

model suggests, may produce a lasting reduction of inhibitions against taking human life, even after the war, thereby increasing levels of violence within nations. To examine the effects of war on postwar violence, Archer and Gartner compared national rates of homicide before and after many wars, both small and large, including the two world wars. They found that most combatant nations experienced substantial increases in their rates of homicide following both small and large wars.

A recent transnational study by Savage, Bennett, and Danner (2008) examined the relationship between social welfare spending and homicide for 52 nations. They wanted to know if welfare spending encouraged dependency and weakened personal initiative (thereby increasing crime) or, alternatively, if it equalized inequality (thereby decreasing crime). When looking at variation in welfare spending across localities in the United States, evidence tended to support the latter. Savage et al. used a dataset called the Correlates of Crime (COC), which contains data for a sample of 52 diverse nations from every region of the globe for the years 1960 through 1984.

Social welfare spending was operationalized as the amount of governmental spending in U.S. dollar equivalents for social welfare programs per person. Over the time period studied, Savage et al. (2008) found that social welfare spending was negatively related to both theft and homicide; that is, as social welfare spending increased, rates of these crimes generally decreased. This was true even after controlling for other important factors such as the gross domestic product and unemployment.

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