes the social in terms of resource distribution and inequalities, to the idea that the social shapes itself and its role is to create optimum conditions for the economic.

In neoliberal discourse the binary economic/social is gendered in new and contradictory ways. Gender flows ostensibly through both categories in that men and women can be economic and social actors. However in the operational terms of neoliberal discourse the economy is transcendent and the social immanent, in other words the social reproduces what the economy needs to thrive. Again this creates ambiguity and confusion. In its communitarian sensibility, neoliberalism expresses a

yearning for the pre-modern and so is rooted in paternalism. At same time it is late modern in recognising its own contingency and vulnerability, so is innovative and adaptive to changing theories of gender and sexuality. This contradictory sensibility can be seen as strategic in terms of discourse, conceptually stripping the social of political structure and agency to tune society to the economic (Portes 1998; Brown 2003; Gamble 2009).

Subjectivity

A new ontology of gender in neoliberal discourse is constituted through altered binary oppositions which work strategically to diffuse political agency and foreground economic value. This reflects the altering of the relationship between the economic and the social described above. Familiar or old⁴² binaries of man/woman, mind/body are clearly gendered and denote a hierarchical relationship of power. Neoliberal binaries tend to diffuse power or to present it in non-hierarchical ways, suggesting either oppositional human attributes like independent/dependent, or constituting a flattened social order or economic organisation, like individual/community.

Two ideal type and gendered subjectivities are present in the document **A vision for adult social care: capable communities and active citizens** (DH 2010), constituted through neoliberal sensibility or logic: the late modern reflexive individual who makes radical choices about who to be and how to live, and the responsible individual,

⁴² Old/new is a neoliberal binary, where the old is done with, not modern as in Old Labour, and the new is innovative and exciting. Using these terms to shape critical analysis is problematic but illustrates how taken for granted opposites are pulled into the discourse and are re-signified.

embedded in reciprocal community relationships. The former suggests the transcendent economic subject and the latter the immanent social, though either could be male, female or any mix of social identities. Adkins argues for example, that gender flows contingently through these late modern or reflexive subjects (Adkins 2002) and so is present but obscured. New binaries in neoliberal discourse avoid recognition of structural inequalities and instead describe the relationship between oppositional human attributes or spatial positions. Binaries that denote human attributes include positive/negative; independent/dependent; active/passive; deserving/undeserving; or capable/incapable.

In contrast to the ideal transcendent and immanent subjects, the dependent subject is to be monitored and rehabilitated. In chapter four the problem of dependency was explored as a core ordering idea in neoliberal discourse. As Fraser and Gordon point out, dependency is a familiar term in welfare ideology, used historically to describe and/or blame those who are marginalised or vulnerable due to their position in society and limited access to political and economic resources (Fraser and Gordon 1994). In the document analysed for this study, dependent people are less deserving than vulnerable people who, through no fault of their own, may need help and support. Until recently welfare discourses related the condition of dependency to specific subject positions like 'pauper or women' (Fraser and Gordon 1994: 317). With neoliberal discourse the binary of independent/dependent still orders gender and class but is ambiguous as to whether each is inhabited by women or men, middle or working class, and so distances subjectivity from behaviour or action. We can see that the binary independent/dependent is ordered along two axes of difference, reflecting the

combination of communitarian and late modern sociological subjectivities. The first is an axis of economic and/or moral value where the independent, entrepreneurial or responsible subject is the preferred, useful or valued subject; and the dependent subject is morally lacking and a drain on public resources. The second axis is social difference, and is complex. Partially this axis crosses either side of the binary which can be male or female, or any other combination of social inequality. This criss-crossing masks the wider gendered ordering of social categories, where independence is masculine and dependence is feminine (Fraser and Gordon 1994). The potential in new binary oppositions is that they integrate and diffuse subject positions that have populated social conflict and oppositional politics in the past, whilst optimising their economic value.

Conflicts once held in binary oppositions are dealt with in neoliberal discourse by erasing the language that describes them. Feminism has also questioned rigid identity binaries but to erase them without addressing their complexity, or the situation in which they arise, is problematic. Binary changes affect clarity of thinking about relations of power and knowledge. In the neoliberal politics of boundary redefinition, the conceptual or linguistic structure of conflict and emancipation is replaced with new binaries that validate certain kinds of individual character and behaviour and negatively judge their opposites. On the face of it neoliberal subjects are constituted and judged according to good or bad human characteristics, masking the continuation of binary oppositions where gender and other inequalities still circulate.

Agency

The strategic patterns explored here expose how subjectivity is ordered in neoliberalism's politics of language, and begins to suggest how this gendered ordering constitutes the woman question in contemporary politics. As Young suggests, the task of feminist theory is to bring into language women's struggle to be at home in the world (Young 1997). The opposite occurs in neoliberal discourse where gender is taken out of political language, whereby the loss of recognition in language which describes subjectivity-in-situation conceptually, if not actually, distances or alienates individuals from the world. Similarly, as explored in chapter five, the loss of political citizenship as individuals are re-described as economic and social subjects, disorients individuals from the public world of recognition. Individuals are categorically estranged from each other as citizens and so from politics, since the awareness and connections that collectivise political agency are diffused or wiped out.

Chapter five illustrates how neoliberal policy discourse advocates a disassociation of citizen and state as a means to empower and free individuals to make choices and to act autonomously in their own interests. This positive presentation of agency is politically negative and enacts a depoliticisation of public life (Jenkins 2011). Agency, freed from state interference, works in favour of free market interests and aligns with the de-linking of inequalities from social and economic structures. With this detachment of agency from the state neoliberalism is a politics legitimised through a negation of the political. While its legitimacy rests on the idea of freedom and agency, neoliberal citizenship is not guaranteed - certainly in the document - by political or institutional conventions that specify spaces for freedom and agency but specifically on

activity without political agency in the context of markets and community life. With agency and citizenship cut loose from political institutions, political activists work to shape spaces of power in and between markets and community, to subvert binary positions that negate the political (Newman 2013).

Like agency, freedom is cut loose from the political in neoliberal discourse. Without a conceptual or political connection to civil and political rights freedom arises, inheres and is legitimised through the activities of individuals, and is exercised through choice and imagination. Unlike classical liberal theory where freedom is secured through constitutional rights embedded in political institutions, freedom in neoliberal discourse loses attachment to the political and finds its place in the market. The state releases its hold on citizenship to transfer and confer power to individuals so that they can liberate themselves from dependency on state welfare and to realise their freedom through market choice. This uncouples freedom from politics and the public sphere and locates its possibility in individual subjects, in the choices they make and what they do. In the document we find that individuals are encouraged to orientate themselves towards working and consuming in the market, but also to draw on their skills and creativity in becoming socially independent, whilst caring for the vulnerable who cannot care for themselves. Clarke sees through this and argues that this detachment produces abandonment rather than freedom. Abandonment he argues, 'best describes the process of changing the relationships between economy, society and the state to the greater advantage of capital in its global and local forms' (Clarke 2005: 453).

Situation

Neoliberal citizens, defined as potentially free though in practice abandoned (Clarke 2005) are positioned in a social order and economic organisation that is constituted through spatial binaries. These include presence/absence; inside/outside as conceptual binaries, and individual/community; work/home, which are ontological or physical. These spatial binaries subvert the public/private binary which, if nothing else, more or less maintains a distinction between political and intimate spaces. With neoliberal spatial binaries the political organisation of society which shaped liberal democracy is dismantled in favour of horizontal market mechanisms. The strategy that produces and flows through these binaries obscures distinctions between citizenship and economic/private life and claims social spaces for economic value. In this way the structural organisation of power and resources is obscured and overlaid by an economic/social organisation. The binary organisation of economy/society is profoundly gendered where the transcendent economic infuses the immanent social to bring its 'monstrous outside' into the comfort of home spaces (Hennessey 2009: 310).

The presence of the economic in social spaces organises a new economy of care through policy mechanisms which include personalisation and co-production, the means through which the **untapped potential of communities** is harnessed to meet the deserving needs of vulnerable people. This potential is to be **unlocked** as a resource stream for the new care economy and arises as the free floating agency and freedom discussed above, tangentially located in responsible and caring individuals. The new care economy, dropped into the site of home, reproduction and unpaid women's labour, is achieved, as Bakker argues, through 'reconfigurations of power and

production' and a re-ordering of the public-private, production-reproduction dichotomy (Bakker 2007; LeBaron 2010). This re-ordering in the Coalition document alters and diffuses the partnership between state, market and civil society set up by New Labour which at least had a logic of distribution. In this altered relationship, public/private no longer reflects an ideologically fixed 'separation of state and domestic sphere' but is 'constituted relationally' through state policies and discourses (Simon-Kumar 2011: 449). With this discursive re-ordering of the public/private, distinctions between production and reproduction continue 'to be a critical axis to appraise normative constructions of gender roles, activities, and representations that impact on the relative social positioning of women' (Simon-Kumar 2011: 449). Yet due to the ambiguity of subject and spatial binaries, as Simon-Kumar suggests, women are analytically disembodied and conceptually separated from home and social reproduction, while at the same time they are located in caring social spaces (Simon-Kumar 2011: 459). Thus neoliberal discourse locates the problem and the solution to women and/or dependency in personal and intimate spaces, at home.

Home is constituted in neoliberal discourse through the binary re-ordering of subjectivity and 'landscapes for social and gender relations in the home, economy and polity' (Simon-Kumar 2011: 458). Home is where older and vulnerable people are cared for by anonymous others. Home is the negative inside where dependent people have needs and should have resilience, and where the community outside is a positive force for action. Home is present through a neutralising language that re-inscribes subjects and situations, constituting a common sense that destabilises and confuses critique.

Home is intimate economics where (de)gendered skills have the capacity to connect home with choice and markets, so as to release potential for independence and freedom. Home is made into a utilitarian, economic category and is depoliticised. Home is where welfare services are distanced from political accountability and populated by economic actors; it is where intimacy, care and imagination are of economic value and subjects are more or less useful. Power circulates through home in neoliberal discourse through reframing social and individual ontologies, celebrating freedom and agency while at the same time defining and limiting them. The document states that individuals will have more power and agency, though on the contrary neoliberal subjects are distanced and separated from political mechanisms, institutions and spaces that create the conditions for citizenship. In this way neoliberal subjects are alienated from themselves, since identity and citizenship is denied; from others, since the space of public recognition is denied; and from the world, since the political is denied.

Neoliberal discourse constitutes activity and agency to be useful to governments, limiting the repertoire of struggle and resistance, abandoning citizens. The political effect of the disorientation of subjectivity and economisation of society is that individuals can become absorbed in the moment, in coping with things as they are rather than resisting them⁴³. In their research into how people cope with the Coalition Government's austerity cuts for example, the New Economics Foundation found that:

⁴³ In 'Surviving Austerity' (2013) Julia Slay and Joe Penny of New Economics Foundation argue that the 'burden of reducing Britain's deficit is falling predominantly on those who get vital support from public services and welfare: the unemployed, low-income earners, the very elderly, the young, and the disabled... we interviewed a diverse range of local people: they all shared experiences of everyday insecurity, an

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For many years, social security has shielded people on the lowest incomes from making ...choices... between eating or heating their homes, between childcare and paid employment. All this leaves many people more insular, and less able to connect with others or take local action. As one interviewee remarked:

People are thinking more about themselves because they don't know what's gonna happen in a few weeks. People are angry, they have debts. You feel as though all doors are closing in your face. Even if you're gonna ask someone for help, they need help too. So who are you going to ask for support and guidance? (Wood Green Resident, Haringey).

Economic conditions are depriving many people of the resources they would need to get involved in local civic action. This substantially weakens the Government's vision of a Big Society (Slay and Penny 2013: 29).

Coping strategies, Brown argues, work to perpetuate and sustain the alliance of strategic power and everyday common sense. With austerity cuts, individuals might experience a disorientation exaggerated by the dismantling of familiar ways of life. This disorientation prompts individuals to search for security and certainty and to identify with others who offer a sense of place, community and belonging (Brown 1995: 34).

Brown suggests that in this way neoliberalism produces everyday allies, since there is no language other than community and belonging for individuals to describe themselves, their lives or their situation (Brown 1995: 36). Similarly, neoliberalism

unravelling safety net, precarious employment, and growing demands for unpaid labour'.
<http://www.neweconomics.org/publications/entry/surviving-austerity>

dismantles the linguistic and material ground of feminist politics, so that it is the task of feminism to find a language and a space from which to speak (Hemmings and Treacher 2006).

This feminist interrogation of home in neoliberal discourse, as the story about women and the woman question in contemporary politics, offers an interpretation of one 'small aspect of [the] present' (Foucault 1988: 36 quoted in Bell 1999: 146). The aim has not been to tell the whole story, nor has it been to come up with answers or solutions. Rather the purpose has been to follow and fracture the lines of the gendered logic of neoliberal discourse to lay bare the code of power that re-orders, maintains and positions all women in society as other. I have argued that the powerful quality of home in contemporary culture coincides with and is articulated by neoliberalism's social turn. This articulation of home circulates through a new configuration of ontology and politics, potentially erasing and incorporating contemporary expressions of the woman question.

Challenging the neoliberal story

Feminism offers a critical resource for dismantling the neoliberal version of the woman question. Feminist theorists expose how neoliberal discourse articulates knowledge of subjectivity, agency and situation around dependence, which characterises the problem of woman; and activity and freedom, which characterise the solution (Fraser and Gordon 1994; Fine and Glendenning 2005; Chantler 2006; McNay 2008; Adkins 2009).

Dependency is the core problem of welfare in neoliberal discourse, seen as a sign of degeneracy and weakness, while independence is the desired attribute. Not only does independence free individuals from dependency in the neoliberal view, but it projects them into the community and market as active and free. Translated into an overtly gendered or inequality language, this last sentence might read as 'not only does independence free men from women, mind from body, capital from labour, production from reproduction, but it projects them into public spaces as free and unencumbered individuals'. Within this language is an imperative to distance freedom from necessity, and perhaps to deny the fragile or vulnerable aspects of the human condition. With dependency as a negative state in neoliberal discourse, a fundamental basis of human interaction is not only discredited, but an anger and an othering occurs. This is not new, as Fraser and Gordon point out (Fraser and Gordon 1994), but is re-energised as a powerful legitimisation of austerity politics as I write, to distinguish between deserving and undeserving individuals (Lister and Bennett 2010). The irony is that not only do neoliberal states create conditions for dependency including a care-deficit (Sevenhuijsen 2000, 2002, 2003) they also set themselves up to be categorically separated from, but entirely dependent on, the social.

Such a different story is told in feminist research and literature where dependency is not a separated condition but is an integrated human and relational quality (Kittay 2001). Feminists question the independent/dependent binary by introducing an alternative and richer story. Khatidja Chantler writes for example that

..independence and dependence are seen as polar opposites rather than allowing for the possibility that one might be both dependent and independent,

strong and vulnerable. It also excludes the notion of inter-dependency based on mutual reliance and a strong sense of give and take (Chantler 2006: 29).

From this perspective dependency is a shared condition. Human beings need to be fully dependent before they can learn through experience how inter-dependence works and how a measure of independence or separation grows from dependent attachments to others. There is a passivity to dependency, and an ethic of care, that is valued in feminist theory and practice (Tronto 1993; Sevenhuijsen 1998; McNay 2000; Fine and Glendenning 2005; Barnes 2013).

In neoliberal discourse action is defined in terms of asserted energy or potential through which communities work to deal with dependency. In the binary of active/passive, dependency is passive and is definitely the bad side. In a moving critique and turnaround of this logic, Jacobson argues that passivity is the necessary condition for citizenship. Rather than action or doing, passivity or being is a precondition of politics and political agency. In being passive we are more open to difference, more aware of each other and of the world. Jacobson argues that human beings can only become citizens or public beings in a shared space, 'by emerging from our familiar personal territories – our homes' (Jacobson 2010: 219). We can learn this, Jacobson writes, through experiences that arise only 'through our way of being-at-home-in-the-world' (Jacobson 2010: 221). We become attuned to 'passive elements of our experience.. that slip into the background to become the stability on which we depend without the need to pay heed to it' (Jacobson 2009: 371). Passivity for Jacobson

is a condition of freedom, since being at home enables us 'to have an openness to what is outside us' (Jacobson 2009: 372).

Feminist ideas themselves can offer spaces for thinking, for imaging a different kind of politics. The habit of thinking, Maslin argues, 'reveals the disconnect or disharmony between our appearance, or what we reveal of who we are in the public realm, and our consciousness, our true selves, which we may or may not reveal in the public realm' (Maslin 2013: 593). On the other hand, she claims that understanding is a different, a 'lifelong attempt' to 'try to be at home in the world' (Maslin 2013: 593). Thinking about home in this way is to think again about that which is closest to us, how we know ourselves and each other and how we know the world. We might dare to value passivity and being at home with ourselves, so as to occupy home differently, tell different stories and make a space for critical thinking and critical living.

Where does this leave feminist politics? Brown tells us that opening 'a breathing space between the world of common meanings and the world of alternative ones' offers 'a space of potential renewal for thought, desire and action' (Brown 2005: 81). So in the following section I want to think about this space, or spaces, which might be found strategically in the tightness or the 'edge' between neoliberal discourse and feminist critique (Brown 2005; Newman 2012, 2013), and in the disruption of binary distinctions which produce 'the category woman ... rather than looking to those power structures for emancipation' (Salih 2002: 48). In this way feminist politics finds a strategic lever to

break the neoliberal ground of language and reality, which constitutes gender ontology and the woman question.

Home and the woman question in feminist politics

Over the course of this inquiry I have worked with the idea of home as subjectivity-in-situation. I have separated this out heuristically as subjectivity, agency and situation so as to focus on each, whilst tracing the interactive qualities of being-at-home-in-the-world. As a methodological category home evokes the personal, relational and material aspects of women's lives, so providing a conceptual frame for attending to one or other levels and for understanding that together they express a human desire to be at home, to make a home. In the development of a radical feminist critique of the neoliberal political landscape as Brown suggests, we need to be alert to how subjectivities are shaped by circulations of discursive power, in relation to a material understanding of how this erodes the possibility of critical, political engagement (Brown 1995). Translated into politics this ties feminists into a relationship with a seemingly benign but strategically oppressive state 'where the feminist subject turns out to be discursively constituted by the very political system that is supposed to facilitate its emancipation' (Butler 1990: 3). We need to be alert to how closed this circle is, whether there is any space between ourselves and state politics, any possibility to bring into language women's struggle to be at home in the world.

It is a struggle, since it is difficult to be at home if home is a disorienting and colonised place leaving us 'susceptible to simply getting lost...without fixed meaning or orientation' (Brown 1995: 34):

..power is often characterized as decentred and diffuse, even while it incessantly violates, transgresses and resituates social boundaries; it flows on surfaces and irrigates through networks rather than consolidating in bosses or kings; it is ubiquitous, luminal, potent in small and fluid doses. In absence of critical discourse attuned to such configurations and conduits of power, we risk becoming unresisting vehicles of its objectionable contemporary functions ...more oblivious to our unfreedom than One Dimensional Man. Here lies the serious threat of a thoroughly disintegrated subject, of false consciousness beyond what either Marx or radical feminism ever dreamed, of a total system that no longer requires a systematic form to operate as containment (Brown 1995: 34).

Power irrigates through the binaries that order gender and the woman question, where the conceptual disappearance of women and gender is achieved. Binaries are the new terrain of feminist politics and need to be worked. I have suggested that in rewriting binaries neoliberalism performs a disappearing act where it seems as though historical distinctions are blurring or fading while they are in effect re-signified and inscribed within the organising principles of a patriarchal gender order. Between neoliberal binaries - between positive/negative, or independent/dependent - home appears in the discourse as a hub, a potential space for welfare, a container of the problem of dependency/women and its solution, where the woman question is held but

disappears. It is at this binary edge where potential spaces for feminist politics open up (Brown 2005; Newman 2012, 2012). It is from this analysis that home comes into play as a potential critical space for feminist politics.

Home as critical space

What might this space of home be like? All in all the new gender order makes the space of home a highly tense, contested and politically laden one, bearing directly on questions and operations of power: just how are women always on the wrong side of power; and how are home and gender simultaneously eroded and intensified in policy discourse (Bakker 2007: 550). Feminists argue that as agency becomes the central focus of policy discourse, the agency or subjectivity of women becomes increasingly decentred and unspoken. This creates a condition of disorientation, of having no place or space, of having the closest space taken away. Feminists like Woolf, Young and Winterson argue convincingly that patriarchy, through time, defines and orders the intimate and personal spaces of home, leaving women homeless and without access to the very space in and from which they derive their understanding and experience of power and agency.

Feminism has another story which holds the potential of home as a second body; as a place to be; of renewal and passivity; a space from where political action and citizenship arises; a place of being for each other, and the right of every human being to be-at-home-in-the-world. Home is where we can learn how to recognise and negotiate power. Home is where we learn to be meaning-seeking creatures, and how to find a

place in the world. To cultivate home as a political space, Brown suggests, it needs to be carved out, separated from and defined in critical relation to the world in invented political paradigms (Brown 1995; 2005) which is a world divided between public and private; and economic and social spaces. If home is a second body and a condition of citizenship, home is neither entirely personal or public; economic or social. For Brown

..feminist political spaces cannot define themselves against the private sphere, bodies, reproduction, production, mortality and all the populations implicated in these categories.. these spaces cannot be pristine, rarefied and policed at their boundaries but are necessarily cluttered, attuned to earthly concerns and visions, incessantly disrupted, invaded and reconfigured (Brown 1995: 50).

Home is a real and material space and, Andrea Thuma argues, there 'must be a "ground" which attaches the individual to the world around her, offers her space for action, and thereby enables her to intervene in it. This space would be a starting point for experiencing the world, as a part of the worldly reality that will be changed' (Thuma 2011).

A theoretical carving out of home as a critical space does not touch the diversity of experiences and material conditions of home. The purpose of this genealogy is to intervene in the neoliberal politics of language, and to bring a feminist imagination to bear on the neoliberal story of women and home. It is to question or 'to grasp why and how that-which-is might no longer be that-which-is' (Foucault 1988: 36 quoted in Bell 1999: 146). And then to work with feminist theory to write or tell a different story about women and home, which can then be used, challenged and subverted by women in their everyday lives and in feminist politics.

Exposing the problem of the question

At the heart of the neoliberal story about home is the woman question, or the problem of women. The woman question is not straightforward in this context. It is hidden, wrapped up in neutralised language and nostalgic fantasy about community and home, populated by self-less women. The woman question is obscured by the ambiguous workings of neoliberal discourse, in the power and purpose of the economic to infuse and control the immanent social. So what is this hidden problem? It is not that women are this or that, emotional or irrational. It is not that women bear children and need protecting. It is not that women are the weaker sex. Surely the discursive control and exclusion of women could not be driven by the belief that women are weak. What would be the point? The problem is more likely to be that women are powerful in particular ways in relation to men, so that the problem to be solved by patriarchy is: how to maintain the illusion that they are not? As I quote at the beginning of this study, Woolf writes:

Women have served all these centuries as looking-glasses possessing the magic and delicious power of reflecting the figure of man at twice its natural size....if she begins to tell the truth, the figure in the looking glass shrinks; his fitness for life is diminished. How is he to go on giving judgement...making laws, writing books, dressing up and speechifying at banquets, unless he can see himself at breakfast and dinner at least twice the size he really is...Take it away and man may die. ..Under the spell of that illusion, I thought,...half the people on the pavement are striding to work (Woolf 1928: 37-38).

Patriarchal power, in this study in the mode of neoliberal discourse, seems to work hard to order gender so as to perpetuate this illusion. As Winterson suggests, the more women recognise their power and the bolder they get, the more tactical patriarchy becomes (Winterson 2013). Strategically, two aspects of the women question can be separated out: the continuing question of how women are positioned as other, which is a question of power; and the story of the problem of women as it is told in historical contexts. The question of power has been articulated as a series of conundrums circulating around epistemological questions of the mind/body, public/private, work/home, production/reproduction axes. Around these axes public stories are produced to give them common sense shape, like the women's suffrage movement at the beginning of the twentieth century; the women's liberation movement that flourished during the 1970s, or the current campaign of the Fawcett Society for women's economic equality and equal pay⁴⁴. The historicisation of these movements or campaigns adds to the ordering and compartmentalisation of feminist politics (Hemmings 2011). They are, however, examples of how the continuing question of power is addressed through historically specific manifestations of patriarchy and feminist resistance. Governments resist feminist struggle but if they have to recognise the justice in feminist politics they give as much, only as much, as is necessary to keep the status quo. In whichever way the problem of women is told and lived, women are placed on the supplicant side of the gender divide. The struggle for feminism has been to challenge patriarchal power as it is posed and experienced differently, as the problem of women, or the woman question, in different times.

⁴⁴ See Fawcett Society, 'Women and the Economy' campaign: <http://uat.fawcettsociety.org.uk/activity/women-and-the-economy/#sthash.IPGHI9nQ.dpbs> [Accessed 10 April 2014].

Separating these two aspects of the woman question exposes the problem of the question, of the question itself and how the question is posed. In neoliberal discourse the question is obscured, which is not unusual, Murray Li argues, since 'discourses are devoid of reference to questions they cannot address, or might cast doubt on the completeness of their diagnoses or the feasibility of their solutions'. The avoidance of a direct engagement with the woman question, she further suggests, is an avoidance of 'the conditions under which expert discourse is punctured by a challenge it cannot contain' (Murray Li 2007: 11). As such a challenge, the power of the woman question is exposed. Murray Li's analysis suggests that the woman question is avoided precisely because it reveals the power of women in relation to men. This is the continuing question of power which presents as the core and timeless question for feminist politics (Phillips 1998).

The continuing presence of the woman question, in relation to the story of home as it is told in neoliberal discourse in the moment described in this study, marginalises, individualises and pushes the political problem of women into economic/social and everyday spaces to be solved. These everyday spaces are spaces of struggle for many women (Burchardt 2008). In the context of the Government's big society policy frame, Slay and Penny find that:

The economic downturn and cuts have had a severe impact on women. They are more likely to be employed by the public sector, and take on the burden of care as local authority cuts bite.. According to Women's organisations.. women are more vulnerable than ever to domestic and sexual violence as the economic

situation worsens and specialist services are closed down (Slay and Penny 2012: 2)

For women it is likely to mean that they will be expected to do even more informal caring work than they already do. This may ultimately mean making tough decisions about their ability to do paid employment (Slay and Penny 2012: 5).

For Claire Hemmings and Amal Treacher, everyday struggle 'evokes a wriggling body, never still, always engaged with itself and the world'. It is 'experienced differently' and 'expressed differently for different groups and individuals' (Hemmings and Treacher 2006: 1) What is shared, however is that everyday struggles involve

..the question of resources...the relationship between what a body needs for life..and what one has access too. The shortfall between the two produces everyday struggling in a material sense, and necessitates the use or development of more personal resources, in the form of narrative, testimony, action or reflection' (Hemmings and Treacher 2006: 1).

In a feminist language of home this can be described as a struggle to be at home in 'the sphere in which our personal and political struggles actually take place' (Moi 1999: 120). As Hemmings and Treacher write, these struggles are made sense of through reflection and personal stories:

..we are human insofar..as we tell stories – to ourselves and to others – as a way of becoming and exceeding ourselves. We narrate the world to make it palatable – with strangeness and humour, often to enable ourselves to be and

remain human, and we narrate the world to others in the form of testimony or with the benefit of hindsight, in order to attempt to alter the conditions that shape the narratives we tell (Hemmings and Treacher 2006: 2).

Conclusion

This is the story of home for feminist politics. Home is an ambiguous space for so many personal, material and political reasons, but it is our space as a second body, as a means to agency and power and as a sense of being at home-in-the-world. Home is not an idealised space in this sense but is the situation in which we find and make something of ourselves. Home is where we experience how to be dependent and dependable, independent and interdependent. Home is a pre-condition for being-in-the-world, a space of passivity and agency, of being before action. Without home, feminists argue, there is no potential for citizenship, for being with others, recognising each other as persons alone and together and as equal in the world. Since home is the space for becoming political, this is a home to fight for.

A different story of home resonates through neoliberal discourse, where powerful ideas enter personal spaces through policy and common sense language to redesign who we are, what we do and where we do it according to utilitarian and economic design. Our stories are potentially caught up and told through this language that distances and alienates us from politics. Feminist imagination is the means to intervene in this kind of language struggle (Bell 1999). Working with feminist theory I have unravelled some of this common sense to show the complex ways that neoliberal discourse depoliticises

and inscribes home and women's labour as an economic resource. The story of home in neoliberal discourse is familiar, it wraps women up as carers and workers so that we are neither wholly at home or at work. It tells us that we should not be ourselves, we should not be dependent and that we are responsible for rehabilitating those who are. In this way the patriarchal language of neoliberalism colonises the very space of potential for women to be at home in the world.

At the heart of home in neoliberal discourse is the woman question, the continuing question of what to do about women's power in relation to men. Seeing this the task of feminist theory and politics is to identify and strip away the invented story about home, so as to get to the core question of ontology and politics, of power. This is a struggle to interrogate and puncture the woman question as it is constructed and told. It is a struggle to get hold of or articulate the disappearance of women from public discourse and the dissembling structures of welfare that sought to solve questions of gender inequality. It is a struggle to inhabit and claim home as our space in the world, to understand how it is constituted politically and to begin to imagine how it could be a radical space, both materially and politically, if inhabited differently. It is to bring home to the centre of feminism as a critical space for women, all women, and as the contested ground of feminist politics.

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A Vision for Adult Social Care:

Capable Communities and Active Citizens

Social Care

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We will engage widely as we develop plans for achieving our vision. If you have any views about the vision, please e-mail socialcarevision@dh.gsi.gov.uk or write to: Social Care Vision, Department of Health, Room 116, Wellington House, 133–155 Waterloo Road, London SE1 8UG. We are fully committed to developing and publishing an impact assessment and an equalities impact assessment to accompany the White Paper on the future system of social care, which this vision will inform.

Foreword

Social Care is an essential human need, something most of us will need at some point in our lives, whether for ourselves or those close to us. How well we look after each other says a great deal about the strength and character of our society.

The Coalition Government recognises this and the Spending Review settlement gives local authorities the resources they need to maintain vital services and meet growing demands. Funding is, however, only one part of the answer. People's expectations are changing, and neither those who provide the services nor those who receive them expect to trade autonomy for dependency.

This challenge is reflected across the policy spectrum. The answer is to strengthen communities, while changing the role and our relationship with the state. It is a new vision for government which does not simply look to the state for answers to the issues we face, but outwards to communities. This is why we talk about building the 'Big Society'. This approach underpins our vision for social care – a vision grounded in the Coalition Government's values.

The first value is Freedom. We want to see a real shift of power from the state to people and communities. We want people to have the freedom to choose the services that are right for them from a vibrant plural market. That is why this vision challenges councils to provide personal budgets, preferably as direct payments, to everyone eligible within the next two years.¹ We also want professionals to have freedom from local authority procedures and be able to work more closely with people who use services.

The second is Fairness, through a lasting settlement to the question "how do we pay for care?" and a clear, comprehensive and modern legal framework for social care. The recommendations of both the Law and Funding Commissions will be brought together with this vision in a White Paper next year, with legislation to follow. We also want to see those who are already carers provided with the support they need. That is why we want to see more carers receiving direct payments for breaks from care over the next few years.

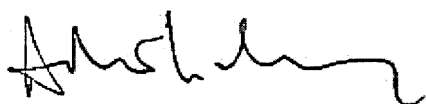
The third is Responsibility. Social care is not solely the responsibility of the state. Communities and wider civil society must be set free to run innovative local schemes and build local networks of support. There are already some hugely successful examples of how this approach can help reduce people's dependency on care services, such as the Southwark Circle initiative in London, Timebank schemes and complementary currency schemes that

¹ See Spending Review 2010, including the commitment to Personal Budgets, (HM Treasury) Para1.84, page 33

allow people living far from their relatives to partner with local people in the same position to provide reciprocal care.

Frederick Seebohm, in his landmark 1968 report, said that social care should enable ‘the greatest possible number of individuals to act reciprocally, giving and receiving service for the well-being of the whole community’.² We need a return to these foundations. Care must again be about reinforcing personal and community resilience, reciprocity and responsibility, to prevent and postpone dependency and promote greater independence and choice.

This vision cannot be achieved by Government alone. We need a social movement to form around these values, with different organisations and communities coming together to develop new ways of caring for people. All of us want a culture of dignity, respect and compassion deeply rooted in our communities. By working together towards this vision, we can make it happen.



Rt Hon Andrew Lansley CBE MP
Secretary of State for Health



Paul Burstow MP
Minister of State for Care Services

² Report of the Committee on Local Authority and Allied Personal Social Services The Seebohm Report HMSO(1968)

1. Introduction

The Coalition Programme³ committed the Government to reforming the system of social care in England to provide much more control to individuals and their carers. This vision focuses on the Government commitments to:

- break down barriers between health and social care funding to incentivise preventative action;
- extend the greater rollout of personal budgets to give people and their carers more control and purchasing power; and
- use direct payments to carers and better community-based provision to improve access to respite care.

1.1 This vision sets a new agenda for adult social care in England. We want to make services more personalised, more preventative and more focused on delivering the best outcomes for those who use them.

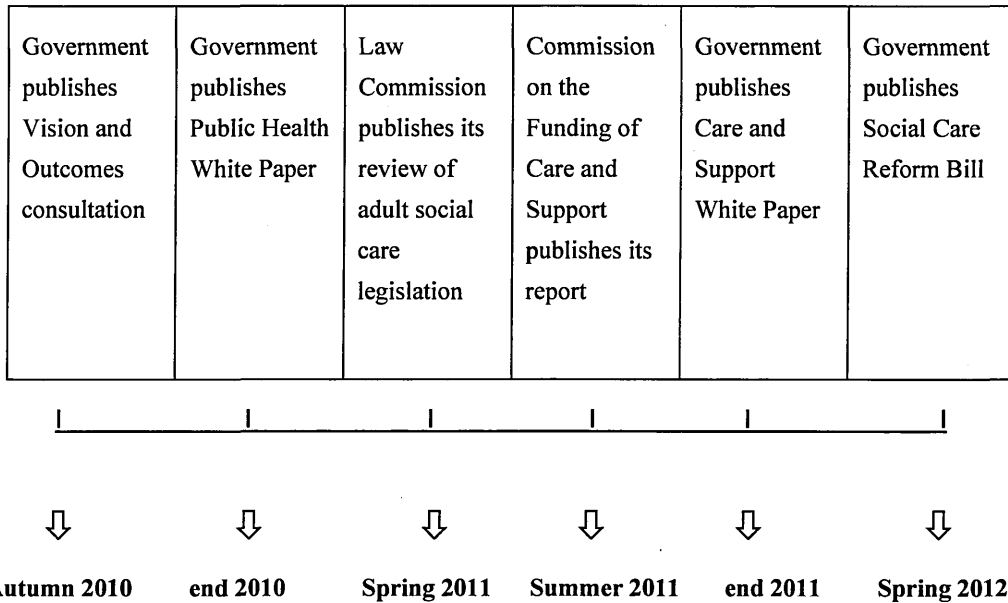
1.2 The Government is committed to devolving power from central government to communities and individuals, and social care is no exception. Front-line workers and carers are fundamental to the delivery of personalisation – we want to give them the freedom and responsibility to improve care services and support people in new ways.

1.3 The Spending Review provided social care with a stable financial base over the next four years. It provides additional funding of £2bn by 2014/15: £1 billion through the NHS and £1 billion in grant funding to local government.

1.4 This settlement gives councils a platform for reform and improvement – including redesign of services and significant gains in productivity. The vision is the first step towards the White Paper that we intend to publish next year, setting out a long-term solution to the funding and delivery of care and support.

³ The public's comments on *The Coalition: Our Programme for Government* are at: <http://programmeforgovernment.hmg.gov.uk/social-care-and-disability/index.html>. The Government's response is at: www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_118129

Timeline⁴



1.5 Reform cannot and will not be top-down. We want decision-making devolved as closely to the individual as possible, and we need the care services sector, working with partners, to take a lead role in promoting and delivering transformation. The Partnership Agreement *Think Local, Act Personal*⁵, developed together with partners in the adult social care sector, set out concrete steps to transform social care. Best practice documents describe how we can make care more personalised for service users and carers.⁶ If power and control is devolved to communities, then people – including the most vulnerable – can lead more independent and fulfilled lives. This is the challenge at the heart of the vision.

⁴ The Department of Health Business Plan 2010-15 and Transparency Plan can be found at: <http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/index.html>

⁵ <http://www.puttingpeoplefirst.org.uk/ThinkLocalActPersonal/>

⁶ You can find the best practice papers at: www.dh.gov.uk/socialcare. The documents are: Practical approaches to improving the lives of disabled and older people by building stronger communities; Practical approaches to market and provider development; Practical approaches to co-production; Practical approaches to safeguarding and personalisation and; Personal Budgets – Checking the Results

2. The principles

Our vision for a modern system of social care is built on seven principles:

Prevention: empowered people and strong communities will work together to maintain independence. Where the state is needed, it supports communities and helps people to retain and regain independence.

Personalisation: individuals not institutions take control of their care. Personal budgets, preferably as direct payments, are provided to all eligible people. Information about care and support is available for all local people, regardless of whether or not they fund their own care.

Partnership: care and support delivered in a partnership between individuals, communities, the voluntary and private sectors, the NHS and councils - including wider support services, such as housing.

Plurality: the variety of people's needs is matched by diverse service provision, with a broad market of high quality service providers.

Protection: there are sensible safeguards against the risk of abuse or neglect. Risk is no longer an excuse to limit people's freedom.

Productivity: greater local accountability will drive improvements and innovation to deliver higher productivity and high quality care and support services. A focus on publishing information about agreed quality outcomes will support transparency and accountability.

People: we can draw on a workforce who can provide care and support with skill, compassion and imagination, and who are given the freedom and support to do so. We need the whole workforce, including care workers, nurses, occupational therapists, physiotherapists and social workers, alongside carers and the people who use services, to lead the changes set out here.

3. Our vision for prevention

Empowered people and strong communities will work together to maintain independence. Where the state is needed, it supports communities and helps people to retain and regain independence.

- 3.1 Our vision is based on the principle that those actively involved in care are the best people to decide how these services should change. We want people who receive care and those who provide it to work with councils, user-led organisations and voluntary bodies to deliver outcomes that are right for them. We can transform care, not by looking upwards to the state, but outwards to open communities – by empowering individuals and unlocking the power and creativity of neighbourhoods to deliver the Big Society.
- 3.2 Prevention is the first step. All of us want to maintain independence and good health throughout our lives. We also know that a considerable proportion of care needs can be avoided or significantly reduced if we intervene earlier. It is always far better to prevent or postpone dependency than deal with the consequences.
- 3.3 We also know that prevention is best achieved through community action, working alongside statutory services. We need to inspire neighbourhoods to come together to look out for those who need support. In other words, we need a Big Society approach to social care – one that gives people the power to support each other and meet the challenges they face. This not only leads to better and more creative solutions, it also makes our communities stronger and people less isolated and vulnerable.
- 3.4 Councils can play a vital role in leading change and stimulating action within their communities. Their broader role in promoting health and well-being will be enhanced by the new public health functions outlined in the White Paper *Liberating the NHS*,⁷ and by joint working with GP consortia on planning and commissioning services.

⁷ Responses to the views raised in the White Paper and the associated papers will be published prior to the introduction of the Bill and its Parliamentary passage.

Active citizens and strong communities – the Big Society

- 3.3 A Big Society approach to social care means unleashing the creativity and enthusiasm of local communities to maintain independence and prevent dependency.⁸ Local councils should work to enable people, their carers, families and communities to support and maintain full and independent lives. This means unlocking the potential of local support networks to reduce isolation and vulnerability.⁹ Social care has a long history of building community capacity. A renewed emphasis on this goes well beyond the social care sector and must focus on what people can do for each other.
- 3.4 Examples from all over the world show the value of reciprocity. A scheme in Japan, for example, allows people who live too far from their elderly relatives to care for them to partner with other families in the same situation and 'adopt' each other's responsibilities, meaning less need for so much state intervention. There are good examples closer to home too. Innovations such as Timebanking schemes and 'complementary currency' systems, outlined below, allow people to exchange different kinds of support.

Building community capacity

Over 250 time banks have been set up locally in the UK. People from all backgrounds and abilities come together to help others and help themselves at the same time. To quote a time bank member, "you give what you want and get back whatever you need". Local people 'deposit' their time by sharing their skills, one hour of giving earns them one time credit. They can then spend their time credits on any of the skills and support on offer from other local people. Resilient social networks are formed that people can rely on and trust.¹⁰

The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, one of the four 'Vanguard Communities' for Big Society, will test a web-based complementary currency approach for care and support, to assess the potential benefits both in reduced demand for formal care and in people's quality of life.¹¹

Connected Care is Turning Point's model of community-led commissioning, one that integrates health, housing and social care. Through a rigorous process of community

⁸ *Shared Support at Home and in the Community* (Elders Voice, 2010) shows how targeted social support for an individual can lead to community support for a larger group of people.

⁹ *Village Agents: An Evaluation* (University of Birmingham, 2008). Village Agents, a Department for Work and Pensions scheme in Gloucestershire, combats social isolation among people over 50 by providing information about services.

¹⁰ To learn more, visit www.timebanking.org

¹¹ See: www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/consultation_big_society_white_paper.htm

engagement and co-production they narrow the gap between commissioners priorities and the needs of the community. It is a model of commissioning that puts the voice and needs of the community to the fore when designing and delivering services enabling them to build vital social capital and community resilience to ensure better results for whole communities. In Hartlepool the Connected Care initiative has addressed barriers facing local residents. A team of local 'navigators' work with local people to support them to achieve their quality of life outcomes and a community interest company (CIC) commissions a range of support services in the local community. The navigators are a low cost model and evaluations of the service have demonstrated the cost benefits of the service and the positive impact in reducing demand on existing statutory services.¹²

Southwark Circle is the flagship in a network of 'Circles' that extends to Hammersmith & Fulham in West London and to Suffolk County (as of November 2010). The concept and business model has been co-designed and developed over three years with over 1,000 older people and their families, in conjunction with Participle. At the individual level, a Circle delivers flexible support with life's practical tasks (from DIY to gardening to technology), an opportunity to learn, build social networks, and maintain relationships around shared interests and hobbies. Crucially, it does this by allowing those that seek support in some areas of life to provide help to other members in other areas of life. The outcome is a more connected, supported person, who is part of a service that evolves with them as they age. The social impact is an improved sense of well being and new relationships and acquaintances that lead to improved quality of life. The service is delivered by a distributed network of people called Neighbourhood Helpers. These are people of all ages who share their talents and skills; many are also members and some are paid the London Living wage for their time. Each Circle is designed to be self-sustaining within a three-year launch period, and is supported by the Local Authority as it grows towards this milestone.¹³

The Asian Welfare and Cultural Association (AWCA), is a community-led organisation working to improve the quality of life for older Asian men and women in the Eastleigh area of Hampshire. They approached the Council to ask about the local support available. From this, Asian elders established a meeting space to socialise and take part in activities. Local community members had the will to form a community group, and the council helped the AWCA to get started.

¹² www.puttingpeoplefirst.org.uk/BCC/topics/Latest/resourceOverview/?cid=6775

¹³ For more information visit: www.southwarkcircle.org.uk

- 3.5 Local government can be a catalyst for social action. In some areas, people will need the support of councils to stimulate a community response. This may mean encouraging and supporting employment, local mentoring and volunteering activity at an individual level. As part of the Government's Big Society programme, 5,000 new community organisers are being trained across the country, and a new Community First Grant programme will help build local community capacity, particularly in areas with less social capital. A range of learning and development opportunities funded through Informal Adult and Community Learning are helping to train volunteer Community Learning Champions to engage local people in learning for personal, family and community development.¹⁴
- 3.6 User-led organisations, supported by local councils, can help people come together to reduce social isolation, particularly in rural areas.¹⁵ Happier, more socially connected individuals have more pride in their neighbourhoods, which can enhance quality of life, health and well-being.¹⁶

Preventative services to maintain and restore independence

- 3.7 When people develop care and support needs, our first priority should be to restore an individual's independence and autonomy. With the solid basis provided in the Spending Review for social care, there is no reason for councils to restrict support to those with the most intensive needs. This not only serves local people poorly, it is a false economy.
- 3.8 Carers are the first line of prevention. Their support often stops problems from escalating to the point where more intensive packages of support become necessary. But carers need to be properly identified and supported. Councils should recognise the value of offering a range of personalised support for carers to help prevent the escalation of needs that fall on statutory services. They should also be mindful, when assessing adults, of young carers to make sure they are not being asked to provide inappropriate levels of care.¹⁷ The forthcoming carers' strategy will set out how we can support carers in their vital role, and ensure they have a life of their own.

¹⁴ Research shows the importance of mental, physical and social activity in delivering mental and physical health benefits for older people (Mental Capital and Wellbeing, Government Office for Science, 2008). Informal Adult and Community Learning offers a wide menu of activities that help meet needs and benefit people in residential home and home care.

¹⁵ *Village Agents: An Evaluation* (University of Birmingham, 2008). Village Agents, a Department for Work and Pensions scheme in Gloucestershire, combats social isolation among people over 50 by providing information about services.

¹⁶ Martin Knapp's study on making an economic case for community development looks at models of interventions, with calculations of the costs and returns of a community initiative. Knapp, M et al. *Social capital economics*. Full study to be published shortly at www.puttingpeoplefirst.org.uk/BCC

¹⁷ To learn more see: *Working Together to Support Young Carers - A Model Local Memorandum of Understanding between Statutory Directors for Children's Services and Adult Services* ADASS and ADCS, 2009

- 3.9 New technology opens up new horizons for care. From community alarms to sophisticated communication systems, telecare can help people stay in their own homes and live independently for longer. Chapter 7 discusses its potential to save resources as well as promote independence.
- 3.10 Re-ablement covers a range of short-term interventions which help people recover their skills and confidence after an episode of poor health, admission to hospital, or bereavement. We know that re-ablement can help people to continue to live independently in their own homes without the need for an ongoing social care package. The Government is supporting an expansion of re-ablement across the NHS and social care, with £70m in new resources in 2010/11 and up to £300m a year earmarked for re-ablement in the next Spending Review period. The cost-effectiveness of re-ablement schemes is explored further in Chapter 7.
- 3.11 Many people need social care because of the effects of long-term conditions. Good partnership working between health and social care is vital for helping them to manage their condition and live independently. The long-term conditions chronic care model within the Department of Health's Quality, Innovation, Productivity and Prevention (QIPP) programme is exploring how different services can work together to promote self-care, preventative care and early intervention, minimising the need for hospital and residential care.^{18, 19}
- 3.12 Securing good outcomes for disabled people may also mean bringing employment and housing services together to improve their well-being and meet emerging needs. 'Supporting People' provides housing related support to help individuals to live independently in their own home and avoid more costly interventions. These preventative services improve outcomes for individuals and return savings to other areas, such as housing, health, social care and the criminal justice system.²⁰

¹⁸ The long-term conditions QIPP workstream aims to support local health economies to learn the large-scale change techniques needed to accelerate the delivery of this evidenced-based model of long-term conditions care management.

¹⁹ Quality, Innovation, Productivity and Prevention (QIPP) works at a national, regional and local level to support clinical teams and NHS organisations to improve the quality of care they deliver while making efficiency savings to reinvest in services to deliver quality improvements.

²⁰ A toolkit that helps local authorities model the local financial benefits of supporting people services can be found here: www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/financialbenefitsguide

Council leadership for health and well-being

- 3.13 At its broadest level, prevention depends on promoting health and well-being at a grassroots level. The Coalition is committed to giving local authorities the power and influence they need to lead change within their communities. Following the NHS White Paper *Liberating the NHS*, local government will take on new health improvement responsibilities. Councils will also take the lead role in drawing up joint strategic needs assessments (JSNAs), which will shape the commissioning of health, social care and health improvement services. These developments offer councils a huge opportunity to shape local services to promote health and well-being and prevent dependency. Further details will be set out shortly in a White Paper on public health.

Nothing about me, without me

Bristol Older People's Partnership Board involves older people in equal measure at the highest levels of service planning and decision making. The Board is made up of heads of service drawn from departments across the whole local authority as well as senior decision makers in health, community safety, pensions service, voluntary sector etc. More importantly 50% of the places on the Board are reserved for older people and carers, drawn from representative bodies in the area, who have an equal say in all discussions and have co-authored an "Improving the Quality of Life Strategy for Older People".²¹

Making it happen

- 3.14 Councils should exploit the many opportunities to improve preventative services by:
- developing community capacity and promoting active citizenship, working with community organisations and others across all council services, establishing the conditions in which the Big Society can flourish; and
 - commissioning a full range of appropriate preventative and early intervention services such as re-ablement and telecare, working in partnership with the NHS, housing authorities and others.
- 3.15 The Government will:
- publish a White Paper on public health, outlining councils' enhanced leadership role in health improvement and the opportunities this offers.

²¹ More information about how older people are involved in developing services in Bristol is available at: www.bristol.gov.uk/ccm/content/Health-Social-Care/ppfb/quality-of-life-for-older-people-strategy.en

4. Our vision for personalisation

Individuals not institutions take control of their care. Personal budgets, preferably as direct payments, are provided to all eligible people. Information about care and support is available for all local people, regardless of whether or not they fund their own care.

- 4.1 Our vision starts with securing the best outcomes for people. People, not service providers or systems, should hold the choice and control about their care. Personal budgets and direct payments²² are a powerful way to give people control. Care is a uniquely personal service. It supports people at their most vulnerable, and often covers the most intimate and private aspects of their lives. With choice and control, people's dignity and freedom is protected and their quality of life is enhanced. Our vision is to make sure everyone can get the personalised support they deserve.
- 4.2 While social care is more advanced than any other public service in making direct payments, we need faster progress to bring the benefits to all.²³ A personal budget alone does not in itself mean that services are automatically personalised. This requires a wholesale change - a change of attitude by councils and staff, reform of financial²⁴ and management and information systems, and reduction of inflexible block contracts. People should get personal choice and control over their services - from supported housing through to personal care.²⁵ Even those with the most complex needs can benefit from personalised services.²⁶

²² A personal budget can be taken by an individual as a direct (cash) payment; as an account held and managed by the council in line with the individual's wishes; or as an account placed with a third party (provider) and called off by the individual; or as a mixture of these approaches.

²³ The scope and legislation governing personal budgets varies across Europe, but many countries have more extensively personalised their social care system. For example, cash allowances for people over 65 have 100 per cent coverage in Austria (*Direct Payments and Older People* (The King's Fund, 2006), pp. 6–8).

²⁴ *Financial management of personal budgets* (Audit Commission, 2010) See:

www.audit-commission.gov.uk/nationalstudies/localgov/personalbudgets/Pages/default.aspx

²⁵ *Delivering Personalisation in Housing Support* (Department for Communities and Local Government, forthcoming).

²⁶ *Raising our Sights: Services for Adults with Profound Intellectual and Multiple Disabilities – A Report by Professor Jim Mansell* (Mansell J, 2010).

Bringing the benefits of personalisation to all

- 4.3 Where personalisation has taken root, it works and is popular with users and carers. A report from the Office of Fair Trading showed that direct payments made people happier with the service they receive.²⁷ Two reports on individual budgets said people, including carers, enjoyed the enhanced control over their care.^{28, 29} The time is now right to make personal budgets the norm for everyone who receives ongoing care and support – ideally as a direct cash payment, to give maximum flexibility and choice.
- 4.4 In order to bring the benefits of personalisation to all there are five groups of people who may need more support or appropriate help to manage a direct payment:
- older people should be supported with information on quality of providers readily available and the ‘hassle costs’ of choice reduced as far as possible.^{30, 31} For example, by ensuring they receive appropriate support and assurance through the process. Strengthening the voice, choice and control of older people with high support needs takes time and effort to achieve. A range of person-centred approaches exists to help plan and deliver better outcomes for people who need support, which can have benefits for older people, staff and families, and also contribute to ending age discrimination as outlined in the Equality Act 2010;³²
 - people with learning disabilities, autism, disabled people and those with complex needs require person-centred planning to maximise choice and control, and appropriate help in cases where a direct payment is not chosen;
 - despite evidence that use of personal budgets resulted in a significantly higher quality of life for people with mental health conditions,³³ take-up has so far been low;
 - people in residential care should have the same entitlement as anyone else to exercise choice and control over their care and how they live; and

²⁷ *Choice and Competition in Public Services: A Guide for Policy Makers* (Office of Fair Trading/Frontier Economics, 2010).

²⁸ *The National Evaluation of the Individual Budgets Pilot Programme* (Social Policy Research Unit, University of York, 2008).

²⁹ *Individual Budgets: Impacts and Outcomes for Carers* (Social Policy Research Unit, University of York, 2009).

³⁰ See ref. 27

³¹ See *Delivering Personal Budgets for Adult Social Care: Reflections from Essex* (Office for Public Management, 2010); see also ref. 14 above

³² NDTi (National Development Team for Inclusion) Insights 3 Examples can be found at: www.independentlivingresource.org.uk

³³ See ref. 14

- people who lack the mental capacity to make some decisions should also be offered the same opportunities for choice and control as anyone else. The core principle of the Mental Capacity Act – that best interests and participation in decisions should be enabled wherever possible – must guide the approach. Councils should work with the person and those close to them to find out their preferences and manage risk sensibly. This may involve placing control of a personal budget in the hands of another suitable person.³⁴

The power of personal budgets

Charlie is a young man living in the countryside with a diagnosis of Paranoid Schizophrenia. After treatment for his mental health needs in hospital he returned to stay with his family but spent most of his time indoors. He felt unable to live in his own house, and had regular contact with mental health services. A Personal Budget enabled him to live at home with the support of personal assistants he and his family employed. Now he helps out on a local farm, his mental health has improved and he is living more independently.³⁵

Lynne was diagnosed with epilepsy after receiving a head injury and the impact of seizures on her everyday life was huge. Everyday tasks suddenly became hazardous to her. At her local Epilepsy Action branch she learned how Seizure Alert Dogs can warn epilepsy sufferers of imminent seizures. Lynne now uses her direct payment to fund the upkeep of her dog, Dougal.³⁶

David started his own business selling local produce at a market. His personal budget buys him support from a social enterprise that helps people with learning disabilities to establish their own micro-enterprises or small businesses.

- 4.5 Pooling budgets is one way of maximising outcomes, using direct payments to employ an organiser to help a group of people to arrange leisure activities together.³⁷ Personalisation can also be achieved by harnessing the untapped potential of communities. For example, volunteer visiting schemes can reduce the social isolation of older people, who are disproportionately represented in the rural population. Whether they receive a direct payment or fund their own care and support, people should have access to a service that meets their needs.

³⁴ See: www.publicguardian.gov.uk/mca/code-of-practice.htm for more information.

³⁵ Lincolnshire Partnership NHS FT

³⁶ See the case study at: www.support-dogs.org.uk/lynn%20ratcliffe.htm

³⁷ See, for example: www.ruils.co.uk/Options/1/8

- 4.6 Rolling out personal budgets is not, however, an end in itself – our focus is not on the process but on the outcomes of greater choice, control and independence, and ultimately better quality of life. Outcome-based tools, including the ASCOT toolkit³⁸ and POET,³⁹ alongside the development of outcome-based assessment and review processes,⁴⁰ support a better understanding of whether people’s expected outcomes are being met and the information used to commission differently. Chapter 7 sets out our broader proposals to put outcomes at the heart of social care.
- 4.7 The system should support rather than hinder people’s goals. People who want to pursue educational or employment opportunities, for example, should be able to move from one part of the country to another without having to go through unnecessary multiple assessments and uncertainty. We want to see greater portability of assessments, and will consider how to pursue this in the light of the work of the Law Commission and the Commission on the Funding of Care and Support.

Information, advice, advocacy and support

- 4.8 To have real autonomy and choice people need information and advice. Lack of good, accessible information to help support their choices is a real concern for people. Councils’ role here is to ensure that everyone – whether using a personal budget or their own funds – can get the information and advice they need. This could include:
- good quality, up-to-date and accessible information direct from the council, especially on websites;
 - working with local voluntary and/or community organisations and experts in user-led organisations, including carer-led organisations, to provide support, advocacy and brokerage services;
 - advocacy, which helps people express views and receive the services they want as a result. This can range from a person helping a disabled person speak up for themselves to a paid advocate employed by the Independent Mental Capacity Advocacy Service; and
 - recognising that provision of information and advice is a universal service, and that people funding their own care have a particular need for information and guidance to help plan how their care needs are met.

³⁸ The Adult Social Care Outcomes Toolkit (ASCOT) is available at: www.pssru.ac.uk/ascot. ASCOT and the outcomes data it generates can be used to inform cost-effectiveness, examine the relative costs of outcome improvements across service types and aid outcomes-based commissioning.

³⁹ The Personal Budget Outcomes Evaluation Tool (POET) is in use at a number of councils, with support from In Control and Lancaster University.

⁴⁰ *Outcome-focused Reviews: A Practical Guide* (Department of Health, 2009), a practical tool that discusses the use of outcome-focused reviews, is available at: www.puttingpeoplefirst.org.uk/Topics/Browse/Measuringresults/Review/?parent=3249&child=5625

Information for choice

Harrow Council and shop4support have entered into a partnership to create an online marketplace, shop4support.com, that brings together the services and support available in the local area. People can shop around, choose the services that suit them best and decide how to make the best use of their personal budget. People can also suggest new types of services they would like, helping the council to stimulate new provision to meet people's needs.⁴¹

Making it happen

4.9 Personalisation in social care is under way, but there is plenty of scope for progress. An Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) survey in April 2010 said that 42 out of 152 councils (30 per cent) had made good progress towards personalisation.⁴² Councils should:

- provide personal budgets for everyone eligible for ongoing social care, preferably as a direct payment, by April 2013;
- accelerate reforms to their assessment, care management, financial and information systems to support a personalised system that places a stronger emphasis on outcomes and gives all users choice over their services, whatever the setting;^{43, 44} and
- focus on improving the range, quality and accessibility of information, advice and advocacy available for all in their communities – regardless of how their care is paid for – to support their social care choices.

4.10 The Government will:

- put personalisation at the heart of the framework for quality and outcomes being developed and examine the outcomes and benefits for people;
- consider how to embed personalisation in the new legal framework following the Law Commission's report – for instance, in strengthened guidance, new statutory principles to underpin the law, and through an entitlement, or right, for support to be offered as a personal budget or direct payment;
- develop proposals, subject to the Law Commission and Funding Commission reports, to ensure portability of assessments; and

⁴¹ See: www.shop4support.com/s4s/ui/content/

⁴² *Putting People First: 2nd year progress* (ADASS, 2010); available from www.puttingpeoplefirst.org.uk/Topics/Browse/General/?parent=2734&child=7671

⁴³ Right to Control Trailblazers, which build on the principles of personal budgets and personalisation and will give disabled people more choice and control over the services they use (personal budget pilots for disabled people in 7 areas) will be able to delegate their non-complex assessment reviews from social workers to user-led organisations (ULOs) and third parties via a Deregulation and Contracting Out (DACO) Order.

⁴⁴ A total of 12 councils are currently leading local partnerships in the development and evaluation of information sharing across organisational boundaries. More information is available at: www.dhcarenetworks.org.uk/CAF

- use the pilots currently under way to inform the rollout of personal health budgets and make it possible to combine personal health budgets with personal budgets in social care in the future.⁴⁵

⁴⁵ A personal health budget pilot programme is currently underway involving half the PCTs in the country and around 3000 people. The independent evaluation, to be published in 2012 will inform the wider rollout of personal health budgets.

5. Our vision for plurality and partnership

The variety of people's needs is matched by diverse service provision, with a broad market of high quality service providers.

Care and support is delivered in partnership between individuals, communities, the voluntary and private sectors, the NHS and councils - including wider support services, such as housing.

A plural market

- 5.1 Our vision looks out to strong communities, not up to the state – to a big and open society. It shifts the power from the state to the citizen, from Whitehall to the town hall and from provider to citizen. This vision can be realised if people and providers work together for the benefit of people who need care. The increased use of personal budgets preferably as a direct payment, alongside people funding their own care, will be a catalyst for change. People will demand the services they want to meet their needs, creating truly person-centred services. These will be delivered by organisations, including social enterprises and mutuals, that can respond to the demands of their communities. This can include niche and specialist providers. It can also include more mainstream and universal service providers – for instance, those offering transport or leisure options, or employment and education support – which are able to cater for people's needs without operating exclusively in the social care sector.
- 5.2 Social care already involves a diverse range of providers, including the voluntary and private sectors. But more can be done to make a reality of our vision of a thriving social market in which innovation flourishes. Councils have a role in stimulating, managing and shaping this market, supporting communities, voluntary organisations, social enterprises and mutuals to flourish and develop innovative and creative ways of addressing care needs. Local government has already made great strides towards developing local services with their local communities and voluntary organisations.⁴⁶ To build on this they will need robust evidence about what local markets offer and how they operate.
- 5.3 A first step in market shaping is for councils, with their NHS partners, to move away from traditional block contracts; increase personal budgets, including direct payments; and support the growth of a market in services that people want. The starting point should be a shared view of the outcomes to be achieved.

⁴⁶ See: www.scie.org.uk/publications/atagance/atagance15.asp

Addressing barriers

- 5.4 There should be a fair playing field for providers, particularly for small providers who often struggle to engage with formal tendering processes but can offer very individualised solutions. Commissioners of services should work with suppliers in the independent and voluntary sectors to better understand market capacity and capability, and decide how innovation and best value can be incentivised effectively.

Working together

Lancashire County Council (LCC) were an early adopter of the *Working together for change* approach to engaging people in commissioning and service development. LCC has used the approach in a variety of ways, including for specific client groups and across pathways such as stroke services, older people's day services and dementia services in the county. The approach has been used with providers to support them to improve the quality and responsiveness of their services and the degree of choice and control people experience. So far this has included extra care housing, domiciliary care and community support.⁴⁷

- 5.5 The Government will consider whether there are barriers, in particular to social enterprises, that prevent a dynamic and varied market. The Department of Health will work with the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) to look both at barriers that may exist, and at initiatives that could support new approaches. One example is social impact bonds, where philanthropic and private investment can support voluntary sector activity and successful outcomes are rewarded on a payment by results basis.^{48, 49, 50} The Department of Health, working with the Department for Communities and Local Government, will also consider the proposed role for Monitor in overseeing the market in social care, and ensure that such a role does not duplicate existing functions.

⁴⁷ Guidance for Working Together for Change is available at:

www.puttingpeoplefirst.org.uk/Topics/Browse/General/?parent=2734&child=5802

⁴⁸ 'Will social impact bonds solve society's most intractable problems?' (*The Guardian*, 6 October 2010), www.guardian.co.uk/society/2010/oct/06/social-impact-bonds-intractable-societal-problems

⁴⁹ See also: *From Social Security to Social Productivity: A Vision for 2020 Public Services* (2020 Public Services Trust at the RSA, 2010), p. 45

⁵⁰ The Department of Health has been working in partnership with the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS). BIS market analysis for the Department of Health, 2010.

Partnership working

- 5.6 Partnership working means individuals, communities, statutory organisations, the voluntary, private and community sectors, all working together. It must also mean ensuring that a joined up approach is taken within councils, including for young disabled people, making the transition from children's to adults services, and identifying wider individual and family needs, in particular safeguarding children. The greatest benefit of partnership working is better outcomes for people. Alongside this, however, efficiencies can be achieved through a joined-up approach between social care, housing, employment and other sectors.⁵¹
- 5.7 Evidence suggests that joint strategies, including a focus on reducing hospital admissions, save resources in the NHS.⁵² Specifically, getting more people into employment has well-documented benefits including generating savings for the taxpayer.⁵³ The local government 'Getting A Life' and 'Jobs First' websites are already showing how people with learning disabilities can use their personal budgets, drawn together with other appropriate funding, to buy the support they need to get and keep a job or self-employment.⁵⁴ Similarly, it is likely that expenditure on adults with significant disabilities could be reduced if funding were used for supported employment rather than leisure-focused day services.
- 5.8 The flexible use of resources should be encouraged if it improves outcomes. Coherent and integrated services are essential, not optional. Indeed, the *Six Lives*⁵⁵ progress report is a reminder of how poorly co-ordinated services for people with learning disabilities can contribute to harm and unacceptable failings in quality.

The opportunity

- 5.9 The plans set out in the NHS White Paper, *Liberating the NHS*, provides the opportunity for a much greater degree of local co-ordination and integrated working to shift the balance of power towards local communities and individuals:
- JSNAs will form the foundation of priority setting, encouraging greater involvement of local voluntary and community organisations. JSNAs will help local people to hold providers and commissioners to account, agree local priorities and inform a range of commissioning strategies and plans. This will be underpinned through new statutory duties for local councils and GP consortia to work together to promote the health and well-being of their local population.

⁵¹ Right to control is working across six funding streams to deliver more choice and control for disabled people.

⁵² See: www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_111240

⁵³ *A Financial Cost: Benefit Analysis of Kent Supported Employment* (Kilsby M, Beyer S, Kent County Council, 2010).

⁵⁴ See: www.valuingpeoplenow.dh.gov.uk/content/demonstration-sites

⁵⁵ *Six Lives: Progress Report* (Department of Health, 2010),

www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_120251

- joint commissioning, pooled budgets and place-based budgets allow the focus to shift away from funding streams and onto people's needs.
- simplifying the commissioning and contracting landscape by merging or sharing back office functions across councils and NHS commissioners can develop a more accessible, less costly process for suppliers.
- learning from the Trailblazer local councils developing Health and Wellbeing Boards.

Making it happen

5.10 Local councils should:

- exploit the opportunities of the NHS White Paper to play a lead role in their communities, ensuring local services are more coherent, responsive and integrated. Together with the NHS and other partners, councils should agree a shared view of local priorities and the outcomes to be achieved, and deliver commissioning strategies to meet the needs of their local populations – including the most vulnerable;
- work with the NHS and other partners to pool and align funding streams at the local level and alert the government if there are any barriers to this local flexibility
- work with private providers, charities, voluntary organisations, mutuals, social enterprises and user-led organisations, and move away from traditional block contracts; and
- critically examine their arrangements for contracting service providers to ensure that the rules are fair, proportionate and enable micro and small social enterprises, user-led organisations and voluntary organisations to compete to deliver personalised services.

5.11 The Government will:

- identify and remove barriers to collaboration and to pooling or alignment of budgets across health and social care and bring together funding streams for employment support;⁵⁶ and
- consider the barriers to market entry for micro and small social enterprises, user led organisations and charities, and the proposed role for Monitor to play in market shaping.

⁵⁶ Partnership arrangements for lead commissioning, joint management of provision for services and pooling of funds between NHS bodies and local government to support improvements in outcomes for local populations via section 75 of the NHS Act 2006

6. Our vision for providing protection

There are sensible safeguards against the risk of abuse or neglect. Risk is no longer an excuse to limit people's freedom.

- 6.1 Abuse is a hidden and often ignored problem. It is fundamental in any civilised society that the most vulnerable people are protected from abuse and neglect. People should be protected when they are unable to protect themselves. This should not be at the cost of people's right to make decisions about how they live their lives.

Safeguarding is everybody's business

- 6.2 Providers and commissioners of services are responsible for their quality and safety. They should ensure their staff provide safe, high quality care. This includes rigorous pre-employment checks and monitoring of their work. Equally, all staff need to see safeguarding and providing a high quality service as central to their role.
- 6.3 The Care Quality Commission (CQC) sets the essential level of quality and safety that all organisations must follow. By focusing on core duties for safety and quality, CQC can identify where standards are at risk of failing and will retain the ability to inspect services where safeguarding concerns have been raised. Professional regulation of the social care sector, including regulation of social workers, is another important aspect of delivering quality services.
- 6.4 Government should provide direction and leadership, ensuring that the law is clear, proportionate and effective. There is a particular responsibility for national government in relation to those who lack mental capacity, and their welfare and safety must be a priority. However, the state's role is to strike a balance – allowing people to make decisions about risk without becoming intrusive or overbearing. People tell us they wish to be safe, but equally they do not want to be over-protected and denied their independence. People also tell us that they want more choice and control. A modern social care system needs to balance freedom and choice with risk and protection.
- 6.5 The risk of abuse can come from people close to the individual concerned, not just from paid staff or volunteers. We want to support and encourage local communities to be the eyes and ears of safeguarding, speaking up for people who may not be able to protect themselves. This could build on existing Neighbourhood Watch schemes or involve initiatives by local HealthWatch. People and communities have a part to play in preventing, recognising and reporting neglect and abuse. It is everyone's responsibility to be vigilant.

- 6.6 An effective safeguarding system requires everyone to be clear about their roles and responsibilities. It is essential that there is coherent local leadership, vision and strategic direction. Safeguarding Adults Boards exist in all parts of the country and some currently take on this function. Local government should act as the champion of safeguarding within communities. In developing our plans for legislation we will consider whether this function should be placed on a statutory basis.
- 6.7 The Law Commission has recently consulted on a number of proposals on safeguarding as part of a proposed new adult care statute⁵⁷. We will work with the Law Commission in preparation for strengthening the law in respect of safeguarding. Our aim is to have a system that is proportionate and gives people local flexibility, without leaving gaps in the legislative framework.

Safeguarding is central to personalisation.

- 6.8 Choice and control can only be meaningful if people can make informed choices, in an environment where they can make decisions freely and safely. Giving people control over their care and support does not mean they are abandoned. Safeguards against poor practice, harm and abuse need to be an integral part of managing care and support.
- 6.9 Personalised care is for everyone, but some people will need more support than others to make choices about how they live their lives. Everyone has the right to personalised care and as much choice and control as possible. As we pick up the pace on personalisation, we need to ensure that this includes the most vulnerable members of our society, including those who may lack capacity. With effective personalisation comes the need to manage risk for people to make decisions as safely as possible. Making risks clear and understood is crucial to empowering service users and carers, recognising people as ‘experts in their own lives’.
- 6.10 Risk management does not mean trying to eliminate risk. It means managing risks to maximise people’s choice and control over their services. True empowerment means that people might make decisions service providers disagree with. But as long as the outcomes are part of the care plan and all risks have been fully discussed and understood, this can lead to real choice and control and a better quality of life for the individual.

Making it happen

- 6.11 Local councils should:
- ensure that everyone involved in local safeguarding is clear about their roles and responsibilities;

⁵⁷ Consultation can be found at: www.lawcom.gov.uk/current_consultations.htm

- ensure that people who need care and support to maintain their independence have their right to personal autonomy respected, underpinned by a proportionate approach to the management of risk; and
- champion and support safeguarding within communities. Citizens and communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting abuse and neglect.

6.12 The Government will:

- work with the Law Commission in preparation for strengthening the law on safeguarding to ensure the right powers, duties and safeguards are in place.

7. Our vision for productivity, quality and innovation

Greater local accountability will drive improvements and innovation to deliver higher productivity and high quality care and support services. A focus on publishing information about agreed quality outcomes will support transparency and accountability.

- 7.1 The Coalition Programme for Government made clear the over-riding importance of deficit reduction. The Spending Review recognised the pressures on the social care system in a challenging fiscal climate and allocated an additional £2bn by 2014/15 to support the delivery of social care. This includes £1bn through the NHS to be spent on measures that support social care but also benefit health. Of this £1bn, up to £300m a year is for re-ablement spending in the NHS, while the remainder will support other social care services. The other half of the £2bn is from additional local government grant funding, rising to £1bn by 2014/15. This funding will be allocated in addition to the Department's existing social care grants, which will rise in line with inflation. Grant funding for social care will therefore reach £2.4bn by 2014/15. In order to support local flexibility and to reduce administrative burdens, this funding will go to authorities through the local government formula grant.
- 7.2 This additional funding of £2bn comes in the context of a reduction to overall local government funding. It is vital that councils deliver lasting reforms and redesign their services to deliver efficiencies and transform how social care is delivered. Finding new and innovative ways to deliver social care, maintain quality and work in a more integrated way with the NHS is essential. We know that councils have an excellent track record in delivering efficiencies, and that the social care sector is on course to deliver 3% savings this year.
- 7.3 Councils must now redouble their efforts. Over the next four years, demographic changes will continue to put pressure on social care. Councils must examine how they use their resources and reform their services to ensure the very best quality outcomes for those who need social care. We have set out below a framework that councils should use when looking at delivering efficiencies and getting value for money from social care without reducing services.

Helping people to stay independent for as long as possible

- 7.4 Preventing people's needs from escalating will help to reduce the costs of intensive care packages. Employment is also an important part of helping people to stay independent for as long as possible. Effective rehabilitation and the management of long-term conditions are both central elements of the NHS's QIPP programme. Health and social care professionals should take a joint, evidence-based approach to identifying the needs of local populations and agreeing shared solutions.

- 7.5 Re-ablement services help people to regain their independence after a crisis, and can have a significant positive impact on people's quality of life. The recent study on the impacts of re-ablement, from the Personal Social Services Research Unit and the University of York, showed that those going through a re-ablement programme experienced a significant improvement in health-related quality of life compared to a comparison group⁵⁸. In addition, the report suggests that re-ablement is cost-effective for local authorities. For the 10 months after a re-ablement programme, people's care costs were around 60% lower than those who had not gone through a re-ablement programme - which significantly outweighed the initial costs of providing the re-ablement service to people.
- 7.6 To strengthen and mainstream re-ablement services, the Department of Health will amend the 'Payment by Results' tariff from April 2012 so that the NHS pays for re-ablement and other post-discharge services for 30 days after a patient leaves hospital. From next April, Trusts will not be reimbursed for unnecessary readmissions to hospital.
- 7.7 To prepare for these changes, we have allocated £70m for PCTs to spend on re-ablement in 2010/11. This is a chance for the NHS, including the emerging GP consortia, and councils to agree the re-ablement services they will need to fulfil the new 30-day post discharge responsibility. The Spending Review also allocated up to £300m a year for further re-ablement services. Investing in re-ablement should improve people's outcomes - supporting their independence, reducing unnecessary hospital admissions and easing discharges - which will also benefit the NHS.

Crisis or rapid response services

- 7.8 Case studies suggest that an integrated crisis response service that responds within a four-hour period could save an average of £2m per PCT, and £0.5m per council, by reducing ambulance callouts, unnecessary admission to hospital and unplanned entry to long term nursing or residential care.⁵⁹ Bristol PCT and Bristol City Council's service is an example of a highly regarded crisis response service. It is part of a comprehensive range of intermediate care services, which has saved around £4.3m across health and social care.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ <http://www.csed.dh.gov.uk/homeCareReablement/prospectiveLongitudinalStudy/?parent=5172&child=6450>

⁵⁹ See Care Services Efficiency Delivery research at: www.csed.dh.gov.uk/CrisisResponse/

⁶⁰ The case study is available at:

www.csed.dh.gov.uk/_library/Resources/CSED/CSEDProduct/Bristol_Crisis_Response_Case_Study.pdf

Providing care and support to meet people's goals

- 7.9 Providing people's care and support in the most appropriate and cost-effective way is vital. Self-evaluations from three councils indicate that adult social care departments could save at least 1.5 per cent per annum of their home and residential care spend by introducing integrated telecare support to people. North Yorkshire Council has led the way in embedding telecare services into its social care provision, saving around £1m per annum as a result.⁶¹
- 7.10 Assisted living is one of the most promising developments for ensuring the ageing population continues to be well served with high quality and affordable health and care services. Technologies such as telehealth help people with long-term conditions to better manage and understand their condition. They also provide daily information on health status to support more effective and timely clinical decisions. Telecare enables people to live at home independently for longer by providing technologies that make their homes more safe and secure.
- 7.11 Robust evidence on how to target telecare and telehealth to ensure both cost-effectiveness and successful outcomes is lacking. The £31m whole system demonstrator programme will start to address this problem. It is the largest ever randomised control trial of these technologies. Over 6,000 people across Kent, Cornwall and Newham are involved in testing assisted living services, and the evaluation by six of the UK's leading academic bodies will report in spring 2011. The results will inform the Department of Health's work with BIS on market shaping and the barriers to new technology entering the market, including assisted living.

Reducing spending on long term residential care for reinvestment in other services

- 7.12 *Use of Resources in Adult Social Care*⁶² highlighted how the proportion of social care budgets spent on long term nursing and residential care varies dramatically across the country – from 12 per cent to 80 per cent of spend on services for people with learning disabilities, for example. Some of this variation may reflect local preferences. However, some people are placed in residential care because there are few alternatives to meet their needs in the community, or because people are discharged from hospital without a suitable care plan.

⁶¹ See: www.csed.dh.gov.uk/AT/

⁶² *Use of Resources in Adult Social Care: A Guide for Local Authorities* (Department of Health, 2009).

- 7.13 Supported housing and extra care housing offer flexible levels of support in a community setting, and can provide better outcomes at lower costs for people and their carers than traditional high cost nursing and residential care. The Care Services Efficiency Delivery Programme's evaluation of a supported housing scheme for people with learning disabilities in Redcar with Cleveland suggested that a saving of £12,000 per person per annum could be achieved.⁶³ Better use of existing community-based services, for example step-down re-ablement or home improvement and adaptations, can also reduce demand for nursing and residential care. We expect councils to look closely at how they can reduce the proportion of spending on residential care through such improvements to their community-based provision.

Support to stay at home

In Nottingham, the Support Management and Response Team (SMaRT) covers over 1,000 people living in supported accommodation and in their own homes. This includes people with learning disabilities and mental health needs, homeless people, female victims of violence, ex-offenders and people with drug and alcohol issues. People can press the SMaRT button in their home to speak with an experienced support worker. If necessary, a mobile response team can swiftly attend. The service has directly saved over £0.5 million per year by replacing night staff and making sure that access to floating support is better linked to need. The service enables people who would otherwise be in high-cost residential care or hospitals to live in their own homes.⁶⁴

Homeshare is a model which allows people to stay in their own homes for longer. It is a simple way of helping people to help each other. A Homeshare involves two people with different sets of needs, both of whom also have something to offer. Firstly, people who have a home that they are willing to share but are at a stage in their life where they need some help and support. Secondly, people who need accommodation and who are willing to give some help in exchange for somewhere to stay.⁶⁵

⁶³ See: www.csed.dh.gov.uk/supportRelatedHousing/

⁶⁴ *Use of Resources in Adult Social Care: A Guide for Local Authorities* (Department of Health, 2009). Also see: www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_107596

⁶⁵ See: <http://naaps.org.uk/en/homeshare/?PHPSESSID=6b19ddd1de455d2f07dde3bafb009819>

Maximising spend on front-line services

- 7.14 The solid Spending Review settlement for social care requires the rigorous prioritising of expenditure to ensure that as much money as possible goes to those most in need. Tough choices will be required of councils to transform services and meet efficiencies. Councils must therefore ensure they minimise spend on back office administration and replace poor value services. Herefordshire Hospital Trust, PCT and Council have agreed to establish a public sector joint venture to carry out shared back office services across local government and health. They expect that this approach will lead to significant savings, and free up resources for front-line care.
- 7.15 Despite growth in the private and voluntary sectors, some councils retain a large proportion of in-house services. In 2008/09, around half of councils spent over a fifth of their residential care budgets on in-house provision, rising to over 60 per cent of residential care budgets in some areas. For day care, the situation was even more stark, with the majority of councils spending over half their budgets on in-house services.⁶⁶
- 7.16 There may be exceptional reasons for the council to retain services, but separating responsibility for commissioning and providing services should become the norm. It is crucial for providing choice for service users and carers, and increasing competition amongst providers. Evidence from a wide range of public services shows that choice and competition can be a powerful tool to drive up quality and reduce and control costs.⁶⁷ Local councils with substantial in-house provision should look to the market, including social enterprises, mutual and voluntary organisations, to replace them as a local service provider. Benchmarking both quality and unit costs provides a useful reference point for councils as they grow a broader market of local care providers.

High quality assessment and care management services

- 7.17 High quality assessment and care management services are central to providing a person-centred social care service. But inefficient, unnecessary processes remain. We expect councils to show that they have reduced unnecessary management costs in their assessment and care management processes and redirected it to funding more care and support. We will also look carefully at whether the law could allow some assessments to be undertaken by people themselves, including user led and community organisations, rather than councils. This could be better for the individual, make better use of council resources, address people's frustration at being asked the same questions on each contact, and reduce inconsistency in record keeping.

⁶⁶ PSS Ex1 data. Further information at: www.ic.nhs.uk/statistics-and-data-collections/social-care/adult-social-care-information/personal-social-services-expenditure-and-unit-costs-england-final-2008-09

⁶⁷ *Assessing the Impact of Public Sector Procurement on Competition* (Office of Fair Trading, 2004).

Putting quality at the heart of social care: a strategic approach to quality and outcomes

- 7.18 The balance of power is shifting dramatically – away from the centre and towards empowered local communities holding organisations to account for the services they provide based on the experience of service users and carers. The Government does not believe in top-down programmes or performance management. Instead we need to combine sector-led improvement with a stronger local voice and accountability. The national role in this approach should be to facilitate, assure and support, not to dictate.
- 7.19 The approach aims to free the frontline from bureaucratic constraints, and support local organisations to focus on the quality of care and the outcomes achieved. Local government will be responsible for delivering improved outcomes for people using services and their carers, without the focus on targets and service activity. By embedding outcomes throughout the social care system, we can help organisations at all levels to think about what individuals need, and design services to meet those needs.
- 7.20 The consultation document *Transparency in Outcomes: a framework for Adult Social Care*, published alongside this vision, proposes a new agenda for adult social care. It will be co-produced with the social care sector, voluntary and community organisations and people who use services over the coming months and years. It will have five core elements:
- **building the evidence base** – being clear about what quality means for social care and the relationship between quality and outcomes. Expanding the remit of NICE to cover adult social care, to produce quality standards that bring together best practice on service quality and achieving outcomes;
 - **demonstrating progress** – developing fair, consistent data on quality and outcomes which helps local government and communities to see progress and hold organisations to account;
 - **supporting transparency** – focusing on the core issues of transparency and local public accountability by making information on quality and outcomes available to local people, carers, commissioners and managers;
 - **rewarding and incentivising** – promoting quality improvement through stronger incentives for providers and commissioners and closer integrated working with the NHS; and
 - **securing the foundations** – ensuring essential standards of quality underpin all services to secure safety for the most vulnerable and support public confidence. This includes the role of regulation in controlling market entry, and the extent of inspection powers to check compliance and highlight risk.

- 7.21 The new approach signalled in the consultation will emphasise information generated by people who use services. The Government's plans for information services, *An Information Revolution: a Consultation on Proposals*, sets this trend in the context of broader plans to make information in health and social care much more responsive to people's needs.⁶⁸
- 7.22 Similarly, the performance assessment system will be changed to support the enhanced role of the sector and local communities in shaping local services and holding councils to account. The current annual assessment of councils as commissioners of adult social care will be ended and replaced by a new sector led-approach. Where concerns are raised about services, CQC will continue to be able to inspect councils. We envisage a robust system of triggers that can lead to inspection. For example, local HealthWatch organisations will be able to report concerns to HealthWatch England. It could request CQC to undertake inspections where it has grounds for concern about the quality or safety of social care or health services.
- 7.23 Adult social care has shown that, over the last two decades since the community care reforms, it has an excellent track record in delivering efficiencies. Now, quality and efficiency can no longer be seen as two separate objectives – we must deliver both.

Making it happen

7.24 Local councils should:

- develop a local plan for reform, to ensure that they are making the best use of available resources. This should draw upon work also being undertaken by ADASS, and by the Local Government Association led Place Based Productivity Programme.

7.25 The Government will:

- support the work of councils to deliver efficiency savings by co-ordinating and disseminating support tools and best practice; and
- publish and consult publicly on our proposals for a new strategic approach to quality and outcomes in adult social care.

⁶⁸ *Liberating the NHS: An Information Revolution: A Consultation on Proposals* (HM Government, 2010), www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Liveconsultations/DH_120080

8. Our vision for people

We can draw on a workforce who can provide care and support with skill, compassion and imagination, and who are given the freedom and support to do so. We need the whole workforce, including care workers, nurses, occupational therapists, physiotherapists and social workers, alongside carers and the people who use services, to lead the changes set out here.

A diverse workforce

- 8.1 The contribution of all those who make up the workforce in adult social care should be celebrated. Over 1.6 million people provide vital services day in day out, working alongside carers to help people live more independently and play a fuller role in our communities. Often working closely with people from other agencies, including the NHS, they have a huge variety of jobs and careers – from senior managers and professionals in social work, nursing and occupational therapy to people of all ages with practical skills in care, catering and other essential support roles. It is challenging but rewarding work.
- 8.2 To deliver the vision the workforce will need to respond to the challenges of the principles at its core when delivering care. They will be crucial to delivering personalisation. People with more choice and control over their care and support will need more information and advice, and want to know how to access and fund services, including from new brokerage and advocacy roles. The provision of personal budgets for all eligible people will mean personal assistants (PAs), directly employed by people who use care and support services, working in new, creative and person-centred ways to play an increasingly important role in providing tailored support to meet individual needs.
- 8.3 The principle of partnership and plurality will result in the workforce being employed in different types of organisations, some of which will work across traditional health and social care boundaries to deliver more integrated services. They will work for a variety of employers including mutuals, employee-owned co-operatives, user-led organisations, existing independent sector employers and individual people who use care and support services.

A skilled and responsive workforce

- 8.4 Delivering the vision demands a capable and well-trained workforce. This will be led by those working in the sector, their employers and employer-led organisations, including Skills for Care (the part of the Sector Skills Council that represents the sector) and the National Skills Academy for Social Care. Skills for Care will publish a workforce development strategy later this year to help employers design their workforces to support the greater personalisation and other changes to services set out in this vision. The Skills Academy will publish a leadership strategy to address the need to increase leadership capacity in the sector, in order to deliver on those changes.

- 8.5 Local councils will play an important role, working with local employers in the independent sector and other partners, including healthcare workforce planners, to commission the workforce of the future and lead local changes for existing staff. Continuing training and skills development is a vital investment in the future. The Department will work with BIS and others to increase uptake of professional standards.
- 8.6 The Department of Health will also work with BIS and others to ensure there is a secure and simplified framework for training and skills development within the sector to meet future needs. The particular needs of personal assistants and their employers will be addressed in a forthcoming PA strategy, to be published next year. The PA strategy will highlight the need to give people who use services choice and control over their care needs. It will also emphasise that with this freedom comes responsibility to be a good employer and to train, recruit and retain staff.
- 8.7 New and continuing professional roles will be developed for front-line social workers, occupational therapists, nurses and others. New career pathways will be developed, including more apprenticeships and a new care worker role in home and residential care, as well as more PAs. There will be renewed work with employers to maximise recruitment and, especially, retention within the sector. Employment opportunities in the sector are expected to grow over the medium term.
- 8.8 Sickness absence in the social care sector must be tackled. In adult social care rates of sickness absence range from 6.8 days per employee in council adult social services (incorporating social work staff) to 4.9 days per employee in the independent sector (which incorporates care staff).⁶⁹ Good staff health and well-being is important to quality and productivity in social care. Work in the NHS shows that the development of effective occupational health strategies can make a significant difference.⁷⁰ In the light of this and the challenges in social care, the Government will work with the social care sector to co-produce an occupational health strategy.

⁶⁹ *State of the Adult Social Care Workforce in England 2010*, Skills for Care

⁷⁰ *NHS Health and Well-being: Final Report* (Boorman S, 2009),

www.dh.gov.uk/en/publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_108799

New freedoms

- 8.9 Giving decision making to front-line professionals is important in building localised and flexible services. The workforce will be empowered to work more in partnership with carers and volunteers locally, helping to develop community skills. The initial findings of the Munro Review of children's services make clear that burdensome procedures and over-regulation reduce social workers' discretion to exercise professional judgement.⁷¹ The Government will carefully consider Professor Munro's work as we give more decision making authority back to social workers and allow staff to exercise judgement with skill and imagination.
- 8.10 To develop the confidence and competence of the profession across both children's and adults' services, we will implement the recommendations of the Social Work Taskforce, including the creation of a new College of Social Work. Social workers and others will play a key role in community development, supporting individuals and community groups to provide more care and support locally.
- 8.11 The Localism Bill will give organisations the ability to challenge local authorities where they believe they could provide services differently or better. Social Work Practices (SWP) are one example of running mainstream social care functions differently. They are professional partnerships of social workers, voluntary sector organisations and private sector organisations independent of the council that operate as social enterprises. Existing pilots currently focus on looked-after children.⁷² We will invite councils and their social workers to extend this opportunity to adult services during 2011. We want to see a much more locally specialised service, with social workers combining their skills with the knowledge that local people and carers have about their own needs. This should result in greater choice and control over the services that local people purchase.⁷³

⁷¹ *The Munro Review of Child Protection* (Munro E, 2010), www.education.gov.uk/munroreview/

⁷² The Department for Education social work practice pilots are explained in more detail at: www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/safeguardingandsocialcare/childrenincare/socialworkpracticepilots/swppilots/

⁷³ For more information about Social Work Practices you can e-mail swpenquiries@dh.gsi.gov.uk or write to: Social Care Vision, Department of Health, Room 116, Wellington House, 133–155 Waterloo Road, London SE1 8UG.

Regulation of the social care workforce

- 8.12 The primary objective of workforce regulation should be to secure the safety of service users and assure public confidence in the workforce in a way that is both proportionate and targeted. The General Social Care Council has proved to be an expensive model and due to past management failures has not been able to take on the regulation of other care workers. The Government has announced the transfer of the General Social Care Council's regulatory functions to the renamed Health Professions Council, reflecting its new broader remit. We are currently reviewing the overall approach to professional regulation in health and social care and will be making proposals later in the year.

Making it happen

8.13 Local councils should:

- take a leadership role in workforce commissioning in their area, including integrated local area workforce strategies linked to JSNAs. Central government will support and co-ordinate developments only where and when the sector demands this, with a particular focus on the smaller employers who predominate in this sector.

8.14 The Government will:

- support the publication of a workforce development strategy by Skills for Care and a leadership strategy by the Skills Academy
- publish a personal assistants' strategy in 2011; and
- working with councils, extend the piloting of social work practices to adult social care during 2011.

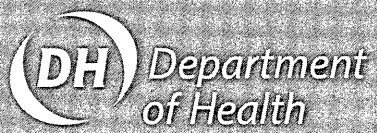
9. Conclusion

- 9.1 This vision for social care is part of the Government's ambition to reform health and social care, alongside an integrated public health service focused on prevention, and an NHS with patients in the driving seat and professionals with discretion to make the decisions that matter to people and service users. Local government and adult social care in particular have a key role to play, working in partnership to determine local public health needs and to integrate the commissioning and delivery of services wherever this makes sense locally.
- 9.2 The Spending Review settlement gives local councils a solid basis to reform social care services, rise to the new opportunities and accelerate the pace of change in their existing responsibilities. It also assumes councils will show the leadership needed to make tough choices to deliver efficiency and transform services. The partnership agreement, *Think Local, Act Personal* published in November 2010 set out the immediate actions for councils, focusing on personalisation, a community-based approach to developing services with local communities and other service providers, and a sustained drive on productivity. The Government welcomes the partnership agreement. As we establish the new structures in the NHS and public health, we will work closely with local government and voluntary and community sector leaders to ensure that service development continues apace.
- 9.3 This vision for social care demonstrates the Government's values of freedom, fairness and responsibility, shifting power from central to local, from state to citizen, from provider to people who use services. Our ambition is to foster the conditions in which communities, social enterprises and others can develop a diverse range of preventative and other support that will help to reduce isolation, improve health and well-being and, by doing so, better manage the demand for formal health and care. The Spending Review prioritised resources for social care and partnership working with the NHS, including a transfer from the NHS rising to £1bn by 2014/15. This demonstrates the importance that the Government attaches to social care services. It is now up to councils, working with their local communities and those who already provide care as a carer, family member or neighbour, to make a reality of this vision.

Annex A

The Vision for quality in social care – a summary of proposals	
Prevention	<p>The Government will:</p> <p>publish a White Paper on public health, outlining councils' enhanced leadership role in health improvement and the opportunities this offers.</p>
Personalisation	<p>The Government will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • put personalisation at the heart of the framework for quality and outcomes being developed and examine the outcomes and benefits for people; • consider how to embed personalisation in the new legal framework following the Law Commission's report – for instance, in strengthened guidance new statutory principles to underpin the law, and through an entitlement, or right, for support to be offered as a personal budget or direct payment; • consider how to pursue greater portability of assessment, subject to the Law Commission and Funding Commission reports; and • use the pilots currently under way to inform the rollout of personal health budgets and make it possible to combine personal health budgets with personal budgets in social care in the future.
Plurality and partnership	<p>The Government will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify and remove barriers to collaboration, pooling or alignment of budgets across health and social care and bring together funding streams for employment support; and • consider the barriers to market entry for micro and small social enterprises, user-led organisations and charities, and the proposed role for Monitor to play in market shaping.
Providing protection	<p>The Government will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work with the Law Commission in preparation for strengthening the law on safeguarding to ensure the right powers, duties and safeguards are in place.
Productivity, quality and innovation	<p>The Government will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support the work of councils to deliver efficiency savings by co-ordinating and disseminating support tools and best

	<p>practice; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• publish and consult publicly on our proposals for a new strategic approach to quality and outcomes in adult social care.
People	<p>The Government will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• support the publication of a workforce development strategy by Skills for Care and a leadership strategy by the Skills Academy;• publish a personal assistants' strategy in 2011; and• working with councils, extend the piloting of social work practices to adult social care during 2011.



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