The State of the Welfare State: Advice, Governance and Care in Settings of Austerity

Insa Koch & Deborah James

Published online: 24 Feb 2020.

Submit your article to this journal ↗

Article views: 312

View related articles ↗

View Crossmark data ↗

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

OPEN ACCESS   Check for updates

The State of the Welfare State: Advice, Governance and Care in Settings of Austerity

Insa Koch[a] and Deborah James[b]

[a]Department of Law, LSE, London, UK; [b]Department of Anthropology, LSE, London, UK

ABSTRACT
Contemporary attempts to govern 'the state of the welfare state' are as much about moral endeavours as they are about political and economic imperatives. Such is the argument put forward in this Introduction, which focuses on the work that advisers perform in settings of austerity across Europe. Advisers are often the last call for help for their clients/dependents who find themselves increasingly at the mercy of local authorities, immigration regimes, landlords, banks and debt collection agencies. But competing visions of moral worth and social justice continue to permeate the everyday deliberations of those who administer, support and advocate advice. Struggles and dilemmas over how best to provide assistance and balance individuals' moral judgments against the collective good frequently occur. We explore both the dovetailing of and divergence between domains and roles, in disrupting as well as reproducing dominant logics of extraction and accumulation.

KEYWORDS Advice; anthropology of Europe; welfare; care; the state

Introduction

Philanthropic counsel, emergency assistance, charitable intervention, do-good-ish interference: these are epithets applied (often critically) to the arena of aid to countries in the global South, but not often considered in relation to 'life back home'. This special issue illustrates the repatriation of such assistance within the UK and with reference to selected comparative European settings. It offers an anthropological take on 'advice, using it as a diagnostic tool that helps to illuminate the welfare state's changing character and role. It explores how recent shifts towards austerity, fiscal policies and financialisation have reconfigured state-market-charity relations in European settings and produced new forms of ethical relationships. Advice and advisers act to correct mistakes made by state agents, force disparate branches of the state to speak to one another, mimic the state and give it a new guise, offer sites where state power may be challenged,

CONTACT Deborah James ✉ d.a.james@lse.ac.uk

or – increasingly – circumvent the state and other formal institutions altogether. We deploy the terms 'advice' and 'advisers' in both an ethnographic and an analytical sense. In the UK, they are part of an emic repertoire used by our informants around the provision of legal and practical assistance to those in need. But we also use the terms as analytical categories to track similar processes of mediation or brokerage between the state, the market, charitable initiatives, families and ordinary citizens beyond the UK in selected European sites affected by austerity politics, namely Spain, Italy and Switzerland (cf James & Koch forthcoming).

By focusing on the work that advisers perform at the interstices of these different settings, our key objective is to analyse the 'state of the welfare state' today. We argue that the welfare state is not just a political-economic but a moral formation, one which creates multiple boundaries of inclusion and exclusion through a variety of actors, officials and institutions. These boundaries at times challenge, and at other times reproduce, dominant logics of extraction and accumulation. Thus, advisers are often the last call for help for their clients/dependents who find themselves increasingly at the mercy of local authorities, immigration regimes, landlords, banks and debt collection agencies. But competing visions of moral worth and social justice continue to permeate the everyday deliberations of those who administer, support and advocate advice. Struggles and dilemmas over how best to instantiate social justice, provide assistance and balance individuals' moral judgments against the collective good frequently occur. In analysing advice as part of a broader landscape of governing the welfare state, our papers explore both the dovetailing of and divergence between political, economic and legal imperatives and domains.

The provision of advice for those in need of assistance has always been a key feature of welfare services. But the agents in charge of dispensing and receiving such advice, and the manner in which it has been administered, has changed over time. The UK provides a paradigmatic case study. There, it was in the post-war years that welfare and advice increasingly came to be furnished and funded by the state across a range of western European settings. But as the social settlement on which post-war welfare provisions were founded has come under attack, so has the idea of state-sponsored welfare. Conceived once as the planner and executor of concerted social engineering programmes, the state is today shedding its care responsibilities. The shift in public services delivery is both ideological and procedural: from ambitious top-down directed initiatives and a 'one size fits all' approach to an increasingly informal and 'flexible' model which blurs the boundaries between state, voluntary and business sectors. But the UK are not unique. In southern European countries such as Spain and Greece, cuts to state-provided services are similarly severe, but their establishment in the post-war years was far less extensive. We are witnessing not the retrenchment or loss of the welfare state as has often been assumed, but its reconfiguration in more complicated and plural ways.

Across these different settings both within the UK and beyond, 'ethical citizenship' (Muehlebach 2012) and an 'ethics of care' (Held 2006; Tronto 1994) are central to the governance work that advisers do. Care directs the distribution and (mis) allocation of resources and hence becomes a central node for implementing governance across

different social groups. In some examples, private agencies may mediate between the state and migrants, enabling an exclusionary immigration policy, yet also act as sites for challenging state power. In others, getting access to the food bank, to debt relief, or to the ranks of those intent on occupying one of the repossessed properties allocated by activists, depends upon relationships of solidarity, but new forms of inequity may also be enshrined. Likewise, in debt advice, where the state, the market and charity are locked in an uneasy embrace, payments take on different moral meanings: they may be viewed as owed to the state so as to balance the fiscus and contribute to the common good, or owed to financial creditors where they accrue as immoral profit. Financial corporations, in recognition of the negative way they are perceived, have started to subsidise advice and are newly endowed with moral agency, while the (re-) emergence of paternalistic forms of charity, through faith-based, unpaid advice work, indicate a neo-Victorian re-moralisation of poverty.

It is through these various actors, institutions and competing ethical demands that dominant logics of extraction are both contested and reproduced across a range of advice settings. Our ethnographies show that the relationship between austerity and care is neither straightforward nor singular. On one level, the care work that advisers engage in can be seen as adding to, even legitimising, the political status quo of austerity and public sector cuts. As advisers fill in the 'gaps' that are created by the reconfiguration of welfare provisions, they can also become complicit in upholding that reconfiguration and the wider system. Pushed to the extreme, then, acts of care might be seen as yet another facet of neo-liberalism, one which turns the optimisation of morality into a form of governance itself. And yet, much of our work militates against too monolithic a perspective. Similar to the dissidents of austerity recorded by Powers and Rakopoulos (2019), the caring labour that advisers engage in also challenges dominant logics of 'deservingness' and 'scrounging' as they provide vital services – at once emotional, practical and ideological – to those that the state itself has given up on or does not consider to be in need of support. In these moments, care work becomes a mechanism for implementing or imagining alternatives to the status quo, however ad hoc or fleeting these alternatives might be. In the absence of institutional and political mechanisms that represent ordinary citizens' demands, it is precisely in these daily, often overlooked, acts of care that individual struggles can become collectivised and feelings of self-blame and inadequacy be overcome (Guttierez, Wilde).

The special issue provides a unique insight into the 'the state of the welfare state' at a time when austerity politics, an entrenched crisis of welfare provision and the reconfiguration of state-market relations, have called into question the post-war logic of the welfare consensus. The papers illustrate how redistributive intentions are rendered increasingly difficult by funding cuts, and acknowledge the deleterious effects of austerity regimes as they chip away at the heart of welfarism, rendering people 'expropriable' (Davey 2016). But they also counter overly pessimistic assessments that uniformly foreground the punitiveness of such new regimes. We move beyond dominant accounts of contemporary governance in terms of Foucauldian governmentality or the return of the neo-liberal state (Wacquant 2009) by introducing an ethnographic and analytical focus on an ethics of care (Held 2006; Tronto 1994). At

the same time, our attentiveness to political economy also extends anthropological takes on morality and ethics (Laidlaw 2002; Robbins 2007; Zigon 2008) by moving from a focus on individual subjectivity to collective social struggles both within and between contested moral spheres. In short, our contribution in this special issue is twofold: just as we insert the 'moral' into contemporary accounts of governance and the state, we also bring a critical engagement with political and economic processes to anthropological perspectives on ethics.

In what follows, we outline our points in four parts. First, we analyse how recent shifts towards austerity/fiscal policies have reconfigured the post-war social settlement, giving rise to hybrid and plural arrangements between market, third sector[1] and government institutions. These transformations should not be seen as a retrenchment or loss of the welfare state but as an expression of its reconfiguration in sometimes unexpected ways. Second, we turn our attention to some of the key actors who are at the forefront of these interfaces: the advisers who mediate between citizens and institutions, be they state, market or third sector actors. While the separation of spheres between charity and business, state and market is an aspiration in line with theories of modernity and democracy (cf. Cannell & McKinnon 2013; Narotzky & Smith 2006; Alexander *et al.* 2018), we contend that these domains are juxtaposed and mediated through the work that advisers do. The third part explores how advisers working at the coalface draw on hidden reserves of 'empathy' (James & Killick 2012) or seek 'ethical fixes' (Pia 2017) to respond to pressures by delivering fair outcomes in the interests of all. The final part introduces the papers by focusing on the three key empirical themes that cut across them – welfare provision/resources (housing, food, services); immigration and debt. Through these different strands, we advance our key point: that contemporary attempts to govern the 'state of the welfare state' are as much about moral endeavours as they are about political and economic imperatives.

A brief note on our ethnography: this special issue uses the UK as a paradigmatic case study and introduces selected comparisons from Italy, Spain and Switzerland. Our intention is not to present an overly homogenising picture, nor is it to deny important differences in existing trajectories of capitalism and the development of typologies of welfare regimes across Europe (Esping-Andersen 1990; Cohen & Bock 2017) and beyond. That said, the UK – and Britain in particular – serves as a productive starting point for analysing broader transformations in 'the state of the welfare state'. Shifts towards neo-liberalism and minimal welfare protection have arguably been more pronounced in Britain than in many other countries in the global north (except for the United States), as it has followed the model of a 'liberal market economy' (Hall & Soskice 2001; Lacey 2008). More recently, 'austerity politics' and public sector cuts have become the mantra of the day, with the election of a Conservative-dominated coalition government in 2010. By offering a bottom-up, ethnographic engagement with these macro-processes, this special issue decentres dominant assumptions about the workings of neo-liberalism and, indeed, governance more broadly, from within the heart of a liberal market economy. It is intended, then, as a starting point for developing an analytical framing in a plural debate on the 'state of the welfare state' that goes

beyond the case of Britain and the UK. This introduction is framed with this broader, comparative purpose in mind.

From Post-War Welfare to Austerity: A Plural Account of the Welfare State

The history of advice reveals its ambiguous connotations. Here it is important to acknowledge the specificity of different national traditions, not just in terms of welfare provisions (with varying degrees of emphasis placed on the state, church and informal bodies) but also the specific legal histories that pertain to them. In countries of the global South, planned interventions aimed at transforming economic practices and outcomes had a paternalistic aspect, but this was later replaced by notions of sustainability and participatory approaches in the interests of 'helping people to help themselves'. This new managerialism, inspired by the 'will to improve' (Murray Li 2007), has fostered increased attempts to micro-manage the behaviour of individual actors across the global south (Mosse 2004). But closer to home, in the UK and Europe, the history of advice has also gone through different stages. In the UK, charity and moralistic counsel were given by philanthropists to the 'deserving poor' in an earlier era (Skeggs 1997; Howe 1990). This was eventually succeeded by the advent of the welfare state, with benefits re-conceptualized as being based on work and contribution paid into the system (Kymlicka & Norman 1994), even if this was done in gendered and racialized ways (Lewis 2001; Koch 2018b). Today, the drastic withdrawal of such entitlements, as well as the introduction of more punitive regimes based on 'welfare to workfare' ideologies, opens pathways for the return of more openly moralistic discourses about the 'deserving poor', and heralds the arrival of new and unpredictable advice arrangements.

The drastic shrinking of funds for aid and assistance, previously an essential underpinning of the welfare state, has been accompanied by an increase in those who need such aid, and the entry of entirely new sets of players to fill the gap. In the UK, and exemplifying processes occurring elsewhere in much of Europe around the same time, post-war social reformers were driven by their ambitions to get rid of unemployment, poverty and squalor. But their dreams for more egalitarian societies have long been overhauled. Today, those in need of assistance include waves of people facing the precarious living conditions prompted by a shift from state-planned to neoliberal economies, growing deindustrialisation, the rise of a service economy and the effects of financialisation. There are those in employment who cannot make ends meet, those in debt for reasons beyond their own control, and those displaced from their home countries by the knock-on effects of economic crisis but insecure in their host ones. The economic crisis in 2008 and the global housing crash that followed in its aftermath (Alexander *et al.* 2018) demonstrated that those in need of assistance are no longer the socially excluded and poor but include large swathes of precariously situated middle classes. In the absence of appropriate political channels that can capture citizens' demands for equity and justice, populist responses, including those on the far right, have become commonplace (Smith 2012; Evans 2017; Edwards *et al.* 2017).

Structural readjustment, neo-liberal reform and financialisation have also paved the way for a set of processes commonly known as 'austerity'. The effects of these in countries in the global south are well-known, but anthropologists have been less attentive to the way similar processes were implemented elsewhere (yet see Powers & Rakopoulos 2019). In the 2000s, austerity politics and public sector cuts were enforced by governments across much of Europe (Knight 2015; Muehlebach 2016; Forbess & James 2017; Koch 2018a). In the UK, this was introduced with the election of a Conservative-dominated coalition government in 2010. There, austerity has been described as a 'full frontal assault on the Keynesian proposition that cutting spending in a weak economy produces further weakness' (Krugman 2013) and an ineffective economic answer to the 'the problem of public debt' (Clarke & Newman 2012: 302; see also Krugman 2013; Pettifor 2006). Across these different settings, much ideological work has gone into producing moralistic discourses along the lines of 'you were a bad boy and you must take the pinch' (Clarke & Newman 2012; Krugman 2013). These discourses have been politically effective, echoing post-war austerity as a means to get everyone on board, although welfare dependents and the not-so-deserving 'urban poor' tend to be singled out as excluded from 'the nation of "hard-working, responsible families"'(Clarke & Newman 2012: 312).

Let us briefly consider the actual effects of austerity cuts on social welfare (rather than on 'economic growth' for which, according to many critics, austerity more generally has been ineffectual if not downright damaging). The papers in this volume tell of European states doing just what was done by those in countries in the global South (Powers & Rakopoulos 2019): moving welfare dependents 'off the books'; outsourcing their care to empathetic or entrepreneurial businesses or charities, or to fellow-sufferers; hollowing out benefits regimes; and ditching older ideas of the 'public good' in the name of welfare-to-work ideologies (Bear 2017). In the UK, for example, agencies have been scrabbling for funds and beneficiaries obliged to work full time – not because they are in employment but doing form-filling, launching online appeals against or appearing in tribunals to attempt the reinstatement of discontinued benefits (Forbess & James 2017). The human costs are large: death rates among those who are now deemed 'fit to work' rose exponentially in 2016 (Butler 2016), while policies such as the 'bedroom tax', which penalise social housing tenants for having spare bedrooms, have driven people to suicide (Koch 2016). But the workings of austerity are felt beyond the UK. In Italy, for example, a flattening of scale occurred, whereby 'household' was likened to 'nation' and belt-tightening was the same for both. The ball was passed from higher levels to local ones in a game of 'hot potato' – away from the national state's coffers to municipal ones, making these the site where austerity policies are contested and play out (Sopranzetti 2016).

In response, those formerly funded by the state's redistributive arrangements have been driven elsewhere in search of what they need to live. But the austerity regime has not abolished the welfare state altogether (Clarke & Newman 2012: 305). Instead, its running has been significantly outsourced to other agents (Patrick 2017: 39). We argue that the 'state of the welfare state' is marked not by a straightforward withdrawal or loss of welfare services but rather by an ever more complex reconfiguration of

market, state and civic-society or third sector relations, one which draws a range of actors into the job of governing welfare. Values and logics merge between diverse domains. In the same way that businesses are developing ethical practices and corporate social responsibility initiatives (Rajak 2011; De Neve *et al.* 2008; Davey 2017); charities organise economically astute and competitive ways of delivering their services, subcontracting work to businesses (Robinson 2010; Arqueros; Forbess). Government agencies are shifting from a directive to a more mediating role allowing private organisations to take the lead (Tuckett), while other services are almost entirely run by volunteers (Muehlebach 2012), including those who hail from church backgrounds (Davey; Pusccedu). We have also witnessed the emergence of new activist networks and social movements that combine advocacy with more traditional advice-giving work (Wilde; Gutierrez Garza, see also Wilde 2017).

In short, advice is part of a broader history of the dismantling of the social contract as it existed in its post-war configurations in the UK and beyond, namely as a generalised social contract between citizens and the state. But far from simply amounting to a withdrawal of the welfare state, we argue for a more subtle understanding of the 'state of the welfare state', one which emphasizes not the retrenchment of welfare and the welfare state but rather their reconfiguration in more plural and hybrid ways. But who are the people who are situated at the interstices of these arrangements? And how do they move between different domains and competing demands? The next section will consider in more depth the role of advisers as the broker figures par excellence who fill the gaps.

Brokers at the Interface of Market/State/Third Sector

The reconfiguration of market/state/third sector relations has resulted in ever more complex arrangements that require the intervention of 'experts': advisers who mediate and translate between different institutions and actors, including the most marginalised citizens and complex bureaucracies (Forbess & James 2014). Advisers resemble, or indeed embody, the brokers whose role has recently come to the attention of anthropologists doing research in the global south (James 2007; 2011; 2018; Koster & van Leynseele 2018; Lindquist 2015; Mosse & Lewis 2006; Auyero 2000) as well as in writing on bureaucracy across the global south and the global north more broadly (Tuckett 2015; 2018; Alexander 2002; Koch 2018b). In marginalised settings, where 'basic' goods and services are difficult to access or outright unavailable to large swathes of citizens, it is often only with the help of these brokers that citizens can make their demands for housing, employment benefits or immigration-related resources heard. Brokers who move between their clients and the institutions, authority figures and actors that their clients struggle to access, occupy a veritable in-between position, deriving their legitimacy from their seeming proximity to the 'common people' while also possessing specialist skills and knowledge that the latter lack.

Unlike traditional employees of the state whose duties are clearly defined, a broker often operates in flexible and idiosyncratic ways. The role of the idiosyncratic bureaucrat who occupies lower levels of the institutional structure was found to be key in

France where the power devolved to these officers arose out of the increasing 'de-objec-tification' of the welfare state's earlier categories, leaving welfare benefits to be granted according to an evaluation of individual situations (Dubois 2009; 2010), not unlike the 'street level bureaucrats' of the post-war welfare state (Lipsky 1980). Individual decisions acquire similar significance elsewhere, such as in German immigration offices, because of both ambiguities within the law itself and the 'difficulty in matching legal requirements with the social reality' (Eule 2014: 15). This means that officials base decisions 'on an orally transmitted tradition of learning the legal text and calculations of risks of selective and improper implementation' (ibid.). Acting in line with the official law is less important than showing flexibility and adapting fast, even if this means that brokers can occasionally act 'off the books' to get their work done. Brokers have become particularly important in the settings where state intervention, albeit concerned with welfarist redistribution, foregrounds the market as a central actor (James 2011: 319). It is the total sum of these evaluative decisions, practices and attitudes – rather than the designs and services of those higher up in the system – that increasingly determine outcomes for those in need of welfare benefits (Dubois 2009: 222).

We build on this literature and take it to the various settings in which actors contest and try to buffer the effects of cuts and austerity politics, often by acting in creative ways and by inventing new models of business to fund their services and support (Davey; Forbess & James 2017). Broker/advisers here are the agents on whom the needy and vulnerable rely, to dispense the public goods to which they are trying to establish their entitlement, to mediate between themselves and the source of those goods, or even to advocate on behalf of broader redistributive struggles over housing, immigra-tion policies and access to welfare provisions. The roles and affiliations of these individ-uals and groups vary across a wide range of different settings. They range from bureaucrats making often arbitrary decisions as in France and Germany (Dubois 2009; Eule 2014); to lawyers/paralegals 'translating' the decisions of, or effectively 'poli-cing', such bureaucrats in cases of their growing incompetence as in the UK or Italy (Forbess & James 2017; Koch 2018b; Moorhead & Robinson 2006: 63–5; Tuckett 2014), to those involved in self-help movements as in the UK and Spain (Wilde; Gutier-rez Garza). As these examples make clear, advisers by no means form a homogenous group. They have competing, and sometimes self-interested, motives and goals for their action and often act in conflict or tension with one another.

While advisers' first call of duty is to serve their clients/dependents, they occupy shifting positions. At times, they position themselves as allies or representatives of more powerful institutions, including those of the state, while at other times they mount challenges and pursue more overtly hostile relationships with these same insti-tutions. For example, in the UK debt advice sector, financial advisers often narrate the history of debt advice from the 1980s onwards in terms of a shift away from a more antagonistic relationship with creditors to what they describe as a more consensual process existing today (Davey, see also Davey 2017). Similar tensions between collabor-ation and antagonism are also familiar to the advisers in Switzerland's immigration and asylum advice offices (Eule). Forbess and James have explored the ways that the state – especially at local level – provides its services in an un-coordinated manner, requiring

advisers and government officers to function as part of a single system, with the former often correcting mistakes made by the latter (2014). On the other hand, advisers were challenging government: overturning unfair legislation and contesting the categories and assumptions that are enshrined in law. By forcing disparate state agencies to 'speak to one another', advisers were helping welfare dependent people to actualise their rights (ibid). In yet other cases, advisers can act in more self-interested ways, pursuing their own career ambitions (Gutierrez) or negotiating complex work relations with a range of officials, activists and government figures in their daily workings (Eule).

The examples given thus far speak of the difficult work that advisers do in assessing, negotiating and sometimes challenging the situations in which they find themselves. But advisors do more than adapt their roles and alliances in accordance with the pressures they are under: we argue that they also become active in converting different kinds of value to advance particular causes and to help their clients. This can mean converting financial/economic value into moral value, and vice versa, as advisers use financial imperatives of local authorities to further clients' needs (Forbess). It can also mean converting formal laws and a rational-legal discourse into political advocacy and support work, such as in the case of Swiss asylum-support workers who seek to change the course of the common law by mobilising cases selectively (Eule). Finally, converting different kinds of values can also lead to advisers utilising individual struggles as a platform for broader political action and redistributive agendas (Gutierrez Garza; Wilde). In a case analysed by Koch, a local political party was able to mobilise electoral support around a 'bread and butter' politics by building networks of brokerage with a disenfranchised working class community (2016). Recent work on trade unions, including welfare claimants' unions, in the UK and beyond (Lazar 2017; Ness 2014) has similarly foregrounded the importance of mundane and daily 'case work' in mobilising people around broader causes.

In sum, ever more complex arrangements that provide welfare in austerity settings have brought to the fore a particular class of experts – brokers – who sit at the interface of these arrangements. Advisers engage in a range of brokerage activities as they use their idiosyncratic and often highly localised knowledge to act on behalf of their clients/dependents and convert between different forms of value, rendering commensurate and compatible what may otherwise seem disconnected or contradictory. But what is the work of governance that advisers engage in in this process? In the next section, we turn our attention to how advisers put an ethics of care to work and how this both challenges, but also reproduces, dominant logics of extraction and accumulation.

Governance and an Ethics of Care

Ethnographic and analytical attention to advisers as brokers par excellence runs up against questions of governance: questions about how resources and 'public goods' (Bear & Mathur 2015) are distributed, to whom and with what consequences. Dominant anthropological approaches to contemporary governance have often been framed in terms of Foucauldian governmentality (Ferguson & Gupta 2002; Ong 1996; Shore & Wright 2003) or alternatively in terms of the return of the 'neo-

liberal' Leviathan defined through its punitive capacities (Wacquant 2009; 2012). While according to the former, governance has become about the self-disciplining individual, the latter have been concerned with expressive modes of statecraft that continue to frame contemporary policy making. Both approaches in some ways echo or mimic the ideologies that are put to work through austerity politics. The anthropological critique of how neo-liberalism edges people towards 'self-government' and implants disciplinary or belt-tightening ideologies that poor people are ill-equipped to respond to is mirrored by the way designers of austerity regimes act in the interests of big business while remaining confident that the public will accept their cuts to public spending. Similarly, the emphasis placed by scholars on the expansion of the criminal justice apparatus as a necessary appendix to neoliberal reform reflects the ways politicians often clamp down hard on 'law and order' to police those unable to stand on their own feet.

While our approach in this volume draws in part on critical perspectives on neo-liberalism, we also argue that we must transcend these in light of the particular frameworks which austerity regimes have engendered. Let us focus first on the insights we can glean from existing critical accounts. Foucauldian approaches to governance have usefully illustrated the novel interchanges that occur between state and non-state (or conversely market and non-market) domains and actors under conditions of neoliberal capitalism, viewing these increasingly fuzzy boundaries with suspicion (Ferguson & Gupta 2002) because of the increasingly invisible and perhaps 'unintended' and unintentional control they produce (Rose 1996). As Tuckett's paper shows in relation to the outsourcing of immigration-related services, the blurring of the state's boundaries is also accompanied by a hardening of its edges. In the process, teachers in informal learning centres take on a 'state-like role' (Tuckett 2017). In the domain of advice, the 'empathy' of one-on-one interactions and the personalised commitment of advisers can serve to persuade citizen/subjects to accept prevailing interpretations of law (Coutin 1994: 283, 295). Immigrants and refugees are shaped to 'fit the mould' of the good citizen or are nudged to accept the decisions of the bureaucracy (James & Killick 2012; see also Bell & Smerdon 2011; Genn 1999: 214; Lens 2009; Ong 1996); applicants for housing assistance, and those seeking help with debt problems, are equally reliant on 'expert' advice (Genn 1999: 239–41) delivered with compassion. Paternalism and a moralising emphasis on 'deservingness', are thus an inevitable side-effect of advice regimes under threat from cuts.

Similarly, the argument that we are witnessing the return of a neo-liberal Leviathan in the contemporary moment can helpfully frame some of the more openly coercive transformations that have been affecting the welfare sector. As criminal justice policies are being rolled out as a means of 'punishing the poor' (Wacquant 2009; Wilde 2016), an ever-growing number of civic society institutions and groups are drawn into the business of enforcing 'law and order', indicating a shift from a 'politics of welfare' to that of 'lawfare' (Koch 2018a). In the UK and the US, Garland (2001) has traced these strategies of 'responsibilisation' through groups like neighbourhood watch, crime stoppers and civil-police partnership initiatives (see also Simon 2007; Hyatt 2011). Of these, the most bizarre alliances to date are perhaps the 'street pastors'

who are uniformed church members patrolling the streets to offer assistance to members of the public in need and who remain connected with local police forces during their patrols (Koch 2018b). But law enforcement officials themselves are also becoming more active in dispensing assistance. Police officers in deprived English neighbourhoods have started offering advice services to gang members who wish to leave their gang affiliations (Williams & Clarke 2015). Failure to comply with the advice can have adverse effects, leading to punitive interventions, thus turning the dispensing of advice into a repressive service.

Our take on governance, however, extends the classic 'critiques' of neoliberalism, be they framed in Foucauldian terms or in terms of state-centric perspectives, in crucial ways. We investigate scenarios where expectations for welfare and support often outlast state-imposed cuts to welfare. An ethnographic and analytical focus on advice brings to light that neither advisers nor their advisees are wholly – or at all – persuaded by austerity arguments and ideologies, nor do they accept the withdrawals of welfare benefits (Powers & Rokopoulos 2019). Rather, they continue to operate in accordance with their own frames of reference, drawing on moral registers that are not exhausted by a focus on state or governmental logics alone. Somewhat like the Kolkota shipyard workers of Bear's account, they espouse and embrace 'alternatives to austerity' (Bear 2015; 2017). In the case she documents, their rebuff to austerity arrangements comes through recourse to kin-based idioms of solidarity and religious ones of transcendent mutuality. Idioms of kinship similarly play key roles at the social margins of the UK. There, welfare recipients who encounter the coercive rules of means-tested welfare regime (and the Kafkaesque bureaucracies that accompany them) do not wholly acquiesce to punitive rules that individualise welfare recipients and their household arrangements by treating them as 'single' claimants. The mothers on council estates that Koch (2018b) worked with remain part of localised kinship arrangements that invoke a more relational understanding of personhood. Caring for each other, rather than for an abstract 'system' or 'society', supplies the basis for an alternative understanding of citizenship to that projected by dominant logics of capital and the neoliberal state.

Crucial to the examples given thus far is a concern with an 'ethics of care' (Held 2006; Tronto 1994) and alternative 'political ontologies of self' (Skeggs & Loveday 2012) to those implied by the individualising agent of neoliberalism (Tyler 2007). Indeed, how a population at a given time learns to experience life through a care/ethics of the self was a crucial concern of Foucault and remains central to the writing of Foucauldian scholars. Ethics and morality have also become key concerns in recent anthropological work (Robbins 2007; Laidlaw 2002; 2014; Zigon 2009). But these approaches have tended to use individual subjectivity and personhood as their principal units of analysis. While our approach includes an emphasis on individuals' choices and motivations, we are first and foremost interested in how ethical choices become, or fail to become, collectivised. We define ethics of care as a moral practice that conceives persons as relational and interdependent, whether this be within a household, between members of a social movement or as a wider imagined collective. As in recent engagements with neo-liberalism (Muehlebach 2012), the state (Fassin et al. 2015) and the third sector

(Alexander 2010), we then explore how moral dilemmas over care and redistribution (Held 2002; Staeheli & Brown 2003) are part of broader struggles over redistribution and governance. And like recent work on moral economy which has taken E.P. Thompson's original formulation to the analysis of contemporary struggles (Palomera & Vetta 2016; Smith 2017; Alexander et al. 2018; Narotzky 2016; see also Wilde's and Pusceddu's papers), we investigate the productive tensions that emerge between the moral aspirations of social groups and individuals, on the one hand, and the dominant logics of accumulation and power, on the other.

It is this focus on the political and economic in ethical practices that explains the tensions explored in this special issue. Contradictions abound in the daily care work in which advisers engage. For example, many of our contributions show that while advisers (and those they are advising) often hold deeply-embedded convictions about equality and inclusivity, difficult decisions over who is entitled to what also allow received logics of deservingness and the poor to creep back into the picture (Davey; Wilde; Pusceddu, Arqueros; Suarez). These draw on tropes reminiscent of more paternalistic times, even if they do so for reasons other than those that the architects of paternalistic policies had in mind. Similarly, tensions abound between the more 'humanist' work that advisers engage in and the more extractive aspects of their work: this can be defined, as in Forbess' case, in terms of the resources that are extracted from public goods to help individual clients, or through the exceptional levels of emotional labour that is extracted from advisers in their provision of aid to their clients (James & Killick 2012). A final tension discussed in our papers relates to the contradictions that advisers and social movement members experience between their need to act in the 'here and now' and to develop broader, longer-term and more sustainable agendas for political action (Gutierrez Garza; Wilde). As Gutierrez Garza's paper shows, this can translate on the ground into tensions between the allegedly 'selfish' or 'uncaring' goals of particular individuals and the broader political aims of the movement as a whole.

To sum up, while acknowledging and analysing the highly corrosive effects of austerity policies, we argue for the need to transcend an emphasis on the repressive and disciplinary aspects of contemporary governance. Moving away from dominant accounts of power in terms of Foucauldian governmentality or the return of the neoliberal state (Wacquant 2009), we introduce an ethnographic and analytical focus on an ethics of care as a collective resource. It is through the care work that advisers and advisees engage in that questions over governance are decided, fought out and contested, at times challenging dominant rhetoric and policy and at others reproducing their underlying logic. But even where dominant frameworks and ideologies are ultimately reinforced, the manner in which this is done and the reasons that individuals have for acting in the way they do are often different to those that policy makers and enforcers have in mind. We argue then that the 'state of the welfare state' produces multiple, shifting and contested boundaries of inclusion and exclusion that require careful ethnographic attention. In the final part, we move on to three key empirical themes to introduce the papers of this volume: welfare provision/resources, debt, and immigration.

Major Empirical Themes: Welfare Provision/Resources, Debt, and Immigration

The purpose of the final section is to introduce papers in this volume and to identify cross-cutting themes between the papers. Any attempt to classify the papers together thematically, however, runs into problems, since areas of welfare concern – including indebtedness, housing, employment, social security, and immigration and asylum – have been noted as converging to form 'problem clusters' (Genn 1999; Moorhead & Robinson 2006; Pleasence *et al.* 2004). Debt problems, intersecting with issues of immigration and housing, demonstrate this well (Gutierrez Garza 2018). This convergence and clustering should be born in mind even as we separate them out for analytical purposes. In what follows, we introduce first our case studies that are focused on the UK before moving to our comparative material from Italy, Spain and Switzerland.

The UK material investigates advice and governance with respect to a range of different welfare problems, including housing, debt, immigration, and the National Health System. Housing, and housing advice for the impending homeless in London's housing crisis is the topic of **Matt Wilde's** paper. Wilde is concerned with the actors and institutions that have become active in both policing and finding solutions to the crisis. This includes various grassroots social movement organisations, charities such as Shelter and Advice4Renters and local authority housing offices. The paper views both the diverse activities undertaken by and the views of these organisations through the prism of the recently-revived idea of the moral economy: as a means through which social actors attempt to understand, regulate and potentially alter specifically economic relationships. These moral economies, instead of being oppositional to an established order, interact in a common field of engagement. Grassroots movement members who enact more radical and collective forms of advice run up against a predatory housing market, while local authority officials, associated by many with the 'establishment', engage in their own practices of moral reasoning that sometimes dovetail with, and sometimes depart from, dominant logics of accumulation.

Access to adequate housing is not the only struggle that citizens in the UK face. **Alice Forbess** focuses on a range of welfare provisions in which welfare law advisers and staff engage in two local state institutions in England: a council housing office and an NHS (publicly funded) hospital. Her paper investigates advice as an interface that can convert economic value into moral legitimacy and vice versa. In the first example, an office which administers council tenancies had hit upon the solution of using welfare benefits advice to tenants with rent arrears in order to capture more resources from another section of the state bureaucracy, namely the centralised social security system. This enabled them to maximise resources for both councils and tenancies, but also increased the rate of evictions. In the second case, the acute ward of the local psychiatric hospital coped with a chronic bed shortage by frequently discharging psychiatric patients despite thereby rendering them homeless. As a remedy, social welfare advisers were brought in to secure council accommodation for these patients, often revealing a clash in ideas of fairness vis-à-vis hospital staff. Forbess' paper shows that while advisers' piecemeal 'ethical fixes' (Bear 2015; Pia 2017) aim to

enable the system to operate more fairly, new forms of inequality emerge from actions motivated by ideals of universal equality.

Central to Forbess' account are the ethical considerations and dilemmas that advisers face in their daily pursuits of equity and fairness. This theme is also taken up in **Deborah James**' paper which explores the complex interaction between diverging obligations to 'make payments' in the UK debt advice sector: either to the state (for those receiving welfare benefits) or to the market (those with debt to commercial creditors). Advisers of both kinds operate in a world where 'payments' often seem to be automated, technologized and economised, and where the state is 'giving with one hand and taking away with the other'. Yet payments have a human, even moral/ethical aspect, and must be constantly negotiated. In the case of debt advice, profit always seems paramount, whereas in the world of debts incurred to the state what is at issue is reclaiming what is owed so as to balance the fiscus. In both cases, it is not only that payments must be pledged, and that these pledges must be honoured (from either side). It is also that 'someone has to pay' for the increasingly expert and professional advice that is required to counter what people are told by under-trained state officials or to protect them from the demands of dodgy lenders.

Debt advice in the UK is also the central theme of the paper by **Ryan Davey,** which explores the managerial and governmental discourse accompanying various funding arrangements and 'business models' for debt advice organisations, and the changing relations between voluntary-sector advice providers and the retail financial industry. Debt advice managers advocate co-operation and dialogue with the financial industry, contrasting this with more fractious relations in the early days of debt advice in the 1980s. Their perceived 'mutuality of interests' has borne several flows of money from the financial industry to voluntary-sector debt advice providers, as a supplement or substitute for money from the state. However, the proliferation of funding from financial corporations has coincided with cuts to state funding, leading 'front-line' debt advisers in paid posts to complain that they are unable to provide the level of care and compassion required to assist clients with more complex needs. From this context, church-based, volunteer-run debt advice providers have emerged, who consider themselves well-suited to serving the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable. While this understanding of social welfare legitimises government policies that prioritize the 'healthy' functioning of financial markets, the same markets increase inequality and amplify economic insecurity.

In **Anna Tuckett's** paper, we move from problems of debt, housing and access to health systems to immigration as one particular site where struggles over advice and advice-giving play out. Based in London like Wilde's study, where the withdrawal of state funding for this and other sectors has led to 'advice deserts', the paper examines different kinds of establishments that have sprung up in the state's absence. The paper focuses on both officially outsourced test centres which deliver the UK citizenship test and unofficial migrant-run small businesses which help applicants prepare for the test. Situating their emergence within the neoliberal British state, which increasingly outsources its service provision, Tuckett explores the various and sometimes unexpected actors who come to take on state-like roles. The ambiguous position of these

different organisations shows that while the reach of the neoliberal state is more diffuse and invisible than ever, clear boundaries between state and non-state realms do continue to exist. Paradoxically, therefore, Tuckett argues that the blurring of boundaries which characterises the neoliberal state is also accompanied by the hardening of borders between state and non-state realms. At times this reinforcement of boundaries can appear to increase state power and at others to challenge it.

Problems over access to housing, debt advice, the public health sector and immigration-specific provisions are not unique to the UK sector, however. While these problems have been exacerbated in the UK under recent shifts to 'austerity politics', they also appear in different forms in comparative European settings. There, they are mediated through locally-specific institutions and social mechanisms.

Returning to the case of housing advice as social struggle, we move to consider the case of Spain. Here, **Ana Gutierrez Garza**'s paper investigates a setting where the severity of the Euro-zone crisis has all but dissolved official advice systems on benefits, jobs, health and housing altogether. She explores the emerging role of a new platform which offers face-to-face legal and financial advice and coordinates political campaigns and community action: the PAH (*Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca*). This is a non-profit organisation founded in 2009 by people affected by mortgage debts created by the predatory lending for homeownership before the collapse of the Spanish banking system in 2008–2009. The everyday work of the movement is based on an ethics of care that supports the collective by promoting relations of solidarity and responsibility among its members. However, at the same time, caring practices are used to legitimize moral judgements regarding 'commitment' and 'deservingness'. The paper analyses the tensions and conundrums of a social movement that struggles to get away from neoliberal models of dependency by furthering an agenda based on social rights and the collective good; and, much like Wilde, identifies the inescapable contradictions of the struggle for social justice on an everyday basis.

Maka Suarez' paper similarly engages with the context of Spain's housing bubble by extending the focus of some of the other papers on debt and housing advice. Her paper shows how gendered conceptualizations of care, motherhood, and kinship acted as a driver for her informants to become indebted to mortgage lenders. It discusses the particular case of Ecuadorian women who migrated to Spain – for economic reasons but also to escape gendered duties, obligations, and onerous domestic roles. When they bought mortgaged apartments in Barcelona, this was similarly motivated by considerations of domesticity, care giving and motherhood: the promise of homeownership became a way of accomplishing complex forms of transnational caregiving as well as upward mobility. Ideas of 'good mothering' link to economic aspirations and sentimental attachments. It was this affective dimension that was transformed by financial institutions into subprime mortgage loans, generating financialisation, creeping into women's most intimate forms of care for each other and using all forms of moral justification for turning life's affective dimensions into profit-seeking, mathematical calculations.

Spain is also the site of ethnographic exploration in **Arqueros'** account, which analyses the advice work of the Spanish Red Cross as an extension of the neoliberal state.

Like the two preceding papers (and many others in the volume), his focuses on the role played by social actors other than traditional state agents. Taking the 'Active Labour Market Policies' implemented by the local assembly of the Spanish Red Cross as its point of departure, Arqueros investigates the increasing role played by the third sector in the provision of care against a backdrop of structural unemployment and low levels of economic growth. Similar to the case investigated by Pusceddu, the increasing role played by such organisations is part of a broader process of privatisation of welfare services and resources. Despite good intentions, Red Cross workers contribute to reproducing social stereotypes between groups of immigrant and local workers at the lower end of the labour market. Different ethnic groups are categorised as fit for certain types of social interventions but excluded from others. Arqueros argues that the intervention programmes of the Red Cross pursued the activation of 'service users' in neoliberal terms by contributing to the segmentation of the labour market and the advancing of a political economy of capital and completion.

The final two papers of the volume are concerned with Italy and Switzerland, respectively, where an ethnographic engagement with advice brings into focus two groups of advisors that have perhaps been less prominent in the UK material: the role of religious institutions (though see Davey), and that of legal activists. In **Antonio Maria Pusceddu's** paper, the focus is broadened from housing to a range of other welfare provisions, including soup kitchens, food banks and clothing distribution. Through an exploration of *Caritas*, Pusceddu returns to the theme of religious institutions explored by Davey. Pusceddu's paper focuses on the increasing role played by religious charities alongside the transformation of the welfare state and the concomitant expansion of private welfare associations in Brindisi, a southern Italian city. Home to large capital-intensive industries that are undergoing a steady process of deindustrialisation, Brindisi has been deeply affected by job losses, indebtedness and bankruptcy of local businesses. The paper explores the expansion of the voluntary sector that has been expanding to meet the increase in aid demands, and the categorisation of poverty that frames the increasing demands for 'aid'. Volunteers see themselves as providing a vital service in the face of austerity and social inequality, but their approach to the 'new poor' also invokes moral evaluations of deservingness and desert. The paper asks how privatisation and retrenchment politics, welfare fragmentation and territorial inequality affect people's perception and understanding of 'care' and institutional patterns of responsibility.

Moving to Switzerland, **Tobias Eule**'s paper introduces the crucial role played by legal advisers in a context where a history of judicial activism is well-established and thriving: the case of the immigration and refugee advice sector in that country. As newcomers to a legal system, and often with limited resources, refugees find themselves in precarious situations when making claims for asylum. Across many European countries, non-governmental organisations have supported asylum seekers in their legal struggle since the 1980s, although the need for such support has grown exponentially over the last decade. The paper examines changing relations between advice organisations and their long-standing state collaborators, against the backdrop of recent legislative changes which have seen an increase in state funding opportunities

for asylum seekers. Advisers are battling with questions over whether to collaborate with or oppose the Swiss and European asylum regimes, as well as with specific case-work decisions. At the same time, advisers try to implement new forms of advocacy by using international networks, focusing on high-profile landmark cases at the European Court of Human Rights and new relations to state agents to directly influence decision-making.

Note

1. This term describes organisations 'that are neither public sector nor private sector. It includes voluntary and community organizations (both registered charities and other organisations such as associations, self-help groups and community groups), social enterprises, mutuals and co-operatives'. https://www.nao.org.uk/successful-commissioning/introduction/what-are-civil-society-organisations-and-their-benefits-for-commissioners/. See also Alexander (2010).

Acknowledgements

Disclosure Statement

Funding

References

Alexander, C. 2002. *Personal States: Making Connections Between People and Bureaucracy in Turkey*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
———. 2010. Third Sector. In *The Human Economy, a Citizens' Guide*, edited by Keith Hart, Jean-Louis Laville & Antonio David Cattani, 212–224. Cambridge: Polity Press.
Alexander, C., M. H. Hojer-Bruun & I. Koch. 2018. Political Economy Comes Home: On the Moral Economies of Housing. *Critique of Anthropology*, 38(2):121–129.
Auyero, J. 2000. The Logic of Clientelism in Argentina: An Ethnographic Account. *Latin American Research Review*, 35(3):55–81.
Bear, L. 2015. *Navigating Austerity: Currents of Debt Along a South Asian River*. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press.
———. 2017. 'Alternatives' to Austerity: A Critique of Financialized Infrastructure in India and Beyond. *Anthropology Today*, 33(5):3–7.
Bear, L. & N. Mathur. 2015. Introduction: Remaking the Public Good. *Cambridge Anthropology*, 33 (1):18–34.
Bell, K. & M. Smerdon. 2011. *Deep Value: The Role of Effective Relationships in Public Services*. London: Community Links.

Butler, P. 2016. Thousands Died After Fit For Work Assessment. *The Guardian*. https://www.theguardian.com/society/2015/aug/27/thousands-died-after-fit-for-work-assessment-dwp-figures (Accessed 15 June 2017).

Clarke, J. & J. Newman. 2012. The Alchemy of Austerity. *Critical Social Policy*, 32(3):299–319.

Cohen, S. & J-J. Bock. 2017. Introduction: Social Activism, Belonging and Citizenship in a Period of Crisis. In *Austerity, Community Action, and the Future of Citizenship in Europe*, edited by S. Cohen, C. Fuhr & J.-J. Bock, 1–23. Bristol: Policy Press.

Coutin, S. B. 1994. Enacting Law as Social Practice: The U.S. Sanctuary Movement as a Mode of Resistance. In *Contested States: Law, Hegemony, and Resistance*, edited by S. Hirsch & M. Lazarus-Black, 282–303. New York: Routledge.

Davey, R. 2016. *Debts in Suspense: Coercion and Optimism in the Making of Class in England* (PhD dissertation), Cambridge.

———. 2017. Polluter Pays?: Understanding Austerity Through Debt Advice in the UK. *Anthropology Today*, 33(5):8–11.

De Neve, G., P. Luetchford & J. Pratt. 2008. Introduction: Revealing the Hidden Hands of Global Market Exchange. In *Hidden Hands in the Market: Ethnographies of Fair Trade, Ethical Consumption and Corporate Social Responsibility*, edited by G. De Neve, P. Luetchford & D. C. Wood, 1–30, Research in Economic Anthropology, 28. Bingley: Emerald Group Publishing Limited.

Dubois, V. 2009. Towards a Critical Policy Ethnography: Lessons From Fieldwork. *Policy Studies*, 3 (2):221–239.

———. 2010. *The Bureaucrat and the Poor: Encounters in French Welfare Offices*. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Edwards, J., A. Haugerud & S. Parikh. 2017. Brexit, Trump and Anthropology: Forum. *American Ethnologist*, 44:195–200.

Esping-Andersen, G. 1990. *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Eule, T. 2014. *Inside Immigration Law: Migration Management and Policy Application in Germany*. Basingstoke: Ashgate.

Evans, G. 2017. Social Class and the Cultural Turn: Anthropology, Sociology and the Post-Industrial Politics of 21st Century Britain. *The Sociological Review Monographs*, 65(1):88–104.

Fassin, D., Y. Bouagga, I. Coutant, J. S. Eideliman, F. Fernandez, N. Fischer & S. Roux. 2015. *At the Heart of the State: The Moral World of Institutions*. London: Pluto Press.

Ferguson, J. & A. Gupta. 2002. Spatializing States: Toward an Ethnography of Neoliberal Governmentality. *American Ethnologist*, 29(4):981–1002.

Forbess, A. & D. James. 2014. Acts of Assistance: Navigating the Interstices of the State with the Help of UK non-Profit Legal Advisers. *Social Analysis*, 58(3):73–89.

———. 2017. Innovation and Patchwork Partnerships: Advice Services in Austere Times. *Oñati Socio-Legal Series*, 7(7). http://ssrn.com/abstract=3056205.

Garland, D. 2001. *The Culture of Control*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Genn, H. 1999. *Paths to Justice: What People Do and Think About Going to the Law*. London: Hart Publishing.

Gutierrez Garza, A. P. 2018. *Care for Sale. An Ethnography of Latin American Domestic and Sex Workers in London*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Hall, P., and D. Soskice. 2001. *Varieties of Capitalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Held, V. 2002. Care and the Extension of Markets. *Hypatia*, 17(2):19–33.

———. 2006. *The Ethics of Care: Personal, Political, and Global*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Howe, L. 1990. *Being Unemployed in Northern Ireland: An Ethnographic Study*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hyatt, S. B. 2011. What was Neoliberalism and What Comes Next? The Transformation of Citizenship in the Law-and-Order State. In *Policy Worlds: Anthropology and the Analysis of Contemporary Power*, edited by C. Shore, S. Wright & W. D. Pero, 104–123. Oxford: Berghahn.

James, D. 2007. *Gaining Ground? Rights and Property in South African Land Reform*. Abingdon: Routledge.

———. 2011. The Return of the Broker: Consensus, Hierarchy and Choice in South African Land Reform. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 17:318–338.

———. 2018. Mediating Indebtedness in South Africa. *Ethnos*, 83(5):814–831.

James, D. & E. Killick. 2012. Empathy and Expertise: Case Workers and Immigration/Asylum Applicants in London. *Law and Social Inquiry*, 37(2):430–455.

James, D. & I. Koch. forthcoming. Economies of Advice. In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Anthropology*, edited by Mark Aldenderfer. New York: Oxford University Press.

Knight, D. 2015. *History, Time, and Economic Crisis in Central Greece*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Koch, I. 2016. Bread-and-butter Politics: Democratic Disenchantment and Everyday Politics on an English Council Estate. *American Ethnologist*, 43(2):282–294.

———. 2018a. *Personalizing the State: An Anthropology of Law, Politics and Welfare in Austerity Britain*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

———. 2018b. From Welfare to Lawfare: Environmental Suffering, Neighbour Disputes and the Law in UK Social Housing. *Critique of Anthropology*, 38(2):221–235.

Koster, M. & Y. Van Leynseele. 2018. Brokers as Assemblers: Studying Development Through the Lens of Brokerage. *Ethnos*, 83(5):803–813.

Krugman, P. 2013. How the Case for Austerity has Crumbled. *New York Review of Books*. http://www.nybooks.com/articles/2013/06/06/how-case-austerity-has-crumbled/ (Accessed 15 June 2017).

Kymlicka, W. & W. Norman. 1994. Return of the Citizen: A Survey of Recent Work on Citizenship Theory. *Ethics*, 104(2):352–381.

Lacey, N. 2008. *The Prisoners' Dilemma: Political Economy and Punishment in Contemporary Democracies*. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Laidlaw, J. 2002. For an Anthropology of Ethics and Freedom. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 8(2):311–332.

———. 2014. *The Subject of Virtue: An Anthropology of Ethics and Freedom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lazar, S. 2017. *The Social Life of Politics: Ethics, Kinship, and Union Activism in Argentina*. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press.

Lens, V. 2009. Seeking Justice: Citizens' use of Fair Hearings to Correct Errors in Public Welfare Bureaucracies. *Journal of Public Administration Research & Theory*, 19:817–837.

Lewis, J. 2001. The Decline of the Male Breadwinner Model: Implications for Work and Care. *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State & Society*, 8(2):152–169.

Lindquist, J. 2015. Of Figures and Types: Brokering Knowledge and Migration in Indonesia and Beyond. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 21:162–177.

Lipsky, M. 1980. *Street-Level Bureaucracy: Dilemmas of the Individual in Public Services*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

McKinnon, S. & F. Cannell. 2013. *Vital Relations: Modernity and the Persistent Life of Kinship*. Santa Fe: School for Advanced Research Press.

Moorhead, R. & M. Robinson. 2006. *A Trouble Shared. Legal Problems Clusters in Solicitors' and Advice Agencies*. Department for Constitutional Affairs, Research Series 8/06.

Mosse, D. 2004. *Cultivating Development: An Ethnography of aid Policy and Practice*. London: Pluto Press.

Mosse, D. & D. Lewis. 2006. Theoretical Approaches to Brokerage and Translation in Development. In *Development Brokers and Translators*, edited by D. Lewis & D. Mosse, pp. 1–26. Bloomfield, CT: Kumarian.

Muehlebach, A. 2012. *The Moral Neoliberal. Welfare and Citizenship in Italy*. Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press.

———. 2016. Anthropologies of Austerity. *History and Anthropology*, 27(3):359–372.

Murray Li, T. 2007. *The Will to Improve: Governmentality, Development, and the Practice of Politics*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Narotzky, S. 2016. Between Inequality and Injustice: Dignity as a Motive for Mobilisation During the Crisis. *History and Anthropology*, 27(1):74–92.

Narotzky, S. & G. Smith. 2006. *Immediate Struggles: People, Power, and Place in Rural Spain*. London: University of California Press.

Ness, I. 2014. *New Forms of Worker Organization: The Syndicalist and Autonomist Class-Struggle Unionism*. Oakland, CA: PM Press.

Ong, A. 1996. Cultural Citizenship as Subject-Making: Immigrants Negotiate Racial and Cultural Boundaries in the United States. *Current Anthropology*, 37(5):737–762.

Palomera, J. & T. Vetta. 2016. Moral Economy: Rethinking a Radical Concept. *Anthropological Theory*, 16(4):413–432.

Patrick, R. 2017. *For Whose Benefit? The Lived Experiences of Welfare Reform*. Bristol: Policy Press.

Pettifor, A. 2006. *The Coming First World Debt Crisis*. London: Palgrave.

Pia, A. 2017. Back on the Water Margin: The Ethical Fixes of Sustainable Water Provisions in Rural China. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 23:120–136.

Pleasence, P., *et al.* 2004. *The Causes of Action: Civil Law and Social Justice*. London: Legal Services Commission.

Powers, T. & T. Rakopoulos. 2019. The Anthropology of Austerity: An Introduction. *Focaal*, 83:1–12.

Rajak, D. 2011. Theatres of Virtue: Collaboration, Consensus and the Social Life of Corporate Social Responsibility. *Focaal*, 60:9–20.

Robbins, J. 2007. Between Reproduction and Freedom: Morality, Value, and Radical Cultural Change. *Ethnos*, 72(3):293–314.

Robinson, D. 2010. *Out of the Ordinary: Learning From the Community Links Approach to Social Regeneration*. London: Community Links.

Rose, N. 1996. The Death of the Social? Refiguring the Territory of Government. *Economy and Society*, 25(3):327–356.

Shore, C. & S. Wright. 2003. *The Anthropology of Policy: Perspectives on Governance and Power*. London: Routledge.

Simon, J. 2007. *Governing Through Crime: How the War on Crime Transformed American Democracy and Created a Culture of Fear*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Skeggs, B. 1997. *Formations of Class & Gender: Becoming Respectable*. London: Sage.

Skeggs, B. & V. Loveday. 2012. Struggles for Value: Value Practices, Injustice, Judgment, Affect and the Idea of Class. *The British Journal of Sociology*, 63:472–490.

Smith, K. 2012. Anxieties of Englishness and Participation in Democracy. *Focaal*, 62:30–41.

———. 2017. 'You Don't Own Money, You're Just the One Who's Holding it': Borrowing, Lending and the Fair Person in North Manchester. *The Sociological Review Monographs*, 65(1):121–136.

Sopranzetti, C. 2016. 'Austerity and the Scales of Sovereignty in Contemporary Italy', paper presented at Alternatives to Austerity workshop, LSE, 9 June 2016.

Staeheli, L. A. & M. Brown. 2003. Where Has Welfare Gone? Introductory Remarks on the Geographies of Care and Welfare. *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*, 35:771–777.

Tronto, J. C. 1994. *Moral Boundaries: A Political Argument for an Ethic of Care*. London: Routledge.

Tuckett, A. 2014. *The Ambiguities of Documentation: Migrants' Everyday Encounters with Immigration Law in Italy* (PhD dissertation). LSE.

———. 2015. Strategies of Navigation: Migrants' Everyday Encounters with Italian Immigration Bureaucracy. *The Cambridge Journal of Anthropology*, 33(1):113–128.

———. 2017. 'The Island is Full. Please Don't Come': Narratives of Austerity and Migration in a UK Citizenship Class. *Anthropology Today*, 33(5):24–27.

———. 2018. Ethical Brokerage and Self-Fashioning in Italian Immigration Bureaucracy. *Critique of Anthropology*, 38(4):245–264.

Tyler, K. 2007. 'Streetville Forever': Ethnicity, Collective Action and the State. *Ethnicities*, 14:579–602.

Wacquant, L. 2009. *Punishing the Poor: The Neoliberal Government of Social Insecurity*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

———. 2012. Three Steps to a Historical Anthropology of Actually Existing Neoliberalism. *Social Anthropology*, 2(1):66–79.

Wilde, M. 2016. Our Immoral Housing Policy is Set up to Punish the Poor. *The Guardian*. https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/sep/26/immoral-housing-policy-punish-poor-councils-poverty-people-losinghomes

———. 2017. Embryonic Alternatives Amid London's Housing Crisis. *Anthropology Today*, 33 (5):16–19.

Williams, P. & R. Clarke. 2015. *Dangerous Associations: Joint Enterprise, Gangs and Racism. An Analysis of the Processes of Criminalisation of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Individuals.* London: Centre for Crime and Justice Studies.

Zigon, J. 2008. *Morality: An Anthropological Perspective.* Oxford: Berg.

———. 2009. Developing the Moral Person: The Concepts of Human, Godmanhood, and Feelings in Some Russian Articulations of Morality. *Anthropology of Consciousness*, 20(1):1–26.