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Neoliberal discourse puts emphasis on individual behaviour change as the solution to issues of poverty and sustainability, however in an increasingly interconnected world ideas of 'the individual' are inadequate for addressing what are understood to be systemic issues.

How might we think differently about networks, relationships and ideas of community in developing alternative narratives?



'measure poverty by peoples individual behaviours and characteristics as opposed to their circumstances. The new 'multi-dimensional' measure they were seeking to develop aimed to downgrade the importance of income and living standards and instead concentrated on criteria such as parenting skills, parental health, drug and alcohol dependency and family stability. The approach posed bore no relation to any previous method of measuring poverty in this country or worldwide, either historical or present day. But the consultation document, like the 'Troubled Families' programme, gave clear insight into the governments central understanding of the causes of poverty - namely that it was down to individual behaviour'

Lansley S. & Mack J. (2015) Breadline Britain: The Rise of Mass Poverty
p.65

E: courgettes and...

J: but I always go into Sainsbury's along Lewes road
about half past six and find everything that's reduced

A: good plan...that's a good idea

J: yeah

AH: when I've got money it's hit the reduced section

J: yeah

E: what's your diet like?

AH: the only time I eat healthy is when I'm up
here...that's all I'm saying

AH: I don't think it makes that much of a difference really...

E: But that's it...it's the media telling you...and like the media writing about food poverty but actually what does it mean...?

AH: They've just said that it extends your...if you eat more than you should...your life just gets extended a little bit longer

‘Under the aegis of new public management, voluntary and community organisations were regarded as little more than ‘alternative providers’ in efforts to diminish the state or as ‘service agents’ for the delivery of government policy. The sector’s roles in community action, campaigning and policy making were sidelined’

Macmillan R. (2010: 06) The third sector delivering public services: an evidence review

Enable sustainability through capacity to think
locally and systemically