DRAFT

Complying, transforming or resisting in the new austerity? Realigning social welfare and independent action among English voluntary organisations

Linda Milbourne, Birkbeck College

l.milbourne@bbk.ac.uk

Mike Cushman, London School of Economics

m.cushman@lse.ac.uk

Abstract

This paper considers implications for the English voluntary sector of recent shifts in the terms of engagement with the state following rapid political and policy changes under the UK Coalition government. It explores how ideas of what constitutes the voluntary sector are being reconstructed in policy and practical settings, examining processes contributing to re-shaping the voluntary sector's conception of itself and beliefs about appropriate arrangements, legitimate activities and aspirations. It draws on theories of institutional isomorphism and governmentality to explore these changes which appear to be modifying and restricting the voluntary sector's previous role in social welfare, limiting its influence and its ability to act simultaneously within and against the state. The paper argues the integral role of the state in recasting the roles of different sectors but also discusses the extent to which compliance is necessary to organisational survival, asking what spaces exist for independent voluntary sector activity and resistance.

Introduction: Realigning social welfare and the emphasis for voluntary organisations

As governments across Europe counter economic crises by restricting welfare services and resources, the emphasis on non-state provision, both for-profit and non-profit, and community based solutions to growing socio-economic problems has increased. Over several decades, a neo-liberal economic approach has pervaded political thought in the UK and elsewhere, privileging markets and New Public Management arrangements in public services (Newman and Clarke, 2009). Accordingly, outsourcing public services to non-state providers has steadily expanded. Simultaneously, significant reductions to public welfare spending have provoked growing concerns among both public and voluntary sector (VS) workers about maintaining provision in poorer areas (Taylor, 2011).

Under New Labour's Third Way ideology, outsourcing services and diverse community initiatives produced considerable growth and development among voluntary organisations (VOs), underpinned by rising income to the sector, although some 3% of VOs registered as charities received some 75% of the income (NCVO, 2010). VOs were sought to provide alternative solutions to both market and state failures in service delivery (Le Grand, 1998; SEU, 2001), and were acknowledged as offering distinctive expertise in tackling intractable social problems. However, under the Coalition, policy and perceptions around VOs and welfare have shifted markedly, representing, as Macmillan (2013a, p186) argues a paradigm shift 'in how the third sector is understood'. In concrete terms, the income growth from which many parts of the sector benefited for nearly a decade has reversed, with preference given to corporate contractors; and local infrastructure support organisations are being transformed (BLF, 2011) but effectively decimated. Market competition and private enterprise are now positioned as the answers to resolving service problems more efficiently and VOs have been relegated to largely unpaid community work or corporate sub-contractors. Over 2 years since 2009-10, income to the voluntary sector overall has dropped significantly with rising inflation (NCVO, 2013), reductions in grants and philanthropy (Pharoah, 2011) and loss of service contracts (CAF, 2012).

Increased reliance on the voluntary sector under New Labour depended increasingly on its adoption of managerial behaviours and practices (Harris, 2010) and a willingness to build

capacity, collaborate or merge to take on increasingly large service contracts. However, a continuing service delivery role under the current regime may depend less on adaption and more on compliance with the harsh terms of service sub-contracting. Engagement with this new 'public' services agenda also implies complicity in the shift towards the longer term privatisation of welfare services, highlighting ethical dilemmas (Murray, 2012), and in turn raising questions about whether such changes signal a demise of the approaches and values for which VOs have been sought hitherto as service contributors (Buckingham, 2011).

As contracts for different welfare services are scaled up and rolled out, the Coalition commitment to a crucial, continuing role for VOs in funded service delivery is proving hollow (Butler, 2011; Marsden, 2011), exacerbating the exclusion of many VOs with inadequate financial reserves to manage the risks of payment by results. It is also clear that risks are increasingly being transferred down to small sub-contractors (Baring, 2013; Horton, 2013), belying the rationale for the size and financial criteria embedded in contracts. Paradoxically, the failures of corporate contractors emphasise the risks in new arrangements, including of inadequate services, but have done little to curb government enthusiasm for privatisation. However, as Murray (2012, p63) indicates, the rhetorical inclusion and promotion of VOs as potential bidders and service providers, 'confuses the public and leaves the voluntary sector compromised as a "Trojan horse"'; while corporates include VOs simply as 'bid candy', subsequently discarded. This discussion raises dilemmas for VOs about their involvement, highlighting ways that dependence on government resources over the last decade has exacerbated their current vulnerability and potentially compromised independent purposes and activities, including those concerned with social change and justice (Milbourne, 2013).

Service providers comprise only one segment of a diverse non-profit sector which is effectively a loose alliance of differing interest groups. Large and medium sized charities delivering services have been among the most visible and prominent actors, while many small community based VOs remain 'under the radar' (McCabe and Phillimore, 2010), receiving little or no state funding. Open Public Services, Localism and Big Society rhetoric has highlighted other roles for the voluntary sector, including in community planning and organising (Taylor, 2012), and in providing infrastructure for voluntary

activities (Rochester, 2012). While some VOs have engaged enthusiastically in local community plans, criticism has emerged about top-down rhetoric versus genuine local empowerment (Padley, 2013) and around the inequalities of limited community support and over-stretched resources in poorer areas (Slocock, 2012). It is also apparent that government policy has deliberately blurred the line between funded services and unfunded voluntary or community action, with greater emphasis on people doing things for themselves, the latter promoted as a virtue and integral to repairing society in a 'broken Britain' (Blond, 2010) that has become overly state dependent.

This maps a threefold role for VOs beyond contracted service delivery: to help provide a welfare safety-net where funded services are either inadequate or fail; to contribute expertise to community organising; and to support a small infrastructure for organising volunteers. These latter roles appear familiar but illustrate a re-shaping of community action, potentially deflecting oppositional campaigns (Milbourne, 2013), and overall contributing to increased fragmentation among VOs adopting different roles and approaches. Visible among all these changes is a dichotomy between dispersal coupled with greater disciplinary restraints over voluntary sector roles and conversely, a decoupling of the state and VOs, signifying greater freedoms to develop a vibrant civil society (Macmillan, 2013a). All this maps a fundamental recasting of state relationships with VOs, signalling that new narratives and multiple understandings of the voluntary sector are needed.

The paper goes on to discuss these changes through the influence of governmental powers and dominant organisational cultures on shifts in voluntary sector values and arrangements, drawing both on new institutional theory, in particular isomorphism (Di Maggio and Powell, 1983) and governmentality (Rose, 1999). Subsequent sections of the paper consider the application of these theoretical perspectives to empirical examples drawn from several welfare fields and to insights into the kinds of roles that VOs can expect to play in the future. There are significant freedoms, as well as hardships, in decoupling from government funding regimes and the paper questions the 'continuing commitment of government to engage with the third sector' (Alcock et al, 2012, p358). It concludes by exploring instead,

the spaces that exists for subverting or resisting ways that voluntary organisations are being cast in the contemporary policy and political landscape.

Framing the debates: isomorphism and governmentality

The UK voluntary sector has a long history of providing social and humanitarian welfare, responding and adapting to the demands and funding vagaries of different governments and addressing gaps in state provision (Lewis, 2005). This has produced shifting boundaries and definitions around the sector's status, leading to questions about the extent to which we are currently observing a fundamental shift as opposed to more incremental changes (Macmillan, 2013a).

Through the New Labour period the hypothetical domain of the third sector gradually increased, encompassing diverse organisations: from local community and campaigning associations; to large charities with trading arms; to social enterprises; and to some degree, socially responsible businesses - effectively drawing a wider range of organisations within the state's governable terrain (Carmel and Harlock, 2008). The rebranding of the Office for the Third Sector as the Office for Civil Society (OCS) under the Coalition government tells its own story in extending the OCS remit further to wider civil society: to informal community groupings and individual citizens, making explicit the policy intentions to nudge negative welfare behaviours (Brown, 2012). As Alcock and Kendall (2011) argue, the process of mainstreaming under New Labour led to decontested spaces in which many VOs adopted consensual discourse and behaviours, with expectations of gaining greater legitimacy and access to resources. There were, conversely, contested spaces (Milbourne, 2013), which may become more prevalent with the decline of resources and more stringent requirements on compliance. It is to explore the extension of both coerced arrangements and supposedly consensual spaces that the paper draws on the two aspects of theory below.

The effects of isomorphism

The process of organisations conforming to dominant arrangements in the surrounding organisational environment has been analysed as isomorphism (Di Maggio and Powell, 1983), with legitimacy granted to those displaying approved characteristics. While pressures towards homogeneity have been largely driven by the state and associated

professional fields (ibid), this often operates most powerfully through expectations within a similar service field (Aberg, 2012), and is also advanced through resource dependency (Pfeffer, 2003), reinforced by competitive funding arrangements. The consequence is a gradual homogenisation of organisations working within similar fields, producing a context where the rational outcome of efforts to deal with both uncertainties and performance controls constructs overall similarities in organisational cultures and arrangements. These arguments are familiar to both management and voluntary sector scholars (Billis, 2010), and for that reason, discussion of how these pressures become operationalised, especially in times of change, through inter-agency relationships, intermediary bodies, professional standards, resource dependency and, in particular, dominant understandings of what counts as legitimate action and arrangements, remains brief.

In summary, the spread of public services outsourcing, with associated managerial and monitoring cultures (Baines et al, 2011) prompted needs in the VS for professional management skills which have been integral to changing practices in VOs (Harris, 2010). Resource dependency and contract requirements produce enforced modifications to activities (coercive isomorphism). In the longer term, the effect is to limit alternative practices and aspirations and slowly transform self-definition: trends of professionalisation and commercialisation which are mirrored in processes re-shaping civil society organisations internationally (Eikenberry, 2009).

Not all isomorphic pressures are coercive. As Aberg (2012) argues, there are (or have been) significant incentives to choosing closer cooperation with the state or private sector, and adopting what appear as normative mainstream arrangements; and also to becoming more market oriented. Such choices encourage VOs to embrace the language and arrangements of the surrounding environment in a process of mimetic isomorphism (Di Maggio and Powell, 1991). Material resources may be incentives but the goal is often about increasing external legitimacy, in turn leading to better positioning in relation to influence and resources. Legitimacy can be understood as ways that the actions and arrangements of an organisation are seen to imitate systems of normative behaviours (Suchman, 1995). However, such norms are socially constructed, often to serve specific interests; whereas

organisations also create their own meanings (Weick, 1995) from which they derive internal legitimacy.

The dangers are that in striving for greater external legitimacy, a VO decouples from its traditions in civil society, and from the meanings and purposes that ground it with members or service users and community stakeholders; and, consequently, tensions and ambiguities ensue, weakening organisational identity. There may also be conflicting narratives *within* an organisation around how its meanings and purposes are understood as VOs internalise discourses and operational practices which bestow legitimacy in external settings, while continuing to claim cultural credibility, rhetorically at least, with former goals and narratives. There are also opposing examples: VOs that have chosen to resist external pressures to sustain their roots in local connectedness (Harris and Young, 2009; Milbourne, 2013).

Where there are clusters of similar organisations within an organisational field or local area, mimetic or normative isomorphism may exert pressure to maintain similar arrangements to sister organisations, as Milbourne (2009) describes of VOs working with young people in one area. Organisations may also choose to imitate what they see as successful models, especially if these are perceived as conferring increased status within their organisational fields. However, within clusters of organisations in one field or area, larger organisations and those with longer established practices may well dominate the arrangements adopted, suppressing alternative and innovative approaches. This could be construed as normative isomorphic pressure: adopting what is widely considered as 'the way that things are done' Hoggett (2004, p196).

With economic recession and an intensification of public sector cuts, pressure to diversify and become more enterprising were integral to New Labour's stage directions for the VS (Wilding, 2010), and were echoed in the Coalition's exhortations to seize entrepreneurial opportunities (OCS, 2010). The emphasis on business links and entrepreneurialism has now pervaded sections of the VS to the extent that some (especially newer) VOs identify themselves as 'social enterprises' as a way of seeking competitive and resource advantages (NCIA, 2013). Many VS actors discuss choosing to adopt particular models, language or behaviours which enable them to become effective boundary spanners for their

organisations (Lewis, 2010) but there is also a reflexive process where the environment has created a culture of expectation that such changes should be assumed to anticipate legitimacy and success. While useful in understanding how powerful cultures of arrangements induce shifts in organisational models and narratives more widely, these isomorphic trends are insufficient to explain the fundamental recasting of voluntary sector roles that we have identified above; and we examine governmentality to explore these questions further.

Governmentality and the integral role of the state

For several hundred years, the balance between state and VS welfare has been significant in shaping the form and emphasis of VS activities, and its ability to operate within and also criticise public agencies: both *in and against* the state (Holloway, 2005). For some 25 years, relationships with the state have significantly shaped the nature of VS activities, remodelling its contributions to social welfare and society. Arguably, as VOs delivered more state services and projects, they grew in influence and mainstream legitimacy while independent activities and criticism of government agencies became more inhibited (Milbourne, 2013).

Managerialism (Clarke et al, 2000) has been criticised for importing excessive 'command and control' and monitoring mechanisms into public service management (Brown, 2010) which, in turn, spread to the voluntary sector. Service goals and intended approaches can be distorted through marketisation, inappropriate contract criteria and targets and service rationing (Milbourne and Cushman, 2013). However, the scaling-up of contractualism has wreaked more widespread damage, producing a realignment of activities and fundamental ideas about welfare purposes, consolidating negative attitudes towards welfare beneficiaries (Sage, 2012).

Miller and Rose (1990, p3-4) examine the expansion of governed spaces achieved through policy (and associated cultures of arrangements), rather than policing, applying Foucault's concept of governmentality. They explain that, 'policies always appear surrounded by more or less systematised attempts to adjudicate on their vices and virtues,' may be superseded by others either, 'promising to achieve the same ends by improved means' or 'advocating

something different.' In other words policies may appear as a harmless programmatic means to achieving desired outcomes but are ways of ensuring and implanting changes of a political nature. The authors go on to argue that policy evaluation, while seeming to assess effective implementation, is integral to the powers of change embedded in policy systems and to understanding the operation of processes of governmentality.

It is not simply the hard technologies of computers or financial threats which enforce policy compliance but also the related implementation mechanisms - schemas and templates and associated discourse - which together institute the necessary discipline though producing knowable, calculable and administrable objects. Within the VS, these schemas manifest themselves through contract criteria, increasingly detailed specifications, performance data, the language and means through which they are communicated - ultimately the cultures of arrangements through which organisational actors conform (Milbourne and Cushman, 2013). All these requirements demand forms of professionalization, and standardisation and homogenisation of approaches, denominating activities in the currency of the governing rather than the governed.

Countering ideas of hierarchical management there has also been a shift towards networked forms of governance in public services. As Bevir (2011) identifies, these arose both from rational choice theory and critiques of state bureaucracies, leading to neo-liberal reforms and marketisation, and subsequently, a quest for more flexible alternatives, such as in the multi-agency partnerships promoted by New Labour and the Coalition's localism strategies. These were models purportedly better suited to modern and consensual forms of governance, in which hierarchies could be regarded as 'increasingly redundant' (Davies, 2011, p6). However, new public management cultures have persistently dominated collaborative projects and associated funding and monitoring arrangements for community developments, showing how hierarchical power habitually reasserts itself in partnership working, despite the intention to facilitate more open governance (Milbourne, 2009). Moreover, as Davies (2011) argues, the apparent masking of persistent hierarchies and the hegemonic powers of the state and allied agencies within such governance forms serves dominant neo-liberal political interests in falsely communicating consensus.

The role that the voluntary sector has played in governance has, however, had limited discussion in debates around governmentality. Carmel and Harlock (2008) illustrate ways that the state established and extended its influence both through outsourcing services and through use of cross-sector partnerships as forms of governance and delivery. In parallel, many VOs have been complicit in extending the reach of governable terrain through their participation in public service delivery, cross-sector planning bodies, collaborative projects and policy making fora, broadening the ambit of government priorities into previously more autonomous community-based work. By positioning themselves within these governance spaces, VOs increase compliance with governmentally driven projects while reducing the room for independent challenges; thus creating insiders and outsiders among VOs: those seeking legitimacy and influence through insider tactics and those excluded by pursuing alternative approaches. Different research examples (Milbourne, 2009; Howard and Taylor, 2010) illustrate the differential powers and influence of VOs involved in partnership work, where dominant organisational cultures determine the rules of play (Clegg, 1989). As Hoggett (2004) argues, in inter-organisational settings, an assumed culture of consensus prevails which suppresses alternative arrangements and the very differences and creative solutions for which VOs have often been included, also belying the purportedly more pluralist aims of such work.

As the Coalition restricts the powers and scope of local government and corporations increase their share of 'public' service delivery, the business sector has gained power over shaping conditions for service activity, while VOs are increasingly excluded. Many VOs lack financial credentials to be eligible as contractors (Marsden, 2011); have insufficient reserves to survive under the terms of sub-contracts; or are excluded, as corporations prioritise profits at the expense of frontline delivery (Wright, 2013).

Widespread financial losses among VOs have also prompted a shift in thinking about strengthening VS alliances with business (Harris, 2012). However, to disregard the integral role of the state in engineering the environment encompassing each sector would be a mistake. Tracing the hegemonic processes underpinning and sustaining beliefs in the withdrawal of the state and the appropriateness of markets and neo-liberal economic arrangements is crucial to making sense of these changes. However, rather than heeding the

growing gaps in services resulting from profit-led contractors; or the poor reputation and evident failures of corporations heavily engaged in social welfare services where they have little relevant experience (Long, 2012), the focus has shifted instead to individuals and 'communities' to fill the gaps left behind by failures and cost-cutting (Horton, 2013). Residual welfare, passed to community and voluntary activity, is heralded positively as a means to promote a more responsible, less welfare dependent citizenship (Brown, 2012).

Thus the Coalition government has promoted attitudinal shifts alongside rationing and conditionality in welfare, affecting moral judgements about what is viewed as fair or who deserving of public support. The consequences are damaging to wider social relations, encouraging divisions rather than cohesion; and Hoggett et al (2013, p583) suggest that this populist anti-welfare rhetoric coupled with the policy emphasis on localism is steering society towards parochialism and away from 'the big questions about social inequalities'. Tackling presumed welfare dependency more forcefully than the previous government, and representing it as substantially responsible for public debts, has allowed the Coalition to exploit existing social fractures and advance a stronger rhetoric around dismantling the public sector. Redirecting services from VOs to profit-seeking providers facilitates this shift in the nature and perception of 'public' services more rapidly.

Within this new service framework VOs are somewhat incidental, encouraged both to participate in the supply chain and to concentrate on local 'associational' voluntary activities. Campaigning charities are criticised (CESI, 2012; DCLG, 2012) and VOs of most interest are those deemed innovative and enterprising, ready to 'seize new opportunities' (OCS, 2010, p6). The re-engineering of the public sphere could well be slowed if alternative approaches or potentially subversive VOs were more welcome; and indeed, these new frameworks have been constructed in ways that largely restrict or exclude them.

The decline in state funding to VOs for outsourced services and community projects, suggests an opportunity to reclaim independence and free them up from the influence and powers of the state. However, this assumption is potentially flawed, not least because of the recent dispersal of prospective governable terrain through localism and open public services; and much depends on how VOs deal with the dilemmas of these new spaces. The

creation of a unit drawing on nudge theory (Thaler and Sunstein, 2008) to influence the behaviours of welfare users and reduce welfare use and costs is a concrete sign of the Coalition government extending its reach. Nudge theory, drawing on behavioural economics and cognitive psychology, has informed both US and UK government strategies intended to influence individuals' behaviours: to deter behaviours deemed as discordant with dominant views and arrangements. Ethical concerns about imposing social norms of behaviour in a diverse multi-cultural society are largely bypassed, as is the emphasis on individual agency, which disregards the effects of socio-economic structures and institutions in maintaining barriers to change.

The pragmatism and consensual assumptions embedded in political messages around norms of behaviour are integral to strategies aimed to nudge both individual and organisational behaviours in the desired directions, away from the purported social disease of state funding dependency. Agents of local communities - VOs and civil society actors - are identified as key components in maintaining and also reinforcing a 'civilising' role - constructed initially in rhetoric as Big Society. However, such roles are not only about consensually driven processes of civilising welfare (Lever, 2011); there are markedly punitive alternatives, in the enforcement of harsher controls for dissenters. Thus nudging behaviour may also be construed as disciplining groups and individuals; and punishments the outcome of failures to adapt.

Both isomorphism and governmentality can be interpreted as over-deterministically but conceptualising the power of govermentality as the temporal resolution of a relational network of forces in society, embedded in predominant values, rituals, assumed beliefs and institutional practices (Foucault, 1977), is helpful in understanding the intersection of agency with these influences. In other words, while the discussion above has considered macro-level trends, everyday examples of practice also demonstrate ways in which VOs, their staff, members and user groups resist and also accommodate different influences, sometimes adopting contradictory positions. For example, there is choice as well as pressure to survive as a service provider, which may mean becoming complicit in the privatisation and impoverishment of public services. Moreover, entering the new supply chain is already leading to demise for some charities undermined by financial risks (Butler,

2011; Bawden, 2013). There is also the potential to retreat from the state's projects in realigning public services, to decouple from state funding dependency and strengthen alternatives; and the next part of the paper explores the dilemmas being played out through examples in different contexts.

Continuities and changes

Empirical research on changes among voluntary organisations since Coalition policies began to take effect is inevitably limited but examples are emerging. Below, we identify illustrations from our own research and other recently published studies. Our research draws on area based case studies in three relatively deprived inner-city areas of England, mainly small VOs working with children and young people. Most were service providers and some were also involved in campaigning and advocacy. Our research also includes data from a further qualitative study in which some larger charities discussed experiences of recent service contracts. In what follows, we initially consider service fields where scaled up contracts are spreading, with pressures on VOs towards growth and building capacity. Our examples demonstrate isomorphic pressures, often visible through more concrete phenomena but also illustrate governmentality at work in the broader re-shaping processes and restrictions on autonomous activities and independent voices over time.

Voluntary organisations working in criminal justice

VOs have a long history of work in the criminal justice system, especially in supporting prisoners and ex-offenders. Recent policy developments, as Mills et al's study (2011) demonstrates, have encouraged increased involvement in delivering services linked to supervising and sanctioning offenders. Traditionally, VOs have focused on supplementary services, such as mentoring and support, and on advocacy and penal reform to improve the treatment of victims, suspects and offenders.

Hucklesby and Corcoran's (2013) study in this field also shows that the scaling up of outsourcing and the combining of prison delivery and support services in contracts is drawing VOs deeper into 'the management and supervision of offenders', involving them in administering sanctions either directly or indirectly. Changes are therefore exacerbating tensions between service delivery, and reform and advocacy roles; and VOs are potentially

moving from altruistic activities to needing to demonstrate effectiveness in different terms. In other words, organisational goals and the meanings of successful work are gradually being transformed.

Some VOs have sought a bigger level of engagement in new services, assuming to gain increased legitimacy and therefore greater influence over penal conditions. However, as they enter this growing service contract market alongside private sector competitors, Mills et al's (2011) indicate that the more flexible ethos and approaches that they aspire to bring to prison services are becoming submerged by security priorities and the complexity of language and arrangements. Hucklesby and Corcoran (2013) also highlight stringent contract conditions and the effects of payment by results as restricting flexibility and inducing mission drift, while bidding wars are also generating divisions amongst VOs, previously allied as advocates for reforms. The overall consequences are pressures to neglect some of the hardest to help groups in society.

The additional requirements imposed because of the strict security regimes surrounding custodial institutions also compound restrictions on activities and discipline providers. While both normative and coercive isomorphic pressures are visible, it is the longer term restructuring of services and the growth of composite contracts encompassing support services that were previously the province of VOs, independent of, and supplementary to, the state that demonstrates the spread of the governable terrain to voluntary sector areas of expertise.

The third part of these transitions is the way in which critical voices in the criminal justice field are being constrained as service contracts encroach on VOs' freedoms to campaign and also draw them into administering punishments. In a complex extension of state led agency to non-state providers, this re-locates the dilemmas and contradictions of punishment frameworks. There is now limited room emerging which allows these VOs to operate both *in* and *against* the state (Holloway, 2005).

Working in the Work Programme: Network Plus

Network Plus (NP), a case study drawn from our own research, is a large national non-profit organisation working with the unemployed across England and Wales, which started

some 35 years ago in three neighbourhood centres in a large English urban area. Over 10 years, up to 2010, NP grew steadily, developing regional centres and delivering advice and support, diversifying with partnerships and collaboratively funded projects run in many community centres, while maintaining a focus on the unemployed. It had gained a successful reputation locally and nationally for sustaining people in work, with previously unemployed people contributing to voluntary advice work and also establishing small non-profit enterprises, such as a drop-in cafe. The last few years has seen NP become more overtly enterprising, extending projects and establishing trading ventures and professional fund-raising schemes.

NP bid for contracts under the Work programme in several regions, in collaboration with private contractors but was mainly unsuccessful, an experience which parallels that of other VOs: wide-scale loss of direct service contracts and difficulty in gaining sub-contracts (Marsden, 2011). The rapid shifts in control over provision for the unemployed reflect the extent of changes in this field, engineered through scaling-up; and the use of key financial criteria and business reputation to underpin contract allocations in preference to service expertise and experience.

Discussing her experience of these changes, one of the NP regional managers identified aspects of the new contracting processes as partly about covert compliance, 'fitting in with the "can do more for less" culture' (Shelley). However, she also described the extent to which the risks for payment by results were being transferred downwards in sub-contracts as a 'pretty brutal awakening'. The harsh new contract culture was threatening NP's financial survival but also their underlying approaches to work with the unemployed, together with their long track record of success. Another local co-ordinator, Jackie, conceded: 'Survival now, may depend on limiting vision and creativity in our projects, narrowing approaches, 'parking' clients or restricting activities to those most likely to succeed.' Jackie admitted, 'never mind the informal work... we can't afford not to meet the targets.'

Narrowing the focus of activities discourages the development of innovative work and generates a culture among workers and agencies focused on meeting prescribed outcomes within a restricted range. The consequence is that structural problems for those that are

unemployed and marginalised and institutional failures, such as in poor quality support, are both obscured and reinforced, relegating some groups in society as disposable or outside safety-nets of projects, an outcome recently visible from the Work Programme more widely (Horton, 2013).

Scaled-up contracting within a professional field also pressures organisations to move from more specialist or locally responsive provision to supplying more generic services. With just 18 contract areas across the UK, resulting in two or three prime contractors in each area controlling funded provision for the unemployed, the Work Programme offers some stark examples of processes promoting service homogenisation, with providers controlled through schemas ensured by harsh contract terms, payment by results and gagging clauses around financial information and performance. Among local providers there are inevitable variations, and specified activities and performance controls may be unwittingly subverted or open to deliberate gaming (Milbourne and Cushman, 2013); but restrictions have undoubtedly multiplied.

Bucking the trend: Horizons' work in youth justice

There may be alternatives, and Foucault (1977) argues that harsh disciplinary regimes also breed resistances. Horizons, a small VO in a relatively deprived inner city area, illustrates an organisation that initially accommodated normative isomorphic influences but has more recently resisted pressures to conform. Horizons was one of several VOs involved in a longitudinal study begun in 1999 and has a 30 year history of work with disengaged young people in the youth justice system. The last few years has seen it holding firmly to a coherence of purpose, and resisting external expectations and pressures to develop in other ways.

Since 1999, Horizons has moved from local government Social Services grant funding to a riskier education services contract, containing problematic service targets. With a history in youth work, the educational performance demands became, not only onerous, diverting resources and activities, but also posed financial risks. Horizons therefore reviewed its goals and decided to re-emphasise its specialist focus on young people 'in trouble' with the

law. It re-negotiated funding, securing a more flexible contract with the local Youth Offending Services (YOS).

However, more recently, external pressures to increase capacity have intensified. The YOS in a neighbouring area pursued Horizons to take on a new contract which would have doubled their places. Despite considerable discussion among staff and management committee members, Julie, the co-ordinator's, comments reflect the reasons for their eventual decision:

> There's such strong pressure towards big is best and Riverdon YOS wants us to sign up... But that's a whole new negotiation and there's always hidden catches. So...we've said we'll take a extra few young people if we have space ...but we won't have a whole new contract with all the extra demands involved.

The pressures continued with Horizons' staff being asked to take part as advisors in a pilot youth crime prevention project, involving outreach work on local social housing estates. Their advice helped the local government to gain Home Office funding for a bigger project but once the full contract specifications emerged, the terms looked very different. Funding was loaded heavily towards successful outcomes and performance targets involved unrealistic expectations of moving young people from potentially crime-related activities into training and work within very short timescales, laying Horizons open to significant risks, both financial and reputational. Cora, a trustee explained the VO's reasons for not pursuing the funds, despite significant pressure to do so, including their need for income.

> We got involved because it's prevention work with the kind of young people we work with... But how they wanted it run ...it's not worth it.... They invited us to pilot activities because they recognised our expertise and it helped access Home Office money. But now it's a big risk...so no. They're puzzled why we're not going forward. But chasing the money, survival at any price isn't right.

Horizons is now facing hard times with funding cuts and rising costs. However, taking on the contract for crime prevention work may have been the opposite of protective, despite normative assumptions about the advantages of growth and diversification and isomorphic pressures to follow these trends. Similar youth work projects in the area have now seen

significant reductions; some have closed. Horizons has survived crises in the past and is cautiously hopeful about the future. In its favour is its niche position as a specialist 'youth justice' provider; its reputation for successful practice; its coherence of purpose; and relative organisational stability over time. These all help to sustain staff and trustees' efforts to sustain a clear purpose and activities, while 'bucking mainstream trends'. Survival *may* depend on elements of accommodation and resistance, a path that Horizons has achieved fairly effectively until recently; but as earlier discussion suggests, that may not be possible for much longer.

However, resisting mainstream arrangements also carries risks. Non-compliance is potentially a signal of being untrustworthy in a wider context and threatens reputation and resources with funders. The loss of favour with local government partners may produce a wider loss of legitimacy and influence in relation to local decision making and services. In this sense, organisations are disciplined to conform and assume specific activities; and contrary to government rhetoric around extending locally responsive approaches, such arrangements diminish local providers' influence and the voice of service users. This paradox highlights the potential spaces for taking back power, for those VOs committed to alternatives.

Speaking truth to power: silencing critical voices

For some time now, research has identified a tension in a voluntary sector which provides services on behalf of government and advocates on behalf of its users (Cairns et al, 2010), seeking to influence local and national decisions but hesitating to 'bite the hand that feeds it'. This tension around operating both *in and against* the state has emerged in evidence of trends towards increased use of insider tactics (Mosley, 2011; Milbourne, 2013): adopting mainstream discourse and modes of operation to gain legitimacy and influence. Speaking the language of funders may offer advantages in greater influence over service and resource decisions but this kind of 'cosy campaigning' often marginalises diverse voices and excludes less comfortable issues.

The Baring Foundation (2013), mapping threats to independence, highlights a significant deterioration in VOs being able to express their voices freely over the last two years, with

self-censorship increasing and advocacy decreasing. Self-censorship seems to be growing because of fears to loss of funding but there are also wider impacts. Examples from our research of VOs working with young people illustrate how self-censorship silences discussion of service failures, effectively posing barriers to mutual organisational learning. Dan, responsible for provision for young teenage fathers, pointed to ways that the nature of what can be discussed - the whole discourse for exchange of information - has changed. Failures or limited progress made with young men in the targeted time frame, 'are things you just can't talk about now. Funders... want success factors; they're not interested in what we do as such ...though that's crucial to...success.' As discussion of cases in similar areas shows (Milbourne, 2013), this also encourages gaming in performance reporting and restricts overall public knowledge about services.

Direct censorship, often emanating from government, is also growing, with 'gagging clauses' in contracts and restrictions on freedom of expression increasing (Baring, 2013). For example, Work Programme contracts typically prevent providers, not only from disclosing financial information, but also from publicly highlighting service problems emerging from new specifications. Management and performance data can only be published via the DWP[i], obscuring failures from public view, unless, as is starting to happen, frustrated workers or service users are willing to speak out about unprofessional practices (Wright, 2013). Government advice to local authorities to withdraw funding from charities that lobby for improved service funding or to alleviate the negative effects of recent contracts (DCLG, 2012) offer further examples of constraints on speaking out. Additionally, the Institute of Economic Affairs challenged the legitimacy of charities involved in campaigning (Snowdon, 2012), with Save the Children coming under direct criticism for the alleged political nature of its anti-poverty campaign (CESI 2012). The rise of restrictions on sharing information about services, alongside the political attack on the right to campaign and advocate run counter to traditional assumptions about the role of autonomous VOs and an independent civil society to make information public and to ensure diverse voices are heard. While examples of self-censorship show ways that governmentality operates through tacit threats to loss of funding and legitimacy, silencing freedom of expression through direct censorship signifies a worrying trend in constraints on

VOs 'speaking truth to power' - a crucial role for civil society organisations in a healthy democracy.

Discussion: re-locating power and the integral role of the state

Little prepared VOs for either the rapidity of change or the extent of financial losses experienced during 2011 and 2012, or for the reversal in how VS roles in public services would be valued. While closer scrutiny of relationships with business is necessary with the preference now being granted to corporate contractors, our research indicates that we should not lose sight of the integral role of the state in engineering this environment. Recent changes are not just about discounting the value previously ascribed to the VS and ushering in business; though, of course, that is happening. These governmentally driven arrangements are steadily opening up public services and shedding state responsibilities for welfare provision, prompting a fundamental change in public understanding of the state's role (Murray, 2012).

Contrary to the rhetoric of curbing 'big government', central government has taken back considerable power while ostensibly ceding it to 'communities', under the guise of localism, and to corporate contractors, through increased outsourcing of public services. Both strategies have extended the governable terrain in previously autonomous domains of civil society. As Padley (2013) argues, localism has paradoxically reallocated functions from local government to central government while devolving responsibility but little power, to local groups of people. Well-funded VOs, volunteers and social and cultural resources are sparser in poorer areas (Mohan, 2011; Lindsey, 2013); and therefore longer-term reliance on voluntary action and self-help activities will also lead to significant geographic inequalities.

New public management (and new voluntary sector management) prescribe routines for activities, and these have spread isomorphically. However, domination of VS cultures and arrangements are more deeply embedded through processes of governmentality. It is assumed that neo-liberalism enables a retreat of state power; but more fluid arrangements ensure that actors internalise the virtues of values and approaches of powerful agencies, and suppress others, while apparently acting independently. Our various examples demonstrate

that isomorphic changes are not particular to one field of welfare, although the pressures within particular services may be more exacting, such as in the security regimes required in criminal justice. This field also offers a clear case of the extension of governable terrain, as 'additional' activities, such as in prisoner support, become subsumed into new combined contracts with prison service delivery. This draws VOs further into the disciplines of administering sanctions – previously the remit of the state – and inhibits reform and campaigning activities.

Nevertheless, examples, such as the Work Programme, illustrate the shift from broader support and advice activities to more homogenised services focused on narrower activities and targets, which emphasise reporting claimants' task completion and attendance, regardless of worth. Work programme providers have described a contractual regime controlled through harsh terms and punitive financial conditions, forcing them to narrow and limit more meaningful approaches, while pressuring them to shed claimants unlikely to achieve positive short-term outcomes. Issues of measuring outcomes and the dominance of managerial arrangements have shaped and constrained VOs across varied service fields for some time (Milbourne and Cushman, 2013) but the recent size of contracts and resulting amalgamations and take-overs to meet turnover criteria are producing a contractual environment of increasingly exacting specifications.

Exploring further examples shows that not all VOs have chosen compliance. While some may have conformed to normative expectations until recently, those accommodations have been tempered by overriding missions, and as examples elsewhere show, have often encompassed elements of accommodation with resistance (Milbourne, 2013). Contemporary changes, however, are posing harsher choices; and while some VOs work increasingly hard to adapt and survive in this new service environment, others are choosing to decouple from these settings to sustain alternative models.

For many years, the VS has been able to act both *within and against* the state: a critical friend, highlighting shortfalls and deficiencies in welfare; providing additional services; and increasingly during the New Labour years, delivering outsourced public services. Our examples illustrate ways that VOs are being silenced because of tacit threats to funding and

also through direct censorship. Gagging clauses in contracts and overt criticisms of campaigning charities – all speak of powerful governmental controls at work, concealing service problems and injustices. Such censorship serves to marginalise diverse voices and more challenging messages, where VOs have previously carried a crucial role for representing minority voices. Silencing freedom of expression denotes a constraint, not only on civil society organisations – what they can and can't do – but worse, a broader re-shaping of democratic freedoms.

A fragmenting voluntary sector?

For some 20 years, the voluntary sector has been represented in policy terms as unified, yet encompassed a diverse range of distinguishable factions from grassroots community groups, to large national and international charities and a growing number of social enterprises. However, times have changed: voluntary sector value has rapidly evaporated under the Coalition; and latent fractures have become more pronounced. As examples above show, VOs in particular service fields are under increased pressure to homogenise activities as contracts are scaled up, privatised and more tightly controlled. To maintain a legitimate status in these fields is therefore progressively eliminating spaces in which VOs could previously criticise the state and its actions in welfare.

Others VOs are choosing different paths, potentially at the expense of external legitimacy and resources but, as earlier discussion highlighted, legitimacy is also secured through internal organisational integrity and from alliances with like-minded organisations. While decoupling from state funding and outsourced contracts frees VOs to maintain critical voices, they are, nevertheless, relinquishing 'insider' influence and service users to less sympathetic providers. All this argues that VOs have reached the end of a long era of operating both *within and against* the state – and are confronting increasingly difficult choices about their directions, also raising questions about the current value of strategically identifying a singular sector. As diverse VOs attempt to relocate their purposes and find room to operate in meaningful ways, they also face ethical dilemmas about whether to remain within this new service market; to engage in unpaid volunteering to replace services; or to decouple from the state more effectively to develop alternatives.

We would argue with others (Macmillan, 2013a) therefore that increasing voluntary sector divisions are visible, and to find spaces for resistance and to operate with alternative models may now require new alliances. At a collective level, analysis and sense-making across different segments of the voluntary sector are important in constructing a stronger narrative or narratives to take account of the sector's diversity and growing fragmentation. This means that re-defining voluntary sector identity and strengthening bonds *within* the sector may be less significant than building other bridges and strengthening interest-based alliances with other congruent groups and organisations or previously neglected partners. The common political and campaigning interests that VOs share locally with public sector workers, trade unions and wider social movements are therefore important to building new identities within and across sectors. Whatever the case, extending analysis of recent voluntary sector changes is crucial in constructing a stronger narrative for its present and future: to take account of the changing roles and more marked divisions emerging as the Coalition government extends into a fourth year.

With localism and the opening up of public services, complexity and fragmentation in relationships surrounding VOs have also increased. Local and national government agencies are mutating; and the locus of power is shifting. This makes it harder for VOs to navigate governmental relationships, weakening potential for resistance. If the voluntary sector is both marginalised and divided, it may open the door to the most powerful players determining the outcomes, whereas the kinds of alliances identified above may help to counter dominant ideas of VOs and civil society organisations and their purposes, and to establish and strengthen an alternative discourse. The voluntary sector has become disputed territory, involving, as Macmillan (2013b, p50) identifies, a 'struggle for hegemony in which some voices, interests and alliances prevail and may achieve partial and temporary influence and domination.' However, the territory remains contested.

Constructing a different future?

Greater divisions among VOs also offer hope for spaces of resistance and room for alternative models in the future. Davies (2011) argues that governmentality as a part of the neo-liberal project to enrol and transform civil society invariably dominates attempts to

foster a more egalitarian ethos which allows for divergent models. However, a better understanding of the rules of the game and ways in which power is enacted and reinforced, can also be used to challenge and, sometimes, to redefine the terms of engagement. VOs committed to sharing power with service users and sustaining grassroots connections provide examples of resisting the pressures of dominant cultures and normative assumptions about arrangements.

Rather than be silenced by threats of exclusion from funding and influence, there may be a need for less compliant advocacy strategies, if an important democratic means of asserting contradictory views is not to be lost. The 'invited spaces' for influence 'are not enough' (Taylor, 2011, p305); and are shrinking. Neither political nor business leaders have an interest in sharing power, resources or privileges; and resistance and constructive changes for poorer communities will need to be pursued by those concerned to counter this growing hegemony.

Institutional theory used to explain organisational transitions has been criticised for being applied uncritically, and for neglecting the role of agency (Willmott, 2013). Our aim has been to consider isomorphism and governmentality from a critical perspective to shed light on ways that VOs are drawn into problematic compromises but may also 'buck the trend'. The resistance illustrated above and in examples elsewhere (NCIA, 2013), demonstrates individual actors and VOs asserting alternatives to the pervasive forces at work, which shape action and communications, serving the interests of powerful institutions. An overly deterministic interpretation of governmentality, focusing only on ways that conformity is being realised, risks discounting the significant role of agency in subverting and resisting hegemonic trends and arrangements, whether intentionally or unwittingly. From Foucault's work, it is also clear that agency should not be discounted in understanding governmentality: the power and discipline of harsh regimes also gives rise to resistances, potentially shifting the provisional balance of arrangements in contested spaces.

In conclusion, isomorphism and governmentality provide valuable frameworks for examining broad changes affecting VOs, both overall transitions and increased fragmentation; but offer limited explanation for the complexity of responses visible at the

level of everyday organisational dilemmas and activities. This highlights the value of micro, as well as macro level research; and argues for not neglecting agency while seeking to understand and critique the bigger picture. Patterns of change examined here are inevitably the focus of ongoing research necessary to map the aspirations and activities of VOs and their contribution to maintaining critical alternatives in the future.

References

Aberg, P. (2012) 'Managing Expectations, Demands and Myths: Swedish Study Associations Caught between Civil Society, the State and the Market', *Voluntas,* online only (6 March).

Alcock, P. and J. Kendall (2011) 'Constituting the Third Sector: Processes of Decontestation and Contention under the UK Labour Government in England ' *Voluntas,* 22 (3), pp. 450-469.

Alcock, P., J. Kendall and J. Parry (2012) 'From the Third Sector to the Big Society: Consensus or Contention in the 2010 General Election', *Voluntary Sector Review,* 3 (3), pp. 347-363.

Baines, S., I. Hardill and R. Wilson (2011) 'Introduction: Remixing the Economy of Welfare? Changing Roles and Relationships between the State and the Voluntary and Community Sector', *Social Policy and Society,* 10 (3), pp. 337-339.

Baring Foundation (2013) *Independence under Threat: The Voluntary Sector in 2013,* London: Baring Foundation, Civil Exchange and DHA

Bawden, A. (2013) 'We've Got 5 Years Left, at Best', *Society Guardian,* 24th July 2013, p. 32.

Bevir, M. (2011) 'Democratic Governance: A Genealogy ', *Local Government Studies* 37 (13), p. 17 February.

Billis, D. (2010) *Hybrid Organizations and the Third Sector,* London: Palgrave Macmillan

BLF (2011) *Transforming Local Infrastructure Programme,* London: Big Lottery Fund

Brohman, J. (1996) *Popular Development: Rethinking the Theory and Practice of Development,* Oxford: Blackwell.

Brown, P. (2012) 'A Nudge in the Right Direction? Towards a Sociological Engagement with Libertarian Paternalism', *Social Policy and Society,* 11 (3), pp. 305-318.

Brown, P. and M. Calnan (2010) 'The Risks of Managing Uncertainty: The Limitations of Governance and Choice, and the Potential for Trust', *Social Policy and Society,* 9 (1), pp. 13-24.

Buckingham, H. (2011) 'Hybridity, Diversity and the Division of Labour in the Third Sector: What Can We Learn from Homelessness Organisations in the UK? ', *Voluntary Sector Review,* 2 (2), pp. 157-175.

Butler, P. (2011) 'There Is Little Charity in the Work Programme' *SocietyGuardian* 11 October, http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/joepublic/2011/oct/11/work-programme-charities-losing-out?INTCMP=SRCH [accessed 18 October 2011].

Cabinet Office (2009) *Real Help for Communities: Volunteers, Charities and Social Enterprises,* London: Cabinet Office

CAF (2012), London: Charities Aid Foundation, December 2012 https://www.cafonline.org/media-office/press-releases/2012/0912-charities-fear-closure.aspx [accessed January 2013]

Cairns, B., M. Harris and R. Hutchinson (2006) 'Servants of the Community or Agents of Government? The Role of Community-Based Organisations and Their Contribution to Public Services Delivery and Civil Renewal' IVAR London.

Cairns, B., R. Hutchinson and M. Aiken (2010a) ''It's Not What We Do, It's How We Do It': Managing the Tension between Service Delivery and Advocacy'.', *Voluntary Sector Review,* 1 (2), pp. 193-208.

Carmel, E. and J. Harlock (2008) 'Instituting the 'Third Sector' as a Governable Terrain: Partnership, Procurement and Performance in the UK ', *Policy & Politics,* 36 (2), pp. 155 - 171.

CESI (2012) 'Save the Children Appeal Attacked for Its Political Agenda', *Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion,* London, September 2012.

Clarke, J., S. Gewirtz and E. McLaughlin (2000a) 'New Managerialism New Welfare?' Sage, London.

Davies, J. S. (2011) *Challenging Governance Theory: From Networks to Hegemony,* Bristol: Policy Press

DCLG (2012) '50 Ways to Save: Examples of Sensible Savings in Local Government' *London: Department for Communities and Local Government, December 2012*.

Di Maggio, P. and W. Powell (1983) 'The Iron Cage Revisited: Institutional Isomorphism and Collective Rationality in Organisational Fields', *American Sociological Review,* 48, pp. 147-160.

Di Maggio, P. and M. Powell (1991) *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis,* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Eikenberry, A. (2009) 'Refusing the Market: A Democratic Discourse for Voluntary and Non-Profit Organisations', *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly,* 38 (4), pp. 582-596.

Fligstein, N. and D. McAdam (2012) *A Theory of Fields,* Oxford: Oxford University Press

Foucault, M. (1977) 'Truth and Power' in *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*, Gordon, C. (ed.) Pantheon, New York.

Harries, J., P. Gordon, D. Plamping and M. Fischer (1998) 'Projectitis' London: *King's Fund*.

Harris, M. (2010) 'Third Sector Organizations in a Contradictory Policy Environment' in *Hybrid Organizations and the Third Sector* Billis, D. (ed.) Palgrave Macmillan, London, pp.25-45.

Harris, M. and P. Young (2009) 'Developing Community and Social Cohesion through Grassroots Bridge-Building: An Exploration', *Policy & Politics,* 37 (4), pp.517-534.

Hoggett, P., H. Wilkinson and P. Beedell (2013) 'Fairness and the Politics of Resentment', *Journal of Social Policy,* 42 (3), pp.567-586.

Holloway, J. (2005) 'Change the World without Taking Power' London: *Pluto Press* Horton, C. (2013) 'Work Programme: When Jobs Aren't There', *Society Guardian* 21 May 2013.

Howard, J. and M. Taylor (2010) 'Hybridity in Partnership Working: Managing Tensions and Opportunities' in *Hybrid Organizations and the Third Sector* Billis, D. (ed.) Palgrave Macmillan, London.

Hucklesby, A. and M. Corcoran (2013) *Voluntary Sector Involvement in Criminal Justice: Controversies and Challenges* London: Voluntary Sector Studies Network Conference, 15 May 2013

IVAR (2012) *Recession Watch: Interim Report,* London: Institute for Voluntary Action Research.

Le Grand, J. (1998) 'The Third Way Begins with Cora', *New Statesman,* 6 March 1998 p.24.

Lewis, D. (2010) 'Encountering Hybridity: Lessons from Individual Experiences' in *Hybrid Organisations and the Third Sector*, Billis, D. (ed.) Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, pp. 219-239.

Lewis, J. (2005) 'New Labour's Approach to the Voluntary Sector: Independence and the Meaning of Partnership', *Social Policy and Society,* 4 (2), pp. 121-131.

Lindsey, R. (2013) 'Exploring Local Hotspots and Deserts: Investigating the Local Distribution of Charitable Resources', *Voluntary Sector Review,* 4 (1), pp.39-54.

Long, J. (2012) '£46m Payout for A4e Despite Missing Work Programme Targets', *Channel4 news,* Social Affairs reports, http://www.channel4.com/news/46m-payout-for-a4e-despite-missing-work-programme-targets [accessed 24 October]

Macmillan, R. (2013a) 'Decoupling the State and the Third Sector? The Big Society as a Spontaneous Order ', *Voluntary Sector Review,* 4 (2), pp.185-204.

Macmillan, R. (2013b) 'Distinction in the Third Sector', *Voluntary Sector Review,* 4 (1), pp.39-54.

Marsden, S. (2011) *Pushed to the Edge,* London: Locality

McCabe, A. and J. Phillimore (2010) 'Understanding the Distinctiveness of Small Scale Third Sector Activity', *Third Sector Research Centre, University of Birmingham,* Working paper (33).

Milbourne, L. (2013) *Voluntary Sector in Transition: Hard Times or New Opportunities?* Bristol: Policy Press

Milbourne, L. and M. Cushman (2013) "From the Third Sector to the Big Society: How Changing UK Government Policies Have Eroded Third Sector Trust", *Voluntas,* 24 (2), pp. 485-508.

Milbourne, L. and U. Murray (2011) 'Negotiating Interactions in State-Voluntary Sector Relationships: Competitive and Collaborative Agency in an Experiential Workshop ', *Voluntas,* 22 (1), pp. 70-92.

Miller, P. and N. Rose (1990) 'Governing Economic Life',*Economy and Society,* 19 (1), pp. 1-31

Mills, A., R. Meek and D. Gojkovic (2011) 'Exploring the Relationship between the Voluntary Sector and the State in Criminal Justice', *Voluntary Sector Review,* 2 (2), pp. 193-211.

Mohan, J. (2011) 'Mapping the Big Society: Perspectives from the Third Sector Research Centre', Working paper 62, August 2011.

Mosley, J. (2011) 'Institutionalization, Privatization and Political Opportunity: What Tactical Choices Reveal About the Policy Advocacy of Human Service Nonprofits', *Voluntas,* 40 (3), pp. 435-457.

Murray, U. (2012) 'Local Government and the Meaning of Publicness' in *Public Service on the Brink*, Manson, J. (ed.) Exeter: Imprint Academic, pp.41-66.

NCIA (2013) 'Can Voluntary Services Survive? And Survive as What?', *National Coalition for Independent Action: launch of inquiry into voluntary services,* Conference, London: 10 May 2013.

NCVO (2013) 'UK Civil Society Almanac' London: *National Council for Voluntary Organisations*.

Newman, J. and J. Clarke (2009) *Publics, Politics and Power,* London: Sage

OCS (2010) *Supporting a Stronger Civil Society: An Office for Civil Society Consultation on Improving Support for Frontline Civil Society Organisations,* London: Cabinet Office, Office for Civil Society

Padley, M. (2013) 'Delivering Localism: The Critical Role of Trust and Collaboration', *Social Policy and Society,* 12 (3), pp.343-354.

Pfeffer, J. (2003) *The External Control of Organizations,* Stanford: Stanford University Press

Pharoah, C. (2011) 'Private Giving and Philanthropy', *People, Place and Policy online,* 5 (2), pp.65-75.

Rochester, C. (2012) 'Councils for Voluntary Service: The End of a Long Road?' *Voluntary Sector Review,* 3 (1), pp. 103-110.

Rose, N. (1999) *Powers of Freedom, Reframing Political Thought,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Sage, D. (2012) 'Fair Conditions and Fair Consequences? Exploring New Labour, Welfare Contractualism and Social Attitudes', *Social Policy and Society,* 11 (3), pp.359-373.

Schwabenland, C. (2006) *Stories, Visions and Values in Voluntary Organisations,* Farnham: Ashgate

Slocock, C. (2012) *The Big Society Audit 2012,* London: Civil Exchange

Snowdon, C. (2012) 'Sock Puppets: How the Government Lobbies Itself and Why' London: *Institute for Economic Affairs,* June 2012.

Stoker, G. (2011) 'Was Local Governance Such a Good Idea? A Global Comparative Perspective', *Public administration,* 89 (1), pp.15-31.

Taylor, M. (2011) 'Community Organising and the Big Society: Is Saul Alinsky Turning in His Grave?', *Voluntary Sector Review,* 2 (2), pp.257-265.

Taylor, M. (2012) 'The Changing Fortunes of Community', *Voluntary Sector Review,* 3 (1), pp.15-34.

Thaler, R. and C. Sunstein (2008) *Nudge: Improving Decisions About Health, Wealth and Happiness,* London: Yale University Press

Toynbee, P. (2012) 'Anna's Charity Was Bid Candy. Now It's Bankrupt', *Guardian,* July 19, p.38.

Weick, K. (1995) *Sensemaking in Organizations,* Thousand Oaks: Sage

Wilding, K. (2010) 'Voluntary Organisations and the Recession', *Voluntary Sector Review,* 1 (1), pp.97-101.

Willmott, H. (2013) 'Can Institutional Theory Be Critical?', *Paper presented to panel discussion of 8th International Conference in Critical Management Studies,* Manchester, 10-12 July.

Wright, O. (2013) 'Revealed: The Great Outsourcing Scandal as Firms 'Cut Corners' to Cream Profits Off Public: Private Firms 'Gaming' £100bn of Government Services', *Independent,* 18 July 2013, http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/revealed-the-great-outsourcing-scandal-as-firms-cut-corners-to-cream-profits-off-public-8715119.html [accessed 19 July 2013]

---

[i] The Department for Work and Pensions