

Data in Society

Challenging Statistics
in an Age of Globalisation

Edited by Jeff Evans, Sally Ruane and Humphrey Southall
Foreword by Danny Dorling



Dr Sally Ruane

**Radical Statistics Conference
London**

28th February 2020

 @SallyRuane

Third book in the RadStats series

- Interdisciplinary
- Accessible
- Moves beyond the state
- Substantial content on health and wellbeing
- Critical statistical activism
- Collaborative endeavour

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Professor Christina Beatty


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@CBeatty_CRESR

The world has changed: 1985 to 2020

- **Technology and digital infrastructure**
 - computer processing time and data storage
 - affordability and accessibility
 - internet
 - smart phones
- **Administrative data**
 - digital records and access
 - data linkage
- **Proliferation of 'Big Data'**
 - phones, consumption, e-commerce, social media, service users, GPS, surveillance cameras
- **Statistics**  **data**

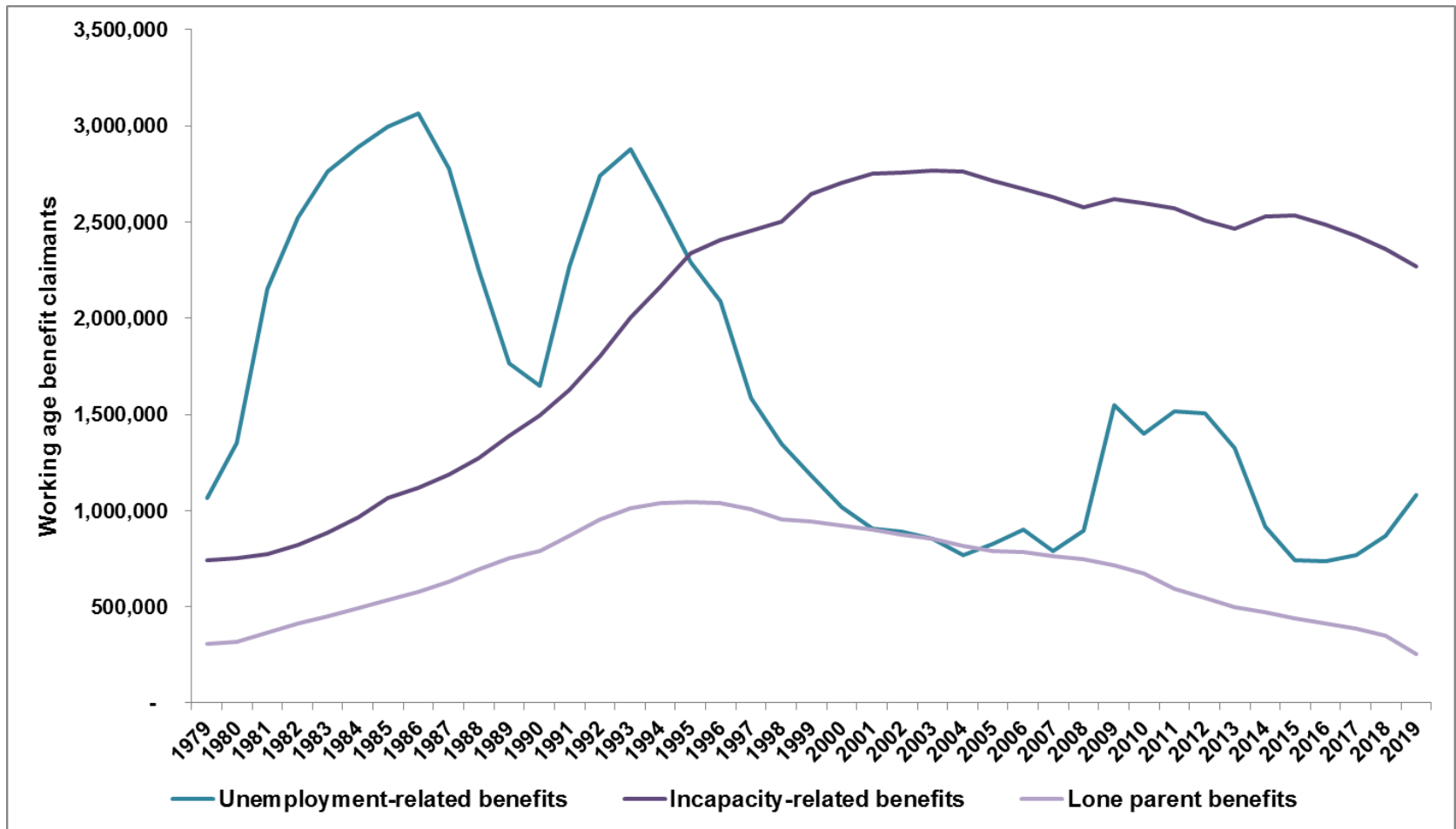
Easier to get more data?

- **Data easier to access?**
 - Disclosure controls, data protection, secure data labs, data retention and destruction, data discontinued
 - Risk assessment, time, bureaucracy and resources
- **National survey data?**
 - Falling response rates, lack of sub-regional data, seen as expensive, risk of discontinuation
- **Census?**
 - Individuals  households  small areas
 - Rich source of socio-economic data, ethnicity, tenure, qualifications, demographics, workforce
 - Resident, workplace, longitudinal
 - An anchor point for sampling frames and weighting
 - But Government seeking cost savings
 - Replacement with administrative data???

Administrative data, big data - partial data!

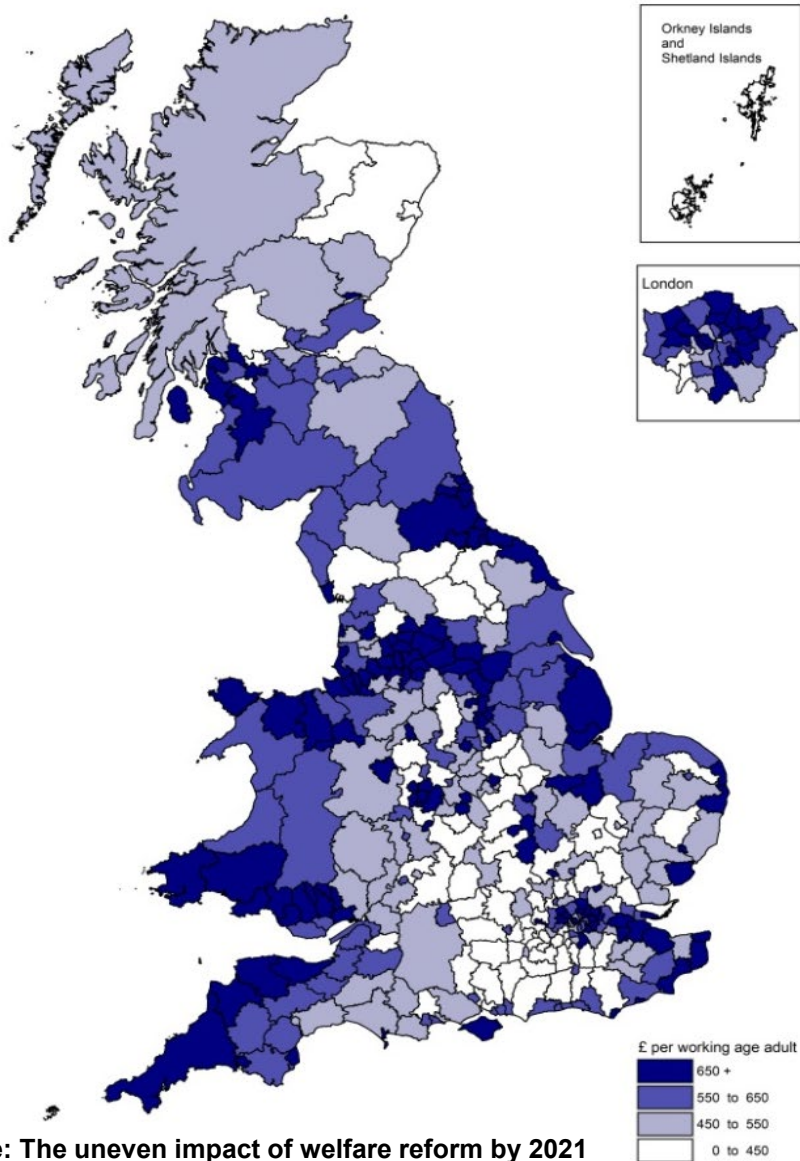
- **Administrative data**
 - Major overhaul of social security system - eligibility, entitlement, classification
 - Working age benefits (WPLS, SHBE)
 - Universal Credit
 - NOMIS vs Stat-Xplore or ONS
- **Big Data: consumer data, social media, service users**
 - Representative?
 - Systematic?
 - Who's missing?
 - Richness of data?
 - Ecological fallacy?
 - Quality, manipulated or false data?

Ability to track long-term trends?



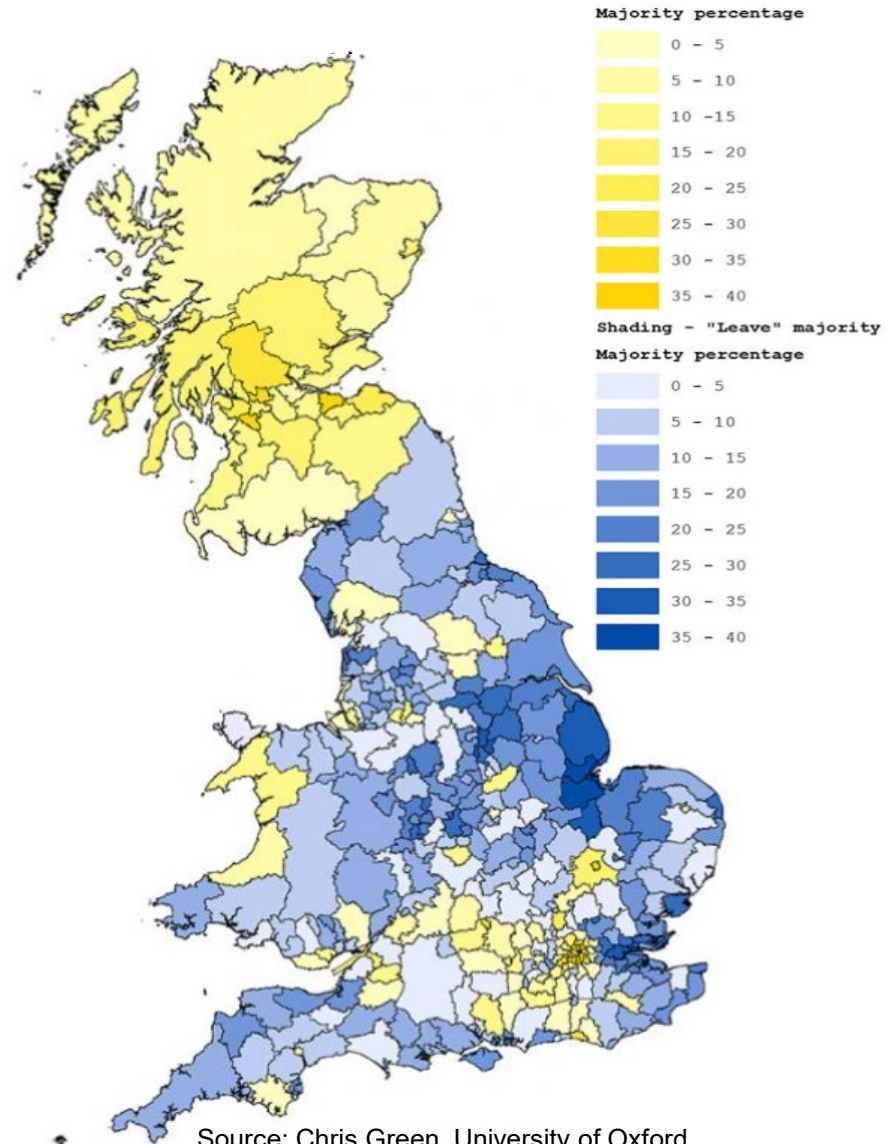
Source: DWP

The left behind?



Source: The uneven impact of welfare reform by 2021
Sheffield Hallam estimates based on official data

Brexit vote



Source: Chris Green, University of Oxford,
<http://www.ox.ac.uk/news-and-events/oxford-and-brexit/brexit-analysis/mapping-brexit-vote>

***"Not everything that counts can be counted,
and not everything that can be counted
counts"***

**William Bruce Cameron, 1963
(Sociologist)**