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The Scylla State. A gendered understanding of the experiences of marginalised women in the United Kingdom

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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

The Scylla State. A gendered understanding of the experiences of marginalised women in the United Kingdom

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Abstract

Since the formation of the 2012 Coalition government, the UK has been subject to 12 years of neoliberal policy enacted with ferocity and vigour. This has comprised austerity measures including the retrenchment of welfare via the reshaping of the welfare state and public services according to business practices, ideals of individual responsibilisation and overwhelmingly, the notion of reducing the state's ideological and fiscal responsibility for equity and social welfare. The neoliberal state has been conceptualised by Loic Wacquant as a Centaur, boasting a liberal head, yet one atop an authoritarian body whose focus is the designated 'underclasses', the socially and economically non-compliant. The Centaur takes away with one hand while ruling punitively with the other, specifically via 'prisonfare' and 'workfare' to compel submission to precarious and sub-par employment. Although compelling, the Centaur State is justifiably critiqued for its blindness to gender and focus upon the manifestation of neoliberalism in the States. By exploring the stories of 23 women in the UK with histories of survival sex working and problematic drug use, a distinct gendered alternative reality emerges of the operation and machinations of the neoliberal state. Rather than a Centaur, marginalised women experience the Scylla State, a covert,

hydra-headed beast motivated by neo-Victorian ideals of 'womanfare'. The operations of the Scylla State are unpredictable, replicate traumatising interpersonal experiences and variously involve surveillance, coercion, conditionality and the responsibilisation of victimhood to justify increasingly punitive responses to women's survival strategies in the face of increasing trauma and deprivation.

1 | INTRODUCTION

Although the modern iteration of neoliberal governance in the UK reached initial heights under Thatcher, since the formation of the 2010 Coalition government neoliberal policy has been enacted with renewed ferocity. This has entailed even further retrenchment of support for disadvantaged and vulnerable populations via the reshaping of the welfare state and public services according to business practices and ideals of individual responsibilisation and overwhelmingly, the reduction of the state's ideological and fiscal responsibility for equity and social welfare (King et al., 2021; Wilkinson & Pickett, 2009). The neoliberal state has been conceptualised by Wacquant as a Centaur comprising a liberal head which gazes upon the economically productive and socially compliant atop an authoritarian body whose focus is the designated 'underclasses', the non-compliant (Wacquant, 2009). The Centaur takes away with one hand while ruling punitively with the other, specifically via 'prisonfare, expansion of the penal system (Wacquant, 2009), to compel submission to precarious and sub-par employment. This paper highlights the Centaur State's blindness to gender, addressing this gap to significantly enhance the concept's capacity and relevance. Based on primary research with women with histories of problematic drug use and survival sex working (PDU and SSW), this paper argues that rather than a Centaur, marginalised women are at the behest of the Scylla State, a covert, multi-headed beast that feels unpredictable, replicates traumatising interpersonal experiences and variously uses surveillance, coercion, conditionality and the responsibilisation of victimhood to justify increasingly punitive and inappropriate responses to women's survival strategies in a climate of increasing trauma and deprivation.

Conceptualisations of the motivation, architecture and impact of post-industrial Western neoliberalism are predominantly male-centric, lacking a similarly robust gendered understanding of the expectations of the state regarding womanhood and the ways in which practices of governance attempt to shape, control and impact of this (Balfour and Comack, 2021). Wacquant (2009) based his conceptualisation on an entirely male sample and though Wacquant introduces an often-omitted sociological angle, much scholarship on neoliberalism focuses on traditionally patriarchal arenas such as the political and economic. These lenses omit the breadth of women's experiences and the nature of the state's expectations of femininity, comprising family, motherhood and acceptable conduct (Balfour and Comack, 2021). By excluding women's experience, sociologists neglect the principles of equitable enquiry at the heart of the science, disregarding the ethos of democratic representation often espoused in the discipline. In promoting the stories of SSW and PDU women through the Scylla State, we make crucial progress towards realising a fully informed understanding of the experiences of the supposedly deviant targets of neoliberal governance. Therefore, the Scylla State is a matter of social justice so that we do not perpetuate the blinkered and exclusionary approaches women, especially marginalised women, are frequently subject to.

This article draws upon research underpinned by feminist and humanistic principles, which converge providing a trauma-informed approach to the exploration of women's experiences under neoliberalism in the UK. Twenty-three women 'in recovery', from post-industrial cities across England and Scotland were interviewed concerning their lives

prior to, during and following their PDU/SSW. The women were aged from their 30–50s and their parents had grown up during the economic and social upheaval of Margaret Thatcher; thus, the women and their communities were affected by this inheritance and the intensified renewal of neoliberal practice and ideology that accompanied the 2010 Coalition Government. The impact of this emerged in the data via the proliferation of trauma at individual, community and systemic levels that can be traced to the machinations of neoliberal governance as described by Wacquant (2009); specifically punitvism and authoritarianism towards deprived populations. However, women's experiences did not fit those described by Wacquant (2009), whose Centaur State is predominantly informed by the lives of working class men in the United States. Instead of 'workfare' and overt penalism, notions of 'womanfare', a key concept referring to neo-Victorian values of femininity imposed by the state, and the attendant more covert and complex strategies aimed at coercing this emerged. This paper advances the concept of the Centaur State, offering instead the Scylla as a means to explain and explore the experiences of marginalised women. These are examined herein, prefaced by a discussion of literature concerning neoliberalism, the Centaur State and women.

1.1 | Neoliberalism

The impact of neoliberal ideology and practice in the governance of economically and socially excluded populations has captured the attentions of myriad concerned scholars (Christiaens, 2019; Johnson, 2014; Tiisala, 2021). As Flint (2019) remarks, whilst the Centaur State *is* static and coherent, neoliberalism *is not* and varies in several ways, including geographically and temporally. Most recently, discussions have highlighted the emergence of 'authoritarian' neoliberalism, with expertise located either within a figurehead (e.g., Trump and Putin), technocratic democrats or in instances of nationalistic populism, in the people (Gallo, 2022). In the United Kingdom, Da Costa Vieira (2023) describes how authoritarian neoliberalism's focus, through Thatcher, the recession and beyond, has been to induce 'state-driven behavioural change', through which individuals identify and act independently as capitalists.

While these shifts in neoliberal forms of governance are significant, the overarching ideals, delineated below, remain constant. Bettache et al. (2020) describe the necessary acceptance of a 'dog eat dog' mentality, where social inequality and unequal power distribution is accepted in the pursuit of economic freedom and the purported endorsement of meritocracy. Correspondingly, Holmwood (2000) and Polanyi (1944) charge the neoliberal ideal of self-regulating markets with imperilling the security of social rights. This ideal represents a form of 'laissez faire' capitalism where the state abdicates responsibility for public services, and instead confers freedom upon markets to assume the mantle of purportedly delivering economic *and* productive excellence (Holmwood, 2000; Thorsen & Lie, 2006; Whitfield, 2001). The level of income generated and received in the commodification of land, labour and money arguably reflects the 'indispensability' of their services to those who control the markets (Furniss, 1912, p. 199; Gordon, 2019). This focus on the macro level and fiscal impacts dominate sociological critiques of neoliberalism (Cassidy et al., 2020; Gordon, 2019; Tirapani & Willmott, 2023). For example, Connell (2010) remarks upon the commodification of services and the intrusion of market practices into previously untarnished sectors. However, the impact of this on service users as individuals and the corresponding human cost is largely absent from critiques. The notion of freedom and neoliberalism's association of agency, independence and empowerment with market forces receives critique from Boltanski and Chiapello (2005) but the freedom of individuals or conversely, their experiences of control and restriction is mostly neglected. Wacquant (2009) remedies this somewhat, by introducing a conceptualisation that focuses on the approach of the neoliberal state towards individuals who are perceived as non-compliant and unproductive.

1.2 | The Centaur State

Wacquant (2009) proposes the concept of the 'Centaur State' to delineate the machinations of the modern neoliberal state, described as 'punishing the poor'; where retrenchment and exclusion accompany individualising

discourse, methods used to enact the retrenchment of state responsibility by replacing 'welfare' with 'workfare', and increasing penalism through 'prisonfare' to identify and coerce so-called 'underclasses' into a precarious labour market.

UK academics have used the concept of the Centaur State to discuss the impact of welfare changes, particularly the destructive combination of roll-back and roll-out neoliberalism heralded by the Coalition government (Peck and Tickell, 2017). This work has often centred on welfare reform and unemployment support (or lack of), reflecting the focus on economic productivity and submission to 'workfare'. As Redman and Fletcher assert (2022, p. 306), a burgeoning field of research suggests that due to the 2010–2015 Job Centre Plus reforms (and the war on so-called 'scroungers'), *'claiming processes became a more 'institutionally violent' and injurious experience for out of work benefit claimants'* (also see McCarthy et al., 2015; Speake, 2020). More broadly, Fletcher and Flint (2018) argue that the UK exhibits the markers of the Centaur State in its laissez faire market politics and stern paternalism according to the productivity and status of the recipients.

Povey (2017) does introduce a gendered lens, applying the Centaur State to explore women's experiences of the UK welfare state, concluding that the model is unsuitable, as women experience intensifying levels of intervention and control at perceived times of crisis. Povey (2017) does not propose an alternative, however neither did she set out to.

Cain (2016) also adopts a gendered perspective, albeit focused on economic productivity, exploring lone and low-paid parents' experiences of claiming Universal Credit highlighting the impact of the free market and the conservative idealisation of the heteronormative family, demonstrating how ideals of individual responsibilisation and self-sufficiency counterbalance those that citizens also dedicate themselves to familial sovereignty. Cain emphasises the inherent contradictions that make the attainment of both untenable in an increasingly precarious and volatile climate; this counterproductive neoliberal dynamic is conceptualised and expanded on by the Scylla State.

The Centaur State has not avoided criticism, with Flint (2019) remarking that it is insufficient to capture the nuances of modern neoliberalism. Drawing on the literature on neoliberalism and women and assessing the fit of the Centaur State, a more nuanced picture begins to emerge. In the following section, the harmful impact of neoliberalism in the UK is discussed regarding women's experiences, exploring themes of stigmatisation, punitivism and retrenchment which manifest underpinned by neo-Victorian ideals of womanfare, and marked by complexity, unpredictability, duality of punishment and the contradictory duality of status.

1.3 | Women, neoliberalism and the state

This section explores the consequences of the neoliberal state for women, demonstrating how concerns with conduct and contribution manifest in specifically gendered ways, not captured by the Centaur State.

The focus of this paper is the post-industrial UK, and the regulation and persecution of designated deviant women in tandem with the expansion of neoliberal ideals. The women whose experiences inform this paper are multiply stigmatised by, and thus deviant according to, the State, with their PDU and SSW intersecting to amplify their treatment as morally, economically and socially inadequate. Female drug users and survival sex workers are frequently perceived as defying conventions, specifically normative expectations of womanhood, in the performance of nurturing, submissive and maternal roles (Balfour and Comack, 2021). This research identifies incompatible tensions between the ideals of the state and the reality of the lives of women navigating disadvantage in the paucity and unpredictability of the neoliberal socioeconomic climate. We find expectations of self-control, self-realised recovery and the embodiment of normative ideals embedded in women's experiences of public services. Due to the extent of the ostracisation and stigmatisation of survival sex working and problematic drug using women, these tensions and the punitive, exclusionary impact of the neoliberal ideals at their heart dominate encounters across statutory sectors and, due to neoliberal tendering processes result in an increasingly constrained

voluntary sector (Cooper & Mansfield, 2020; Evans et al., 2005). I concur with Wacquant (2009) in identifying the operation of partnerships between services but find that women experience a less formal and less empirical form of surveillance; women are branded rather than blacklisted and exiled from access to support, resources and opportunities, bureaucratically and socially. This increasingly punitive approach towards transgressions of ideal womanhood and the consequent scarcity of support is underpinned by expectations of **'womanfare';** *conformity to neo-Victorian values that designate women as the creators and sustainers of productive, disciplined and self-sufficient family units.*

As the symptoms of women's exclusion and trauma (such as problematic drug use) are conceived of as deviant, thus neoliberal governance justifies the withdrawal of support via austerity politics. Austerity measures in the UK disproportionately affect women's lives, particularly those who are already marginalised and struggling to access suitable support such as SSW and PDU women (Pearson, 2019). This is due to the retrenchment of funding, restriction of creative commissioning, and the consequences of stringent outcome demands on services. Flint (2019) describes the roots of conditionality of citizenship in the identification and problematisation of 'suspect citizens', according to two charges; '*that it represents a challenge to the authority of government and that it is a manifestation of individuals abdicating their responsibility to the state and to their fellow citizens'*. Flint (2019) discusses the problematisation of key cohorts of citizens, identifying Muslims, the workless, immigrants and the anti-social. I expand upon this to introduce a gendered definition of the disruptive and unproductive populations of the workless and anti-social. Women, especially those with experience of PDU and SSW, straddle both these categories; for their failure to accept unpaid and underpaid performance of caring roles and to submit to conventional standards of femininity, matriarchy and maternity.

Consequently, PDU and SSW women are increasingly vulnerable to and unsupported against the constellation of disadvantages and inequities that disproportionately affect them, including domestic violence, poverty, legal issues, addiction, trauma and physical and mental health problems (Sanders-McDonagh et al., 2016; Vacchelli et al., 2015).

In the following sections we explore the presence of key components of the Centaur in the literature on women's lives, including penalism, stigmatisation and surveillance. Crucially, we also introduce a novel element, the experience of and vulnerability to violence and abuse and how this is exacerbated by neoliberal governance, with a particular focus on austerity politics.

1.4 | Punishment and survival crime

Women's experiences of penalism under the neoliberal state reflect those of men's, in that there is an undeniable burgeoning volume of punitive responses towards problematised populations. Incarceration rates in the Western world, the UK included, have soared as states have extended their punitivism towards 'deviant' populations (Roberts, 2016). SSW and PDU women are especially vulnerable to this, as the multiply stigmatised woman is a prolific concern for criminal justice interventions which aim to control and coerce.

However, the nature of women's criminality and its exacerbation may be correlated with the pernicious impacts of the expansion of neoliberal ideals and practice. The majority of women serving custodial and community sentences can be argued to do so for survival crimes including benefit fraud, shoplifting and sex working. For many, involvement in drug use and associated markets can be understood as survival strategies, as women's addiction is often preceded by significant trauma; thus their drug use and financing of this comprises a form of self-medication (Boppre & Boyer, 2021). Reflecting the role of trauma, 46% of women in prison have attempted suicide (compared to 21% among male prisoners and 6% of the general population), 53% of women reported suffering some form of child abuse and the majority serve sentences of 6 months or less, predominantly for 'petty' acquisitive crimes (Booth et al., 2018).

In an attempt to recognise the disconnect between the severity of much of women's criminality, their vulnerability and the trauma inflicted by incarceration (as highlighted in the Corston Report and its follow-up (Annison, 2015) there has been an increase in non-custodial treatment orders or community sentences. These are predominantly applied to coerce drug treatment and/or participation in sex work exiting services and/or compliance with public conduct orders for example, ASBOs. Although the Corston Report recommended alternative sentencing options be explored in recognition of the inefficacy of the short-term custodial sentences, the reality of these orders has been less positive (Annison, 2015) The 2017 follow-up report to Corston found that despite recommendations that approaches recognise the relationship between recommended women's histories of abuse and trauma and their involvement in prostitution this has been inadequately addressed, with funding insecure and insufficient and provision subpar (Annison, 2015) Furthermore, the majority of women who continue to receive custodial sentences are non-violent and between 2014 and 2017 there was a 68% increase in women being recalled to custody for breach of orders; therefore, the reduction in penalism and elimination of custodial sentences through community measures appears largely unsuccessful (Annison, 2015).

The reality of the experiences of conditional sentencing suggests that punitive approaches to women attempting to navigate adversity remain dominant, despite theoretical recognition of the roots of survival and trauma in women's offending and the futility and paradoxical harm inflicted by the imposition of custodial sentences. Furthermore, regardless of this recognition, the neoliberal state *contributes* to the drivers behind the coping strategies women employ in the face of trauma, criminalising them further.

1.5 | Neoliberal governance practices and the amplification of violence and abuse

The correlation between neoliberal governance and women's experiences of abuse and trauma is twofold. In addition to undermining women's ability to access support and resources to protect themselves from abuse, neoliberalism also indirectly contributes to the volume and intensity of abuse that women living in socioeconomically deprived environments frequently face (Fine & Weis, 2000; Matto & Cleaveland, 2016; Morrow et al., 2004; Vacchelli et al., 2015). Practices of neoliberalism have been demonstrated to both erode psychological well-being and tangible opportunities for men and women, and consequently increase the experience of violence and abuse (Ellis, 2019; Khalifeh et al., 2013; Matto & Cleaveland, 2016; Morrow et al., 2004; Sanders-McDonagh et al., 2016). The relationship between poverty and women's experience of violence is demonstrated to operate in two ways; firstly, lack of fiscal assets increases women's experience of abuse (Gilroy et al., 2015; Matto & Cleaveland, 2016).

Secondly, economic solvency is a protective factor that empowers women to leave situations of interpersonal violence (Sanders-McDonagh et al., 2016). A further way women's vulnerability to domestic violence is increased is through the *structural* mechanisms of austerity. Firstly, cuts to Crown Prosecution Services and legal aid impinge women's ability to safely leave violent partners and result in less thorough and fewer successful investigations (Sanders-McDonagh et al., 2016). Furthermore, the permeation of business practices in public services (including conditionality clauses) and the decimation of available services means women and their children are often trapped in violent households (Morrow et al., 2004; Sanders-McDonagh et al., 2016; Vacchelli et al., 2015). In addition to vital resources and support services, SSW and PDU are also often excluded from refuges due to their drug use and so conditionality denies a significant proportion of vulnerable women the help they need to escape the violence that is statistically prevalent in their lives (Fox, 2020).

These vulnerabilities and traumas are further amplified where women are perceived as incapable and immoral rather than understood as self-medicating in response to trauma and deprivation. This is partly fuelled by the state's expectation of female self-sacrifice and the insistence on individual sovereignty, which conceives of domestic abuse as a circumstance wherein women must 'make better choices'.

1.6 | Monitoring motherhood

Reflecting Wacquant, women also experience surveillance between agency partnerships, although these efforts are less to discipline and more to coerce, as we will see in the findings.

Neoliberal surveillance strategies focus on monitoring the conduct of the mother and consequently appropriating blame for undesirable family circumstances (Peckover, 2014; Rogowski, 2015). The expectation of mothers' conformity appears to be levied without recognition of the effect of inequality, social and structural violence upon women's maternal capacity and experience (Bywaters et al., 2015, 2018; Featherstone et al., 2018). The correlation between socioeconomic deprivation and punitive responses to mothers is attested to by social work intervention's disproportionate focus on families living in poverty (Bywaters et al., 2015, 2018). Indeed, Morris et al. (2018, p. 364) remark of data from UK local authorities that '*deprivation was the largest contributory factor in children's chances of being looked after and the most powerful factor in variations between LAs'*. As PDU and SSW in themselves are often treated as risk factors, when co-occurring these may intersect and result in especially stringent interventions by social services and family courts (Featherstone et al., 2018). This suggests that there is a particular feminised component to neoliberalism's exacerbation of poverty in the responsibilisation of mothers, where failure of families to conform is experienced punitively. While social services understand their approach as child-centred and risk averse, women may experience this as the penalisation of poverty, vulnerability and the coping strategies that result. Blaxland et al. (2022) note how when women with ACEs become mothers, they transition from being considered 'at risk' to 'a risk'. Certainly, mothers' histories of trauma and deprivation appear absent in discourse and practical approaches. Child neglect is isolated from environmental, socioeconomic, and even whole-family considerations and all fault is located with the mother, despite evidence illustrating correlations between neglect and poverty (Blaxland et al., 2022; Featherstone et al., 2018).

The individualisation and responsibilisation of risk indicates a shift from a focus on child *welfare* to child *safeguarding/protection*, and from families *in need* to *risky* families, with risk factors dominating decisions to place children on the at-risk register (Blaxland et al., 2022; Rogowski, 2015). This is exemplified in the treatment of women experiencing PDU and SSW; although narratives have shifted from a focus on threat to public health and moral sanctity, to victimhood and vulnerability, this breadth of consideration does not apply to mothers. For example; while simultaneously drawing upon narratives of victimisation policies punish SSW for being 'incapable' mothers and not meeting the criteria of social work orders, regardless of the impact of their own experiences of violence and neglect (Munro & Scoular, 2012).

This approach then justifies the application of evidence gathering strategies to underpin reactive interventions as opposed to the development of preventative, therapeutic strategies including longer-term coordinated care plans (Rogowski, 2015). Consequently, marginalised parents and sometimes children fear social services, experiencing the sector as threatening, intrusive and judgemental (Featherstone et al., 2018).

Relatedly, Peckover (2014) remarks that there has been no parallel development to support *women* who are victims, nor to correct the problematisation of domestic violence as a harm foremost to children, blaming mothers for 'allowing' children to witness her abuse (Humphreys & Absler, 2011). The expectation of change seems misplaced when core aspects of women's lives - their safety and wellbeing - are undermined by systemic retrenchment and misinterpretation of victimhood.

This section has identified several core themes that warrant exploration: the individualisation and problematisation of women's coping strategies in the face of violence and deprivation, the complicity of the state in exacerbating this and the untenable expectation that women exhibit self-discipline and exercise agency in situations where they are denied the capacity to do so. These themes are all underpinned by gendered expectations that women meet the ideals of the state, as mothers and as orderly, morally and behaviourally 'hygienic' citizens who require a minimum of state intervention. The Centaur State does not recognise the prominence of expectations of agency and choice that underpin this, nor the corresponding failure of the state to recognise the role of trauma, deprivation and the realities of abuse. In the Findings section below, these will be advanced through the concept of the Scylla State, providing an alternative through which to incorporate this expanded understanding.

2 | METHODS

The interviews were conducted in 2021–2022 for a funded PhD exploring the life course experiences of 23 women with histories of survival sex working and problematic drug use. This life course perspective focused on women's lives prior to, during and in recovery from PDU and SSW as this would provide insight into the driving, exacerbating and trapping factors and the mitigating recovery assets that countered these. All the women lived in England and Scotland in post-industrial areas and were aged between 35 and 65. I did not ask about their sexuality, ethnicity or class as I wanted to leave the power of disclosure in the hands of the participants. However, almost all women mentioned relationships with men and there was no mention of education except one participant who had attended university during addiction.

Women were recruited through a previous project, online recovery groups, specialist services and word of mouth. Consent was received verbally and in writing, prior to arranging and before commencing the interview. Participants were given a window in which they were able to withdraw consent. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdowns interviews were conducted remotely, via telephone or Zoom, as preferred by participants. While face-to-face interviews are traditionally considered the 'gold standard', remote interviewing enabled the women to retain a greater degree of control as they could (and indeed some did) choose not to be seen, and it is easier to end a remote encounter than to physically leave a room. Remote interviewing facilitated a more trauma-informed approach and arguably allowed for a greater feeling of safety and quality of data.

Research was designed, conducted and analysed according to the principles of trauma-informed practice (as per Abuse, 2014; Fallot & Harris, 2008) and underpinned by the author's historical experience in conducting responsible, compassionate research with trauma survivors. This involved avoiding retraumatisation and promoting safety by emphasising that the power of disclosure lay entirely with participants, with interviews led by the interviewee and trauma stabilisation practices used to support women before, during and after.

Interviews were originally structured around three questions focusing on prior to, during and following addiction (and SSW where relevant-among 13 respondents); however these were abandoned after the first three interviews as the introductory chat, where the purpose of the research and a request for women to tell their own stories as they were comfortable, served to elicit a natural and forthcoming discussion of these phases of life.

The methodology reflected the researcher's own position, embodying trauma-informed principles, where safety, stability and the recognition of and response to trauma symptoms are crucial. It also draws on feminist principles, in providing a platform for frequently silenced women to share their experiences.

Transcription was manual by the researcher, providing a preliminary reading for analysis and ensuring immersion in and reflection on the data. Analysis was conducted according to the themes identified in the literature review; those of the Centaur State, neoliberalism (punitivism, retrenchment, responsibilisation), alternative models of addiction (that contradict the dominant medical-moral-behavioural models), and the presence of trauma at individual, community and systemic levels (termed 'multidimensional trauma' by the author). These were united through a lens focusing on the impact on women's lives and the onset, exacerbation and recovery from, PDU and SSW.

All information was anonymised due to the sensitivity of the topics and to preserve participant's privacy and security. Ethical approval for the research was received by Sheffield Hallam University.

3 | RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The dualistic penalism and retrenchment of the Centaur's punitive arms were present in the study's findings. However, the Centaur State is inadequate when describing women's experiences, which are far more complex and involve a greater complexity of expectations, agencies and agendas. Women described being simultaneously labelled helpless victims and obdurate offenders, punished for the offences or shortcomings of others (including in the family unit) and faced punitive responses to the symptoms of their abuse. The discrimination and punitivism received by women

operated formally and informally, with professionals' opinions unquestioningly received as evidence in life changing decisions, and where women's histories continued to tarnish their present and futures due to social stigma seeping into bureaucratic procedures. Complexity, Duality and Formality/Informality characterise the distinct operations of the Scylla State's multiple heads. The underpinning concerns and endeavours operating these heads are ideals of 'womanfare' as opposed to workfare: 'womanfare' denotes a neo-Victorian expectation that working class women exhibit specific mores of respectability, self-discipline and duty to family and the state. This is exemplified in Thatcher's call for a return to Victorian values, which partnered her announced intention to retrench state support, desiring a return to 'simpler times' where working class women in particular honoured their 'privilege' of roles of motherhood and wife (Campbell, 2015).

The expectations underpinning womanfare are accompanied by a particular retrenchment of rights to support and safety when women do not 'honour' these roles, and branding ensures women are identified and stigmatised as 'other' long after their recovery and rehabilitation. The heads of the Scylla are rooted in the aforementioned neo-Victorian values of womanfare; the accordingly feminised expectations of individual agency, action and self-discipline and justification of retrenchment and punitivism. Theses heads are multiple compared to the Centaur, and may operate simultaneously or in isolation, covertly and overtly, and even in contradiction of one another, for example, where women are portrayed in policy as victims yet treated in practice as culpable. These mobilising ideologies, representing the hydra heads of the Scylla State, and illustrating the ill fit of the Centaur where women's experiences are concerned, are discussed in greater detail below and comprise the body of the beast, 'Womanfare', and its attendant heads: Duality and Dual Punishment, Retrenchment of Rights to Health and Safety (within which Coercion and Manipulation operate as off-shoots) and Branding.

3.1 | The Centaur State and the Scylla State: Workfare versus womanfare

We have discussed the essence of the Scylla, 'womanfare', which is contained in its submerged body, branching into multiple heads whose attacks, as indicated in the findings, perversely serve to reduce women's capacity to engage in normative society. The concept of womanfare is crucial when understanding women's experiences, yet this is absent in alternative conceptualisations: the Centaur State argues that working class men's rights are contingent on submitting to workfare; however, this was not present in the women's accounts. The stories we explore herein reveal the key themes present in women's histories, and the essence of the Scylla State, a hydra-headed covert, unpredictable beast. The Scylla, and women's experiences, are distinct from those described by the Centaur State: *Complexity* underpins all, with an array of agencies and strategies, formal and informal, including surveillance, manipulation and coercion are involved, with multiple priorities and expectations of women's vulnerability and/or victimhood that converge and centre upon women as the locus of responsibility for the family. *Duality and Dual Punishment*, where women are punished both for the crimes of their abusers and the impact of their historical traumas and deprivation, for example, having children with a violent man, and also for their status as a victim of abuse, where the symptoms of their trauma are used as evidence against them. The consequences of neoliberal retrenchment and individualisation and the permeation of business practices in human services impact on women in a specific way that is reflected by the Scylla State: women's rights to protection and support are denied through a myriad of notions of the deserving and undeserving, affecting women's access to support as victims, addicts and the sick. Finally, **'Branding'**, as opposed to Wacquant's 'Blacklisting', as processes of exclusion run on multiple levels including systemically and socially rather than solely on a formal level. Agencies work according to state concerns, operating formally and informally to identify and brand 'deviant' women; professional opinion and hearsay are privileged over women's histories and experiences to make momentous decisions. These factors will be explored in the proceeding sections, with particular attention paid to undercurrents of complexity and 'duality', driven by neoliberal individualising and responsibilising ideals, as they permeate women's experiences.

3.2 | Duality and dual punishment

Kylie's experiences exemplify the duality of the contrary statuses of victim and offender and the layers of punishment women experience in response to their victimisation. Kylie had a lifelong history of complex trauma and rejection, having spent much of her childhood in various children's homes and suffering various forms of abuse. In adulthood, where her violent partner had been sent to jail (for other offences) this provided a window of opportunity for services to engage with Kylie and provide her with the support and protection necessary for her to be able to contemplate change. However, social services and the police failed to recognise her victimisation and manipulation, instead forming an alliance to monitor Kylie.

> So, when I'd moved back with him the police found out and came and arrested him and he got a year in the jail which I thought that'll be really good, it'll give me a chance to get better. But I was still in contact with him because he was phoning, he was writing letters, he was missing his two young boys and (eldest) was 4 at the time, really playing up, missing his dad, 'I want to see my daddy' so I took the two younger ones up to the jail and then ended up getting into a scuffle with one of the guards. Because the two wee ones were there, they reported it to the social work so when I got home the social work came out and they took me out for a coffee. And they didn't even mention it, they just said 'So how's everything been, have you been in contact with (husband)', so I goes 'Aye well I have been writing and phone calls because he is the father of the kids, and he is worried about his kids'. They kept this going for two days then they turned around and said, 'We know what happened at the visit' and I was like 'Oh right'. I goes 'Well I didnae want to mention that to you because of what happened'.

The hold that Kylie's ex still had was multiple. Firstly, in the context of his control and abuse he continued to exert significant pressure. The children's desire to see their father and his exploitation of that also put her under duress to maintain contact. However, the coercive dynamic of the relationship and the history of violence was not recognised by social services. Instead, neoliberal individualisation and responsibilisation of victimhood appeared to inform their response which unwittingly replicated her ex's behaviour, where she was covertly monitored before being confronted and punished;

> I went home that night. The next day they came out with an order saying that they were removing the kids, putting them in foster care because they were saying that I'm putting him first before the kids. And even then, I tried to say to them look you had that chance to intervene with me and say, 'Look he's away for a year let's get you away'. I didn't know the options because I was closed off from everybody, I didn't know that you could have all these options, do you know what I mean? So once the kids went away things got a lot worse, I just used all the time. Husband was still sending out letters, being quite violent... things like that. I went to a lawyer to try and get access to them.

While it was Kylie, not her children, who was the recipient of violence, social services accorded no recognition of her victimhood or her lack of support. Consequently, her children were removed due to, she felt, assumptions of her lack of concern, despite the continued influence of her ex, her entreaties for intervention and her appointment of a lawyer. Kylie's suffering, historically and at the hands of her ex, was completely overlooked while her victimhood was inverted and used to depict her as a liability. This echoes literature on expectations that mothers who experience domestic violence exert agency and make choices where their histories and current circumstances deny them this (Humphreys & Absler, 2011). This is a particularly neoliberal expectation, drawing on notions that individual effort and application are sufficient to navigate 'problems' that are considered indicators of individual poor choices.

I was going up to see them once a week, but I'd felt really no well. I'd had a hernia in my stomach, a bad hernia and I wasn't keeping too well. And I remember going up to a visit and I'd been sick, my stomach was quite swollen, and I remember the social work asking if was pregnant and I goes 'I'm sterilised I'm not pregnant' and they go 'Well you're no looking too well'...Next things I know, the visits were stopped, and it went to a children's panel, and they were like Kylie is out of her face on drugs.

Despite the established correlation between trauma and ill health (Van der Kolk, 2014), especially in women, social service's risk averse approach imposed a stigmatising narrative upon Kylie that ignored the reality of her medical diagnoses and assumed first a pregnancy then a relapse. This also attests to the literature on the minimisation and stigmatisation of women's health, where trauma is overlooked and symptoms are either neglected entirely or attributed to, variously, 'exaggeration' or emotional incontinence (Samulowitz et al., 2018).

Even when Kylie was explicit about the violence she was suffering and her traumatic childhood, she felt social services failed to hear and respond to this;

I was trapped, really. Know what I mean? ... you're at a panel , you've got three strangers and the social work, no matter what you say to them, you try and explain to them, 'Look I've been going through all this trauma, my partner beat me I've lost my family, my self-confidence is away, I've only known what to do since I was 14/15 because I was in children's homes, you're hooking up with guys because you're looking for certain things'. Nobody's ever just that way. But they always believe what the social worker says, the social worker will have a written report, they just believe everything that they say. You don't really stand a chance, so.

In Kylie's story we see a duality of punishment, where historical victimisation and deprivation (often inflicted or exacerbated due to structural deficits) manifest as trauma symptoms and vulnerabilities in adulthood which are responded to punitively by the agents of the state.

While the Centaur State refers to a divergent approach to the productive and unproductive, in women's experiences we see multiple and often contradictory heads in action: a common theme in women's lives was the vacillation of their status between victim and liability. This commonly occurred against a backdrop of a dearth of resources and support. For example, despite a recent trauma, relapse and bereavement, Dina was offered custody of her children in exchange for entry into treatment due to, it seems, lack of alternative options for social services.

My mum found she was unable to cope, and social services asked me if they got me an in-house detox at our local mental health hospital would I be able to take on full responsibility of my son and they'd help me get rehoused.

This offered Dina the return of one of her children and the opportunity to move on from hostel living but was conditional upon completing detox, despite the recent failure of a more intensive rehabilitative programme which at least aimed to do more than a solely medical detoxification. Dina was also under great pressure, yet not provided with wraparound support to help her manage the sudden responsibility of new sobriety and the return of a child. Consequently, while she agreed to do the detox, *'It wasn't successful, I run off to use drugs within the first 2 weeks'.*

Kylie's story and those of several other women provided examples of how mothers in abusive and violent relationships felt blamed for their inability to protect their children from harm, rather than being equally appreciated as victims. This approach fails to consider other variables (such as the impact of past trauma or ongoing coercion) upon women's abilities at the time. Women felt labelled as unfit mothers and targeted by mandates that paid no heed to external barriers. Indeed, no support was offered to mitigate these barriers and contrarily women were responded to in ways that exacerbated deprivation and trauma. Regardless of their mutual victimhood, the risk aversion of social services meant only the child was recognised, and so conversely mothers felt further disadvantaged by systemic mechanisms designed to protect the vulnerable and marginalised. Fenton (2021) attests to the pernicious impact

of this, citing Fraser's model of injustice which describes how contemporary social work's immersion in progressive neoliberalism results in maldistribution (exacerbating inequality and deprivation) and misrecognition (exacerbating injustice). Several women experienced this, which echoed their life histories of neglect, and the result was greater entrenchment in abusive relationships, substance misuse and other harms. This was often compounded by their fiscal vulnerability, due variously to financial control by partners, the burgeoning costs of a drug habit and the unnavigability of the welfare state.

> The support from social work was zilch. Everything was my fault, all my fault. You're the mother you should be looking out for your children, why do you not just walk out the door. And it's not as easy as that, it's just not as easy. I'd lost all my family; I'd lost all my friends to him.
>
> (Kylie)

Direct penalism of women's responses to poverty and trauma was relevant to a significant number of women in prison, illustrating that women's penalism is better conceptualised by the Scylla, as we again see dual punishment (of deprivation, of trauma, of victimhood) and duality, where women are simultaneously vulnerable and criminal. Women were most often in prison for drug related crimes, including possession of substances that 'belonged to their boyfriend or girlfriend'. This criminalisation by proxy ignores the prevalence among women who have experienced developmental or historical trauma to be 'people pleasers'; where the desire to feel safe and wanted manifests in a tendency to put others first, making them vulnerable to exploitation.

Penalism and expectations of productivity also operate in tandem in the Scylla State. Wacquant spoke of the labour camps of the American penal system. In this research, we see accounts of female prisoners being expected to serve as uncompensated maids for male prisoners. This attests to the neo-Victorian moral and behavioural underpinnings which are crucial to the Scylla and which set it apart in utility and suitability from the Centaur.

Exemplifying this, the punitivism within Gina's prison (the infamous Cornton Vale; Malloch, 2004) required a humiliating, especially gendered, form of supposed rehabilitation:

> They used to try and make you work, well I refused to work, as I told you it was a man's jail, and there was no way I'd be washing any man's sheets that'd been dugged up 23 hours and I got in trouble for that, but I didn't care, I wasn't gonna do that...

The disparity in different genders' experiences of incarceration became further evident when Gina learned of the opportunities in the men's prison:

> When I got moved to the men's jail, it's got a brotherhood and the conditions are better, you get a proper cooked dinner. In Cornton Vale you'd get the steamed ready meals with a packet of biscuits once a week. Whereas in the man's jail they had a big gym to go to, proper NA meetings, AA, CA meetings, entertainment stuff, drama classes... far more in a man's jail than in the women's they're only out for themselves, they're in survival mode.

In addition to a systemic patriarchal impulse to exert increasing punishment upon nonconformist women (Malloch, 2004) a further explanation for this difference may be found in Coyle's (2005) observation that as women's prisons are fewer and farther, between, women are more likely to find themselves under high security measures regardless of their crime.

This suggests the presence of womanfare to underpinning the purported rehabilitative aspect of women's prisons, and an emphasis on 'improving work' based on patriarchal assumptions about women's capacity and role (Worrall & Gelsthorpe, 2009). This also attests to Rafters' description of women's imprisonment as a means to instil and enforce middle class, normative standards of femininity (cited in Becker, 2008). This certainly speaks to an idealisation of gender roles in the family, whereby women 'keep the house' and take care of the man and his home while he is out working (Bosworth, 2017). This fails to acknowledge the impact of unemployment, precarious work, poor working conditions and flimsy labour rights upon working-class homes' ability to survive under this model.

3.3 | Retrenchment of rights to health and safety

As a consequence of breaching the neoliberal state's unspoken social contract, it is argued that women are denied their rights to citizenship and health according to the World Health Organisation Constitution (1946) and Human Rights Act (HM Government, 1998).

The determinants of health set out in the WHO Constitution (1946) may be expanded to include addiction and C/PTSD, as both have direct impact on psychological and physical health. Nonetheless, neoliberal practices meant women suffering these harms were excluded from equitable access to the resources, support and protections allegedly available to all citizens (HM Government, 1998).

While in the UK successful conviction rates for *all* victims of rape and sexual assault are deplorably low and support for victims is provided almost solely *during* proceedings, as per the Stern review (Cook, 2011), police attitudes to victim credibility mean purportedly 'deviant' women receive even less support. This again indicates the presence of duality and dual punishment, where punitivism is meted out and justified by the individualisation of histories of deprivation and trauma, and where victimhood is sullied by assumptions of choice and deviance. This is evident in neo-abolitionist sex work policies, which justify control and coercion and devalue and punish those who do not successfully submit to this Rubio Grundell (2021).

Lily's story provides a devastating illustration, demonstrating the horrific stigma faced by sex workers who, perceived as 'choosing' to sex work by police, are denied the protection and justice accorded to women considered deserving victims:

> I was attacked out there and I got away from the guy and I was I got out of his van, and I was trying to get back to where I'd been working, and I was all bloodied, because we got in a fight in the back of his van. ...I got away from him and my tights was all ripped, I was all bloodied and I'm running down the street. And the police car went past me because they knew me from being out, and I just blurted out 'He's just done this', I had his car registration and everything, I still can see the guy's face in my head. The police just looked at me and went (I used to tell them my name was Kelly, I would never give them my real name) and they went 'Well, Kelly, you choose to come out here don't you?' and drove off and didn't even... and then I reported it through Ugly Mugs and then I didn't hear nothing, nothing, nothing. And then the guy went on to rape another girl, she was a student, a 'normal girl' shall I say, and then they come to me and was asking me to go to court and all that. But I didn't go because I was so chaotic then and they weren't gonna listen to me as a heroin addict and the dock are gonna rip me apart, so I thought I'm not gonna put myself through all that. And even the police said to me when they caught him for doing it to that girl, they said (voice breaks) your description was spot on, it was spot on. Because he looked just like Freddie Mercury, and that's what I said to them. And they were like yeah, it was spot on. But they had his registration and everything, so they could've stopped him, the student girl, that didn't have to happen, and however many other girls he did that to who didn't report him, it didn't have to happen.

Lily's account illustrates the devastating reality of divergent approaches in the criminal justice system to 'deserving and undeserving' victims. This echoes the Yorkshire Ripper case, where it was only when a 'normal' girl (again a student) was murdered that attention was paid to the spate of killings that had occurred in the red-light district (Charman, 2019).

Kim also experienced the duality of police approaches, having been (by proxy) facilitated to use drugs and bribed to perform as a witness to support police prosecutions. Despite this, Kim's own assaults remained unprosecuted, something she attributes to her stigmatisation as an active user:

For about ten years I was working the streets and lots of things have happened like I've been raped, and I've been kidnapped. One guy got 6 years because he'd raped a few of the working girls and we had to go to court against him.

R: Did you have support with that because I know court can be retraumatising?

K: So, there was a charity that worked with street sex working women and the worker from there came with me to court. The police put me in a hotel because they didn't think I was gonna stay because I had a habit. So, they got me up first and they actually gave me money to stay there, basically bought me drugs. They didn't say what it was for, but they were like 'if you need to do what you need to do, go and do it but you need to give evidence'.

R: Wow. What do you think about that now and what did you think at the time?

K: I think at the time I thought it was amazing, but I don't know how I feel about it now. I think I was a bit entrapped; I didn't really have a choice; they gave me money and I had to do it. I was trapped at the hotel... after everything I went through, he got found guilty of the other two rapes and not mine. And I believe he didn't get done for mine because I was still actively using at the time. So, after all of that, he did go to prison but not for what he did to me.

We see again the ironic duality of the Scylla State informing women's access to support; while Kim was sufficiently valued as a witness as to be coerced into providing evidence, to achieve this the police knowingly enabled her addiction and provided no follow-up support, despite addiction and the traumas driving it placing her in such a vulnerable position in the first place.

This indicates a retrenchment of women's rights to protection as they are accorded lesser access to public resources and diminished status as victims. Illustrating how systemic trauma under the neoliberal Scylla State comprises what is done *and* not done, while women do not appear to receive equal protection and justice, they *are* accorded blame for the symptoms of their traumas; this is especially pertinent in the treatment of SSW and PDU women (Balfour and Comack, 2021; Gibbs, 2022), The experience of being disbelieved amplifies women's trauma following assault, exacerbating low self-esteem and systemically replicating abusive experiences (DeCou & Lynch, 2019). It can be argued that such failures to protect women and accord them the support they are entitled to also contributes to their ill health.

3.4 | Branding: Opportunities for redemption or an indelible stain?

While research supports Wacquant's (2009) assertion that the state ensures deviant individuals are 'durably blacklisted', the experience of women is more complex, again informed by the expectations of womanfare; therefore, it would be more appropriate to apply the Scylla State model, and describe women as 'dually and durably branded'. Women's exclusion seemed more social *and* bureaucratic as opposed to through the spatial exclusion of the penal state.

This exclusion often operated counterproductively to the demands of the state; women were expected to redeem themselves via partial reintegration and penance as volunteers and underpaid and under-supported peer workers, a neoliberal strategy to reduce the contributions of the state and place responsibility upon citizens for their wellbeing (Kippin & Lucas, 2020; MacKinnon et al., 2021; Olding et al., 2021). Women's lived expertise was relied upon by services to the extent they became solely responsible for and overburdened by their caseloads, yet they were expected to relive their pasts unaffected and punished if unable to do so.

The ironic divergence of standards and approaches for current service users and those in recovery and employed by services is exemplified by Kim's experience:

I mean they encourage people with lived experience but... I was quite shocked, when I went to my old organisation, they knew me when I was using, they support me all the way. So, when I had to do a CRB check nothing was a shock to them. So, when I went to the new job, they'd question me about something, what I do hate, is

when I apply for a job, on my CRB if you've been stopped for sex working it comes up as a sex offence! So, on my criminal record it says sex offence, that's something that's always going to be with me no matter what. Then if I apply for a job in my line of work, it's enhanced CRB, they're gonna see all that stuff. I don't think it should be there...So they (new job) pulled me in about my CRB, so I've had lots of prison sentences, shoplifting, sex work, driving offences... it's quite a hefty one, and I had to explain everything on and it's not like I haven't done this job, I've worked with vulnerable people for a long time now. But they want people in recovery, so I don't know how that works!, This signifies a failure on the part of the criminal justice system in the expectation to employ work-ers with experience without recognising the realities and inherited trauma of their past, due to neoliberal expec-tations of self-fuelled recovery from adversity and dual conceptualisation of those with lived experience as having experienced vulnerability alongside assumptions of innate capacity for resilience (Fomiatti et al., 2019).

As Jo and Rosie pointed out, echoing the literature on the impact of austerity, services are overworked, underfunded and problem-, not person-centred. Pearson corroborates (2019, p. 29), asserting that women's unpaid labour is treated as *'expendable and costless resources that can absorb all the extra work from these* (austerity) *cuts'*. Peer workers' employment exemplifies this, with peers often treated as secondary employees, subject to precarious, casual employ-ment arrangements, lower rates of pay and fewer employee rights (Greer et al., 2020). This could be due to perception of peer workers as inherently less qualified and valuable than professionally trained workers or a calculated fiscal decision. Regardless, we see that even in employment and 'giving back', ex addicts remain branded and marginalised. This is a contradictory position, typical of the Scylla State; peer workers, commonly performing caring roles in the public sector, are lauded as critical to systems change and considered essential in services, yet their inclusion appears tokenistic and potentially harmful. It appears that the archetypal neoliberal impetus to tick boxes and build a work-force at less cost overtakes considerations of the readiness and capacity of the worker and service to support them.

Lily evoked the indelibility of stigmatisation, in legal and less direct terms, describing the indelible mark left on women's reputations by a criminal record:

But obviously, because I've been arrested, I've got convictions for prostitution; fines and that, I've never been to jail, it was all fines. But when I go for a job now, or to volunteer at my son's school, you have to fill out a DBS and it comes up on your DBS. I've had to sit down and write a whole essay on 'how I got into prostitu-tion' and still not got the job, do you know what I mean?!

Where criminal records label women 'sex offenders', this tarnish is practically and psychologically injurious for women who have frequently been victims of genuine sex offenders. The marring of women's records also excludes them from volunteering and employment opportunities, despite these being one of the main tenets of mainstream concep-tualisations of recovery and desistance (Fomiatti, 2017). This is typical of the Scylla State, where dual punishment is inflicted, informed by the stigmatisation of 'immoral' women who are perceived as unfit to fulfil the purported honours of wifedom and motherhood.

'Redemption of self/identity' was further thwarted informally, ironically *by* the criminal justice system, who are osten-sibly invested in the rehabilitation of 'offenders' (McNeill, 2013). The contradictory nature of the Scylla State's heads are embodied in the simultaneous imposition of demands and retrenchment of the resources, the denial of compassion and forgiveness critical in meeting these demands. Lily was stopped in her car and humiliated by police officers who recog-nised her as an ex-street sex worker, while Maria was demanded to refer to police in training *she was providing* by their titles; she resisted this crass power play and asserted that they were now here to listen to her and weren't her 'Sergeant'!

4 | CONCLUSION

While the Centaur State (Wacquant, 2009) provides a strong concept with which to understand the dynamic between the post-industrial neoliberal state and unemployed, criminalised men, the women who share these spaces

had perhaps typically, not received equal consideration. The Scylla State corrects this, illustrating that at the heart of the multi-dimensional traumas experienced by women is political and economic theory and practice that demands compliance and productivity of communities according to gender-specific normative expectations: these expectations centre around the demand for 'womanfare' in the face of ongoing retrenchment of resources and individualisation of social adversity, and operate not through the operation of two arms but the hydra heads of the Scylla. As opposed to the overt 'warfare' described by Redman (2020), we see a more complex array of strategies experienced by women who come to the attention of the state. The expectations that women are behove to are more concerned with moral and behavioural hygiene, the creation and sustenance of economically productive, socially compliant, and self-sufficient families. The goal is to keep the wheels of the post-industrial system turning, regardless of the increasingly dire conditions of marginalised communities.

This social contract operates less as a Centaur, with a penal body beneath a liberal head, but as the Scylla, with many, sometimes concealed heads employing various strategies to compel desired behaviour. Certainly, as demonstrated, women experienced these blows as punitive, coercive, and exploitative, echoing the punitivism cited by Wacquant (2009) yet speaking to a greater diversity of strategy and impact, distinct in their complexity, duality and the informal and formal nature of their operations.

Women described regulation, surveillance and manipulation, primarily from services concerned with their motherhood. As per Wacquant (2009), these were conducted through alliances between public and protective services, with drug treatment and the police working with social services. The punitivism experienced by mothers was more covert and indirect, for example, in the imposition of strict conditions without requisite support to meet these. The Centaur State's individualisation and responsibilisation of 'social problems' certainly persist, albeit with a focus on the concept of choice. As Wacquant's men (2009) are incarcerated for 'choosing' survival crime, women are punished for 'choosing' violent, controlling relationships and addiction, (despite these being survival behaviours or victimisation) over being a 'good mother' and 'putting children first'.

Failure to adhere to this unspoken social contract results in further ostracisation and deprivation. Rather than direct punitivism women often described their experiences in terms of coercion and exploitation underpinned by the retrenchment or denial of support based upon moral judgements. This replicated the abusive relationships that most women had suffered and suggests an inadvertently self-sabotaging component to systemic responses to supposedly 'deviant' women. Furthermore, the treatment of women that occurred due to their perceived deviance excluded them *further* from the rights and status accorded to those able to conform, amplifying their exclusion from the mainstream.

We see in the contemporary treatment of 'deviant' women a neo-Victorian revival of the notions of the 'angel in the house'. Just as Dickens' Urania Cottage was designed to rehabilitate and reform homeless and sex working women, current approaches reflect similar ideals (Kennedy, 1978). Modern iterations also demand that the labours of the individual are applied to realise improvement according to the moral-behavioural mores of a patriarchal state. These expectations are accompanied by increasing retrenchment of resources and refutation of the state's responsibility to create and maintain environments in which compliance and productivity is possible. This approach treats survival and coping behaviours such as PDU and SSW as chosen deviance rather than symptomatic of the historic and ongoing actions of the state.

The concept of the Scylla State adds a much-neglected gendered dimension to understandings of the experiences of marginalised populations in the era of post-industrial neoliberalism. This essential advancement of the concept of the Centaur State enables it to be inclusive of sex and the expectations of gender that differentiate these experiences, expanding and diversifying our ability to interrogate neoliberal society.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The PhD Thesis from which this work is derived is available online at: The Scylla State: an alternative understanding of survival sex work and addiction - Sheffield Hallam University Research Archive (shu.ac.uk).

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