

**BOOK REVIEW CRIMINOLOGY: A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE**

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**INTRODUCTION**

Because of recent changes in communication, transportation, and commerce, crime has become a global phenomenon. Given that assumption, criminology itself must become global in its scope. This means that comparative criminology, the international study of crime, no longer should be treated as a separate subject. Instead, criminology at all levels should be comparative in nature. Based upon this assumption, we have designed a text for introductory criminology that is inherently comparative.

**OVERVIEW**

To create a comparative text in criminology, it was our goal to compile crime and criminal justice information about all of the countries of the world. Such information we found to be scattered in textbooks, anthologies, journal articles, government reports, and in reports by non-government organizations (NGOs). We have gathered this information and placed it on a Website that will be referred to as the Comparative Criminology Website (CCW). This Website can be viewed at the following URL:

<http://www.rohan.sdsu.edu/faculty/rwinslow/index.html>

The Website, in development over the past eight years, contains qualitative and quantitative information on over 230 countries, including international and domestic databases from the FBI, the NCVS, INTERPOL, and the United Nations. The CCW is a compilation drawn from government publications, which are public domain. The Website is not copyrighted, and will not be, because the purpose of it is to create a research tool that can be drawn upon freely to facilitate the development of research papers, texts and other media. Permissions are not required for materials quoted from the CCW. We welcome the submission of research papers, which we will publish on the Website, if desired.

Many of the country comparisons we make in *Criminology: a Global Perspective* are drawn from this Website. Others are drawn from textbooks, journal articles, anthologies, and news stories. Some comparisons appear in text boxes accompanying topics that are covered in the text. In addition, country profiles on countries high or low in a given crime and international data analyses are done in chapters pertaining to particular crimes. These are drawn from the CCW and data sets contained within the CCW. We term these data sets collectively the Comparative Criminology Database (CCDB).

Thus, our goal has been to develop an introductory criminology text that is not only thorough in its coverage of the usual topics, but, in addition, includes international comparisons throughout the text. By "usual topics," we are referring to definitions, extent and trend statistics, typologies, etiological studies, theories and policy recommendations.

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In addition to the international comparisons, what is noteworthy about this text is our approach to theory. We provide three introductory chapters (Chapters 3-5). These chapters are comparative and historical in showing how various theories of crime developed. We include a discussion of the social context or "climate of the times" in which a given theory was developed. We also provide biographical information on the major theorists. The biographies are interesting and helpful in understanding the personal and social circumstances that helped shaped the theorists' perspectives.

Our theoretical analysis, however, does not end with these three chapters. Instead, we continue with the theoretical analysis in each of the subsequent chapters dealing with particular crimes. In many cases, theories have been developed to explain a particular type of crime, such as the "subculture of violence theory" for criminal homicide. In many ways, most of the chapters in this book are devoted to criminological theory. However, once students are exposed to general criminological theories in Chapters 3-5, the remainder of the text is devoted to applying theories to various crimes or forms of crime. We have found that applying theories as explanations for crimes or sets of crime is what makes the theories interesting to students. We have also found that when searching for theories to explain individual crimes, we have located theories that are not included in many criminological texts. For example, we found a theory that seems to provide an empirically valid explanation of "stealthy theft" crime, such as burglary, larceny, and motor vehicle theft. That theory is called the "Easterlin Hypothesis," named for an economist, Richard Easterlin, who linked economic crime with the "baby boom" and its "aftershocks." We found Easterlin's theory to be very useful in explaining the property crimes of young people in "affluent societies," when viewed internationally.

The introductory theory chapters are followed by five chapters on the FBI's "seven major crimes," the Index Crimes of the FBI's Uniform Crime Reports. These crimes were selected for analysis for two reasons. The first is that all seven of these crimes are judged to be "serious crimes" or "real crimes," not only by the police, but also in public opinion surveys. The second reason is that data are available for all seven of these crimes in international databases published by the United Nations and INTERPOL. In these "crime chapters," the various theories are "tested" using both international crime data and through an examination of qualitative information on the countries that exhibit high rates of the crime. Through this process, we have been challenged by anomalous findings to seek out explanatory theories not usually covered in criminology textbooks. In addition to Easterlin's hypothesis, Thio's "power-control theory" is also introduced as a useful explanation for "simple assault." This theory seems to fit the country profiles of several countries that registered high rates of assault.

The following is a brief overview and synopsis of the chapters that will show, where applicable, how the comparative method is used to enhance the subject matter of each chapter.

**Chapter 1 (Criminology in a Fast-Changing World)** contains an analysis of how crime is defined in the United States. Some historical analysis is done to show how a "common law legal system" developed in the United States. The major legal systems of the world (common law, civil law, indigenous/ customary, Islamic, and socialist) are identified and described. The impact of America's common law system upon the definition of crime is explained. We discuss how America's history and its legal system led to the emphasis upon the seriousness of certain crimes, such as drug offenses and crimes against morality. The United States is compared with countries that have "civil

law" legal systems. Civil law countries, such as France, Italy and Spain, tend to be more responsive to "white-collar crimes" than the U.S., and they tend to downplay drug and sex offenses. The emphasis upon contemporary white-collar crimes in these countries is related to the fact that civil law legal systems adapt more quickly to conditions of the modern world because they are based upon codified law rather than legal precedent. A brief introduction to the comparative approach used in this text is also given in this chapter.

**Chapter 2 (Extent and Trends in Crime)** begins with a discussion of the scientific method. This section contains a primer on how surveys are conducted and the meaning of correlation coefficients (which are used throughout the text). The chapter provides estimates of the extent and trends in crime in the United States, comparing FBI and NCVS data. Also included are incidence and trend data from self-report surveys of high school seniors conducted nationally, since 1975, by the Michigan Institute for Social Research. These national data are compared with incidence and trend data compiled by the United Nations, INTERPOL, and the UN victim survey called the International Crime Victim Surveys (ICVS). Definitions of crime from these sources and criticisms of each of these sources are given in the chapter.

**Chapter 3 (Historical Theories of Crime)** covers theories of crime that predate sociological theories. Discussion includes the Classical School and Utilitarianism in France, Italy, and England. Next, attention is turned to the rise of positivism in the form of the "born criminal theory" of biological determinism. Special emphasis is given to religious beliefs about crime—including Christian, Islamic, and Buddhist beliefs. The rise of fundamentalism world-wide has brought these beliefs into the public consciousness. Christian and Islamic beliefs are being used today as a basis for explanations of crime and/or its prevention.

**Chapter 4 (Sociological Theories of Crime)** focuses upon the theories of crime that dominated criminology during most of the 20th Century. A product of Progressivism, the sociological approach was pioneered by Robert Park and his followers at the University of Chicago. While the Chicago School focused upon local community organization, direction was shifted to the macrosociological (societal) emphasis in the writings of Robert K. Merton and his associates, whose opportunity theory was well received by the Kennedy/Johnson administrations during the 1960s. During the 1970s and 1980s Nixon and Reagan administrations, politics shifted away from "big government" and "entitlement" programs, and the labeling theory of Howard S. Becker that called for "diversion" of criminals and the mentally ill from government programs fit the conservative social context of the times. As the 20th century ended, it became evident that the diversion approach had "widened the net." While more and more people were being sentenced to "do time in community based organizations," the prison population also grew, exponentially. This led to an attack by sociologists of the "conflict school" upon the criminal justice system itself as a source of crime. This school, also called "critical criminology," was prominent during the 1990s, at a time when non-sociological approaches started to emerge in criminological literature.

**Chapter 5 (Contemporary Theories of Crime)** calls attention to alternative theories to sociological theories of crime. These theories became popular based upon a variety of reasons—the public fear of crime, the development of the "nothing works" doctrine, and a trend toward conservatism. Many of these new theories are actually revisions of historical theories, such as the Classical School and biological theories. Another new approach is "self-control theory" which stems from the Chicago School. This chapter also covers sociological theories that have withstood the test of time. An

example is Akers' "social learning theory," an expanded version of Sutherland's differential association theory. Social learning theory continues to be respected because of its relationship to the therapeutic community programs that appear to have been successful in treating drug addiction. The chapter contains a description of attempts to reformulate sociological theories to overcome flaws thought to have characterized earlier efforts. "New and improved" sociological theories include the "restorative justice approach," which arises from the "labeling theory" of the 20th century. In addition, "peacemaking criminology" is a surviving nonviolent version of "conflict theory."

We propose another approach to theory which entails the use of the comparative method. Briefly, the comparative method leads to the discovery of different theories for different crimes. Thus, deterrence theory might be appropriate for crimes (such as auto theft and larceny) that are leniently treated by the criminal justice system. Conflict theory seems to provide a viable explanation for criminal homicide, when this crime is viewed cross-nationally.

**Chapter 6 (Criminal Homicide)** begins the sequence of chapters examining individual crimes. Each chapter begins with a case study, i.e. biographies of various criminals. Many of these were derived from actual interviews done in the classroom. Following the case study, each chapter contains a discussion of definitions, extent and trends, typologies, etiological factors, and theories pertaining to the subject. In Chapter 6, it is found that income inequality seems to be a key factor in murder, as manifested in the black/white income gap within the U.S. The racial difference in murder in the U.S. may simply be a manifestation of income inequality.

**Chapter 7 (Forcible Rape)** provides a discussion of how rape is defined in the United States and why some countries (e.g., Canada and Australia) don't report data on this crime, but instead prefer the term "sexual assault." In this chapter, "deterrence theory" seems to emerge as a relevant approach. The deterrence of Islamic law, and the enforcement of American laws pertaining to domestic violence, both seem to have produced lower rates of rape during the 1990s.

**Chapter 8 (Robbery)** emphasizes the changing nature of robbery, from a crime that was once done by professional criminals, to a crime today typically committed by drug addicts with little in the way of criminal skills. Robbery today is a crime shown to be linked with the drug trade (especially, heroin), as well as with the black/white income gap.

**Chapter 9 (Assault)** describes assault as the "common cold" of crime. It is noted that in other criminology texts, there is no accepted "theory of assault," apart from homicide theories. Since assault is far more prevalent than homicide, it is argued that a separate theory of assault is needed. In the absence of theories of assault, this chapter draws even more extensively upon country profiles in order to isolate variables which might lead to a rudimentary "theory of assault." Based upon this analysis, the "power-control theory," suggested by Thio, seems to provide a promising approach to the crime of assault.

**Chapter 10 (Sneak Thieves: Burglary, Larceny, and Motor Vehicle theft)** identifies "stealthy theft"--burglary, larceny, and vehicle theft) as a crime that is different in many ways from robbery. Robbery is often a desperate act of violence and confrontation, while stealthy theft is done secretly, quietly, and (often) successfully. Cross-nationally, the acts of stealthy theft are the opposite of robbery in that they correlate negatively with inequality. They are most prevalent in the most

equalitarian countries. In common with robbery, however, stealthy theft seems to correlate well with alcohol consumption. It is done most in wealthy countries and is inversely related to poverty and unemployment. Australia is shown by various indices to be high in its rate of burglary. In Australia, burglary seems to be associated with participation in a "surfer subculture" of youth who have adapted to unemployment with a "life as party" orientation in which burglary is a major source of financial support. Sweden has the highest larceny rate in the world, a fact thought to be accounted for by the role of youth and immigrants. Analysis indicates that two groups, youth and immigrants, share similar financial stress, as well as the highest rates of unemployment in Sweden. Their high aspirations (travel, home ownership, family), can be attained either through the slow process of assimilation or aging or, as an alternative, through crime. Great Britain is profiled as a country that, by a variety of measures, seems to be a "hot spot" for auto theft. One factor in the British profile is that the crime seems to be "trivialized" in the criminal justice system. Sanctions for auto theft typically include a "caution" by the police or a "summary judgment" (fine) by the magistrate's court. Thus, there is little or no deterrence of motor vehicle theft through law in Britain. At the same time, there are plenty of "motivated offenders" in that country--not just young British citizens, but migrants coming from other parts of Europe as result of its "open borders" policy as a member of the European Union. In addition, there are growing numbers of migrants from the Commonwealth countries, who enjoy free trade and freedom of movement within the Commonwealth. Many of these Commonwealth countries are former British Empire colonies that are now sovereign developing nations with high crime rates.

**Chapter 11 (Organized Crime)** seems a likely sequel to the previous chapter on motor vehicle theft. In England, auto theft has become a form of transnational organized crime (OC). Auto thieves may "barter trade" their vehicles for drugs or other contraband in other European countries. They may then return to England with undocumented aliens, drugs, or other contraband. In this chapter, trafficking in heroin is proposed as an imperfect "marker" for organized crime, imperfect because OC is actually a cluster of crimes. We cannot perform comparative statistical analysis on OC, because the FBI keeps no offense reports on such crimes. Countries that seem to have a large number of OC groups typically also have a history of military rule. Several countries, including the United States, are profiled in terms of this observation, and OC groups that are prevalent in the United States are discussed in terms of their country of origin.

**Chapter 12 (The Drug Trade)** covers the social definition of drugs that are defined as "dangerous" in the U.S. The War on Drugs is traced to the earlier Prohibition movement, as well as to intergroup conflict with various ethnic groups—black, Asian, and Latino. Trafficking in drugs as a form of OC has a strong link with past wars, when soldiers made connections with international drug markets. Based upon its ranking (in Chapter 11), Pakistan is second only to China in Kg of heroin seized in a country. "History of military rule" clearly characterized both before and after Pakistan's independence from Great Britain, due to partitioning more or less imposed by the British Parliament.

**Chapter 13 (The Sex Trade)** includes a discussion of prostitution and pornography. Both, when involving consenting adults, are considered "victimless crimes" that are subject to "moral panics" from time to time in America. Cross-nationally, these two offenses are defined as problems in the U.S. However, many other countries, including Japan, Denmark, Sweden, and Netherlands, do not criminalize these offenses. The sex trade has a military connection because soldiers often are clients for prostitutes in foreign countries. They also sometimes marry these prostitutes and require them to engage in prostitution when they return to the U.S. The sex trade is also linked to

transnational organized crime, and major corporations are participating in the profits from the pornography industry. The sex trade is difficult to quantify for international study, since neither INTERPOL nor the UN publish statistics on prostitution or pornography. However, trafficking in women may prove to be a good indicator, since it is almost always for purposes of sexual exploitation. With limited data available, Germany was profiled as a country in Europe noted for its recent increase in the sex trade, including trafficking in women, prostitution, and pornography. Factors such as former military rule, the country's affluent economy, the consequences of reunification, and the dissolution of the Soviet Union are discussed as relevant to the growing sex trade in Germany.

**Chapter 14 (White-Collar Crime)** covers a number of "paper crimes" that are not severely punished in the United States. These include crimes that range from check forgery to electronic crimes, such as "identity theft," to "big business crime," such as false advertising, fraud, and money laundering. The officers of corporations that commit such crimes, when caught, are given fines rather than jail time. Incorporation provides not only protection from liability lawsuits, but it can also shield criminal acts, since it is difficult to prove who in a corporation was responsible for corporate misdeeds. Thus, the unprecedented growth of corporations in the U.S. provides a fertile ground for white-collar crime. White-collar crime can cause not only financial loss to victims, but also disease and even death from toxic dumping and similar crimes against the environment. Corporate crime, such as the Enron scandal, can also cause increasing economic inequality—the rich get richer..the poor get poorer.

**Chapter 15 (Terrorism)** is the concluding chapter. There is evidence that large corporations have engaged in white-collar crimes not only in the U.S., but also in foreign countries. The expansion of U.S. corporations to other countries has been, indirectly, supported by the U.S. government. It has been alleged that the CIA has deliberately installed repressive regimes abroad to provide a "business-friendly" climate for American corporations. When activities such as these occur, white-collar crime becomes a basis for "political crime" in the form of terrorism that can result in retaliatory terrorist acts against U.S. citizens abroad and, more recently, in the homeland, with the terrorist attacks of 9/11.

It seems clear that much of the terrorism that has taken place over the last 30 years targets U.S. business interests abroad. A major finding in this chapter is that terrorists differ from common criminals demographically. Data produced for the chapter show that the usual variables that correlate with common crime (unemployment, poverty, inequality, etc.) do not correlate with the index of terrorism developed for the chapter (the estimated number of terrorist organizations per country). Instead, this index seems to correlate best with adherence to Islamic faith and, even more strongly, with the heroin drug trade (as a possible funding source). Turkey is discussed as an example of this linkage, since Turkey is an active transit country for South Asian heroin, as well as being a country with a legacy of Kurdish terrorism. Discussion in the chapter also includes the Patriot Act and the dungeon torture scenario which developed at the Abu Graib Correctional Facility in Iraq.

In sum, *Criminology: A Global Perspective* is intended as an introductory text in criminology which addresses the problem of "provincialism" that seems inherent in many, if not most, U.S. criminology studies and texts. Global comparisons are necessary in order to develop improved theories about crime based upon the fact that the theories hold true anywhere--i.e., they are "universal

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generalizations." These are also theories that take into consideration the fact that "crime comes from everywhere, and goes everywhere."

We hope that the foregoing text will be helpful in expanding the horizons of criminology. We believe that criminology must keep pace with the international world of commerce, the World Wide Web of information available on the Internet, and, most of all, the global nature of crime.