

The Defense Policies Of Nations: A Comparative Study

MEASUREMENT AND ANALYSIS OF CRIME AND JUSTICE

Theory, Method, and Data in Comparative Criminology

by Gregory J. Howard, Graeme Newman, and William Alex Pridemore

The goal of this chapter is to provide an overview of the recently rejuvenated field of comparative criminology. It begins by considering the context and history of comparative criminology and continues by outlining the contemporary comparative perspective. After identifying several goals for comparative criminology that are often advanced, including theory elaboration and testing as well as policy evaluation and critique, the chapter describes the common approaches to comparative criminological research. The main theoretical traditions of comparative criminology are examined first, with particular attention directed to metanarratives such as modernization, civilization, opportunity, and world system theories and to structural theories based on culture, social bonds, and the distribution of economic resources. Taking up methodological concerns next, the chapter summarizes some of the more common dependent variables studied by comparative criminologists, noting how these variables have been operationalized in the literature, then explores the three methodological approaches most typically deployed in the field, specifically meta-level, parallel, and case studies.

ABSTRACT

139

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VOLUME 4

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