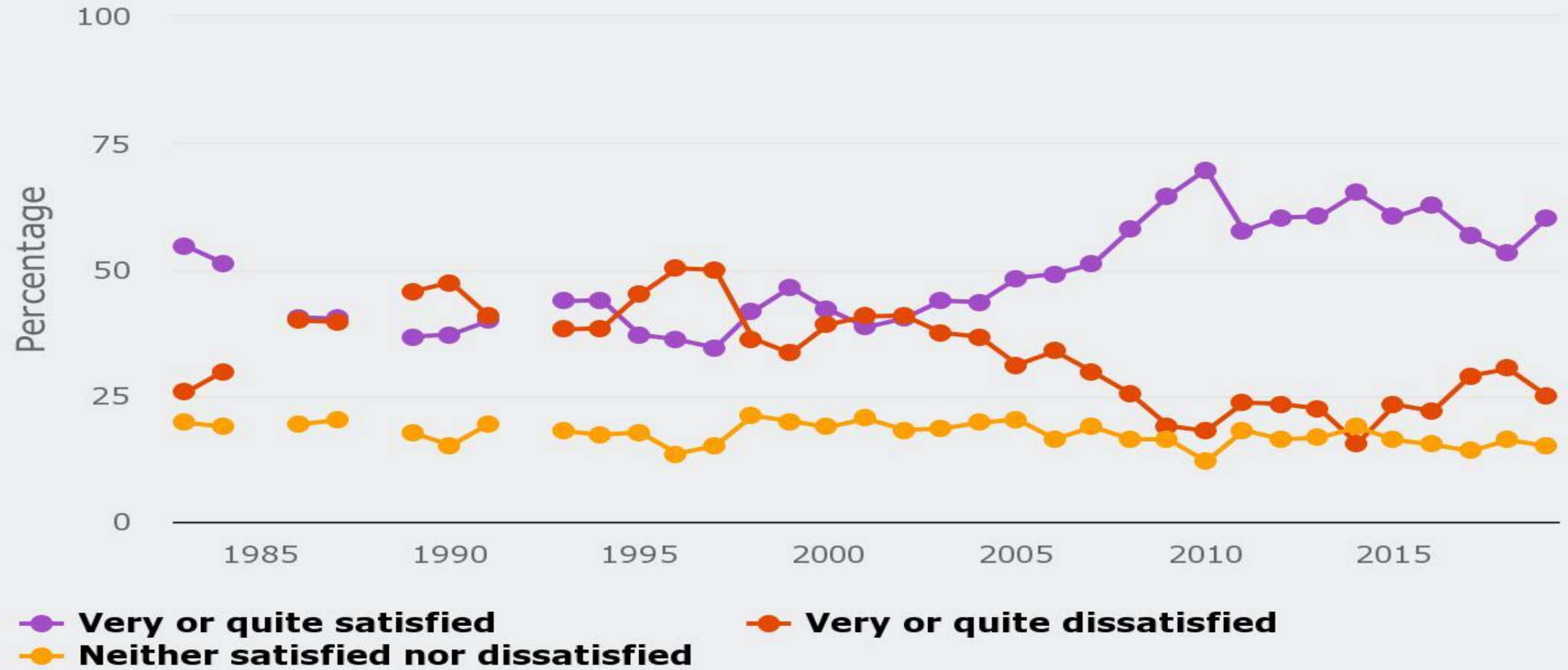


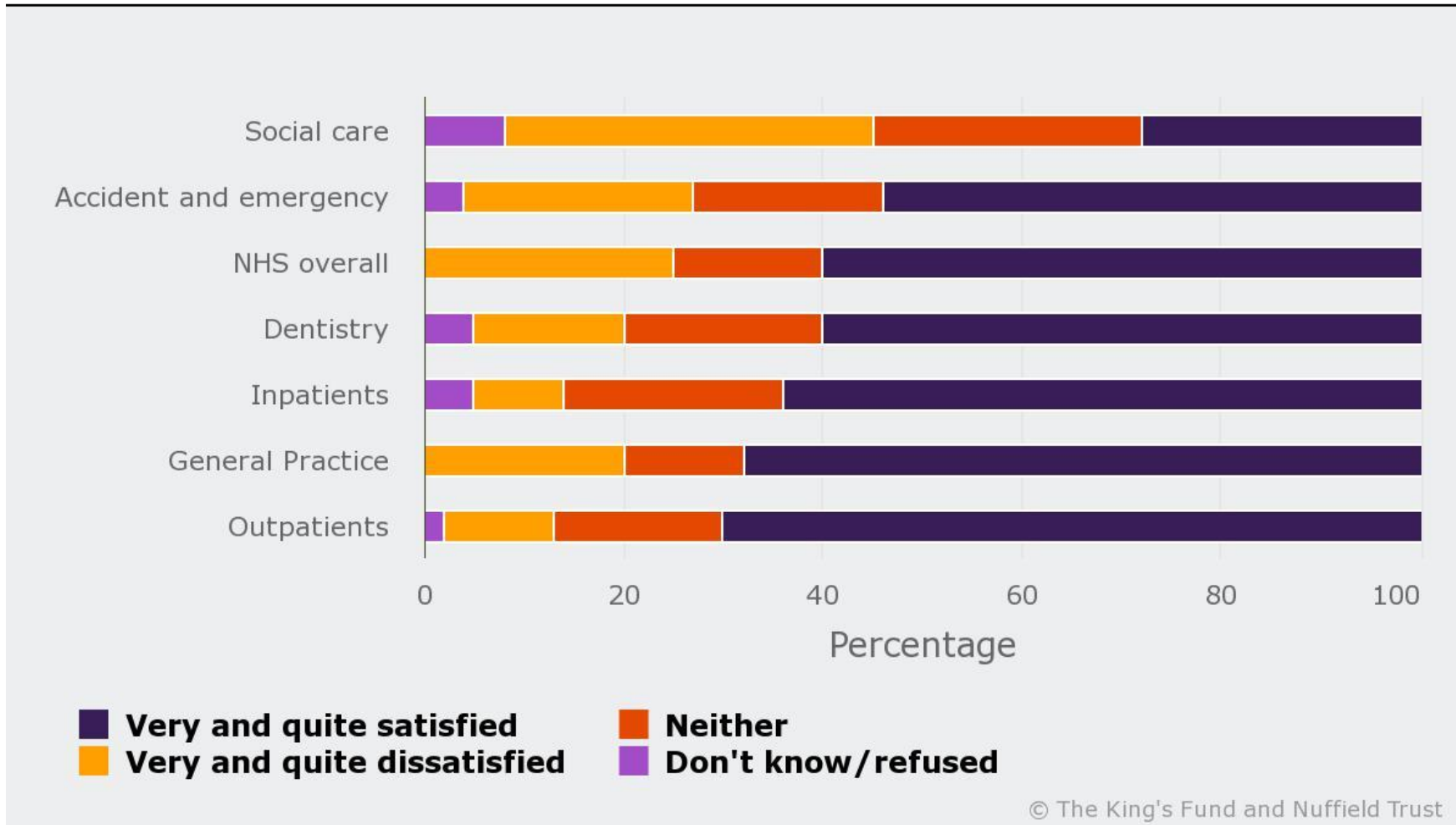
# The NHS as a Sacred Value

Linda Woodhead

# Figure 1 Public satisfaction with the NHS, 1983–2019



# Figure 12 Satisfaction with the NHS overall and social care services, 2019

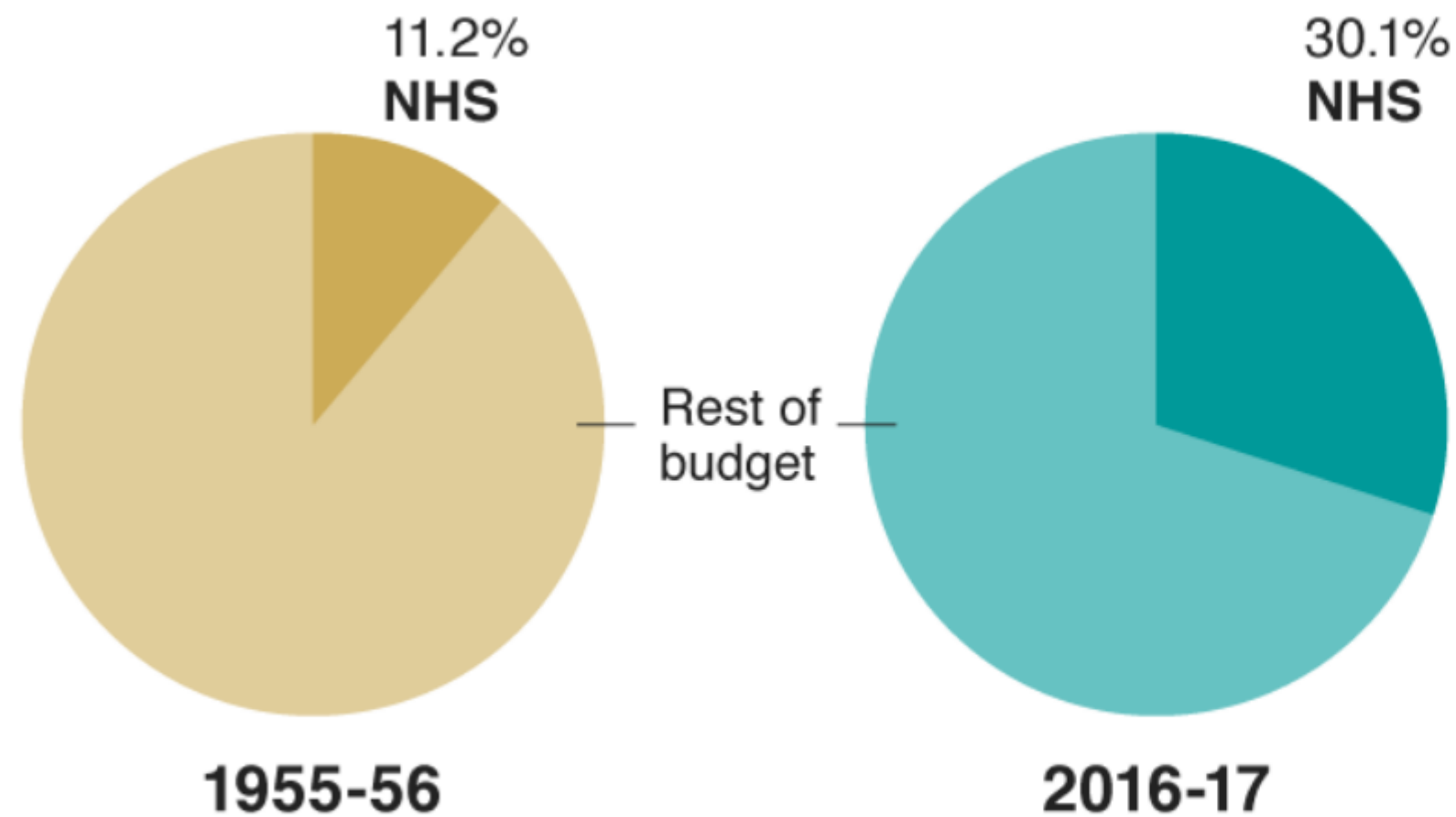


# Clap for carers



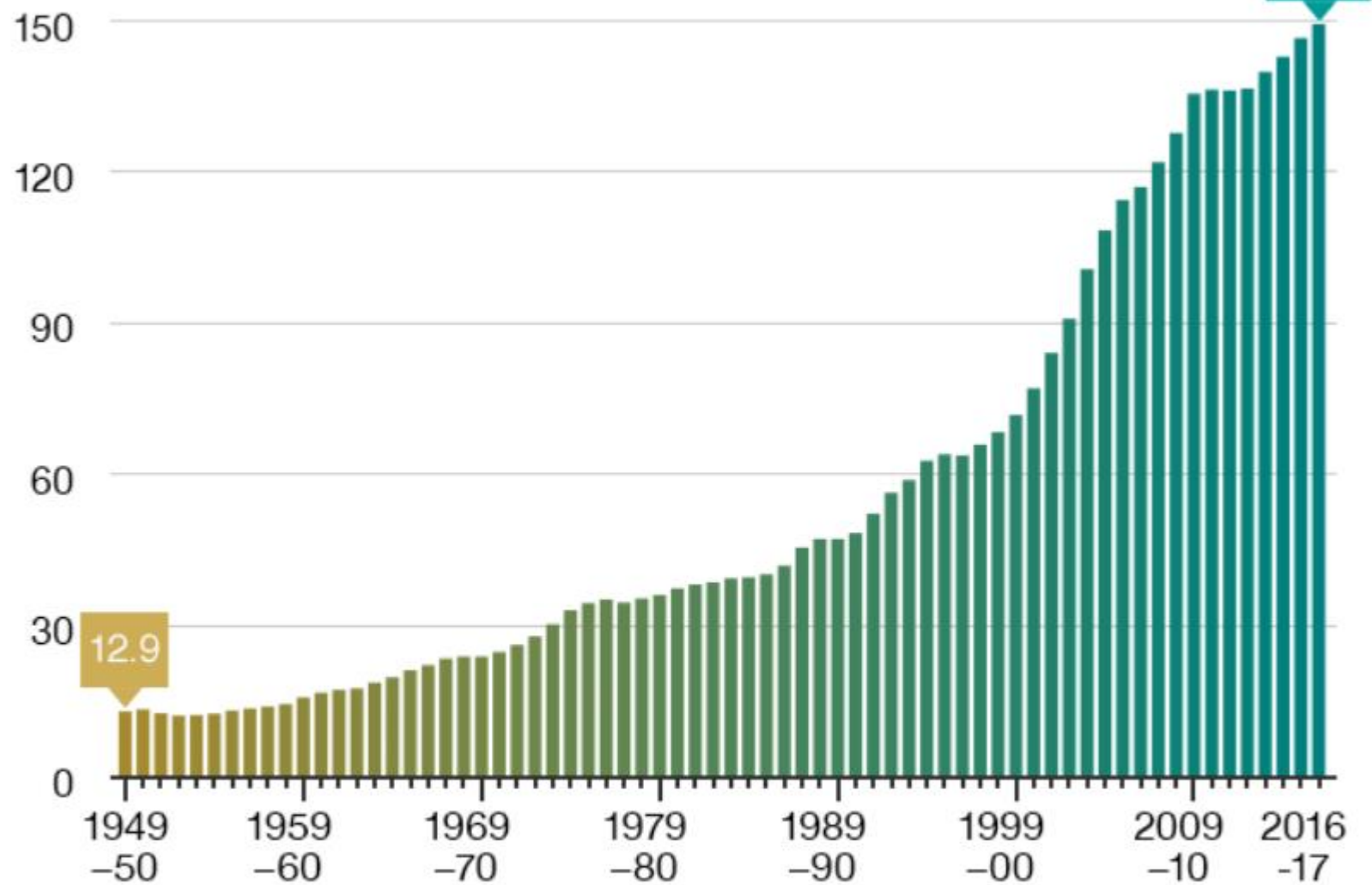


## Change in proportion of public services budget spent on health



# How the health budget has grown

Real-terms spending, 2018-19 prices (£bn)



Source: Nuffield Trust

BBC







**STAY HOME**

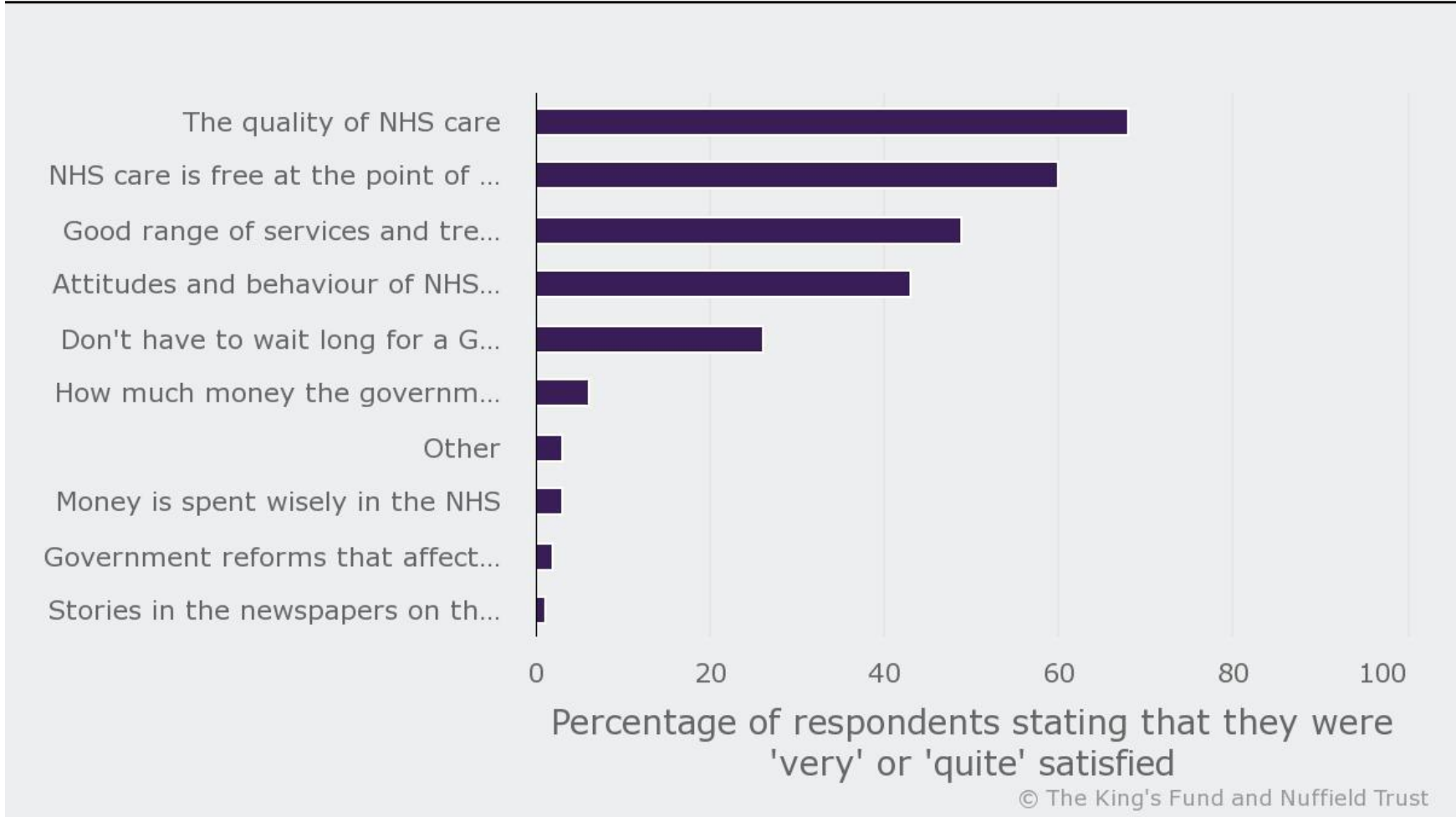
▼

**PROTECT  
THE NHS**

▼

**SAVE LIVES**

# Figure 5 Reasons for satisfaction with the NHS overall, 2019



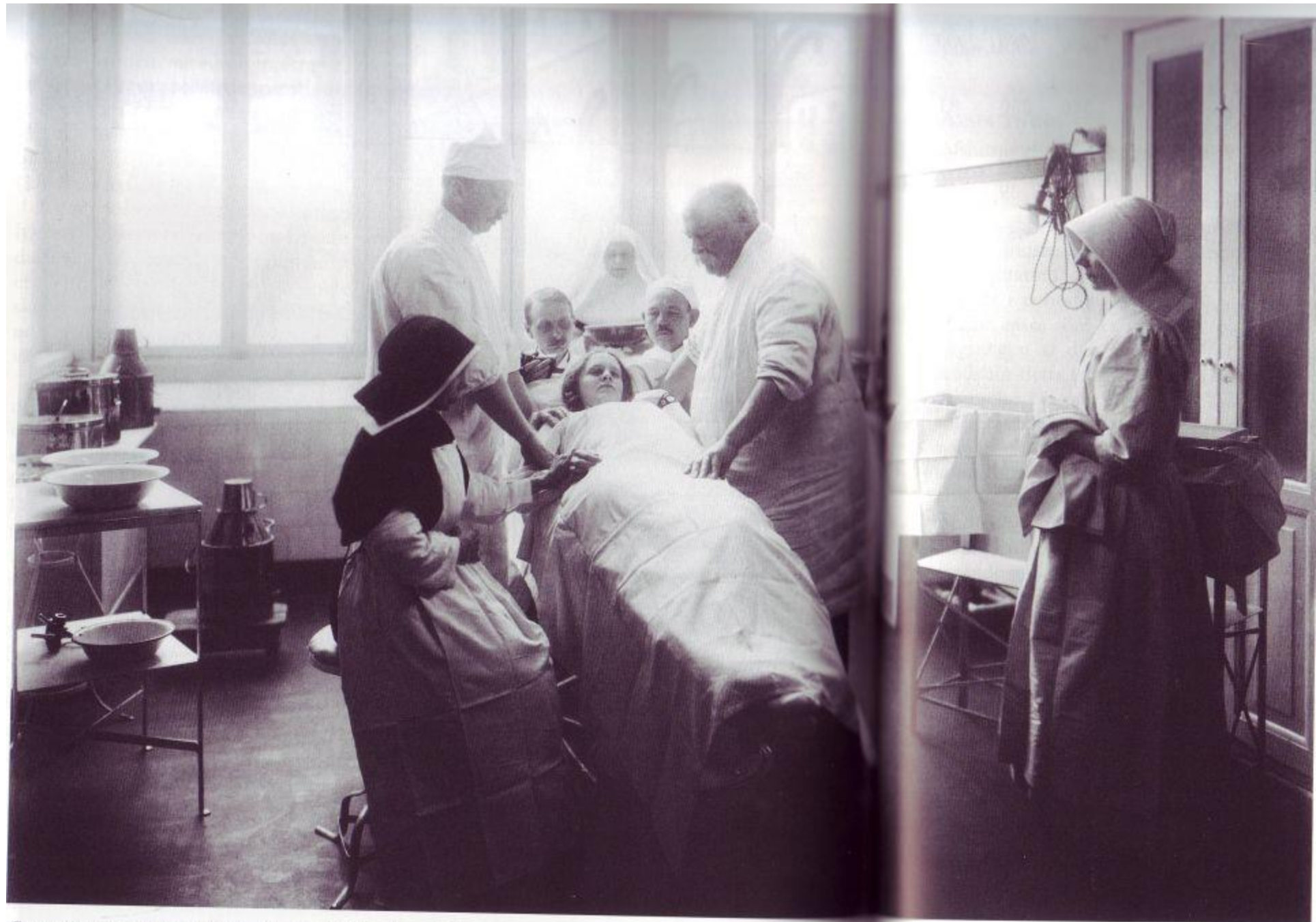
# Max Weber

Instrumental rationality

&

Value rationality

My argument: the NHS is a symbol and repository of our most sacred values



*Operationsstuen Sankt Josephs Hospital København 1901 (Sankt Joseph Søstrenes arkiv, København)*

# The Post-war Welfare Project

## *L'État-providence*

Many of the architects of welfare state were Christian, including Prime Minister Harold MacMillan, Archbishop William Temple, William Beveridge, and Richard Tawney. Bishop J.W.C. Ward called the welfare state 'an expression at the national level of the humanitarian work of the Church.'

# YOUR HEALTH *Service*

HOW IT WILL  
WORK IN  
SCOTLAND





# CHURCH

Religion

Paternalism, amateurism

Charity, sacrifice

Piecemeal

Voluntary

# HEALTH SERVICE

Rationalism, science

Paternalism, professionalism

Care, equality

Systematic, universal

Statutory



Richard Titmuss: blood donation as the modern eucharist

Richard Titmuss, *The Gift Relationship. From Human Blood to Social Policy*. New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1972.



1978, San Francisco



London, 2019





# The NHS today symbolises

Equality

Diversity (caring respect for each unique individual)

Care

National identity and pride

# Enter the market

Entrepreneurial values:

Competition, innovation, efficiency, individual success

# Matt Hancock to take control of NHS and scrap decade-long drive for internal competition

Move comes amid concerns that controversial Cameron-era reforms hampered Government's response to Covid pandemic

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*By* **Henry Bodkin**, HEALTH AND SCIENCE CORRESPONDENT *and* **Harry Yorke**, WHITEHALL EDITOR

5 February 2021 • 7:00pm

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# Political appropriation



# Émile Durkheim

Society and the sacred:

Symbol and ritual

Collective consciousness

Holding up a better image of society

# Dangers

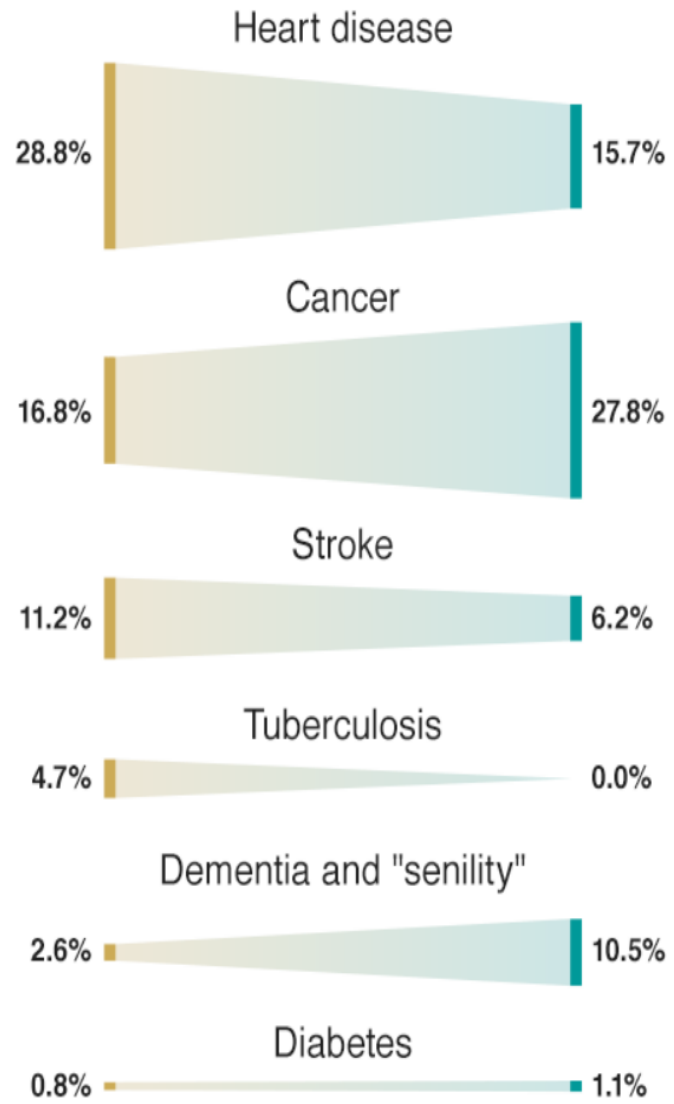
Uncritical, 'turn a blind eye'

Political appropriation

The weight of idealisation

The NHS can't do all that religion can – e.g. death, suffering, injustice

## Causes of death in England and Wales



However important the science, we are really dealing with a faith.