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Housing Tenure and Crime (1980-1998)

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Quantitative Analysis of Crime Conference



Outline

- Project outline
- Datasets we have collated
- The legislative changes made to housing law
- What did this do to the distribution of domestic property crime?
- Conclusion



- Leader of Conservative Party 1975-1990.
- PM of UK 1979-1990.
- Policies in line with neo-liberalism and neo-conservatism.
- Legacy largely unchallenged by Major, Blair, Brown or Cameron.

Margaret Thatcher





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Project Outline

ESRC grant award no ES/K006398/1

Our aim is to assess what Thatcherite social and economic policies did to crime 'downstream'. Uses ideas from political science (agenda setting, historical institutionalism) to bring fresh thinking to attempts to explain rises/falls in crime.



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Which policies are we most interested in?

- Economic policies
- Housing policies
- Social security
(esp. after 1986)
- Education policies
(esp. after 1988)





Original Sources of Data

- Brit Crime Survey/Crime Survey for England & Wales
- Brit Social Attitudes Survey
- General Household Survey
- The collated datasets will be released Autumn 2015.



Housing Prior to Thatcher

- Large social renter sector (council owned)
- Owner occupation much less common than it is today.
- Private rented sector small and declining.



A Summary of Housing Law '77-'89

<i>Year</i>	<i>Act title</i>	<i>Provisions enacted</i>
1977	Homeless Persons Act (Labour Govt)	Broadened definition of homelessness and required LAs to home those with greatest social needs
1980	Housing Act	Right to buy introduced (33-50% discounts)
1980	Local Govt Planning and Land Act	Local Government Finance Competitive Tendering introduced
1982	Soc. Sec. and Housing Benefit Act	Housing Benefit introduced
1984	Housing and Building Control Act	Increased discounts for right to buy
1984	Housing Defects Act	Assistance to purchasers of defective LA houses
1985	Housing Act	Consolidation of existing legislation
1985	Housing Associations Act	Consolidation of existing legislation
1986	Building Societies Act	Liberalisation of mortgages
1986	Housing and Planning Act	Increased discounts for right to buy
1986	Social Security Act	Changes to Housing Benefit
1988	Housing Act	Increased discounts for right to buy; deregulated private housing
1989	Local Govt and Housing Act	Prevented LAs from using rates to subsidize rents



Housing Policy

- 1980 Housing Act key (created RTB)
- Saw a huge rise in owner-occupation.
- Created residualisation of council housing; transient/marginalised residents with low levels of employment (Murie, 1997).
- Overtime a polarisation in terms of the social make up of social renters.



Houses

What do people want to buy?

- A house; ideally a detached, failing that a semi, failing that a terrace.
- In a 'nice area'. Small garden at front, big garden ('for the kids to play in') at the rear.
- Hi-rise flats in inner cities not popular.



Change in Housing Tenure 1982-1998 (BCS and BSAS, selected years)

* 1983 for BSAS, ** 1989 for BSAS, *** 1993 for BSAS. All figures are %s and weighted (BSC for households, BSAS for individuals).

	1982*	1984	1988**	1992***	1994	1996	1998
BCS owners	61	64	66	68	69	70	67
BCS social renters	30	27	28	22	23	21	20
BSAS owners	66	66	71	69	71	70	72
BSAS social renters	27	26	23	20	20	20	19



Residualisation

* 1983 for BSAS, ** 1989 for BSAS, *** 1993 for BSAS. All figures are % and weighted

	1982*	1984	1988**	1992***	1994	1996^	1998
A: Unemployment							
BCS owners	3	3	3	4	4	2	2
BCS social renters	7	9	10	11	10	7	6
B: Low income							
BSAS owners	40	41	34	40	39	42	33
BSAS social renters	70	70	76	76	74	81	74
C: Close to rundown stock							
BCS owners	-	2	1	2	1	-	-
BCS social renters	-	8	9	10	8	-	-
D: High Turnover areas							
BCS owners	7	7	-	-	6	6	7
BCS social renters	9	9	-	-	13	12	12



Residualisation

Benefit Recipients, 1986-1991 (BSAS)

All figures are percentages and weighted for individuals.

	1986	1987	1989	1990	1991
Incapacity Benefit					
Owners	40	38	32	27	32
Social renters	67	70	61	64	68
Single Parent Benefit					
Owners	2	2	2	2	3
Social renters	6	6	8	11	9
Housing Benefit					
Owners	11	9	7	6	4
Social renters	37	41	32	44	44
Unemployment Benefit					
Owners	19	20	15	13	14
Social renters	21	21	17	15	16



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Residualisation

Unemployment, 1972-1994 (GHS)

	1972	1974	1976	1978	1980	1982	1984	1986	1988	1990	1992	1994
Owners	2	1	2	2	3	4	4	4	3	3	5	4
Social renters	3	2	5	5	6	11	11	11	8	8	11	11



Impact on Domestic Property Crime I (pre-RTB)

GHS data (ever in past yr)	1972	1973	1980
Owners (%)	2	2	2
Social Renters (%)	3	3	3

GHS data (N in past yr)	1972	1973	1980
Owners (mean)	.0219	.02	.02
Social renters (mean)	.0395	.04	.04
Mean difference	.0175	.018	.018
Sig	***	**	**



Impact on Domestic Property Crime II (post- RTB)

BCS (ever in past yr)	1982	1984	1988	1992	1994	1996	1998
Owners (%)	8	8	9	9	11	10	9
Social renters (%)	11	10	11	13	12	12	11

BCS (N in pt yr)	1982	1984	1988	1992	1994	1996	1998	2000
Owners (mean)	.1298	.1385	.1383	.1387	.1724	.1483	.1473	.1198
Soc rent (mean)	.2190	.1909	.2421	.2421	.3180	.3412	.3144	.288
Mean difference	.0891	.0573	.1037	.1034	.1455	.1928	.1670	.1685
Sig	***	**	**	***	***	***	**	**



Conclusions

- 1980 Housing Act (via the RTB) redistributed domestic property crime risks away from owners towards renters.
- Two ways in which this happened over time (we suspect).
- The first of these relates to what may be thought of changes at the level of the individual household.
- The second to changes in the social make-up of some council/social landlord estates.



Conclusions

- Initial purchasers stayed put; invested in homes, avoided victimisation by being in nicer estates. No geographical redistribution.
- As time passed, so some estates became 'dumping grounds'. As need for housing rose, so councils were forced to home more people with more needs. This did lead to a geographical redistribution of crime.



Outline of current work

ESRC grant :

- Analyses of BCS, BSAS, GHS, BES + national level data. Data sets to be made available autumn 2015.
- 40min documentary film “Generation Right” (Doc Fest 7th June 2015, EEFF 5th July 2015)
- <http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/law/research/projects/crimetrajectories>
- E-newsletter/Working Papers (s.farrall@sheffield.ac.uk)
- Twittering: @Thatcher_legacy