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Thinking about the idea of a 'Thatcherite Legacy'

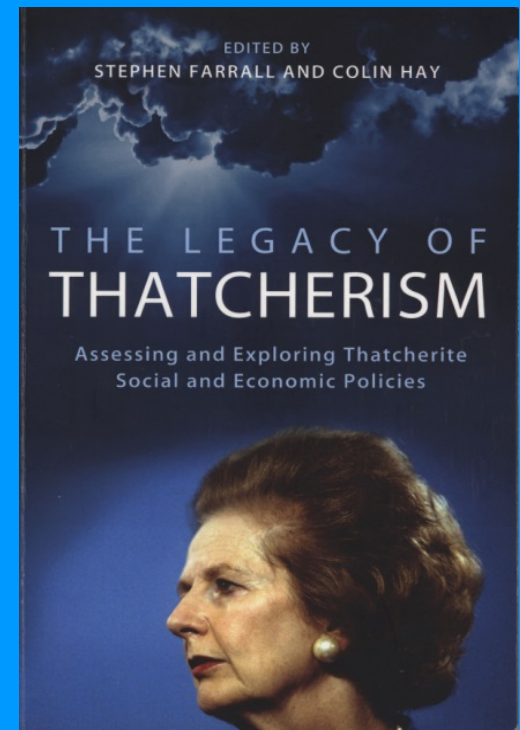
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An Outline

- Explore how others have characterised MT's influence.
- Think about neo-lib/neo-con influences.
- Outline some of the things we need to bear in mind when thinking about MT's legacy.





How have others characterised her legacy?

- Left + Right have focused on her as a hero/anti-hero. “ She saved us” vs. “She destroyed us”.
- Tended to overly personalise matters.
- Similarities with Ronald Reagan, Bob Hawke, Roger Douglas and Ruth Richardson.
- Neo-Liberalism and Neo-Conservatism.



Neo-Con/Neo-Lib Tensions

- Neo-liberalism: reduce inflation; limit govt spending; reduce the state; reduce income tax (esp. if progressive); free markets; not worried about unemployment.
- Neo-conservatism: (re)impose traditional values (respect of property/authority, decency, discipline); state to police/enforce moral behaviour; reduce dependency culture; uphold importance of the family; restoration of social hierarchy.

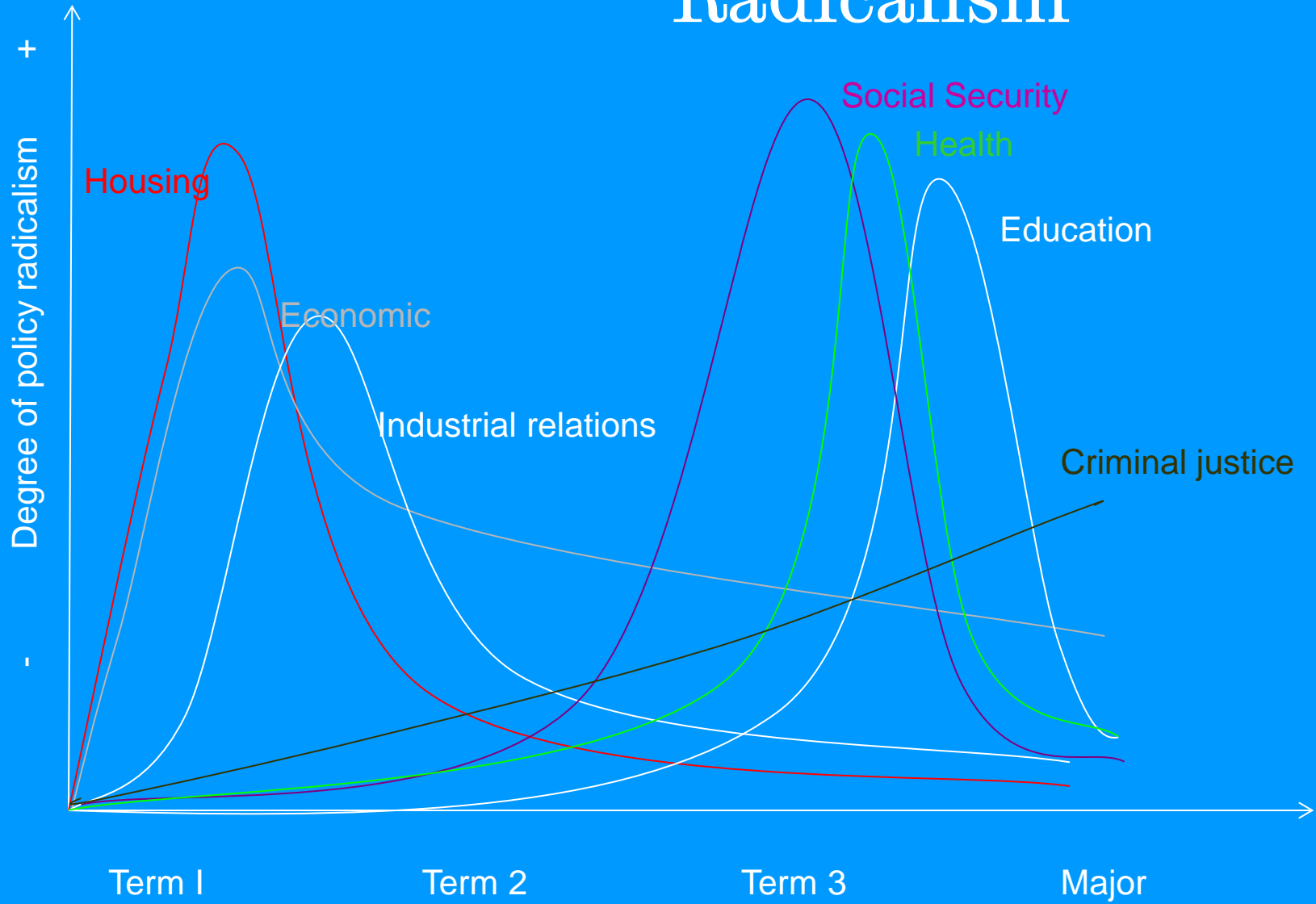


Things to keep in mind when thinking about a Thatcherite Legacy

- Discursive; policy; social attitudes; legislative programme; implementation; impact; institutional change.
- All are different things.
- Thatcherism was of all of them at various stages, so need to think about temporality of Thatcherism and of policy change.



Periodising Thatcherite Radicalism





Things to keep in mind when thinking about a Thatcherite Legacy

- Expressed ideas do not always bear fruit (or do so only slowly). 5-10years.
- Policies/Acts may work against one another (social security + unemployment)
- Legislative changes do not always lead to policy or distributive changes
- Assessments are often short term – yet change may take years.



Things to keep in mind when thinking about a Thatcherite Legacy

- Politics sometimes does not progress smoothly or evenly.
- 1983-1987 the 'lost' administration (expected to lose 1983 GE); had to give some power to 'Wets' in first cabinet – who then plotted against her.
- Great strides in the economy, housing, social security; EC, agriculture = less.



Things to keep in mind when thinking about a Thatcherite Legacy

- In social science, we tend to work in silos, so few have examined how changes in housing may effect (for example) crime rates. 'Cascade/SpilloverEffects'?
- Social attitudes: change slowly; inter-generational replacement; Thatcher as an attracting force which brought 'Thatcherites' into the party?



Things to keep in mind when thinking about a Thatcherite Legacy

- So 'Thatcherite' dominance of some key Depts came after 1990. M Howard; P Lilley; M Portillo; N Lamont; etc.
- Activities may produce unintended or counter-intuitive consequences.
- (EG social work in the CJS: 'eradicated' by Howard; reintroduced by CRCs?)



Things to keep in mind when thinking about a Thatcherite Legacy

- Some institutions will work to support the establishment of a legacy. The creation of 'New Labour' for example.
- Thatcher needed Heath's Selsdon Man to forge a path?
- So ideas may be stripped of their labels, but continue to have purchase.
- Some changes gonna happen anyway ...



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 made (Doc Fest 2015)
- <http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/law/research/projects/crimetrajectories>
- Email newsletter (s.farrall@sheffield.ac.uk)
- Twittering: @Thatcher_legacy