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The “Pull Factor” Problematization in the Emergence of Everyday Bordering in the UK Welfare State

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Abstract: The “everyday bordering” concept has provided key insights into the effects of diverse bordering practices upon social life, placing the bordering of the welfare state among wider state interventions in an autochthonous politics of belonging. Sociological contributions have also introduced new explanations as to why states pursue such measures, positing that neoliberal states seek legitimacy through increasing activities to (re)affirm borders within this politics of belonging, compensating for a failure to govern the economy in the interests of citizens. To what extent is this visible in the state-led emergence of (everyday) borders around welfare in the United Kingdom, often cited as a key national case? This article draws from 20 elite interviews to contribute to genealogical accounts of the emergence of everyday bordering through identifying the developing “problematizations” connected to this kind of bordering activity, as the British state began to distinctly involve welfare-state actors in bordering policies in the 1990s and early 2000s. This evidence underlines how these policies were tied to a “pull factor” problematization of control failure, where the state needed to reduce various “pull factors” purportedly attracting unwanted migrants in order to control immigration per se, with little evidence that legitimacy issues tied to perceived declining economic governability informed these developments in this period. These findings can inform future genealogical analyses that trace the emergence of everyday bordering.

Keywords: everyday bordering; welfare state; hostile environment; pull factors; internal immigration control



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1. Introduction

The everyday bordering concept has emerged as a popular lens for understanding a range of policies that include barriers to accessing social rights for immigrant groups in Europe and the linkage of welfare and immigration-control systems. Situating these policies within a wider array of “bordering” measures that require a diverse range of social actors to participate in immigration policing (Yuval-Davis et al. 2019; see also Griffiths and Yeo 2021), policies that may be understood as the enactment of welfare chauvinism or nationalism are contextualised within a larger, emergent form of governance. In this account, policies impeding access to social rights for immigrant or minority groups—growing from formal changes to entitlement and barriers to accessing them through new administrative practices of scrutiny or checks—are understood in relation to similar measures pertaining to different social sectors, regarding access to the labour market, private rented accommodation, financial services, etc. From this point of view, such policies all enact bordering to sustain certain images of social order. The adoption of bordering measures in welfare states is thus one prominent manifestation of how states are positioning themselves within and through a larger “politics of belonging” (Yuval-Davis et al. 2018, pp. 229–31; see also Yuval-Davis 2006).

Recent major contributions to the “everyday bordering” concept—particularly by Nira Yuval-Davis, Georgie Wemyss, and Kathryn Cassidy—have offered key advancements in the longer-developing literature on how state bordering practices have stretched beyond territorial borders, to within societies themselves (Balibar 2002; Parker and Vaughan-Williams

2012). Providing a distinct sociological viewpoint, these contributions have offered a clear conceptual linkage among interventions into separate policy domains, by underlining the social functions of this array of policies—highlighting their effects on everyday interaction, social relations, and larger accounts and experiences of belonging. Additionally, this literature has developed cohesive new propositions about why states have pursued these everyday bordering measures, toward a genealogical understanding of this form of governance that traces new and receding governmentalities. In this account, as the capacity for neoliberal states to pursue economic governance in the interests of their citizens corrodes in increasingly evident ways, states seek legitimacy through interventions in a politics of belonging by instituting bordering practices around valued social resources—which supplants multiculturalism as a main method by which these states manage difference within their societies (Yuval-Davis 2012; Yuval-Davis et al. 2019, pp. 15–19).

Such an account of the political logic of everyday bordering is certainly plausible, especially in light of the seemingly increased intensity of such policies following the 2008 financial crisis. At the same time, this account sits among many others which previous research has offered to try to illuminate the political logic underlying these types of measures. Some posit broad-brush accounts of state imperatives in particular sectors such as welfare (Freeman 1986; Bommers and Sciortino 2011), some provide less broad accounts of how states and political actors respond to (and also may further cultivate) existing perceived public demands in these issues areas (e.g., Reeskens and van Oorschot 2012; Schumacher and Kersbergen 2016), and some provide accounts that understand such measures as aimed at more traditional instrumentalist immigration control aims (e.g., Ataç and Rosenberger 2019). Indeed, the evident social effects of policies notwithstanding, it can be misleading to interpret the ideas guiding policy processes through these effects (Slaven et al. 2021, p. 880). In light of the explanations offered through this everyday bordering lens for policy approaches that would “border” welfare state access, this article asks: To the extent that this explanation is distinct from those in previous accounts, to what degree may we see evidence of it through examining the “problematizations” (Bacchi 2012) emergent within state administration that led to measures that increased everyday bordering in welfare?

To examine this question, this article examines the United Kingdom—often cited as a major national case in the literature (e.g., Guentner et al. 2016; Yuval-Davis et al. 2018; Wemyss and Cassidy 2017)—by investigating the policy ideas behind bordering measures toward welfare which began to emerge, particularly, in the 1990s and early 2000s. To this end, it employs 20 elite interviews with UK policy actors who were active in this period, taking an interpretive approach which can inform poststructural analyses of policy development (Robinson 2017). Taking inspiration from a historical-empiricist understanding of genealogy (see Reich and Turnbull 2018), this approach may shed critical light on how certain conditions became considered problematic and animated certain policy approaches (Neal 2019, pp. 56–62).

This examination underlines how welfare bordering during this period in the UK was tied to a perceived need for the state to exert control over immigration per se and was employed as instrumental policy to reduce arrivals of “unwanted”, “spontaneous” migrants such as asylum seekers, rather than to address legitimacy issues rooted in other realms of governance, or intervene in ways understood as bordering out wider groups. Within what this article terms the “pull factor problematization”, asylum governance problems were comprehended as driven by “pulls” toward destination countries; welfare provision became considered one significant “pull factor” for asylum seekers, which motivated initial welfare bordering measures enacted by the Conservative Party government who were in power until 1997. However, this formulation continued to underlie continued welfare bordering after 1997 under the New Labour government—which is especially notable because these policies were adopted due to an atmosphere of confidence among policymakers in a neoliberal government’s ability to provide economic governance that would deliver materially to wide swathes of the citizenry. While these welfare bordering measures were undertaken with a sense that they would resonate with popular notions of belonging and

deservingness, they aimed to address perceived problems around the effectiveness of state policy within the migration policy realm, rather than compensating for the perception of diminished governability elsewhere.

This article thus aims to contribute to the development of larger genealogical accounts of everyday bordering by identifying the origins of extensive welfare bordering in the UK as rooted in the pull factor problematization which regarded welfare bordering as primarily implicating immigration control *per se*. It thus raises several questions regarding larger claims about how the politics of belonging interweaves with broad challenges to state legitimacy and bordering trends. These focus on whether the social effects of everyday bordering form part of the policy image that animates its adoption; on the importance of exclusion in a territorial sense, rather than a broader social sense, in problematizations driving such policies; and on the influence of economic governance in these perceived demands. The article proceeds in four main parts. First, it examines how recent “everyday bordering” research has made distinct contributions to an understanding of the interiorisation of borders, focusing, for the purposes of this article, on the hypothesised state rationality of everyday bordering. Second, it identifies the relevance of the case and of the genealogical “problematization” approach. Third, it conducts an interpretive study of the problematizations that emerged within state administration and motivated welfare bordering policies in the UK in the 1990s and 2000s, both under Conservative and New Labour governments, by drawing from interviews with policymakers. Finally, this article concludes by summarising its findings and the questions these raise for future genealogies of everyday bordering.

2. Potential State Logics of Everyday Bordering

While the everyday bordering concept is increasingly referenced in examinations of a wide range of policies regarding immigrants and minorities in Europe especially, the general notion that borders have proliferated within societies themselves has been developing throughout the post-Cold War period. This phenomenon was increasingly identified in the 1990s (Owers 1994; Morris 1998), ahead of Etienne Balibar’s signal contributions nearly two decades ago (2002). Academic attention to the deterritorialisation of borders continued to grow in the 2010s, with scholars identifying both border externalisation and internalisation as key phenomena occurring alongside the securitisation of territorial frontiers themselves (Menjívar 2014). Underlying this is a processual shift in the understanding of borders—from physical borders to the processes of bordering. This shift “allow[s] borders to be viewed as dynamic social processes and practices of spatial differentiation,” a perspective which inevitably highlights “the multiplication of border forms, functions and practices through . . . a variety of social and political arenas, which determine a progressive movement of borders from the margins to the centre of the political sphere” (Brambilla 2015, p. 15).

Such a perspective puts a distinctive twist on interpreting policies that might be understood as enactments of welfare nationalism or chauvinism. Welfare chauvinism—preserving provision for natives while relatively excluding immigrants (Banting 2010, p. 798)—has long been interpreted as a possible component of “racist-authoritarian” political strategies by right-wing political actors in Europe, portraying immigrants as freeloading on a system that rightfully belongs to ethnically defined nationals (Kitschelt and McGann 1997, pp. 22–24). The bordering perspective, however, broadens the meaning of such interventions from the facially materialist politics of the welfare state—which would aim for the protection of in-group benefits and for bounds of inclusion widely seen as socially legitimate—by underscoring broader cross-sectoral implications of exclusion. In this view, these interventions do not just ringfence particular material benefits, nor merely exclude immigrants from welfare as especially “undeserving” (Van Oorschot 2006), but extend the logic of the border itself further into everyday social life. As immigrants are presented as threatening welfare states and thus social security (Huysmans 2006, p. 80), walls go up around the social systems they are said to imperil, in tandem with national borders, as part

of a generalised bordering phenomenon that moves the border into the centre of social relations.

Welfare states thus become one social arena where distinct sectoral bordering forms and practices develop. Of course, the increased political importance of exclusive notions of belonging can create tensions within welfare states which are supposed to serve human needs and guard against social risks pertaining to life stage; for this reason, welfare bureaucracies themselves often tend toward inclusion (Guiraudon 2000; Marrow 2009). This clash between apparently inclusive welfare logics and exclusive concepts of citizenship has been the starting point for a number of political economy contributions, exploring how migration complicates the legitimacy and functions of welfare states by striking at their foundational notions of national citizenship and belonging (e.g., Freeman 1986; Alesina and Glaeser 2004; Ferrera 2005). Contributions drawing from systems theory (e.g., Bommers 2012; Sciortino and Finotelli 2015; Bommers and Geddes 2000) highlight how closed, exclusionary systems of national citizenship clash with the distinct logics of social systems—such as the economy, family, and indeed welfare—with more inclusionary tendencies, which may incorporate immigrants despite state attempts to unsettle their status. Welfare bordering thus emerges as a way to try to close down the space provided by these distinct social systems, where immigrants can sustain everyday life despite the exclusionary impetus of the classic immigration-control system (Engbersen and Broeders 2011).

Intervening in these topics, the everyday bordering concept makes several distinct contributions, four of which are discussed for the purpose of this analysis. First, it identifies autochthony as a main operative concept in the politics of belonging that shapes such bordering policies (Cassidy et al. 2018; Yuval-Davis 2018, pp. 141–42). Autochthony, as a “return of the local” amidst globalisation (see Geschiere 2009), “is based upon the simple notion that ‘I was here before you’ and can, therefore, be re-defined and (re)applied in any situation” (Cassidy et al. 2018, p. 194). While in key senses a rearticulation of ethnicity, autochthony is also an emptier and more flexible concept. It can be claimed by groups that might not be seen as autochthonic by others and can be used by those who argue for exclusion in ways that distance these claims from patent ethnonationalism. The concept of autochthony therefore provides insight into how claims regarding belonging which spur bordering practices can be socially and politically resonant while at the same time being flexible and inexact in ways that carry important implications for the breadth of who is “bordered” in social interactions.

Second, the everyday bordering concept puts a new focus on the ways that such measures alter not just the life of immigrants, but also social interactions involving immigrants, non-immigrant members of minority groups, and other members of society. Formal inclusion or exclusion is one part of everyday bordering, but even broader significance lies in how these bordering practices require wide segments of societies to be consciously involved in either experiencing or advancing these exclusions. Everyday bordering creates “untrained and unpaid border guards” (Yuval-Davis et al. 2019, p. 17) throughout society among private actors, such as those offering employment (and checking the status of new workers) and providing housing (checking “rights to rent”), and also among street-level bureaucrats, including but not limited to those in the social services (who implement “welfare bordering” checks and policies). This has profound effects, aside from how it puts into question the fair and rigorous administration of policies. This is because bordering comes to infuse “everyday encounters between all residents, differentially affecting individual citizenship duties and solidarities” (Yuval-Davis et al. 2019, p. 97), and instilling distinct discourses of belonging. The fact that these bordering processes provide virtually all residents within a society with roles, stakes, and duties in the process of differentiating those who belong and those who do not makes it so encompassing as to suggest that “everyday bordering has come to replace multiculturalism as the hegemonic governance technology for controlling diversity and discourses of diversity” (Yuval-Davis et al. 2019, p. 17).

Third, as that statement suggests, these broad effects on everyday interaction throughout society—and the fact that they draw from often amorphous autochthonic terms of reference—mean that everyday bordering motivates suspicion and differential exclusions of a wide number of people who may be seen as though they do not “belong.” This is related to, but also distinct from, formal immigration or citizenship status. This effectively links the premises of exclusion by the immigration-control system with larger social relations of hostility toward people who may be generally regarded by actors throughout society—many of whom are now increasingly involved in borderwork—as having less secure claims to social belonging. In the case of the UK, for instance, “bordering legislation, discourses, and practices are transforming relationships and everyday life for everyone, not just for the ‘illegal workers’ at whom it is targeted” (Yuval-Davis et al. 2019, p. 102). This is perhaps the most evident way in which everyday bordering functions as a technology of racism (Yuval-Davis et al. 2017; Yuval-Davis 2018), which is often aimed at people seen as not belonging but who may carry various forms of citizenship or formal entitlements, for instance, Roma people in Europe (e.g., Tervonen and Enache 2017; Wemyss and Cassidy 2017). The proliferation of bordering sites therefore sustains a growing complexity in belonging, where classes of people can be “part of a national community [with] only partial access to the polity” (Gonzales and Sigona 2017, p. 3)—a “multi-status” comprising a “range of legal statuses and social positionings” (De Noronha 2019, p. 2417). Everyday bordering, therefore, is a way for states to address the politics of belonging holistically, of which the policing of actual migration is only one (very salient) part. Here, the concept clearly begins to identify and trace the origins of shifts in social discourses and practices which concord with historical-empiricist approaches to genealogical analysis.

Fourth, the everyday bordering concept introduces a plausible new explanation for why the amplification of these types of bordering practices has become so appealing to states. In this account, everyday bordering grows from a larger “double crisis of governability and governmentality” amid neoliberal globalisation (Yuval-Davis 2012; Yuval-Davis et al. 2019, pp. 14–18). Neoliberal globalisation has occasioned a decline in state autonomy that particularly manifests in an inability to effectively steer their economies (Yuval-Davis 2012, pp. 89–93). This means that states increasingly withdraw from the kind of economic intervention which, in the post-war settlement in Western Europe, had been the cornerstone of the social contract. Meanwhile, the neoliberal emphasis on exchange continues to require borders that are at least somewhat permeable for people, as well as goods and capital, to permit capitalist accumulation (Yuval-Davis et al. 2019, p. 13; see also Boswell 2007, p. 84), and the viability of multiculturalism as a way of governing social diversity comes under growing stress (Yuval-Davis et al. 2019, p. 16). This crisis of governability leads to a crisis of governmentality, as publics increasingly see governance—especially of the economy—as not occurring in their interests; autochthonic political projects of belonging emerge in response, laying claim to the rightful resources of society (Yuval-Davis 2012, pp. 93–96).

In this context, everyday bordering emerges as a compensatory way of seeking state legitimation by engaging in this politics of belonging, a way for states to signal keeping their “resources exclusively for those who ‘really belong’”, and to “allegedly . . . reassert control over the composition and security of the population” (Yuval-Davis et al. 2019, pp. 16–17). Everyday bordering therefore presents a new paradigm for managing social diversity within society as a whole, as a way of achieving legitimacy for neoliberal states.

Everyday Bordering: Syntheses and Questions

These distinct elements of the everyday bordering account elegantly tie together various social effects of everyday bordering with observed aspects of recent political projects focused on belonging. Tracing everyday bordering to the demise of welfare capitalism and the rise of neoliberalism, followed by the economic crises of the late 2000s and the reactionary politics of the 2010s, this perspective advances an understanding of state bordering projects and often reads as genealogical, one which “defin[es] a problem of our present . . . [and] investigat[es] the trajectories of the problem within a history” (Reich and Turnbull

2018, p. 3). By tying together neoliberal globalisation, economic governance, autochthonic politics, and state legitimacy, this perspective makes a contribution to academic debates surrounding the interrelation of possible economic or cultural motivations for contemporary anti-immigration politics (see [Inglehart and Norris 2017](#)).

This approach to explaining the prevalence of everyday bordering therefore presents very broad claims, which contrast with previous important explanations of bordering policies. As in accounts where states enact “welfare chauvinism” or “nationalism”, there remains a notion of states meeting perceived demands by nationals around the retention of privileges; here, however, this functions to compensate for a loss of other dimensions of legitimacy, related to the perceived beneficiaries of economic governance. While the border proliferates in everyday spaces, as a number of previous accounts have charted (e.g., [Balibar 2002](#); [Parker and Vaughan-Williams 2012](#); [Menjívar 2014](#)), the “everyday bordering” perspective loosens the perceived function of this from necessarily being about the literal policing of the migratory journey or migrant life course, toward the perceived regulation of belonging in a broader sense. Exclusion from the territory—the accomplishment (or at least threat) of which is the classical function of immigration control—accompanies everyday bordering measures ([Tervonen et al. 2018](#), pp. 139–40), but is not identical to the purported state logic of everyday bordering, which is to systematically border accesses to resources in society in the perceived interest of the autochthonous, where legal status does not play the sole decisive part in exclusion. In principle, this end can be achieved through the outward relative exclusion—or increased suspicion—of those with apparently less secure claims to belonging. Because everyday bordering may accomplish effective interventions in the politics of belonging without necessarily requiring territorial exclusion, it provides an explanation for how states may do this while continuing to meet the imperative of facilitating a certain amount of movement of people within generally exploitative conditions of neoliberal globalisation ([Yuval-Davis et al. 2019](#), p. 18; see also [De Giorgi 2010](#)). As the crisis of governability corrodes state control capacities in general, everyday bordering measures may therefore resemble symbolic governance aimed at “compensation” ([Slaven and Boswell 2019](#), p. 1480) for the socially “unwanted” migration necessitated by neoliberal political-economic constraints.

However plausible and stimulating this account for why everyday bordering has emerged as an increasing activity of states is, it raises questions in comparison to earlier accounts of state logics in welfare bordering. While other accounts do characterise these measures as responding to challenges to the legitimacy of the state or its practices, the “double crisis of governability and governmentality” paints a more sweeping picture. It positions, for instance, bordering in the welfare state as cross-sectoral in ways that reach beyond simply the intersection of welfare and migration. Certainly, the capability to effectively exclude people deemed to be social outsiders is at stake, in both accounts that portray state actors as engaging in welfare bordering to strengthen the perceived legitimacy of the welfare state and in its scope ([Mau and Burkhardt 2009](#); [Reeskens and van Oorschot 2012](#); [Banting 2010](#)). The capacity to assuage public or political demands surrounding immigration control is also at issue ([Faist 1994](#); [Han 2013](#); [Ataç and Rosenberger 2019](#); [Geddes 2000](#)). However, such accounts generally see these legitimacy questions as rooted in policy dilemmas within these specific domains, rather than from more general governance, including that of the economy. This raises the question of what role, if any, larger developments in economic governance plays in their adoption. Furthermore, because immigration control is an issue where states’ difficulties in meeting policy goals may raise difficult legitimacy questions, policymakers, on the whole, may “have little interest in whipping up anti-immigrant sentiment” that may generate demands which are difficult to satisfy ([Slaven and Boswell 2019](#), p. 1480). Purposeful intervention in the politics of belonging, however, is interpreted in the everyday bordering account as a main strategy for state legitimisation.

How might these differing accounts be assessed for their accuracy? It is notable here that this supposed explanation for why states engage in everyday bordering is less

empirically rooted than other distinct elements of everyday bordering contributions which describe the social effects of such moves. Indeed, when it comes to why states pursue bordering measures, the social effects of these policies are not necessarily an accurate guide, even if they have wide-ranging impacts that in turn shape dominant discourses of belonging. Functionalist readings of policies at the immigration-welfare policy intersection—ones which interpret the reasons states adopt these policies through the impacts the policies have—can often mask the driving forces behind certain patterns of policy change (Slaven et al. 2021, p. 880), especially when multiple distinct accounts are plausible. This may be because policies have unintended effects, or because scholarly examinations have identified ramifications in social domains which do not feature heavily in the notions of the imagined problems that state actors are addressing.

This is an issue in assessing the accuracy of the proposed everyday bordering logic, because the evidence for this logic relies on the breadth of these measures' impacts upon everyday interaction. This makes plausible the assertion that everyday bordering is supplanting multiculturalism as a state's main mode of governing diversity; however, it does not necessarily demonstrate this as being a more accurate or fuller account than explanations which have situated welfare bordering measures, for instance, within the particular sectoral dilemmas faced by welfare states or immigration-control bureaucracies. The political logic which the everyday bordering view advances is supported largely by observing the emergence of everyday bordering as a mode of governance following from new governance dilemmas endemic to neoliberalism and the rise of prominent autochthonous political demands following economic crisis (Yuval-Davis et al. 2019, pp. 1–63). Against previous accounts, however, is there more direct evidence of the importance of the particular legitimisation issues or social effects theorised as influencing this increase in bordering policies—overall, or, more particularly for this special issue, in the welfare state?

3. Case and Methods

The puzzle this article has identified surrounds the reasons which the “everyday bordering” literature proposes for why states increasingly institute bordering policies, in the welfare state and beyond. Identifying the broad effects of these policies on everyday interaction within society, the everyday bordering concept introduces a plausible account that such policies constitute purposeful state engagement in an autochthonous politics of belonging, which becomes a key basis for legitimating neoliberal states as they have become perceived as no longer effectively conducting particularly economic governance in citizens' interests (Yuval-Davis et al. 2019, pp. 14–18; Yuval-Davis 2012). While plausible and potentially of great explanatory value, this is a broader account than previous ones which have posited state logics for bordering measures. This contrasts with more typical views of state legitimisation imperatives, which are usually related to the particular sectors under question, such as welfare and immigration control. Furthermore, this account offers little direct evidence that actors devising bordering policies from within state administration perceived such problems amidst the processes by which new bordering policies would be enacted. Would evidence pertaining to this support this account?

To answer this, this article takes an approach aimed at contributing to genealogical understandings of the “problematizations” which have led to increased bordering practices in, in this case, the welfare domain in the United Kingdom. As noted earlier, the account of the emergence of everyday bordering often reads as genealogical, and it employs certain categories of Foucauldian genealogical analysis—especially governmentality (i.e., the “double crisis of governability and governmentality”) (Yuval-Davis et al. 2019, p. 16)—to explain this development. Relating the emergence of welfare bordering to another Foucauldian notion, that of problematization (Bacchi 2012), may be a productive approach to examining this development.

What is a “problematization?” In the sense of the term that is of interest to this analysis: a problematisation is when people begin using their freedom of thought to question something, identify difficulties in it and start treating it as a problem. It

is when a problem is identified as such and enters thought as a result. . . . It is when something that was unquestioned, accepted or not actively thought about becomes problematic to contemporaneous actors. . . . This leads actors to rethink their practices, assumptions, knowledges or rationalisations. When people identify something as a problem, they begin to offer responses and solutions, which may be diverse. (Neal 2019, pp. 59–60)

Read in such terms, the everyday bordering concept offers a distinct view of the problematization that produces increased everyday bordering: one where the lack of bordering around social resources becomes increasingly problematized amidst the state's need for legitimation within a neoliberal condition that features endemic autochthonous demands as previous governmentalities recede. Particular discourses of belonging therefore become dominant, and bordering practices become commonplace where they had not been before.

Genealogical approaches are not bound by rigid methodological guidelines, in part to allow analysts scope for questioning received forms of knowledge. Despite this, there are conceptual dimensions frequently identified as important for this analysis, of which problematization constitutes one (Reich and Turnbull 2018, pp. 2–3), and such an approach retains a firm historical-empiricist orientation (Neal 2019, p. 57). In this sense, the purported problematization at the heart of every bordering does not seem to have as robust an empirical basis as the understandings of everyday bordering's social functions which may produce new bordering discourses. This means it largely lacks the kind of empirical basis against which its accuracy may be determined. In identifying and examining such problematizations, "the empirical focus is . . . on how people articulated a problematisation and the interventions, discourses and practices that the problematisation animated" (Neal 2019, p. 60). In this way, interpretive approaches to understanding the processes of how policy actors comprehended policy problems can shed light upon the reasons why particular discourses and practices emerged (Robinson 2017). These approaches rely on understanding how policy actors perceived their roles vis-à-vis purported social problems and the meanings related to policy responses, frequently employing interview methodologies.

To help inform understandings of the problematizations which may spur the development of everyday bordering policies, this article examines the UK in the 1990s and early 2000s. The UK has been a main national case in the everyday bordering literature (Yuval-Davis et al. 2018; Cassidy 2019), particularly in light of the development of its "hostile environment" policy approach of internal immigration enforcement in the 2010s (Griffiths and Yeo 2021). The 2010s policy developments often examined—especially the UK's Immigration Acts 2014 and 2016—drew on the logic of previous policies (Yuval-Davis et al. 2018, p. 233) which, in earlier decades, had already created substantial bordering within the UK welfare state (Guentner et al. 2016). The time period identified here is particularly important for tracing the problematizations that led to the "outsourcing" of immigration-enforcement duties to other sectors. The internalization of the UK border, especially through linkages to the welfare state, became more pronounced in the 1990s (Owers 1994; Morris 1998). Inasmuch as examining "problematizations" means examining periods of shift—when a lack of barriers around welfare became regarded as part of a problem, from a previous state of not being considered one (or at least an important one)—this is also a key period, because before the 1990s only certain categories of immigrants with specific temporary statuses (such as students or fiancé(e)s) were excluded from general UK welfare provision (Gordon 1986, pp. 25–26).

To examine these developments in the UK in terms of "how people articulated a problematisation and the interventions, discourses and practices that the problematisation animated" (Neal 2019, p. 60), this article draws from 20 semi-structured interviews with UK policy actors active in immigration-related policymaking at this time, sampled for a project on state monitoring of and policy toward unauthorised immigrants. These interviews were conducted through mainly one-on-one, in-person semi-structured conversations, lasting approximately an hour each, between November 2017 and June 2018. (There was one phone interview.) This sample of policy actors focused on high-ranking civil servants. This

group of policymakers is both exposed to the priorities and preferences of ministers, who aim to implement politically effective policy, while also being embedded in the longer-running norms, priorities, and dilemmas of state administration (Alesina and Tabellini 2008; Christensen and Opstrup 2018). This positioning allows high-ranking civil servants to reflect on and convey state legitimation imperatives, both from the perspective of long-running sectoral interests and in terms of the developing political imperatives prioritised by ministers. While most of the sample were high-ranking civil servants, the sample also included political advisors and outside members of policy networks.

While this examination aims to shed light on the problematizations which gave rise to welfare bordering in the UK during this important initial period in the development of everyday bordering practices, there are limits to this approach. First, as a single-case examination during a limited period, it cannot offer a complete account of the problematizations behind everyday bordering as a whole, and therefore aims instead to provide a perspective on a significant case to inform larger genealogical accounts. Equally importantly—and in a similar vein—problematizations are “more than the sum total of what people said and did about a problem they identified” (Neal 2019, p. 60). This is because they both draw from earlier discourses and institute new discourses as larger social spaces for action, which are not reducible to policymaker decisions. Nonetheless, reflections among these types of policymakers can provide evidence of how new issues in state legitimacy became perceived, the extent to which these developments are related to larger discourses, and how certain conditions or intersections (such as welfare and immigration) became “problematized”.

In this way, examining how policymakers approached the involvement of new social sectors in immigration enforcement in this period in the UK can shed light on the problematizations that emerged around the institution of welfare-bordering policies at this important time. The following section examines these problematizations during the terms of the two different British governments during this time: The Conservative Party government before 1997 and the New Labour government which took power after.

4. Legitimising Bordering in 1993 and 1996 UK Immigration Legislation

The UK immigration acts enacted under the Conservative Party government in 1993 and (especially) 1996 have been seen as key moments in the growth of internal bordering in Britain (Morris 1998). Developing during a period of increased asylum-seeking in the UK and Western Europe more broadly (Fiddick 1999), policymakers began to approach a lack of welfare bordering through a problematization which saw the accessibility of various social systems—including welfare—as “pull factors” that were corroding traditional immigration control, by incentivising migration to the UK perceived as “unwanted” by the state. Bordering measures were adopted mainly as instrumental attempts at immigration reduction by deterring would-be arrivals through signalling to them that these incentives were less attainable. They were posed as a solution to a problem of increased asylum-seeking in particular as an increasingly politically salient form of “unwanted” (and suspected “illegal”) immigration (Geddes 2005), rather than to larger problematizations of state legitimacy.

The early 1990s marked the onset of a post-Cold War period that saw the cementing of the neoliberal model of economic governance (elaborated in the UK under Margaret Thatcher), increasing momentum behind more ambitious European economic integration according to this model (Bergsten 1990, p. 97) and substantial growth in the numbers of people migrating to many European countries from outside Europe, often to claim asylum. The UK asylum system came under pronounced strain from the mid- to late-1980s (Boswell and Badenhoop 2021, pp. 340–41). This shook policymakers’ confidence in a UK immigration control system that had been understood as firmly ports-based and not internalised (Slaven et al. 2021, p. 873), because the increasing number of cases and a lengthy internal asylum adjudication process that corroded the states’ ability to remove failed applicants “moved from a system where the Immigration Service was in control ... to one in which it felt it had lost control” (Interview 8). The early 1990s also saw

episodes of declining confidence in the governance of the British economy. The UK's forced withdrawal from the European Exchange Rate Mechanism on 16 September 1992—"Black Wednesday"—occurred at the start of a new five-year term in office for the long-governing Conservative Party, greatly damaging its reputation among voters for competent economic management (Sanders 1999). However, interview data provides scant evidence that the UK's economic instabilities in this period informed its growing emphasis on welfare-bordering measures.

Indeed, a sense of crisis in the UK asylum system, seen to necessitate new legislative solutions, had been emerging before 1992, as increased asylum-seeking was testing the capacities of both processing systems and social services in particular areas of the UK, because asylum seekers were included in general systems of social support at this time (Slaven et al. 2021, p. 873). By this point, there had already been substantial efforts in the UK at border externalisation in the form of new visa requirements and new duties placed on carriers to check them. Indeed, the Carriers' Liability Act 1987, which levied fines on carriers (mainly airlines) for not conducting checks, was meant to make passage to the UK more difficult for people who may attempt to settle, and is cited as a progenitor to later everyday bordering measures (Yuval-Davis et al. 2018, p. 233). Regardless of such measures, however, by the early 1990s, "the sheer volume of [asylum] applications was very, very difficult to handle," one asylum policymaker recounted (Interview 2): "We had to set up an inter-departmental study of this to try to identify policies which enabled us to cope with this . . . That was what the 1993 Act was about".

Policy development on the Asylum and Immigration Appeals Act 1993 began several years before its passage, which was interrupted by the 1992 general election. The failure of previous border externalisation measures to effect satisfactory reductions in asylum-seeking, however, was occasioning shifts in how policymakers understood the problems endemic in trying to reduce asylum applications. Attention turned to what was driving the UK's status as an increasingly frequent destination for asylum seeking; at the time, policymakers perceived that delays in the asylum decision system, which allowed asylum seekers to socially integrate and thus made removals more difficult, were combining with other factors to make the UK appear as an appealing destination. One senior civil servant described the main issues broadly perceived in state administration at this time:

It could take a while for [asylum] decisions to be reached. If, in that period, people were simply entitled to housing, social security, health, and everything else—on exactly the same basis as if they were here on a permanent basis—then that could well lead to concentrations of demand that were difficult for particular local authorities and areas of service provision to cope with. It could also be operating as a pull factor drawing more asylum seekers to the UK than would otherwise make their choices to try to make their way here. (Interview 3)

Here, a lack of borders around welfare access is problematized as part of an array of factors corroding immigration control by drawing more difficult-to-remove asylum seekers to the UK, as well as causing administrative problems for social-service providers in particular localities.

As discussions around immigration control increasingly featured these other social systems, problematizations surrounding immigration control were beginning to stretch beyond the kind of "outsourcing" of border control which had already been imposed on carriers in the 1987 legislation, by beginning to implicate distinct social systems. As a leading operational official recounted, with carriers' liability,

you're still looking at the travel family These are actors who are really involved in the process of travel, if you like, whereas once you start to look at employers and so on . . . [t]hey're not systems which you associate with immigration, that's not their primary focus. . . . I think that's what some [government] departments felt initially about immigration in relation to them too. They were dealing

with a massive, massive volume of business, and dealing with immigrants was only a bit of it. (Interview 8)

This initial lack of cross-departmental motivation in becoming involved in new problematizations of immigration control was not an immediately pressing issue, in part because asylum policymakers in the early 1990s perceived the slowness of the asylum process, and the resulting remoteness of effective removal, as the primary relevant “pull factor.” Reflecting this thinking, the 1993 Act only instituted new bordering measures in one welfare-state area, social housing, greatly narrowing asylum seekers’ rights to it based on their immigration status, which street-level bureaucrats had to affirm (Morris 1998, p. 961). Its main provisions surrounded attempts to speed up asylum processing, decisions, and removals, as the principal method of deterring migration by reducing “pull factors.”

Ideas that further social sectors were implicated by emergent problematizations in immigration policing were nonetheless continuing to develop. Later, in 1993, the Home Secretary announced a new “study of inter-agency cooperation on illegal immigration” (Humphries 2002, p. 129)—often referred to as an interdepartmental “scrutiny”—to examine possible links between the social services and immigration control. Conducted out of a centralised Efficiency Unit with prime ministerial support, the policymakers involved saw this effort as able to compel perhaps reluctant actors throughout UK state administration to entertain broader engagement in bordering activity. Where the frequent refrain had been, “We’re not immigration staff. We can’t check passports”, as one policymaker recalled, the scrutiny “was about shifting the burden to the providers of services or whatever to make the checks to satisfy themselves about whether people were entitled to the benefit, entitled to be here” (Interview 4). While policies themselves were slow to move, this inter-departmental effort was more influential in establishing, within state administration, new bordering discourses that helped in the longer run to shift expectations of who could be legitimately expected to be involved in borderwork.

They didn’t happen instantly, but it certainly led into changes . . . The burdens on the employers have got ever tougher. More recently . . . there’s been the introduction of a requirement on landlords renting a property to check. We have moved a hugely long way. The [1993] scrutiny was the start of that process. (Interview 4)

As this policymaker articulates, these administrative efforts—aimed at addressing the 1990s problematization of inadequate state ability to exert control over migrations—can be understood as a key point of origin for the everyday bordering policies of the 2010s’ “hostile environment”.

This type of thinking increasingly entered into discussions regarding new legislation, as the 1993 Act was soon deemed not to have reduced asylum seeking enough. While, throughout this period, there was a perception that asylum and immigration were not principal issues of public concern—belying the notion that they may have served a central role in political mobilisation—the issues were still seen as potentially very sensitive ones. They were prone to hostile press coverage and popular consternation at ineffective exclusion (Kaye 1999), and their governance had entered a state of continual crisis, as claiming asylum was perceived as a way to try to circumvent efforts at immigration enforcement. Amidst this sense of crisis, policymaking increasingly focused on “the hypothesis that we needed to try and do something about the volume of applications itself . . . cover[ing] things like the state of the judicial system and the scope for appeals and also for judicial review . . . [and] like access to housing and education, health services, social security benefits” (Interview 7). In this emergent problematization, “the signals the system as a whole sent out” needed to not make the UK seem like a “reasonably good option” (Interview 7); shaping these signals could deter arrivals and ease the strain on an overwhelmed control system.

Following on from this, a package of policies in 1996, which included the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996, instituted welfare bordering much more broadly. The 1996

Act made a number of reforms to the asylum system itself, as it attempted to streamline asylum processing through a “white list” of countries presumed not to produce legitimate asylum claims and introduced employer sanctions and formal requirements for employers to check the immigration status of workers. However, many of the 1996 Act’s changes were in the realm of welfare bordering; it ended asylum seekers’ ability to claim local authority housing at all, and policy changes announced administratively alongside the Act narrowed eligibility for a wide range of benefits. While asylum seekers who made claims at the port were, under the 1996 Act, entitled to 90 percent of normal benefit levels, those who made in-country claims—often interpreted as attempts to circumvent immigration control after being detected through enforcement actions—would be eligible for only in-kind support (Bloch 2000, p. 35).

By this stage, therefore, everyday bordering in the welfare state was on its way to becoming well-established in the UK. This responded to a new problematization of “pull factors” drawing asylum seekers, where welfare was among a number of social systems whose openness compromised instrumental aims to reduce forms of “unwanted” immigration, especially asylum-seeking. This problematization provides an imperative for everyday bordering as a solution for achieving instrumental immigration control goals, amidst the difficulties of administering control in an immigration landscape of perceived increasing complexity. Notably absent is the notion that these bordering projects compensate for a loss of legitimacy in other realms beyond the basic instrumental control orientations of the immigration system. Everyday bordering in this period in the UK shows greater evidence, therefore, of emerging from a distinct instrumentalist pull factor problematization.

5. Welfare Bordering and Neoliberal Confidence: New Labour’s 1999 and 2002 Legislation

The New Labour government elected in 1997 had not featured immigration in its positioning to voters because, as one adviser explained, “It was not seen as an issue on which there could possibly be grounds for building up public support” (Interview 6). However, the Labour Party government would be prompted into substantial action on the issue as asylum numbers continued to increase (Geddes 2000, p. 138). This led New Labour, concordant with its emphasis on “joined up” policy (Flynn 2005, p. 473), to pursue welfare-bordering policies that further pushed bordering measures into the interior of the UK, but also sought to “insource” many of these functions into the immigration-control bureaucracy itself.

New Labour’s actions within the already-emergent pull factor problematization provide a particular opportunity to investigate how welfare bordering interfaced with confidence in neoliberal governance. Not only did New Labour advance what is broadly understood as a neoliberal governance programme, but its embrace of neoliberalism as its “diagnosis of global political economy” was also central to the Labour Party’s rejuvenation of its appeal and image, “presenting an appealing package of ideas that were fresh and current and, above all else, appealed to the British electorate” through “third way” policies and appeals to “modernisation” (Consterdine 2017, p. 126). New Labour, around the turn of the millennium, advanced a “third way” neoliberal economic policy which, far from prompting worries regarding state legitimacy, the government believed would widely appeal through economic governance that would deliver materially for wide swathes of the citizenry, “enhanc[ing] access to social inclusion for members of the most disadvantaged sections of society, but without reversing the gains to economic well-being that the middle classes had made under Thatcherism” (Watson 2013, p. 10). This involved moves toward a “preventative” orientation in welfare that primed labour market participation, and an “investor’s Britain” (Powell 2000, pp. 43–46) which emphasised how the country was “structurally dependent on capital” (Consterdine 2017, p. 126). This positioning also, of course, elaborated a “third way” extension of neoliberal discourses of (un)deservingness in welfare and other sectors. Fitting an acceptance of decreased economic governability within the “third way” approach, however, throughout its first two terms in office New

Labour maintained, by all appearances, wide social support for its economic governance model (Watson 2013, p. 7).

It is notable, then, that welfare bordering continued to expand under a government which saw neoliberalism not as presenting an incipient crisis of governability and governmentality, but as a new wave that could be successfully harnessed in a governance model that would gain support by delivering economic gains for diverse sections of society, rather than by merely excluding the “undeserving”. The wider landscape of neoliberal governance had broad effects on New Labour’s immigration policy overall, as a more cosmopolitan orientation melded with an embrace of labour market competition to yield a major liberalisation of economic migration policy, particularly in New Labour’s second term (Consterdine 2017, pp. 119–60; Consterdine and Hampshire 2013; Balch 2009). However, it seemed to much less affect the consolidating problematizations which spurred increased welfare-bordering policies.

Reflections of high-ranking civil servants arriving in the Home Office during the New Labour government underline how the prevailing “pull factor” problematization remained very consistent. As one such senior civil servant expressed,

It was in the territory of backlogs; time taken to take [asylum] decisions . . . Based in part on the belief . . . that if you process things more quickly that would act as a disincentive. In other words, that one of the pull factors was that we were so slow, and we were a country without ID cards and all of that . . . [I]t was easy to disappear. (Interview 12)

The lack of internalised bordering remained a feature of a “pull factor” conceptualization, where it sat alongside labour market openness and a slowness in asylum decision-making which made the prospects of effective territorial exclusion fainter.

The Labour government’s remedy within this problematization was somewhat distinct from earlier attempts, however, in that it did not only require more checks within the interior, but it also sought to relocate social provision for the politically sensitive population of asylum seekers to within the immigration control bureaucracy itself. Its Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, adopted amidst a continued increase in asylum claims in the UK, accepted the premises of the 1993 and 1996 Acts (Geddes 2000, p. 135) within a supposedly “modernised” approach to asylum articulated in the white paper *Fairer, Faster and Firmer A Modern Approach to Immigration and Asylum* (1998). The 1999 Act attempted once more to streamline the asylum appeals system, and it created new criminal penalties for the employment of unauthorised immigrants, extending 1996 Act provisions. It also attempted a further recission of welfare benefits for “unwanted” immigrant groups, mainly by requiring dispersal of asylum seekers by requiring them to obtain housing through a centralised system and dramatically curtailing entitlement to cash benefits (Bloch 2000, pp. 39–40).

These control efforts occurred within a centralised effort to govern asylum seeker support by introducing a National Asylum Support Service (NASS) (Bakker et al. 2016, p. 121) within the Home Office, which would directly supervise social support for asylum seekers. While further internalising border-control measures and locating them deeper within everyday life—dictating even where asylum seekers could live—these efforts were also intended to alleviate, rather than intensify, the involvement of other social actors in borderwork. While, by this time, new discourses of bordering had to an extent legitimised the notion of bordering activities across state administration, it had not created enthusiasm for them. It remained the case, for instance, that “the Department for Work and Pensions had no particular interest or ability to manage benefits to asylum applicants. . . . They didn’t really want anything to do with immigrants. It was just aggravation for them” (Interview 13). “The National Asylum Support Service [was] the answer to that” (Interview 12), locating supervision of support for asylum seekers to within the Home Office itself. As a political adviser recalled,

the point [of NASS] was to take asylum seekers out of local authority and other social assistance provisions, because of course they weren't able to claim benefits, but they were able to present to local authority if they were in need of housing and support. Centralising it . . . taking responsibility away from [local authorities] for housing and supporting asylum seekers, doing the processing of their claims, and then dispersing them around the country. (Interview 16)

At the same time, the 1999 Act also strengthened welfare bordering pertaining to people outside the asylum system by establishing that a “no recourse to public funds” rule applied to anyone “subject to immigration control”, including new categories of family migrants in these exclusions. Strengthened bordering in this regard has had profound exclusionary effects on the social support available to vulnerable groups of immigrants (Anitha 2010), enacted not through a centrally coordinated asylum system, but through dispersed sites in the welfare state. In this sense, efforts toward the central coordination of bordering within the UK were clearly centred on the highly visible and politically controversial asylum-seeking population, where monitoring was especially central to meeting state removal goals because “to deport them . . . you have to know where they are” (Interview 13).

Just like previous legislation, the 1999 Act did not result in politically satisfactory reductions in asylum claims (Schuster and Solomos 2004, p. 274). Their continuing rise—and the issue's growing political salience in this period (Jennings 2009)—increasingly attracted high-level political attention, including from the prime minister, as Tony Blair “focused on asylum very, very heavily, with stocktakes at Number 10; he invested a lot of personal time and energy in it” (Interview 16). As Labour entered its second term, it was liberalising economic migration and bringing forth a managed migration paradigm—one focused on differentiating between wanted and unwanted migration categories, as articulated in the white paper *Secure Borders, Safe Haven: Integration with Diversity in Modern Britain* (2002)—and was continuing, uninterrupted, attempts to reduce asylum seeking.

In regard to “unwanted”, “spontaneous” immigrants such as asylum seekers, the problematization that access to resources encouraged them to come to the UK, and then hindered return by facilitating problematic integration, remained. Much of the reform energy on the part of policymakers in this period focused on an abortive proposal for “accommodation centres” which sought to even further centralise the delivery of welfare under the Home Office—which would not just dictate where asylum seekers could live, but also concentrate them in particular controlled sites. These plans were eventually felled by intense localised opposition (Hubbard 2005). The eventual Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 addressed a wide number of immigration and nationality issues, but addressed asylum in ways that had been very similar to those instigated since the early 1990s; that is, by attempting to expedite the appeal and decision process, strengthen the monitoring of asylum seekers to ensure removals, and establishing a border the welfare state. It reinstated an asylum “white list”, ended automatic bail hearings for asylum seekers and extended the power to detain them at any time during their claim, and denied support to asylum seekers—even those who were destitute—who did not make their claim “as soon as reasonably practical” (that is, at the port) or could not explain how they reached the UK.

Welfare bordering thus continued as a major remedy within the pull factor problematization of unwanted migration to the UK, and policymakers were certainly aware that such measures were widely represented in the press as sensible policies for bordering out the undeserving (Kaye 1999). However, as immigration was growing as a policy area of major focus, it soon encountered the New Labour theme of “evidence-based policy” (Interview 6). Home Office policymaking around immigration had been much less research-informed than in other issue areas, deriving from anecdotal evidence encountered through casework and enforcement, and broad reasoning regarding migrant life courses. However, the lack of an evidence base for the pull factor problematization did not seem to stop the advancement of welfare bordering in this period. As one senior Home Office civil servant from the early 2000s put it, “if you then ask the question, what do we know about the pull factor of

benefits in the UK? Either amongst UK factors or vis-à-vis other countries, the answer was, ‘We haven’t the faintest idea’ (Interview 12). Nonetheless, it had by this point proven a robust problematization that drove escalating discourses of welfare bordering measures and pushed the border further into everyday life, across two UK governments.

6. Conclusions

This article has sought to examine the problematizations present in the growth of welfare bordering policies in the UK in the 1990s and early 2000s, as a way of advancing genealogical understandings of everyday bordering. In particular, it has examined postulations in the everyday bordering literature as to why states institute these policies: explanations which surround a “double crisis of governability and governmentality” that sees neoliberal states advance everyday bordering as part of their engagement in an autochthonous politics of belonging, meant to compensate for declining perceptions that they can effectively govern economies in citizens’ interests (Yuval-Davis 2012; Yuval-Davis et al. 2019, pp. 14–18). Such an account contrasts with earlier explanations that ground the logic of welfare bordering in legitimation issues within the narrower domains of immigration-control or welfare systems. To evaluate this broader account, this article has adopted a historical-empiricist approach to recovering “problematizations” which advanced welfare bordering as a solution by drawing on interviews with 20 UK policy actors from this period.

The problematization that spurred these welfare bordering policies was one which viewed welfare accessibility among a number of “pull factors” attracting unwanted immigrants (especially, at the time, asylum seekers) and thereby undermining immigration control—a problematization which was aimed at the strengthening of state capacity to control immigration per se, even in times when these issues were not perceived as being at the top of the political agenda. In this examination, there is not clear evidence that declining capacity in economic governance—or even a general need to legitimate the state in a new neoliberal era by demonstrating to voters it was on their side—formed part of this problematization. Rather than accelerating due to a perceived “crisis of governmentality”, where people start rejecting the main premises of neoliberal governance, welfare bordering measures grew in Britain during a New Labour government which did not see neoliberal governance as a source of incipient legitimation crisis and which conducted a third-way economic policy it believed would achieve legitimacy and popularity, not merely through popular exclusions, but rather through broad economic gains.

This finding carries implications for genealogical understandings of the emergence and growth of everyday bordering in the post-Cold War era and its relationship to neoliberal governance. In particular, it offers evidence for the importance of an instrumentalist pull factor problematization in the origins of this development, where the reduction of “pull factors” would deter unwanted arrivals and strengthen immigration control per se. The notion that borderwork could be widespread throughout state administration was normalised in the 1990s, toward the wide enactment of measures aimed to address “pull factors.” This continued in later years, despite a lack of clear evidence of what attracted categories of “unwanted immigrants” to the UK—underlining how similar pull-factor concepts have been demonstrated regarding other issues being resistant to a lack of evidence (Mayblin 2016). When people forming state policies began to assess a lack of welfare bordering and to “identify difficulties in it and start treating it as a problem” (Neal 2019, p. 59), this pull-factor problematization centred on effectuating immigration control per se and rebuilding the perceived robustness of this sector of governance, as a much more evident imperative than any form of compensatory legitimacy-seeking.

This problematization also helps put into perspective the position of some of the social functions of everyday bordering concerning why these policies have been pursued. One of the major contributions of the everyday bordering concept is exploring how these measures shape social relations by involving a large portion of society in terms of excluding or being excluded (Yuval-Davis et al. 2019, p. 97), which carries profound implications in terms of instilling a new social discourses of belonging. While this is a key social effect of everyday

bordering, examining the problematization surrounding UK welfare-bordering measures in the 1990s and 2000s suggests that having a larger number of people doing borderwork in society was not understood as *intrinsically* valuable. Rather, this was seen as valuable for its potential to contribute to instrumental immigration control through a cohesive state approach to enforcement. At the turn of the millennium, the New Labour government further internalised borders for asylum seekers through attempts to centralise (rather than disperse) borderwork. Additionally, while the everyday bordering concept emphasises that anyone with apparently less secure claims to belonging may be at least partly excluded through these bordering processes due to everyday bordering's ambiguous autochthonic terms of reference, the problematization identified in this analysis was focused more narrowly on formal immigration status, with little evidence that potential effects on other populations were strongly contemplated. The important new social discourses of belonging generated by everyday bordering, then, may have a somewhat remote relationship to state imperatives; in the UK in this period, these profound social effects of everyday bordering beyond the policing of formal immigration status did not figure in the problematizations underlying increased welfare bordering measures.

Of course, this study has limitations. While in examining the UK, this article takes a distinct look at a case frequently cited in everyday bordering contributions, the UK is not necessarily representative of other countries where everyday bordering has accelerated—though there are reasons to suspect similar dynamics at work in welfare bordering in other Western European countries during this time (Slaven et al. 2021). The time under study is also subject to limitations: While the 1990s and early 2000s were a key period in the growth of welfare bordering and border internalization in the UK (Owers 1994; Morris 1998), it could very well be that the problematizations underlying everyday bordering shifted later, especially following the 2008 financial crisis and a trend toward increasingly pronounced autochthonous claims in politics. In that sense, this article is far from a full genealogy of the development of everyday bordering.

Nonetheless, this article presents findings that may inform genealogical accounts of everyday bordering. It suggests that a pull factor problematization, emphasising the state's need to retain instrumental immigration control capacity, was more key than notions of compensatory legitimation in at least one main case country during a key period in the development of everyday bordering in the welfare state. It also suggests that the new discourses of belonging which everyday bordering helps produce, though critical to the significance of the phenomenon, did not seem to figure prominently in problematizations animating new welfare bordering attempts during this period. This is not to say that an autochthonous politics of belonging did not figure in developments to try to reaffirm territorial exclusion in the UK. However, it does suggest that a relative lack of bordering was problematized in ways oriented around instrumental immigration control considerations, even during periods when immigration was not yet considered a dominating public political issue, while the cultivation of, or intervention in, an expanded politics of belonging did not feature in the policy image during this time. Given this problematization's emergence during a period of neoliberal governance, this may suggest a more shifting or multifaceted relationship between the burgeoning of immigration control as a contested political issue, the bordering phenomenon, and neoliberal states. Problematizations are not static, nor are they the only illuminating categories of genealogical analysis, but the centrality of the "pull factor" problematization in the development of the British policies examined in this article will hopefully shed light that is useful in building wider genealogical understandings of the origins and development of a policy trend that is casting a long and growing shadow over social life.

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