Explaining Counter Terrorism in the UK: Normal politics, securitized politics or performativity of the neoliberal state?

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This paper seeks to explore the politics of counter terrorism in the UK. It argues that for a number of reasons, counter terrorism policy has been separated off from other policy areas and seen as securitised, exceptional or just different. The paper argues that such a separation from "normal" politics is problematic, both conceptually and empirically. It argues that much can be gained by considering counter terrorism policy through the lenses, concepts and debates which feature in other areas of British politics. The paper then examines two such lenses/debates – depoliticisation and neoliberalism. An argument is developed that counter terrorism policy is not, in the main, depoliticised, but rather overt, politicised and visible. This prominence, it is argued, is due to the ways in which neoliberalism has reduced many of the traditional roles of the state. Drawing on the work of Wacquant and Hall, the paper argues that in the absence of such traditional roles, counter terrorism offers the state an opportunity to perform its own "stateness", to visibly display its sovereign power in a context of ever more (self-imposed) diminished powers.

Introduction

This article seeks to develop an argument that contemporary counter terrorism policy in the UK in part takes the particular form that it does to serve as a spectacle of sovereign power in an era of neoliberal governance where the state abjures many of its traditional roles. Counter terrorism is, in other words, a performance of state power in a context of a state which, under the influence of neoliberal ideas, elsewhere lacks performative power or essence. In making this argument, the paper seeks to contribute to debates about *why* security and counter terrorism takes the form that it does. In much literature around security politics, the focus has been on sovereign decision-making, whether this is in the form of securitisation theory or debates around exceptionalism. A related tendency is to see security policy like counter terrorism as exceptional and departing from established precedents and norms – or "normal" politics. The Paris School has sought to shift focus and attention to a broader range of actors, specifically bureaucrats within a "field" of security and unease management, yet arguably, retains a focus on security as different (Neal, forthcoming).

This paper seeks to explore three areas. At the broadest level, it seeks to examine why counter terrorism policy in the UK takes the particular form that it does. Secondly, it considers whether counter terrorism politics is all that different – in form and content – from other areas of politics. Finally, it turns to the question of the extent to which counter terrorism policy and politics is influenced by other aspects and dynamics of politics. To return to the overall argument that the paper seeks to make, it is the contention of the paper that there are reasons to think of counter terrorism as less isolated from other aspects of politics; that it is not so different to "normal" politics as one might think. And secondly, that once we make this move, connections between counter terrorism security politics and other aspects of politics, such as depoliticisation and neoliberalism suggest a holistic analysis which explains the content of UK counter terrorism politics in relation to other aspects of UK politics and not as separate from it. This analysis hypothesises that gaps and absences in many of the state's traditional roles and functions, due to the influence of neoliberal ideas, create forms of insecurity, uncertainty and unease. In such a context, it might be argued that the particular focus on counter terrorism serves as a performance of stateness, which serves up solutions to (some) anxieties, and thus covering over wider, deeper, social, political and economic problems. The paper concludes by arguing that the broader political-economic context and its "strategic selectivity" (Jessop 2008) be given a fuller role in analyses. The paper seeks to make a contribution to and extend a number of different literatures, including debates about how we should understand the nature of security politics, "exceptionalism", securitisation and what the Paris School refer to as the governmentality of unease and how this relates to broader state dynamics. It also seeks to contribute to a number of contemporary debates about the disciplinary or authoritarian nature of (contemporary) neoliberalism.

The paper proceeds in three main sections. The first examines explanations of counter terrorism policy, such as executive/institutionalist and securitisation/exceptionalism. The second section focuses on explanations for security politics which move beyond a focus on executive will/action to a broader analysis, such as the Paris School. The final, longer, section argues that thinking of counter terrorism politics through some of the lenses and ideas which are influential in "normal" British politics, such as depoliticisation and neoliberalism permits a range of interesting sights, such as counter terrorism politics not being depoliticised (perhaps in contrast to areas of "normal" politics). Moreover, debates around neoliberalism raise the possibility that counter terrorism policy is politicised as it serves as a visible manifestation of the state's power and influence in a context of state retrenchment. Building upon the Paris School and their work on the governmentality of unease, the paper focuses particularly on the work of Stuart Hall and Loic Wacquant. Hall's work on authoritarian neoliberalism potentially helps to explain how state actors mobilise popular/populist consent for such a politics of spectacle (or distraction/displacement) and how such a (neoliberal) context "selects for" such a politics.

Explaining UK Counter Terrorism Policy

At face value, perhaps counter terrorism policy needs little or no explanation. One may simply accept the duty of the British state to protect its citizens from terrorism and therefore see counter terrorism as an inevitable reaction to the existence of terrorism. Yet even allowing for this, why has that action taken the form that it has? Why, for example, did the UK government seek, in 2006, to introduce a pre-charge detention period of up to 90 days (later settling on 28), a period which far outstrips that of other western states aiming to combat terrorism? Why, in 2015, did the UK government impose a statutory duty on a vast swathe of public (and some private) sector workers, to have 'due regard to the need to

prevent people from being drawn into terrorism' (HM Government, 2015)? Why introduce and continue with the controversial *Prevent* policy?

There are, at present, two main forms of explanation as to why counter terrorism policy in places like the UK takes the form and shape that it does. The first focuses on the executive, and legal/institutional frameworks or veto points. Here, research that does ask questions as to why states such as the UK have responded to terrorism in the different ways that they have does so in terms of constitutional and legal frameworks (Haubrich 2003; Roach 2011). One effect of this is to attempt to locate or explain counter terrorism within the executive branch (see Owens and Pelizzo 2009). Thus authors who have directly addressed this question have tended to focus on the *ability* of executives to enact stringent measures (often emphasising the role of public fear and threat perception, in association with institutional and political factors; see Roach 2011) without really exploring in significant detail, the extent to which executives and governments come to formulate what they should do. Arguments concerning the UK in such literatures posit a combination of public unease, strong single-party government, a comparatively weak judiciary and political opposition and a relative lack of interest group mobilisation (see Haubrich 2003, 28). These factors clearly have some importance in terms of what executives can do, but not all of the variation is explained by veto points, nor the executive's (in)ability to get things done.

The second main explanation originates within (critical) security studies and particularly around debates on exceptionalism and securitisation. In the wake of 9/11, many politicians were quick to invoke exceptional language to characterise the threat that terrorism posed and the consequent need for exceptional measures in response. Tony Blair (2001), soon after 9/11 referred to it as a 'turning point in history', whilst the UK government's CONTEST Strategy document (HM Government 2009) argued that 'the current international terrorist threat is quite different from the terrorist threats we faced in the past'. Such political framings, alongside counter terrorism measures and initiatives such as pre-charge detention, extraordinary rendition, control orders and so on, leant themselves towards being understood in terms of exceptionalism.

Ideas and debates around exceptionalism demarcate a distinction between "normal" politics and security politics. Many contributions to this debate engage with, in some form, Schmitt (1985) and/or Agamben (2004). For the former, Schmitt's discussion is around the limits of the exercise of political power, focusing on the sovereign as that which decides the exception. Agamben's work focuses more on the ways in which the exception has become the norm, such that individuals have lost the protection of law and are reduced to "bare life". In the post 9/11 context, exceptionalism became a common way to understand counter terrorism policies (for example, see Aradau and van Munster 2009; Huysmans 2004, 2008; Neal 2010). The binary between "exceptional" and "normal" politics will be returned to below, but prior to that, it is important to unpack and question exactly what we mean by exceptionalism. Whilst much attention is focused on the Schmittean *decision* as to what constitutes the exception, as Best (2017) points out, this is only one element of exceptional politics. Suspending the norm, where normal processes of law are derogated from, and putting the exception into practice (often through legislation, see Neal 2012) are, Best argues, key components of exceptional politics. Huysmans (2004) also points to exceptionalism as having important dimensions in terms of compressing the time taken to decide on policy and on the way in which "the people" are invoked and positioned. Such a range of exceptional practices reflects a desire to think about exceptionalism beyond a simply exceptional/normal binary. Indeed, Huysmans (2004, 330) talks about 'varieties of exceptionalism' (see also Neal 2012).

Exceptionalism is an important concept for the securitisation literature. Huysmans (2011, 375), for instance, points to the connections between securitisation and debates around exceptionalism.

> Exceptionalist politics… draws a sharp distinction between the routine, alienation, reiteration of the everyday and the decisiveness and creativity of the moments of exception – the moments of existential threat. Speech acts of security enact a sharp distinction between the exceptional and the banal, the political and the everyday, the routine and creative.

Securitisation most closely associated with the Copenhagen School has for many years, in its classical form, suggested that when "security" is spoken of, when, that is, an issue becomes *securitised*, it is removed from the realm of "normal" politics and is dealt with in a different political mode. This entails a move which 'takes politics beyond the established rules of the game and frames the issue either as a special kind of politics or as above politics' (Buzan et al. 1998, 23). This move involves a speech act, which delineates the issue as an existential threat, requiring emergency action or special measures. Buzan et al. (1998, 29 emphasis added) stress that securitisation sees efforts to 'present an issue as urgent and existential, so important that it *should not be exposed to the normal haggling of politics* but should be dealt with decisively by top leaders prior to other issues'. The effect of this is to separate security politics from other policy areas, to the extent that models, concepts, and analytical frameworks which seek to explain the content and shape of other areas of policy are not seen to be relevant. The securitisation framework has been the subject of intense debate, commentary and criticism (see, inter alia, McSweeny 1998; Williams, 2003; Balzacq, 2005; Stritzle, 2007; McDonald, 2008), yet the central point here is the argument that securitisation creates a sharp divide between "normal" and "securitised" politics.

The cumulative effect of these positions is to place terrorism and counter terrorism policy as above or beyond the normal run of (British) politics. In this separation, broader debates about the content and direction of public policy as a whole – explaining the trajectories of public policy – are analytically excluded. Security is explained, in such accounts, through sovereign (or executive) will and is not related to other areas of public policy as it is seen to be exceptional, or at least different. If security politics is different or "exceptional" then we cannot or should not seek to explain them in the ways we might explain other areas of public policy. Our explanations revolve around executive will, albeit in different ways, with the literature focusing on executive action being a related, but different argument to those which orientate around sovereign exceptionalism.

Beyond the exception

In some ways, the reason as to why security politics has come to be associated with executive decisionism is partly related to academic disciplinary conventions. As Andrew Neal (2012) has pointed out, political science has rarely engaged with security issues, leaving these to IR scholars in the main, with the result that there has been little dialogue between political science and IR in terms of the politics of security. The effect the security studies/IR dominance of counter terrorism and mainstream political science's neglect of such issues has been to push security issues into a different academic space beyond that which analyses "normal" politics. In effect this produces a disciplinary exceptionalisation of security politics which serves to render it isolated and cut off from broader political dynamics and concerns in

political science, and British politics more specifically (see Neal forthcoming). Neal's work, which has focused on the ways in which Parliament has become a more active participant in security politics in recent years, is an important contribution to the debates about security politics and how they are framed, shaped and conducted. He has emphasised the ways in which terrorism studies (orthodox and critical) has tended to ignore or downplay the regular and iterative political aspects of counter terrorism. As Neal notes, the dominant tendency is to see counter terrorism in terms of the sovereign and the exception and therefore to picture security in existential, exceptional terms and dominated by the executive. This he argues 'creates an analytical blind spot regarding security politics and an incomplete picture of the workings of security' (Neal 2012, 108).

Similarly, the focus on sovereign decision making or exceptionality has been critiqued by those associated with the Paris School and International Political Sociology (IPS) more broadly. Scholars such as Bigo and Huysmans argue that security politics is not only decided or framed by (sovereign) political decision makers, but that a broader field of security professionals is also important in understanding what they refer to as the 'management of unease' (Bigo 2008, 64). Bigo (2014, 211) has critiqued the presentism and decisionism of securitisation theory, arguing that we need to take account of a broader context and 'the everyday practices that enact a governmentality of fear and unease'. Similary, Huysmans (2011, 372) has argued for attention away from decisive moments of securitisation towards more recurrent and ongoing 'little security nothings'. Huysmans argues that we should not simply focus on 'critical decisions', but also look to the 'continuous process of assembling objects, subjects and practices' (Huysmans 2011, 377) which make up the politics around (in)security. This broader field and the technology and technocratic processes associated with it, Huysmans argues, in important ways are prior to the decisions of elites; they 'precede and pre-structure political framing in significant ways' (Huysmans 2006, 8). Therefore, rather than focusing on the actions, or utterances of a smaller group of elites, those associated with the Paris School seek to draw attention to the wider, routinised, bureaucratic and technocratic ways in which security is governed. This field of security professionals, they argue, mobilise threats and promote unease through technological processes and self-interest (i.e. the maintenance of budgets for security measures). Political elites are frequently happy to concur, partly, Bigo (2002, 65, 70) argues to mask their inadequacies and failures in other political areas and to obscure their lack of power (or will?) in economic policymaking.

Whilst as Andrew Neal (forthcoming) notes, the Paris school is critical of the focus on traditional political actors and their speech acts, it retains a sense in which security is separate from traditional politics. Its focus on the field of security professionals similarly supplants the institutions of democratic, normal politics. Indeed Bigo asserts that whilst politicians play important roles in security, security professionals occupy a privileged and, in some instances, even a dominant position. 'Even if national professionals of politics still play a key role in structuring security issues… the agencies and bureaus that comprise the world of security are arguably the sole agents able to assert… their definition of what inspires unease' (Bigo 2008, 27).

A number of other scholars have further disputed exceptionalist readings of security politics. Whilst there may be exceptional elements of counter terrorism politics (Guantanamo Bay and extraordinary rendition projects represent perhaps the clearest sense of sovereign exceptionalism), as a number of scholars have argued, a focus on these risks downplaying or ignoring the more regular, mundane even, aspects of counter terrorism politics. Neocleous (2006, 207) forcefully makes the argument that the opposition between emergency/exception

and normal law is fallacious 'historical evidence suggests that emergency powers are far from exceptional; rather, they are an ongoing aspect of normal political rule'. He further states 'In other words, it is through law that violent actions conducted in "emergency conditions" have been legitimated' (Neocleous 2006, 206). Boukalas (2014, 116-117) similarly argues, when discussing the response of the Bush administration to 9/11 that counter terrorism law

> is a juridical and political denial of decisionism and of the assumption of all powers by a single entity taking over in the exception. Instead, the "sovereign" seeks to draw draconian, discretionary power *from* law and inscribe it *into* law and to do so through the active involvement of the legislature and, occasionally, the judiciary.

In the remaining sections of the paper, it will be argued that analyses of counter terrorism politics should move away from a reliance on ideas of sovereign will or exceptionalism (at least in terms of a simple exceptional/normal binary) – indeed perhaps moving beyond the question of *who* makes security politics. The contribution the article seeks to make is to explore what might be gained by thinking through counter terrorism politics and policy with lenses and debates from "normal" politics. The paper seeks to do this through bringing counter terrorism politics closer to the study of "normal" politics and focusing on *why* counter terrorism takes the form that it does. The majority of the paper is explicitly located within the British context, although some of the analysis ranges more widely. The reason for focussing on British politics is a relatively straightforward one. Britain has proved to be remarkably active in terms of terrorism and counter terrorism policy (Jarvis and Lister 2015). Whilst the UK is by no means alone in pursuing new counter terrorism powers, it does represent something of a "market leader" and a number of countries, such as Australia, have been influenced by the UK approach (Roach 2011). There is, in simple terms, a lot of "politics" to examine in British counter terrorism policy.

In "bringing the politics back in" to the study of British counter terrorism policy, the paper focuses on two prominent debates within British politics, namely those around depoliticisation, and neoliberalism. These debates cover questions of governance, governing strategies and political economy – areas sometimes left out of (mainly IR-based) analyses of terrorism and counter terrorism policy. Depoliticisation has been described by Flinders and Wood (2014a, 135) as the 'dominant model of statecraft in the twenty first century'. It is, therefore, a central concept in contemporary political science in Britain and beyond. Neoliberalism might seem a less obvious choice. Neoliberalism, has become, as Schmidt notes, fundamental to many western states, yet until the financial crisis, perhaps its centrality had gone if not unacknowledged, then perhaps somewhat downplayed. Yet she argues that neoliberalism constitutes the '"background ideas" in contemporary capitalist democracies' (Schmidt 2016, 319). Since the financial crisis, the prominence and role of neoliberalism has come to the fore once again. Indeed, the rise of austerity politics and the resilience of neoliberalism in the face of the financial crisis has led some to analyse the more disciplinary or punitive elements of neoliberalism; witness debates about "authoritarian neoliberalism" (Bruff 2014, Tansel 2017).

The Politics of Counter Terrorism: securitised, normal, exceptional or other?

Roe (2012, 251) suggests that "normal" politics, to which securitised politics is to be counterposed, represents politics which follows established rules and procedures; a politics which 'operates according to established mechanisms. Proposed measures are marked by debate and deliberation. Decisionmaking is open in the sense that legislatures and other

bodies are able to scrutinise the executive'. Yet, as we shall see below, there is a parallel debate in (British) political science, namely that around depoliticisation, which suggests that such modes of politics are becoming increasingly rare across the board. If state actors are increasingly drawn to depoliticised modes of governance, which abjures many of the characteristics of "normal" politics identified by Roe, what is special about security? Or, intriguingly, is security different, but not in the manner characterised by securitisation – is security the area marked by contestation, debate and discussion in a (British) political arena increasingly characterised by depoliticisation?

These debates have a relatively long genesis. Hay argues that the perceived crisis of the 1970s and arguments about "overload" and "ungovernability" (compare King, 1975; Rose, 1979 and Parsons 1982) led to a perception that government could not function effectively when trying to achieve a wide range of policy goals. From this, allied to public choice theory and neo-liberal ideas, came a sense in which the state should seek to do less. As Hay (2006, 57) argues such accounts suggested that:

> A bloated state had simply taken on too much by sanctioning ever spiralling expectations and siphoning off an ever growing share of national output through taxation receipts in the attempt to satisfy such expectations. It argued that what we needed was rather less "politics"… and rather less "public sector".

Hay goes on to argue that under the influence of such accounts, depoliticisation has become a prominent aspect of British politics (Flinders and Wood 2014a). Interestingly, Hay identifies some accounts of depoliticisation which makes it seem rather similar to securitisation. He cites Burnham's early definition, that depoliticisation is 'the process of placing at one remove the political character of decision making' (Burnham, in Hay 2006, 92). Hay goes on to characterise depoliticisation as something which removes decisions about political goods and policies away from public deliberation, something which elites find useful to do, especially if the policy is contentious and/or unpopular. Flinders and Wood (2014b, 155) suggest that depoliticisation has three "faces"; governmental, societal and discursive. Governmental depoliticisation represents things like governments putting decision making processes at a remove from political institutions. Paradigmatic examples of this include the granting of independence to the Bank of England over monetary policy and a range of institutional developments which removed certain decisions from overtly political attribution towards more bureaucratic/technocratic institutions (examples include the creations of NHS Foundation Trusts, academies in the school system, the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) on health policy, the Independent Police Complaints Authority and the Sentencing Guidelines Council on law and order issues (Flinders and Buller 2006)). In making the case for societal and discursive depoliticisation, Flinders and Wood aim to suggest that it is not simply a governmental strategy, but one that occurs and exists across a range of processes, institutions and arenas. Societal depoliticisation occurs when issues are not considered to be political or 'the existence of choices concerning that issue are no longer debated' (Harder cited in Flinders and Wood 2014b, 159). Discursive depoliticisation involves 'the promotion of an issue, but alongside a single interpretation and the denial of choice' (Flinders and Wood, 2014b, 161). An example of such discursive depoliticisation might be seen to be ideas about the necessity of austerity policies in the wake of the financial crisis (Standring 2018).

This equation between depoliticisation and the closing down of options and debate is also emphasised by Jenkins (2011, 160) who argues:

a strategy of depoliticisation entails forming necessities, permanence, immobility, closure and fatalism and concealing/negating or removing contingency. To engage in a strategy of depoliticisation is also to perform a political act, as it generates the restriction, removal or suppression of our capacities for autonomy, as well as the preservation of a particular strategy or force.

This all seems to bear at least a passing resemblance to securitisation theory (see Edkins 1999), suggesting that security politics might not be an exceptional or different policy arena; that, in other words, the dynamics to which securitisation theory appeals to, and cites as specific to the field of security, may be far more diffuse and widespread than that theory allows for. Indeed, Flinders and Wood (2014a, 143) ponder whether depoliticisation creates 'a situation more akin to exception as the rule'. Discussing the work of Schmitt and Agamben, they note the ways in which

> depoliticised modes of governance have mutated from being used provisionally and exceptionally to becoming a 'technique of government' which had, as a consequence, made it harder for citizens to challenge the authority of the state. (ibid.)

It is important to note, as Forster et al. (2014, 229) argue that depoliticisation, at least when employed at the governmental level, is not literally the removal or absence of politics, but rather a very specific tactic to absent and deny responsibility and blame: 'what gets "squeezed out" by de-politicisation, is not politics per se, but rather the responsibility, blame, costs and discretion associated with policy making'. It is striking to note the contrast with counter terrorism policy, where government directly assumes responsibility and costs for the policy (albeit with some "at one remove" policy adjustments (e.g. Prevent statutory duty) – a point to which I will return below).

What, therefore, does the debate about depoliticisation offer to analyses and understandings of UK counter terrorism policy? At first glance, it appears that depoliticisation offers little by way of enhancement – it looks similar to securitisation, in that the main thrust of depoliticisation is that governmental or political decisions are increasingly being removed from "normal" politics and being subject to different, elite-driven and unaccountable processes (although there are differences between the two theories. See Neal forthcoming). Yet, the depoliticisation literature would suggest that this process is increasingly apparent across governmental policy areas, and not just something that happens for security issues. It therefore further leads to scepticism about the distinctiveness of security politics – if many policy areas are increasingly being removed from "normal" politics, what is special about security politics? Or, to put it another way, does "normal" politics increasingly look like securitised politics?

However, one might even push the argument a stage further. Brief examinations of some aspects of counter terrorism policy and politics are suggestive of a very different kind of politics to that imagined in depoliticisation/securitisation accounts. Instead of security politics being distinctive for being closed, and elite driven – depoliticised perhaps – UK counter terrorism politics sometimes looks akin to "normal" politics, with open, public contestation, deliberation and debate. Indeed, if we focus solely on the governmental level, there is little evidence of the issue being moved from central government and counter terrorism policy does not appear to be a deracinated, thin, bureaucratic kind of politics with little or no contestation or debate.

The account of the passage of the 2006 Terrorism Act (admittedly a single piece of legislation, albeit an important one, following the 7/7 attacks) serves as an example. The process of drafting the bill involved cross party discussions, the government was defeated in Parliament on a key area of the bill, there were allegations that the police had been "politicised" in the way in which they argued in favour of the bill, it was not fast-tracked through Parliament and received something akin to "normal" Parliamentary time and procedures. Whilst some campaigners such as Liberty argued that the legislation was rushed, the overall time from publication of the bill to royal assent, at some seven months, is (roughly) comparable with other legislation. (The recent Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act of 2013, went from publication to royal assent in seven months (Parliament UK, n.d. a), the 2010 Academies Act (increasing the devolution of schools to academy status) went from first reading to royal assent in two months (Parliament UK, n.d. b). As a further point of comparison, the committee stage for the 2006 Terrorism Act lasted for around twelve and a half hours (Hansard, 2005) and for the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act, the same stage lasted around ten and a half hours (Hansard, 2013)). Indeed, a recent Parliamentary Report (House of Lords Select Committee on the Constitution, 2009) looked into so-called "fast-tracking" of legislation (i.e. reducing amount of Parliamentary time for debate) and found that of the 49 pieces are considered, only 5 are counter terrorism measures. Moreover, major pieces of counter terrorism legislation, that introduced controversial measures such as stop-and-search without suspicion (Terrorism Act 2000); extension of pre-charge detention to 28 days (Terrorism Act 2006), Control Orders (Counter Terrorism Act 2005) do not appear on this list.

The legislation is subject to annual review by the Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation, where the aim is 'to inform – so far as is possible within the necessary constraints of secrecy – *the parliamentary and public debate* over anti-terrorism powers and civil liberties in the UK' (Anderson, 2015, 3, emphasis added). It has also been the subject of a number of Parliamentary committee reports (e.g. House of Commons 2018), and the subject of various social movement campaigns including Liberty (Russell, 2010), Haldane Society of Socialist Lawyers (n.d.) and the Church of England (n.d.) to pick just three. Finally, it should be noted, that the 2012 Protection of Freedoms Act reversed one aspect of the 2006 Terrorism Act, reducing the maximum pre-charge detention period to 14 days. This was, in part, due to the change of administration from Labour to a Conservative/Liberal Democrat coalition. There is, in sum, a great deal of "normal" politics here. This brief sketch is consonant with more systematic analysis which emphasises that security politics is often subject to consistent and significant debate and contestation (Wagner et al. 2017; Bright 2015)

Whilst it perhaps looks like counter terrorism policy is not depoliticised, is it the case that it is exceptional? Here the picture is more mixed. As noted above, we can think about exceptionalism in a number of different ways. In terms of the content of policy, moving to a situation where those suspected of terrorist offences could be detained pre-charge for up to 28 days represents a significant deviation from the norm, both compared to prior UK law and to other countries. Yet the process, and the time spent over this do not look "exceptional". Indeed, to echo Boukalas' argument above, when the UK government has sought "exceptional" powers, it has more often than not, cleaved to the Parliamentary system and process to provide justification and legitimation. In sum the argument is twofold; on the one hand, there seems no lack of politics or contestation around counter terrorism policy. On the other hand, whilst counter terrorism policy might sometimes be considered exceptional or deviating from or suspending the norm, such changes are not normally enacted through

exceptional means. In other words, there might be elements of exceptionalism but they are delivered through "normal" political procedures and processes. As Bigo (2008, 36) puts it 'Exception works hand in hand with liberalism and gives the key to understanding its normal functioning'. This is a point that will be returned to below.

This leads to an intriguing proposition – and given the lack of systematic examination, it can only be a proposition – namely, that UK counter terrorism politics is perhaps somewhat distinctive, but not in the ways in which securitisation might imagine. Might it be the case that UK counter terrorism politics represents a form of "normal" politicised politics in an era where this applies to increasingly few policy areas? This is a point that Huysmans alludes to. He argues that if the speech act of security creates a rupture of the kind which states that the radical nature of the threat means that traditional responses are inadequate – invoking, in other words, an exception – then the response to this might be a radically political one. If the old way of doing things is to be cast aside, all sorts of 'rupturing' options and possibilities are implied (even if they are not acted upon) such that we might refer to 'the speech act of security being radically politicizing' (Huysmans 2011, 374).

If this is the case, and counter terrorism rather than being *de*politicised is, in fact, a politicised area of policy (in a context of ever more depoliticisation), how might we explain the apparent paradox? The argument to be developed below is that part of the answer may lie in the centrality that counter terrorism politics has assumed in the UK, something which is in part due to the state's retreat in other areas, itself related to the influence of neoliberal ideas. Counter terrorism may appear as "normal" politics because of the centrality of its performance to the very essence of state-ness. The state cannot afford to elide or hide counter terrorism as an important part of its role is an ostentatious display of the state performing its key roles.

There is perhaps one important caveat to note here. The above focuses on the national political debate, often within Parliament. Whilst it might be argued that counter terrorism politics at this level appears vibrant and not *de*politicised, that this does not mean that counter terrorism does not have depoliticising effects – particularly if examining levels beyond the national/Parliamentary debate. For instance, Prevent, in its present form, invites doctors, nurses and teachers among others, to identify and refer those who may be subject to radicalisation. An important part of basic training provided to such personnel emphasises that they do not have to be sure or know for certain that the individual(s) in question are radical or in danger of becoming radicalised – they just have to refer the case on. Heath-Kelly (2017, 39) examines the Prevent training provided to NHS staff and concludes that 'the purpose of the training is to induce a culture of reporting'. This might tally with societal or discursive depoliticisation noted above, attempting to remove calculations, evaluations and alternatives from the responsible individuals – don't think, just refer seems to be the mantra. It may therefore be that depoliticisation is manifest around counter terrorism, but not necessarily at the (national) governmental level.

Neoliberalism

As noted above, depoliticisation has its roots, Hay (2006, 99) argues, in a confluence of public choice theory and neoliberalism, both of which 'have considerable trouble in conceiving of the state as either an effective or an honest guarantor of the public good'. Flinders and Wood (2014a, 137) similarly identify depoliticisation in terms of 'the gradual marginalisation or closing down of democratic governance, due to the paradigmatic influence

of neoliberalism's antipathy towards the state and its deification of the market' (see also Forster et al, 2014). There seems, in other words, a connection between depoliticisation and neoliberalism. Neoliberalism is, as Jessop (2013, 65) notes, a 'chaotic concept', whilst Wacquant (2012, 68) refers to neoliberalism as 'slippery, hazy and contentious'. At its loosest, it is a concept which refers to the mechanisms by which market primacy has been extended beyond the economic realm, into social, political and other areas (Harvey 2005). British politics' engagement with neoliberalism has frequently come through the lens and experience of Thatcherism and its legacy, which will be examined in detail below. This section will consider whether debates around neoliberalism and its character have purchase or insights for counter terrorism, arguing that the retreat from or rolling back of many of the state's traditional roles, particularly in the economic realm, has produced, in turn, a heightened attention to and focus on security related issues. Whilst the expansion of counter terrorism, through policies such as Prevent, therefore initially seem to be unrelated to neoliberal ideas and processes, the paper wishes to argue that there is a much closer relationship than seems at first apparent.

After tracing some of the more explicit connections between neoliberalism, terrorism and coercion, the article turns to consider the work of Loic Wacquant, who argues that an upsurge in coercion and control has accompanied the relinquishing and relaxing of economic controls. In part, this seeming paradox (more control/coercion and less control/coercion) is explained by Wacquant as a necessary part of neoliberalism – to control and mask its shortcomings. In other words, greater punitive, coercive security measures are a "normal" part (maybe even a necessary part) of the functioning of neoliberal regimes. The article further builds on this account of greater coercive security politics (such as counter terrorism) by revisiting Stuart Hall's work on Thatcherism and authoritarian populism. Hall's work facilitates a deeper understanding of how such increased attention to security a) becomes possible and b) how it "resolves" or displaces the tensions within neoliberalism. In Hall's work, we find an account of how *in the "normal" run of neoliberal politics*, social, political and economic crises are displaced into moral panics. These moral panics, and the populist consent mobilised alongside them, are given "false" resolutions which provide an element of reassurance and deflection from wider, deeper social, political and economic crises prompted by neoliberalism itself. Thus the spectacle of security masks the deeper rooted insecurities created by neoliberalism.

At first glance, neoliberalism doesn't seem to be able to explain much about counter terrorism; if anything, the post 9/11 drive around counter terrorism seems to be in conflict with neoliberal principles of a limited state and individual freedoms. However, a number of scholars have identified a link between (counter) terrorism, neoliberalism and its less liberal and more coercive or punitive aspects (see inter alia Giroux 2005; Stokes 2005; Blakeley 2009; Heath Kelly et al. 2015), often focusing on the direct ways in which terror/counter terrorism was productive in the expansion of neoliberalisation in the global south. Durodie (2007), although in slightly different terms, also points to the relationship between a (neoliberal) style of government which abjures many traditional roles and values and a fascination with security and terrorism. He argues that the proliferation of risk management techniques and ideas has resulted in an almost neurotic society, but one which also lacks a sense of political purpose or vision. Into this political or ideological void, government and state actors eagerly embrace a role as providers of security as it gives them a purpose and position:

the politics of fear, or risk regulation, have provided a hesitant and isolated elite with an agenda and a new, if limited, sense of moral purpose. The authorities have willingly embraced this role. Latching onto the general climate of isolation and insecurity, politicians have learnt to repackage themselves as societal risk managers (Durodie 2007, 441).

As noted above, those associated with the Paris School and IPS move in the direction of noting links between neoliberalism and the governmentality of fear and unease. Bigo argues that the field of security professionals, in concert with political elites manage a politics of unease and fear through technology and technocratic solutions, but they do so in such a way as to support and be productive for economic concerns. Focusing on the unease and securitisation of migration, he argues that such unease is managed, manufactured and even created to be useful for a wider political and economic context

> The securitization of migration is, thus… used as a mode of governmentality by diverse institutions to play with the unease, or to encourage it if it does not yet exist, so as to affirm their role as providers of protection and security and to mask some of their failures (Bigo 2002, 65)

Bigo goes on to note that this emphasis on security and border control is seen as important by political elites, as their influence and control in other areas is less apparent. 'This assumption [of control over borders] is now even more important for them given that they know they have less and less importance in decision making concerning money and credit' (Bigo 2002, 70).

A similarly Bourdieusian inspired analysis extends this line of argumentation. The work of Loic Wacquant is suggestive of a connection between neoliberalism and security and counter terrorism. Wacquant focuses mostly on the American case, but also sees America as 'the premier global exporter of "theories," slogans, and measures on the crime and safety front' (Wacquant 2008, 21), and sees the UK as particularly receptive to such ideas. He has emphasised how the "rolling back of the state" from redistributive social policies under neoliberalism, goes hand in hand with the expansion of a more extensive penal/criminal justice system:

> policies of economic deregulation, supervisory workfare and punitive criminal justice tend to trek and blossom together. In sum, the penalisation of poverty emerged as a core element of the domestic implementation and transborder diffusion of the neoliberal project, the 'iron fist' of the penal state mating with the 'invisible hand' of the market in conjunction with the fraying of the social safety net. (Wacquant 2012, 67)

In this, Wacquant sees neoliberalism as a political project, one that seeks to utilise the power of the state to reshape citizens to forms amenable to the market. It is, he argues 'an articulation of state, market, and citizenship that harnesses the first to impose the stamp of the second onto the third' (Wacquant 2012, 71). In this, the state is not so much dismantled as it is reengineered. Neoliberalism 'wishes to reform and refocus the state so as to actively foster and bolster the market as an ongoing political creation' (Wacquant 2012, 72). This reformulation of the state occurs for Wacquant for two reasons, one more fully explored than the other. The first, as suggested in the passages above, is that the expansion of the penal state is a solution to the answer of what to do with those dislocated and "left behind" by neoliberal

capitalism. Wacquant (2010, 211) argues that neoliberalism expands the punitive/coercive field in order to deal with the fall out from greater economic inequality and insecurity.

A second explanation of this twin move is clearly stated by Wacquant, although perhaps not as fully explored as the first. Echoing Bigo's point above, as well as serving to regulate and police the marginal populations in neoliberal societies, an enhanced and expanded state focus on law and order serve to cover and distract from the absence of state regulation, power and influence in other areas. The increased attention given to law and order issues, in the penal state 'shore up the deficit of legitimacy suffered by political decision-makers, owing to the very fact that they have abjured the established missions of the state on the social and economic fronts' (Wacquant 2008, 27). In other words, the focus on law and order and security serves as a bait and switch for the (deeper?) socio-economic forms of inequality (and resultant *in*security). Putting these two strands together, it might be suggested that what Wacquant is arguing is that the neoliberal state, unwilling to fundamentally alter market based accumulation, and thus powerless to assuage its citizens concerns and insecurities about their (material) well-being, stages a 'garish spectacle of law-and-order pornography' to provide a semblance of security so as to 'reaffirm the authority of a government wanting in legitimacy due to having forsaken its established duties of social and economic protection' (Wacquant 2014, 1695). This performance of the Leviathan-function is seen by Wacquant (2014, 1701, original emphasis) as 'a bureaucratic theatre geared to reaffirming their authority and to *staging the 'sovereignty' of the state*' and the 'ritual reassertion of the sovereignty of the state' (2010, 208).

There are echoes here of Weber's (1998, 92) arguments, using the work of Butler, concerning the performativity of states, where the state is denied its pre-given existence and rather is seen as the outcome of its various actions, performances: 'the identity of the state – the ways we understand this materiality of people, territory, government etc. – does not pre-exist performative expression of the state' (see also Jessop 2008). Interestingly, Weber's discussion is framed around sovereignty, and she argues that such performativity (of sovereignty) often take strongest form at the moments when the state appears to be least sovereign, taking place when 'states traumatically confront the impossibility of "being" sovereign and thus insist upon their sovereign subjectivity all the more' (Weber 1998, 92). Thus what occurs is 'the proliferation of performances at the very moments when representation seems to fail' (Weber 1998, 92-3). Therefore, this perhaps echoes the points Wacquant makes about the failure of the state to provide (or be willing to try to provide) or address the broader socio-economic insecurities of its citizens. This leads to a performance, a 'staging of the sovereignty of the state', in order to shore up legitimacy perhaps, but also to render the state concrete and actual; to do, and to be seen to be doing, *something*, in an era of limited governmental intervention, especially in economic governance. Clearly, to make this point is not to suggest that counter terrorism is the only, or main, form in which such performances are enacted – merely that this may be a hitherto underplayed aspect in the construction of counter terrorism governance.

To this it is tempting to add that as such moves or performances can never be complete, they perhaps feed a desire among citizens for ever greater law and order/security measures (a desire, which if Wacquant is right, can never be met through such policies). In this, Wacquant perhaps offers an interesting twist on Tilly's conception of the state as a protection racket. Tilly (2002) draws a distinction between racketeers (who cause the threat and offer protection from it, for a price) and legitimate protectors, who offer genuine, if uncertain, protection. The state, under the terms above, is a deviant form of both – it creates (some) insecurities

(through neoliberalism and, in particular, resultant wage/labour insecurities) but offers (again in Wacquant's terms) a diversionary, illusory, performance of security.

It should be noted that Wacquant's work is not without its problems. There is, as Wimmer (2014) argues some conceptual confusion as to whether the relationship between welfare & the penal state and neoliberal governance is contingent or functional. Wacquant's broader conceptual framework emphasises Bourdieu's concept of a bureaucratic field, under which the state is treated not as a "thing" but as an outcome of social relations, political forces, struggle and so on (Wacquant 2010. See also Jessop 2008). This suggests that the outcomes of the state are the contingent and uncertain outcomes of specific institutional terrains and actors. Yet elsewhere, Wacquant refers to a much more tightly specified relationship: 'there exists a deep structural and functional connection between market rule and punishment after the close of the Keynesian-Fordist era' (Wacquant 2012, 76). There is therefore an ambiguity around whether the co-developments that Wacquant points to are functional derivations of neoliberalism or more contingent processes arrived at by state (and non-state) actors working within and under neoliberal institutions and ideas.

Yet the analysis above offers a potentially fruitful avenue of exploration for scholars of counter terrorism. Can counter terrorism policies be understood as extensions of the penal state which Wacquant describes? Whilst it might be considered a stretch to view counter terrorism as a means for "mopping up" the dispossessed, does Wacquant's second explanation for the expansion of the punitive state offer a way of thinking about the form and priority that security and counter terrorism are given within the British state? What Wacquant's work suggests is a much deeper connection between security, economic and social policy such that to think of them as belonging to, and being constituted within, separate political realms or areas, is difficult to reconcile. If Wacquant's work has any purchase in explaining counter terrorism in the UK, it more strongly suggests deep connections (whether functional or contingent) between security and other policy areas. Such a move involves, or necessitates a *de*-exceptionalisation of security politics in the sense of security politics being something apart or away from other elements of politics. It also raises the above question of how one reconciles the contingent and functional elements of Wacquant's account. One potential resolution to this is to examine the work of Stuart Hall and ideas around authoritarian populism.

Legacy of Thatcherism

Wacquant is not the first author to examine the ways in which economic (neo)liberalism has been combined with more authoritarian tendencies. Debates around Thatcherism focussed attention on the ways in which broadly neoliberal-inspired projects such as Thatcherism, combined economic liberalism with strong authoritarian elements (see Hall, 1979; 1985 Jessop et al., 1984; Gamble, 1988). Gamble's famous conjunction of "free economy/strong state" is prominent amongst these. Gamble (1988, 28) argues that Thatcherism's particular combination of conservative and liberal new right leads to a paradox whereby the state is simultaneously 'rolled back and rolled forward'. Markets are to be liberalised whereas the force of the state is to be redoubled in addressing and supporting traditional social and moral strictures and institutions. In Germany the concept of ordoliberalism has considered such constellations (Bonefeld, 2012). Neocleous (2006) also notes the ways in which authoritarian or strong law and order impulses lie at the very heart of liberal states. He argues that the history of "emergency" powers suggests that they are not only resorted to during times of (military) crisis, but constitute a more "normal" form of political control.

In this area, the work of Stuart Hall is particularly important. Hall's work on Thatcherism is probably most remembered for the concept of "authoritarian populism", which referred to the ways in which the Thatcherite project sought to construct a hegemonic project through an apparently contradictory melding of authoritarian impulses based on appeals to populist concerns (Hall 1979, 1985. See also Jessop et al. 1984; Gamble, 1988). Hall considered the shift to a state and society where coercion is more pronounced, particularly examining the ways in which moral panics functioned 'to win for the authoritarian closure the gloss of populist consent' (Hall 1985, 116). Thus, in Hall's work, we might find analytical tools which explain *how* neoliberal states stage spectacles of security to assuage or distract from insecurities generated by neoliberalism, which add to the analysis of Wacquant and others above.

The classic *Policing the Crisis* (Hall et al, 1978) contains a number of reflections on the "moral panic" in response to muggings in the 1970s. It is worth here citing a passage at length

> Why does society react to "mugging" as it does, when it does? To what exactly, is this a reaction?... Why is Britain in a moral tail-spin about "crime" in the early 1970s? Why is the "control culture" so sensitised and mobilised against a potential "mugging" threat, and why does this prior sensitisation occur against such a distinctive social and ethnic group in the community? Why does the very idea of "mugging" trigger off such profound social fears and anxieties in the general public and the press? In short what is the repressed social and historical content of "mugging" and the response to it?... Perhaps the most immediately troubling feature is the clear discrepancy between the scale of the "threat" – even on the basis of official estimates – and the scale of the measures taken to prevent and constrain it. (Hall et al. 1978, 184)

If we were to substitute the words "mugging", "crime" and "1970s" for "terrorism" and "2000s", this would seem to be an apt, current and vital series of questions to consider. Hall et al. contend that when the relationship between crime or criminality enters a phase where either criminality looks different and/or when state responses to this are heightened, that this speaks to broader socio-political fundamentals. There are periods where a rough equilibrium exists between crime and law and order policy, which Hall et al. (1978, 186) refer to as the '"normalised repression" of the state'. This is contrasted with periods where such balance is absent. For Hall et al. such periods, where state repression is heightened frequently coincide with a wider context of social upheaval and economic crisis. These upheavals, Hall et al. (1978, 217) go on to explain, are when hegemony breaks down, when 'the whole basis of political leadership and cultural authority becomes exposed and contested'. When this takes place, processes of assuring rule through consent give way to greater emphasis on coercive control or 'repertoires of domination'. Importantly, Hall et al. (1978, 217, original emphasis) do not see such moments in purely exceptional terms, but as extensions or intensifications of "normal" politics:

> It is important to note that this does not entail a suspension of the "normal" exercise of state power – it is not a move to what is sometimes called a fully exceptional form of the state. It is better understood as - to put it paradoxically – an "exceptional moment" in the "normal" form of the late capitalist state. What makes it "exceptional" is the increased reliance on coercive mechanisms and apparatuses already available

within the normal *repertoire* of state power, and the powerful orchestration, in support of this tilt of the balance towards the coercive pole, of an *authoritarian* consensus

They conclude that at such moments the fundamentals of coercion and force upon which the state and its authority rest, are revealed. This discussion links to the earlier one concerning exceptionalism and in particular, the point developed by a number of scholars that we should resist a simple exceptional/normal binary. The exceptional tendencies to which Hall et al. appeal are similar to those invoked above, such as the tendency for exceptionalism to work in and through normal institutions and processes and that of Huysmans (2004), and the argument that one aspect of exceptionalism is the way in which populism is invoked.

This work was later to coalesce around the concept of authoritarian populism. The crisis to which they refer is the ending of the post-war settlement from the end of the 1960s onwards. The purpose of such a shift is to contain the 'conjunctural crisis', the larger, more fundamental crisis, by way of a "moral panic", which displaces larger questions and concerns. Moral panics were, for Hall et al. crucial in mobilising support for enhanced coercion and control. Once again, the parallels between the characterisation of a "moral panic" and the present counter terrorism milieu is striking:

> Their typical form is that of a dramatic event which focuses and triggers a local response and public disquiet. Often as a result of local organising and moral entrepreneurship, the wider powers of the control culture are both alerted (the media play a crucial role here) and mobilised (the police, the courts). The issue is then seen as "symptomatic" of wider, more troubling but less concrete themes.

Thus, the terrorist attacks of 9/11 and 7/7 are seen not as criminal acts, perpetrated by a group of individuals but as symptomatic of firstly the problematic engagement and assimilation of the Muslim community in the UK, and more broadly, as evidence of the failure of multiculturalism in the UK. David Cameron's infamous Munich speech is a prominent example. Cameron decried the way in which 'state multiculturalism' had 'encouraged different cultures to live separate lives' which 'leaves some young Muslims feeling rootless' such that 'they don't turn into terrorists overnight, but what we see… is a process of radicalisation' (Cameron, 2011).

Perhaps addressing some of the concerns discussed in terms of Wacquant's work about how contingent relationships between economy and coercion are, for Hall et al. the implementation of coercion rests on mobilising consent. This is a contingent construction, carried out by what Hall et al. (1978, 221) refer to as 'signification spirals'. They argue that a signification spiral is a way of presenting and discussing events which inherently increases the sense of their threatening nature. They suggest they contain the following elements:

> (1) the identification of a specific issue of concern;
> (2) the identification of a subversive minority;
> (3) "convergence", or the linking, by labelling, of this specific issue to other problems;
> (4) the notion of "thresholds" which, once crossed, can lead to an escalating threat;
> (5) the prophesy of more troubling times to come if no action is taken…
> (6) the call for "firm steps" (Hall et al., 1978, 223)

It is fairly straightforward to argue that all six steps are present in the post 9/11 concerns around terrorism. Hall et al. (1978) pay particular attention to "convergence", the process by which different elements are linked together. These may or may not be spurious connections, they argue, but the point is that such a process often simplifies complex processes and categories (e.g. "Muslim" "extremist" "radicalisation"). There is also a focus on how the conjunction of certain facets or phenomena can lead to projections of what *might* happen, how future actions might cross "thresholds". Thus they argue, counter culture symbols like long hair and permissive sexuality are seen to be more dangerous if they are linked to drug taking; cannabis smoking is seen in a dimmer light if it is seen to lead to heroin addiction and so on. Thus "threats" are amplified if those which exist on the boundaries of what is considered acceptable behaviour are painted as inevitably leading to threats of a higher order. Thus we might argue that in the present day, any issues, difficulties or problems that ethnic minority communities (and especially Muslims) might have are viewed as more than issues to do with social and cultural integration, more than problems of belonging and identity, and are seen more as processes/issues which may be a first step to radicalism and terrorism. Indeed, the government's *Channel* programme is explicitly based on such a logic. Kundnani discusses how *Channel*, the deradicalisation programme that is one of the key components of Prevent, focuses on seemingly benign behavioural traits but which are seen as potential indicators of radicalisation. Thus 'abandoning current associates in favour of a new social network, experiencing a crisis of identity or family separation, and expressing "real or imagined grievances"' (Kundnani 2014, 154-5) are identified as factors which may indicate radicalisation. Thus minor, personal issues are heightened by their (potential) association with higher order risks. Hall et al. conclude that linking (seemingly) benign traits and behaviours with more serious disorder and security problems renders a wider swathe of behaviour amenable to government control. 'When this process becomes a regular and routine part of the way in which conflict is signified in society, it does indeed create its own momentum for measures of "more than usual control"' (Hall et al. 1978, 226).

Echoing (or prefiguring) Wacquant's sense in which law and order upsurges serve to create a chimera of control and order against a backdrop of broader socio-economic unease and fear, Hall et al. (1978, 321-2) state that despite the fact that crises (whether they be of the 1970s variants or more recent ones) create diffuse manifestations, the performance of law and order, however targeted, can provide a sense of reassurance. For Hall et al. the singling out of a minority or a moral panic in order to assuage fears and anxieties within the broader body politic is a spectacle as much as it is about crime/security

> The state comes to provide just that "sense of direction" which the lay public feels society has lost. The anxieties of the many are orchestrated with the need for control of the few… The state can now, publicly and legitimately, campaign against the "extremes" on behalf and in defence of the majority - the "moderates". The "law-and-order" society has slipped into place.

Crucial to this is that the "crisis" is not a fiction. What is important is that it is the characterisation of the crisis and what to do about it that represent "distortions": 'The "ideology of the crisis", which leads to and supports and finally finds its fulfilment in a "law-and-order" society, refers to a real crisis, not to a "phoney" one. It is how that real crisis is perceived and controlled which contains the seeds of political and ideological distortion' (Hall et al. 1978, 322). Thus, to draw from Hall et al.'s framework, it is not necessary or appropriate to suggest that authorities, or what Hall et al. (1978, 221) refer to as 'primary definers', are "inventing" concerns or problems, of economic crisis or terrorism; clearly the

horrific attacks in London and Manchester in 2017 are testament to the presence of terrorist violence. The ideological function, for Hall et al. is in the way such processes and events are represented and responded to. How such characterisations win the consent of the majority is of utmost concern to Hall et al.; how it is that such narratives resonate with the experiences of ordinary people. They go on to characterise a displacement effect, again something which chimes with Wacquant's notion of a law and order "pornography". They describe this displacement effect as taking a moral panic/resolution dynamic. Fears are projected and respite/resolutions are provided (although Hall et al. would see these as "false" resolutions).

> It is as if each surge of social anxiety finds a temporary respite in the projection of fears on to and into certain compellingly anxiety-laden themes: in the discovery of demons, the identification of folk -devils, the mounting of moral campaigns, the expiation of prosecution and control - in the moral-panic cycle (Hall et al. 1978, 322).

Hall et al.'s analysis is rooted in the specific context of a period in British history and it would be unwise to draw straight and direct parallels. The point should not be simply that counter terrorism powers are used directly to police and constrain other forms of political protest (although there are examples of such things happening) but something more diffuse – that, bringing Hall et al., Wacqaunt and the Paris School together, the culture of control serves to a) create a moral panic around terrorism which serves to i) deflect from other forms of crisis and ii) give the state a role in a context where it has abrogated responsibilities which might attenuate (i) and b) represents a performance of sovereignty in the context of (a). The point about abrogation is a prime difference with the analysis conducted by Hall et al in the 1970s, when such moves had only tentatively begun.

Conclusion

In this paper, two overlapping arguments have been developed. The first was that explanations of counter terrorism policy in places like the UK often focus on a form of executive decisionism, whether institutional or securitisation/exceptionalism. This tends to remove analysis of counter terrorism from "normal" politics (or "normal" political science). Such a removal or separation is problematic, empirically and conceptually. Rather than exhibiting a form of politics which eschews regular processes and rules, in favour of a closed, elite driven mode of policy, counter terrorism, at the national level, appears to be marked by contestation, debate and discussion. This led to a second argument, that studies of counter terrorism in the UK might be developed by thinking about it not as something "exceptional" or apart from British politics, but by examining counter terrorism through some of the key conceptual and analytical lenses of British politics. An examination of depoliticisation, neoliberalism as two such important themes, led to an analysis which suggested that counter terrorism, perhaps paradoxically, is a policy area not marked by depoliticisation (or securitisation). This overt politicisation can be made sense of through analyses of neoliberalism (such as Wacquant and Hall) which highlight how in a context of a state which has retreated from many of its traditional functions, counter terrorism offers the state an opportunity to perform its own "stateness", to visibly display its sovereign power in a context of ever more (self-imposed) diminished powers. The work of Hall provides an analysis of how, by mobilising populist consent through moral panics, neoliberal states stage security in order to mask deeper insecurities. It also provides a historical background to suggest that attention to security and law and order issues to (paradoxically) complement a shift and reduction in the activities of the state may not be unprecedented in British politics, and may thus be part of a deeper and longer tradition of state management.

This argument contributes to and extends those literatures which have sought to move beyond stark distinctions between normal politics and securitised politics/exceptionalism. Authors noted above, such as Bigo and Huysmans have identified the ways in which security is not only something done, or spoken, by elites but something to which a range of voices contribute. Those associated with the Paris School, and IPS more broadly, have emphasised the bureaucratic field of security professionals and everyday "little security nothings". Yet the argument presented here, through Wacquant and Hall, points to the broader political-economic context in which elites, security professionals and "everyday" security politics play out. If, as Hall argues, we might see the (re)surgence of repertoires of domination and control that policies like enhanced counter terrorism measures represent as an intensification of "normal" politics *and as something deeply productive and "useful" for that "normal" politics*, (rather than a departure from it), our analyses of security politics perhaps should consider that broader political economic context of "normal" politics rather more fully. It is important to note, however, that qua Hall (and perhaps against some readings of Wacquant) the precise nature of the relationship between the broader political economic context and security politics is contingent and complex. Whilst it might be argued that neoliberalism strategically selects for government's pursuing intensified security/counter terrorism policies (to permit the state to perform its own sovereignty in a context of declining influence and control in other areas), it does not determine this. Jessop (2008) identifies strategic selectivity as the context which privileges certain actors, identities, strategies and actions, and also points to the ways in which actors reflect, understand and learn from this context. Thus precisely how the embedding of market principles across the polity and the state's self-imposed withdrawal from traditional responsibilities shapes the strategies of actors (political elites, security professionals, media, community groups etc) around security politics is not predetermined. The argument here is that there is utility in focusing on such questions to aid understandings of the nature of contemporary counter terrorism and security politics.

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