Ethnicity, Crime, and Immigration

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Members of some disadvantaged minority groups in every Western country are disproportionately likely to be arrested, convicted, and imprisoned for violent, property, and drug crimes. This is true whether the minority groups are members of different "racial" groups from the majority population, for example, blacks or Afro-Caribbeans in Canada, England, or the United States, or of different ethnic backgrounds, for example, North African Arabs in France or the Netherlands, or—irrespective of race or ethnicity—are recent migrants from other countries, for example, Yugoslavs or Eastern Europeans in Germany and Finns in Sweden. Important social policy dilemmas that are seen in individual countries to be uniquely their own, such as race relations in the United States or assimilation of Maghreb-derived guest workers in France or the experience of Aborigines in Australia, are not unique at all but are instead variations on common themes of social structure that characterize many countries.

It is important, however, not to be reductionist. The different offending patterns and justice system experiences of members of different groups in a country are not simply the result of group differences in wealth, social status, or political power. That is why the word "some" is emphasized in the phrase "some disadvantaged minority groups" in the first sentence of this essay. Not all economically and socially disadvantaged groups are disproportionately involved in crime.

In England and Wales, for example, Afro-Caribbeans and migrants from the Indian subcontinent began to arrive in large numbers at about the same time—the 1950s and 1960s—and experienced comparable forms and levels of invidious discrimination. In the 1990s, Bangladeshis in particular are on average poorer and more disadvantaged than Afro-Caribbeans. Yet Afro-Caribbeans in England are as disproportionately involved in crime and the justice system compared with
whites, as are blacks in the United States compared with whites. Indians, Pakistanis, and Bangladeshis in England, however, are less involved in crime and the justice system than are whites. (It is possible that crime rates for some Asian groups will rise. Bangladeshis arrived in England later than other groups and are on average younger and poorer. One might also hypothesize that anti-Muslim feelings are rising in England and that this will produce greater alienation and higher crime rates. No evidence to sustain either theory has as yet been reported.)

Similarly, Moroccans and Turks came to the Netherlands as guest workers in the 1950s and 1960s. Many stayed and were later joined by family members after the doors closed to new labor migrants in the early 1970s. By the 1990s, both groups were comparably disadvantaged economically and socially compared with the majority population, but crime and incarceration rates for Turks were not much higher than those of the Dutch, while those for Moroccans were much higher.

The English and Dutch experiences capture all of the themes which the phrases "race and crime," "ethnicity and crime," and "immigration and crime" encompass. The criminal justice system experience of Afro-Caribbeans in England is often seen as a problem of race and crime. The experience of Moroccans in the Netherlands is often seen as a problem of ethnicity and crime. The experiences of minority groups in both countries are often seen as problems of immigration and crime. In all the countries examined in this book, disproportionate crime involvement all too often fosters negative stereotypes of minority groups and both discrimination and xenophobia directed at them and, conversely, provokes passionate arguments and accusations about racial, ethnic, or anti-immigrant bias as a or the primary cause of justice system disparities.

These are not small problems. Race relations and political controversies about immigrants are high on the political and policy agendas of many countries. In an era of rapid social and economic changes in many countries, persistent high unemployment in Europe, and declining real wages in North America, many people feel threatened and insecure and nativist politicians have been quick to blame minority and immigrant groups for much of what seems wrong. Hate crimes are increasingly common and publicized in many countries, and violent attacks against minority groups are more evident in Europe. Members of victimized minority groups in turn are likely to become more alienated from majority populations.
This book, no book, can realistically aspire to affect those powerful social forces, but it can and does aspire to shed light on the narrower question of what is now known about crime and justice system involvement of members of minority groups in nine countries and about the reasons for the differences that exist. Public policy does not always take account of systematic knowledge about the subjects it addresses, but in civilized countries it should. The aim of this book therefore is to establish what is now known about racial and ethnic patterns of crime and justice system involvement in nine Western countries. They were selected because they are among the relatively few countries, Western or otherwise, that have empirical research traditions that have generated research findings or well-maintained official statistics on which credible assertions can be based. The writers of the essays in this book have examined evidence concerning both “minority groups and crime” and “immigration and crime,” two subjects that are seldom brought together which, once brought together, can teach more than can either alone.

This introduction, most readers will be relieved to learn, does not summarize and comment on the contents of each of the essays. I have never understood why introductions so often do that; the essays are after all but a few pages away, and if they do not stand on their own and say what they mean should not have been published. Instead, these introductory pages explain why the volume was conceived and suggest some of the things that a look across national boundaries can teach us about “race, ethnicity, and crime” and “immigration and crime.” The essays are vertical or longitudinal looks at the experiences of individual countries. This introduction attempts to look horizontally across national boundaries to indicate common findings and ways in which cross-national inquiry on this subject can modify or enrich current knowledge based on the experiences of individual countries.

There are four sections. The first describes some of the difficulties that confront efforts to investigate these issues. Most human beings, including this one, are captives of their own experiences and both more parochial and more ethnocentric than they know. The seemingly straightforward questions that this volume examines are not easy to answer cross-nationally, not only because of differences in criminal codes and legal processes but also because of important cultural differences in views about things as seemingly mundane as compilation of official statistics. The second section discusses racial and ethnic differences in offending, victimization, and system processing, relative to majority
populations, and shows that similar patterns occur in every country, whatever the race, ethnicity, or nationality of the overrepresented minorities. The third discusses "immigration and crime" and shows that the widespread conventional wisdom that first-generation immigrants typically are more law-abiding than the resident population, while their children and grandchildren typically have higher crime rates, is true, but for a much smaller proportion of immigrants than is commonly recognized. Very different patterns characterize other groups of immigrants. The fourth, finally, offers suggestions for how genuinely comparative and cross-national research might advance current understanding and provide knowledge that can help policy makers predict conditions and circumstances associated with high rates of offending by minority and immigrant groups and devise measures to ameliorate those otherwise foreseeable results.

I. Impediments to Looking across National Boundaries

Although none of the essays in this volume attempts to compare sentencing severity for particular crimes in different countries, the problems involved in trying to make that comparison provide a good starting point. If the goal were to compare average severity of sentences for burglary of a dwelling, street robbery, and rape in Germany, Sweden, and the United States, a number of important contextual differences would have to be taken into account. Definitions of offenses vary between countries, as do traditions about reporting crimes to the authorities, so it would be necessary to look beyond the formal definitions to make sure that similar criminal behaviors were being compared. In principle, this could be done by use of statistical controls, if sufficiently rich data were available in each country on "actual offense behavior." A second problem, however, is that criminal processes vary substantially between countries. In Germany (Weigend 1993) and the Netherlands (Tak 1994), for example, large percentages of cases are disposed of by means of conditional dismissals in which the defendant acknowledges guilt and agrees to pay a penalty, often a fine, comparable to that which might have been imposed following conviction, in exchange for conditional dismissal of the charges (and thus no criminal conviction). Comparisons of average prison sentences between countries in which conditional dismissals are common and countries in which they are not will suffer from selection bias: all other things being equal, in the former countries the average seriousness of the crimes for which convictions are entered will likely be greater. Comparisons of prison sen-
tences for robbery, for example, would be biased since the comparison would be between a smaller proportion of more serious robberies in one country and a larger proportion of both more and less serious robberies in another. Similar problems are presented by national differences in the use of suspended prison sentences, whether a discretionary parole release system exists and how it is used, and whether nominal sentences include a period, often one-third of the total, of automatic remission of sentence ("good time" in the United States).

Comparisons of sentencing patterns in different countries must, accordingly, be made with caution and evaluated with skepticism. None of the essays in this volume make cross-national comparisons. All of the comparisons between groups are made within countries, and the formal legal context is in effect controlled for. That does not mean that there may not be selection biases within a jurisdiction's legal system that occur when members of some groups are more likely to be arrested or prosecuted or convicted and, conversely, less likely to benefit from informal diversions or gentler sentences. Those selection biases within countries, however, have often been studied and many of the essays in this volume report the results. Nonetheless, the warnings above about the need to be skeptical of cross-national comparisons also apply, if with weaker force, to assessment of writings on countries about which the reader lacks detailed knowledge.

A number of other impediments exist to national and cross-national studies of racial and ethnic disparities. They are described below, and illustrated, but not discussed at length.

A. Measuring Racial Disparities

It is not possible with existing data to make even crude cross-national comparisons of racial disparities in the justice systems of Western countries other than the major English-speaking countries. Partly this is because the social construct "race" has played a larger role in the history of the English-speaking countries, and partly it is because in many countries maintenance of official data on race is forbidden for ethical reasons.

When Americans think about racial bias and racial disparities, they tend to think first about the experience of black Americans. Given America's race relations history and that blacks, at 12 percent of the population, are the largest nonwhite minority group, this is not surprising. Thus, if the subject is disparities in imprisonment, a natural question is whether and to what extent blacks compared with whites
are locked up. The answer on an average day in 1990 was that 1,860 per 100,000 American blacks were in jail or prison, compared with 289 per 100,000 whites. That is a difference of 6.44 to 1 (Tonry 1995, table 2-1). Stated differently, the chance that a black American was in prison or jail in 1990 was six-and-a-half times higher than for a white American. Racial disparities in prison have worsened since 1990. According to the U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2,316 per 100,000 blacks were confined in federal or state prisons on December 1994, compared with 291 whites per 100,000 (Bureau of Justice Statistics 1995). That is an 8 to 1 difference (and ignores jail populations which would make the absolute confinement rates half again higher, but probably not significantly affect the ratio).

The first and easiest international comparison is to look at equivalent data in other English-speaking common-law countries. At least for 1990, when that comparison is made, racial disparities in the United States can be seen to be not unique. In that year the 6.44 racial difference in total incarceration rates in the United States was lower than the corresponding disparities in England (a 7:1 Afro-Caribbean/white difference). Disparities in countries with sizable aboriginal populations are worse: Canada (a 16:1 native/nonnative difference in 1986), and Australia (a 12:1 Aborigine/non-Aborigine difference in 1993) (Tonry 1994).

That, however, is where the international comparisons must stop. No other country retains data in official records on defendants' or offenders' race. Only the United States routinely records and publishes such data in its justice system records; England records and publishes racial data in its prison statistics. Canada, Australia, and New Zealand retain data that permit native/nonnative, Aborigine/non-Aborigine, Maori-Pacific Islander/other comparisons. None of the last three countries, however, records data that permits black/white comparisons.

There are two reasons why black/white racial identification data are not recorded in official records in most countries. First, on ethical grounds, lawmakers in many countries have decided that such data should not be recorded. One rationale is that race is not a morally relevant difference between individuals and that recording such data is to treat it as if it were a relevant difference and thereby to tend to reify it into a relevant difference. Another is that recording such data, especially when minorities are overrepresented among offenders, may create or support stereotypes that are stigmatizing or otherwise damaging
to members of minority groups. Still another is that recording such data might make it easier for biased officials to discriminate against minority offenders. Outside the United States, this is an intensely controversial subject. In Canada, for example, in the early 1990s the use of racial identifiers in official records was widely discussed in the editorial columns of national newspapers among other places (e.g., Doob 1991). The conclusion at that time was that racial identifiers should remain forbidden. More recently, Ontario’s Commission on Systemic Racism proposed a five-year data collection pilot project using racial identifiers (1995, p. 405), with the caveat that the pilot project follow “guidelines . . . established in collaboration with racialized communities.” England’s Royal Commission on Criminal Justice (1993) likewise concluded that efforts to reduce racial disparities could not be assessed unless data on racial disparities were collected.

The second reason in most countries for not recording racial identifiers is that the data would be overaggregated and lack social validity. In most countries “blacks” are as heterogeneous a grouping as “whites.” In Ontario, for example, where recent allegations of racial bias, especially on the part of police, have been vigorous, many black Canadians have protested that “black” is overinclusive (Commission on Systemic Racism in the Ontario Criminal Justice System 1995). Until thirty years ago, most black Toronto residents were members of families that had migrated from the United States generations earlier. Since then there have been successive waves of immigrants from the West Indies, especially Jamaica, and Africa, especially Ethiopia and Somalia. At least in public stereotype, high crime rates have been most characteristic of West Indian immigrants, and both long-time residents and African immigrants have resented being victims of guilt by stereotyped racial association. (And members of Ethiopian immigrant groups often insist that Tigreans and Amharic-speakers be distinguished.)

In most countries, there is little reason to lump dark-skinned people into one “racial” group. In Germany, as Hans-Jörg Albrecht shows in this volume, at different times in recent years people from Gambia, Nigeria, and Senegal have been active in drug trafficking. In England, the black population includes both a sizable proportion who derive from the West Indies and another sizable group who derive from various African countries. In much of his discussion of racial disparities in England’s justice system, David Smith (in this volume) is careful to note that heterogeneity even though English official records do not.

Disaggregation below the category “black” is seldom attempted or
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discussed in the United States. A large percentage of black Americans are descendants or members of families that have lived in the United States for many generations, so that may not be surprising. Nonetheless, it must obscure important differences between groups such as Puerto Ricans, Haitians, black Cubans, West Indians, recent migrants from many African countries, and descendants of long-time residents. There is, for example, substantial evidence that West Indian migrants to the United States in the middle third of this century assimilated more successfully both economically and socially into the American mainstream than have other groups (Sowell 1983).

B. Measuring Ethnicity Disparities

Cross-national comparisons of ethnic disparities cannot be made. With only a few anomalous exceptions in individual countries, ethnic identifiers are not recorded in justice system data. In Europe especially, widespread aversion to ethnicity classifications by government is one legacy of the horrors of Nazi Germany. If the subject were open to reconsideration, presumably the concerns about stigmatization, reification, and potential invidious use that lead most countries to reject racial identifiers would be among the concerns opponents would urge, but the subject is nowhere open for reconsideration.

As the next subsection notes, some countries record data on “nationality” which sometimes may be a proxy for ethnicity, but only sometimes. Concerning relatively homogeneous countries like Denmark and Norway in which nationality and ethnicity are largely congruent, the categories “Danish” and “Norwegian” might efficiently characterize people who speak the national language as a first tongue and share cultural traditions and customs and, in those respects, share a common ethnicity. For many nationalities, however, that would not be so. In the Netherlands, for example, “Surinamese” include subgroups commonly distinguished by others and themselves as “Creoles,” “Hindustanis,” and “Asians”; while “Antilleans” may be disaggregated further by particular islands. “Turks” make up sizable minority groups in many European countries, but the category includes both ethnic Turks and ethnic Kurds, two subgroups that in some places differ substantially (and sometimes violently). “Yugoslavs,” the world will not soon forget, include Croats, Serbs, Bosnians, Albanians, and Slovenians, among others. And so forth. In the same way that “black” is an overaggregated category in Ontario, nationality is an overaggregated category in many places and for many nationalities.
There are major exceptions to the general aversion to use of ethnic identifiers. Some countries with sizable aboriginal populations, for example, Australia and New Zealand, routinely use Aborigine/non-Aborigine identifiers. Perhaps surprisingly, given the Canadian reluctance to use black/white racial identifiers, Canadian official records have long, and with little controversy, distinguished natives from non-natives (Roberts and Doob, in this volume). Perhaps most surprisingly, although German laws prohibit use of ethnicity identifiers, including "Gypsy," German police have long recorded other euphemistic data that allow them to identify Gypsies (Albrecht, in this volume).

The anomalies, however, are anomalies and are not useful for making cross-national ethnicity comparisons except, possibly, between the experiences of Aborigines in Australia and New Zealand. Anyone who wanted to compare the criminal justice system experiences in different countries of Kurds or (before the breakup of Yugoslavia) Croats would have to look somewhere other than official records.

C. Measuring Nationality Disparities

Some countries do use nationality identifiers, but as many do not. In Germany, many statistical systems record nationality data. For most purposes, French data distinguish only between French nationals (citoyens) and foreigners (étrangers). Similarly, although nationality is commonly recorded in official records in Switzerland, published Swiss crime statistics distinguish among Swiss nationals, resident foreigners, and nonresident foreigners. Swedish official statistics also commonly distinguish among Swedish nationals, resident foreigners, and non-resident foreigners, and for some purposes report data for geographical regions (e.g., Africa, Nordic countries, South America). In the Netherlands, neither ethnicity nor nationality data is recorded in police or court records, but some use of national origin data is permitted in prison records.

Data systems in the English-speaking countries are even less informative about nationality. At state and national levels, American data typically distinguish only among black, white, Native American, "other," and Hispanic individuals. Australian official data contain only the Aborigine/non-Aborigine distinction (although some systems routinely collect "country of birth" data), and most Canadian data identify only natives and nonnatives. Through the 1930s, U.S. and Canadian data often recorded nationality, but as "crime and the foreign born"
declined as a controversial political issue after large-scale immigration stopped in the mid-1920s, use of nationality identifiers stopped.

The prospects for cross-national studies are not as bleak as this summary may suggest. Germany has the richest nationality data and, as the essay by Albrecht (in this volume) shows, permits highly discriminant and informative analyses. In some countries, for example, Sweden, special studies are done that link official justice system records to other records that contain nationality identifiers. In the Netherlands and Sweden, self-report and victimization studies validated against official records provide much useful information.

This is not the place to explore measurement problems in detail, but a few general problems concerning measurement of nationality should be mentioned. They relate to comparisons within countries both between the experiences of nationals and foreigners and between different nationality groups. A major problem is that countries differ in their naturalization policies and in how naturalized citizens are classified. Naturalization has traditionally been readily available to immigrants in Sweden, France, and the Netherlands, which means that comparisons between citizens and noncitizens are weakened; "citizens" include many people who are recent immigrants, and their children, and thus both sides of the comparison include recent immigrants. If individuals sharing a particular national origin have higher crime rates than ethnic Swedes, the comparison will understate the difference. Germany and Switzerland, by contrast, have traditionally been less open to naturalization, and the citizen/foreigner distinction is sharper.

A second complication is that many countries' records do not distinguish between resident and nonresident foreigners (Sweden and Switzerland do). In a country like Switzerland, where annual border crossings exceed the resident population by a factor of thirty (Killias, in this volume), tourists and illegal entrants may commit a large proportion of crimes by foreigners, making it difficult to compare the behaviors of resident citizens and resident foreigners. As Europe continues its movement toward political and economic unification, and as drug and economic crimes become increasingly transnational, this problem will become more important.

This litany of complications is intended only to show that complexity faces efforts to make cross-national comparisons and not that they are impossible. The complications can be overcome by creative analytic techniques and by collection of original data. And, more important, notwithstanding all these problems, as the essays in this volume
show, a great deal has been learned within each country which reveals strong similarities in every included countries' experiences with ethnicity, crime, and immigration, which offers hypotheses for understanding other countries' experiences, and which provides a rich foundation on which later research can build.

II. Racial and Ethnic Disparities
Many readers of this volume, I suspect, will be surprised to learn that racial disparities in America's justice system are paralleled by comparable minority group disparities in other countries. Similarly, in most countries in which researchers have attempted to learn whether disparities occur primarily because of group differences in offending or because of bias, the general conclusion, as in the United States, has been that most of the measured disparity appears to be attributable to offending differences. Finally, in every country in which case processing studies have been carried out, similar patterns of systematic adverse effects for minority groups appear as a result of "neutral" policies and practices.

Two prefatory points need making. First, as mentioned earlier, most comparisons of offending or system processing are based on such over-aggregated categories as race, aboriginality, and nationality. Substantial behavioral and experiential differences often distinguish subgroups.

Second, countries have distinct research traditions, and the kinds of research findings and official data available to investigate specific questions vary a great deal. On the question of whether invidious bias is a major cause of racial and ethnic disproportions, although large between-group disparities occur in every country, only in a few has there been much research on the subject. There is a vast American empirical literature on justice system bias. There is a smaller English literature. In Australia and Canada, there have been a few studies concerning aboriginal and native disparities; the findings from the first major Canadian study on black/white disparities are reported in the essay by Roberts and Doob in this volume. No studies of this type appear to have been done in France or Sweden and but a few each in Germany and the Netherlands.

Victimization studies offer another example. Victimization studies can be used to compare group patterns in arrests with victims' reports of the identities of their assailants or to investigate the extent to which offending is intragroup. Comparisons of arrest and victim-identification patterns for particular crimes may suggest the presence or absence
of police bias. If offending typically occurs within groups, if, for example, black offenders in the United States typically victimize black victims, epithets of racism are less likely to be used to explain high rates of prosecution of black offenders; not doing so would in effect undervalue crimes against blacks, a form of discrimination and insensitivity which is difficult to justify. Here, too, countries vary widely. Long-term national victimization studies exist in the United States and England, and to a lesser extent in Canada and the Netherlands. Occasional surveys with large samples have been conducted in Switzerland (Killias, in this volume). The Swiss and English surveys, like the American ones, find that assailants' ethnic or national background has little influence on victims' decisions to report to the police.

Still and all, for all the differences in data availability and research tradition in various countries, on some subjects the findings are so robust and so consistent across national boundaries that meaningful generalizations can be offered. The essays that follow discuss the evidence in detail.

1. In Every Country, Crime and Incarceration Rates for Members of Some Minority Groups Greatly Exceed Those for the Majority Population. Perhaps most important, comparable disparities exist both for racial and ethnic minorities and for national origin minorities who are not visible racial minorities. In England and Wales, and the United States, black residents are seven-to-eight times more likely than whites to be confined in prisons, and the black/white imprisonment disparities in the Canadian province of Ontario are greater (Roberts and Doob, in this volume). In Australia and Canada, arrest and imprisonment disparities affecting Aborigines and natives are even greater than black/white disparities in the other English-speaking countries. In the Netherlands, however, the greatest disparities affect people from Morocco and Surinam (Junger-Tas, in this volume). In Sweden, Finns have higher rates than Swedes, and the highest disproportions in arrests affect immigrants from Arab countries, South America (notably Chileans, of whom those in Sweden are mostly of European descent), and Eastern Europe (Martens, in this volume). In the German state of North Rhine-Westphalia in 1993, Romanians experienced by far the highest arrest rates (nearly 740 per year per 1,000 people, 44 times the German arrest rate) and the most disproportionate imprisonment rate (1608 per 100,000 population, 21 times the German rate) (Albrecht, in this volume). In France, the highest imprisonment rates characterize people from the Maghreb countries of Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia (Tournier, in this volume).
Too much should not be made of numbers like those in the preceding paragraph. They tell us something important—that stark disparities in arrests and imprisonment exist in many countries, not simply those in which blacks or Aborigines are the most politically and socially salient minority—but they do not tell much more. Most important, they do not indicate what kinds of offenses are being disproportionately committed and sanctioned and why. Albrecht's essay in this volume, for example, graphically shows that the kinds of offenses different groups commit in different countries vary greatly. Romanians have by far the highest arrest rates in the state of Hessen in Germany, but their offenses are mostly minor property and immigration offenses; their arrests rates for violent and drug crimes are lower than those for many other much less often arrested groups. The essays on Sweden and Germany describe relatively high crime rates for people from Eastern Europe, but both describe their crimes as being principally theft and shoplifting, crimes that are arguably explicable in terms of the exposure of materially deprived people moving into wealthy societies to consumer goods that are readily accessible by illicit means. And in many countries, some groups may be recent migrants who are temporarily in assimilation or acculturation phases often afflicted by high crime rates. Finally, at any time groups may differ from others in age and gender composition, wealth and social status, and other social and economic characteristics that are strongly correlated with criminality; apparent differences in behavior between groups may on closer examination reflect nothing more than composition differences between groups.

2. Minority Groups Characterized by High Crime and Imprisonment Rates Are Also Characterized by Various Indicators of Social and Economic Disadvantage. This should be no surprise. For as long as social reformers and researchers have studied criminality, the correlation between criminality and disadvantage has been clear. Those correlations were as clear in nineteenth-century England (Mayhew 1861) and early twentieth-century America (Shaw 1929), when the high-crime groups were white, as today in those countries when some of the high-crime groups are black. The essays in this volume on Switzerland (Killias), Sweden (Martens), and the Netherlands (Junger-Tas) discuss the links between disadvantage and crime most fully and all make the relationship clear.

However, and it is a big however, not all disadvantaged groups exhibit high crime rates. In England, as already noted, migrants from the Indian subcontinent were as disadvantaged and as discriminated
against as migrants from the Caribbean and Africa; Afro-Caribbeans have crime and imprisonment rates far higher than those for whites, while rates for Indian subcontinent migrants are lower. While, in the United States, it remains unclear whether recent Southeast Asian immigrants will have high crime rates, it is clear that the typically impoverished Chinese and Japanese migrants of the nineteenth century did not. In the Netherlands, Turks and Moroccans first arrived in large numbers as guest workers in the 1950s and 1960s; although labor migrant entry ceased in the early 1970s, the two groups have increased both naturally and as a result of family reunification policies under the immigration laws. In the 1990s both groups are comparably less well-off economically, educationally, and vocationally than the Dutch. Yet the Turks have crime and imprisonment rates much like those for the Dutch while Moroccans have rates that are far higher.

3. In Countries in Which Research Has Been Conducted on the Causes of Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Imprisonment, Group Differences in Offending, Not Invidious Bias, Appear to Be the Principal Cause. I have phrased that conclusion in as nontendentious a way as I can. It could be phrased differently. If the critical aim were to demonstrate that racial and ethnic stereotypes and animus influence disparities, the conclusion would be that, all other things being equal, members of racial minorities receive harsher sentences. The hypothesis to be tested is that race and ethnicity matter, and research findings support the conclusion that they do. If the apologetic aim were to demonstrate that stereotypes and animus have little influence, the conclusion would be that, controlling for offense circumstances and criminal histories, race and ethnicity explain little of the variation in sentencing outcomes. The hypothesis is that neutral or legally relevant factors are the principal determinants of sentences, and the data support the conclusion that they are. Put another way, neither proponents of the claim that bias is the sole or primary cause of disparities nor proponents of the claim that bias has no influence on disparities will find empirical evidence to prove their claims.

Whether bias or behavior was the primary cause of racial disparities in arrests and imprisonment was for two decades a highly controversial question in English-speaking countries, and, as a result, much of the relevant research has been in those countries. However, a significant body of German research has also investigated the causes of disparities from police stops through sentencing (Albrecht, in this volume), as has a smaller body of Dutch research (Junger-Tas, in this volume). Rela-
tively little research on the causes of disparities has been done in the other three countries. The writers of the essays in this volume on France (Tournier) and Sweden (Martens) offer informed speculation. The essay on Switzerland (Killias) compares proportions of foreigners among arrestees to those among prison admissions and populations and finds reasonable consistency, but neither detailed case studies on system processing nor sophisticated statistical analyses have been done to buttress that observation.

Much the largest volume of work has been in the United States and has several times been summarized (e.g., Wilbanks 1987; Mann 1993; Tonry 1995; Sampson and Lauritsen, in this volume). There have been case processing studies, both qualitative and quantitative, at every stage of the justice system from police stops to parole release, aggregate statistical analyses of the relations between national crime data and national imprisonment data, and statistical comparisons of victimization data on victims' identifications of assailants with police data on the racial characteristics of arrestees. With only minor exceptions, the evidence, while certainly not showing that bias has no role, indicates that criminality past and present is the major determinant of officials' decisions.

The next largest literature is in England and Wales and, as summarized by Smith in this volume, supports much the same conclusions as in the United States. Work in Australia and Canada is not inconsistent with the American and English findings, but so little work has been done that no strong conclusions can be offered.

Curiously, although much work has been done in Australia in recent years to document Aborigine/non-Aborigine disparities at every stage of the adult and juvenile systems (Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody 1991; Harding et al. 1995; Broadhurst, in this volume), there have been only a few case processing studies to test bias hypotheses, and although one rigorous study found significantly higher arrest risks after controlling for key factors, this was not conclusively or solely attributed to racial prejudice (e.g., Gale and Wundersitz 1987; Gale, Bailey-Harris, and Wundersitz 1990; Duguid 1992).

The first major statistical analyses in Canada to test antiblack bias hypotheses were completed in 1995 under the auspices of the Ontario Commission on Systemic Racism and are reported in the Roberts and Doob essay in this volume. The findings, depending on the starting point, either show that most of existing sentencing disparities are attributable to legally relevant differences or that, after all legally rele-
vant differences are controlled for, some disparities remain that may be evidence of racial bias. In other words, the findings are broadly consistent with American and English findings. Some work has been done on the causes of native/nonnative disparities, and there too differential behavior patterns seem to be the primary explanation (Laprairie 1990).

4. **Seemingly Neutral Case Processing Practices, Especially Pretrial Confinement Decisions and Sentence Reductions for Guilty Pleas, Operate to the Systematic Disadvantage of Members of Minority Groups.** This is a perplexing problem because practices that are justifiable in their own terms, such as detaining those people who seem least likely to remain in the jurisdiction and appear for trial, produce outcomes, greater proportions of minority offenders in confinement, that are widely seen as regrettable.

The pretrial detention problem appears in many countries. The essays on the Netherlands (Junger-Tas), Germany (Albrecht), Switzerland (Killias), England (Smith), Canada (Roberts and Doob), and the United States (Sampson and Lauritsen) discuss the relevant research in each country. The difficulty is that the rational and humane policy of restricting pretrial confinement to those least likely to appear for trial means that those who live the least settled lives—those without permanent residences, or stable family lives, or jobs—will be held. Those traits more commonly characterize disadvantaged people, and many minority groups are disadvantaged. The resulting disparities are especially unfortunate because, at least in England (Hood 1992) and the United States (Blumstein et al. 1983, chap. 2; Petersilia and Turner 1986; Klein et al. 1991), all else being equal, being detained before trial increases the likelihood that a prison sentence will be imposed after trial.

A second, similar problem—rewarding prisoners who plead guilty with sentencing concessions—may be more troubling. There is convincing evidence in the United States (Petersilia and Turner 1986; Klein et al. 1991), England (Hood 1992), and the Netherlands (Maas and Stuyling de Lange 1989; Junger-Tas, in this volume) that members of some minority groups are less likely than other defendants to plead guilty. From a management perspective, it makes sense to encourage defendants to plead guilty, and thereby conserve resources, by providing a sentence reduction. From a sentencer’s perspective, it will often seem appropriate to acknowledge a defendant’s contrition and acceptance of responsibility, evidenced by a guilty plea, by reducing the sentence that would otherwise be imposed. These phenomena are particu-
larly explicit in England where appellate courts have elaborated a doctrine of "progressive loss of mitigation" under which defendants who plead guilty are entitled to a lesser sentence than if they were convicted after trial, the amount of the discount depending on when the plea is made; the later the plea, the smaller the discount. Hood's landmark study (1992) of sentencing disparities in the English Midlands found that Afro-Caribbean defendants were less likely than white defendants to plead guilty and, when they pled guilty, often did so later in the process than did whites. Thus Afro-Caribbeans lost sentence mitigation under both branches of the progressive mitigation doctrine.

This to many people is more troubling than the pretrial detention disparities because the guilty plea pattern may be shaped by many minority defendants' alienation from the justice system and beliefs that the system is biased against them. Research in many countries, including the Netherlands (Junger-Tas, in this volume), Germany (Albrecht, in this volume), Australia (Broadhurst, in this volume), England (Smith, in this volume), and the United States (Sampson and Lauritsen, in this volume), shows that members of minority groups are more likely to be stopped by police than majority citizens (albeit in most countries there is little evidence of bias in arrest decisions) and to believe that the police are biased against them. If minority defendants are hostile and distrustful toward the justice system because they believe (with some basis) they are treated unfairly, and as a result are less likely to cooperate, including by pleading guilty early or at all, progressive loss of mitigation penalizes them for their (to many people, understandable) alienation.

In both these instances, pretrial confinement based on legitimate criteria that disproportionately characterize minority defendants and sentencing policies that reward defendants who plead guilty, facially neutral policies disadvantage minority defendants for reasons that have nothing to do with their alleged crimes. To detain more minority offenders, or punish them more severely, as a matter of conscious policy would be seen as wrong in all Western countries. To maintain policies which foreseeably have that effect is not exactly the same thing but deserves more hard ethical scrutiny than typically it receives (Tonry 1995, chaps. 1, 8). There is no easy way to resolve this dilemma, but at the very least policy makers should consider whether seemingly neutral, disparity-causing policies can be revised to achieve their express goals in ways that produce fewer disparities.

5. Subcultural Behaviors and Stereotypes Sometimes Associated with Mi-
Minority Group Members Often Work to Their Disadvantage in Contacts with the Justice System. Two behavioral patterns interact to create special problems for members of some minority groups. First, disproportionately large numbers of members of some groups, including blacks in the United States, Surinamese and Moroccans in the Netherlands, and Aborigines in Australia, commit crimes. Many offenders in particular subcultures share characteristics such as distinctive patterns of dress and speech, places of recreation and residence, and social and economic backgrounds. As a result, justice system officials and many ordinary citizens often assume that individuals who possess those characteristics are likely to be offenders. Social welfare scholars call this statistical discrimination. Psychologists call it attribution. Sociologists call it stereotyping. Whatever it is called, it makes people suspicious of entire groups of individuals. In the United States, young black men are particular victims, as is illustrated by a much-quoted statement by civil rights leader Jesse Jackson: "There is nothing more painful to me at this stage of my life than to walk down the street and hear footsteps and start thinking about robbery—then look around and see somebody white and feel relieved" (Cohen 1993). Stereotyping of this sort is one reason why, as noted earlier, members of minority groups in many countries are especially likely to be stopped by the police.

The second pattern compounds the first. For many reasons, including self-esteem, self-assertion, and peer group expectations, some members of some disadvantaged minority groups behave and act in ways that other people find strange and threatening. Novelist Tom Wolfe in Bonfire of the Vanities (1987), a novel that describes the workings of high-volume urban American felony courts as well as any political scientist's case study, describes the "pimp roll," the rolling, loose-jointed walk, which, combined with an off-the-shoulder black leather jacket, blue jeans, gold chains, and untied hightop basketball shoes, were then the fashion for young underclass black men in New York City. In the novel, a black juvenile defendant lost the benefit of a favorable plea bargain when, rather than dress for success in middle-class style as his attorney instructed, he pimp-rolled into the courtroom with two similarly attired friends. To the judge his appearance was that of an incorrigible, antisocial offender, and nothing like the redeemable minor participant in a crime, entitled to another chance and the benefit of the doubt, whom his lawyer had described.

Put together, these two phenomena, widely held stereotypes of minority offenders and distinctive dress and behaviors that evoke the ste-
reotyped, probably explain the consistent finding in many countries that young minority men are especially likely to be stopped by police and, when stopped, to react defiantly and hostiley. Hostility and defiance toward the police are likely to elicit hostility and authoritarian responses from the police. And, in turn again, police aggressiveness is likely often to confirm minority offenders' belief that they are being treated discriminatorily and unfairly. Evidence of this vicious spiral is discussed in the essays on Australia (Broadhurst), Canada (Roberts and Doob), England (Smith), Germany (Albrecht), the Netherlands (Junger-Tas), and the United States (Sampson and Lauritsen). Small wonder then that many minority defendants are not more cooperative when they get to court.

What is most striking about the five findings discussed in this section is that they come from so many countries. They apply to many groups and many countries, suggesting that bias, disparities, and disparate impact policy dilemmas are not uniquely the characteristics and problems of any particular minority groups or countries but are endemic to heterogeneous developed countries in which some groups are substantially less successful economically and socially than the majority population.

III. Immigration and Crime
Although nonimmigrants often attribute many social problems to the presence of immigrants in their midst, especially in periods of high population movement, for at least sixty years there has been a widely shared different understanding among researchers. The popular perception is not surprising; as the essays in this volume show, in each of the European countries examined, "foreigners," who are preponderantly recent immigrants or their descendants, are disproportionately involved in crime. Nonetheless, on the basis of research on the experiences of Western European immigrants to Canada and the United States early in this century, it has often been asserted that first-generation immigrants are typically more law-abiding than the resident population, that their children and grandchildren suffer assimilation problems that produce higher-than-normal offending and imprisonment rates higher than those of either their parents or the resident population, and that subsequent generations have crime experiences indistinguishable from those of the general population.

The first American national crime commission, the National Commission on Law Observance and Enforcement, popularly known as the
Wickersham Commission after its chairman, former Attorney General George W. Wickersham, devoted an entire volume to “Crime and the Foreign Born.” Noting that public opinion attributed high crime rates to immigrants throughout most of American history, the commission devoted substantial energies and impressively extensive data collection and analysis to determining whether public opinion was justified. Among other things, the commission assembled data from many jurisdictions (e.g., arrest and crime statistics from fifty-two cities) on recorded crime, arrests, convictions, and prison commitments.

The commission’s conclusions were signaled by use of the phrase “foreign born” in the immigration volume’s title. The commission observed that there was substantial evidence that foreign born persons committed fewer major offenses, in proportion to their numbers, of the same sex and age, than did native-born persons, concluding that available data “seem to disagree radically with the popular belief that a high percentage [of contemporary crime] may be ascribed to the ‘alien’” (National Commission on Law Observance and Enforcement 1931).

Thus the “foreign born” were not the problem, leaving the possibility that their American-born children were extensively involved in crime. Unfortunately, although many official records indicated (however accurately) foreign-born defendants’ countries of origin, records for American-born defendants did not, making it impossible for the commission to array much data on the subject and leading it to recommend “a continuing study of a scientific character over a period of at least five years and on a national scale of the subject.” (This difficulty in identifying children of immigrants in justice system records exists today in most countries.)

However, there were other sources of evidence. The commission’s staff conducted extensive interviews with justice system officials and the commission received formal testimony. Every police officer, prosecutor, probation officer, and judge interviewed on the subject expressed the belief that there was an immigrant crime problem but that it was attributable not to immigrants but to their sons.

This “not the foreign born but their children” conclusion, though contrary to public opinion, probably did not surprise informed people who had previously taken an interest in the subject. Two earlier federal commissions had reached the same conclusions although on the basis of less evidence. The Industrial Commission of 1901 issued a “Special Report on General Statistics of Immigration and the Foreign Born”
which discussed crime. That commission observed that foreign-born whites were less criminal than native whites but also that the large proportion of native-born prisoners having foreign parents was “just as strong an argument as to the injurious effect of immigration as would be a high proportion among the foreign born themselves” (Industrial Commission 1901).

A few years later, in 1911, the Immigration Commission, which existed from 1907 to 1911, issued a report on “immigration and crime.” Although expressed cautiously in recognition of the limited evidence on which its conclusions were based, this commission reached the same conclusions: “No satisfactory evidence has yet been produced to show that immigration has resulted in an increase in crime disproportionate to the increase in adult population. . . . Such figures as are presented . . . indicate that immigration has not increased the volume of crime to a distinguishable extent, if at all. . . . In fact, the figures seem to show a contrary result” (Immigration Commission 1911). And, although the evidence was spotty, the immigration commission found that for some offenses American-born children of immigrants had higher crime rates than did American-born children of American-born parents.

From the 1920s through the 1940s, crime and immigration was a central interest of American criminologists who continued to observe, and then tried to explain, the broad patterns of findings of the three commissions (e.g., Reckless and Smith 1932; Sutherland 1934). The explanations for the relatively low crime rates of the foreign born are straightforward: self-selected economic migrants who braved an ocean voyage and left their home countries and families thousands of miles away came to America for economic opportunity and to improve their and their children’s lives. Most were hard-working, ready to defer gratification in the interest of longer-term advancement, and therefore likely to be conformist and to behave themselves.

Their children, however, were caught between two worlds. Even if life were better in America than in the place their parents came from, the children often were unable to make or find solace in that comparison. What they knew was that their families often were poor, that others were much better off, and that opportunities for legitimate economic advancement were less available to them than to many nonimmigrant young people. Various theories have been offered to explain why the second generations’ crime rates were higher than those of their parents or those of children of native-born parents: alienation, blocked opportunities, lack of role models, deviant subcultural
values of youth gangs which young people joined as a source of self-identification and self-esteem. Whatever the reasons, the immigration and crime model that distinguishes the experiences of the generations settled into the conventional wisdom of criminology.

Large-scale immigration into the United States stopped after 1924, and, as time passed, the descendants of immigrants assimilated into the American mainstream. "Immigration and crime" attracted less attention as a political issue and other issues attracted American criminologists' attention. Interest first revived not in the United States but in Europe as the result of the migration of guest workers from southern Europe and North Africa into many European countries in the 1950s and 1960s.

Contemporary research in Germany (Kaiser 1974; Albrecht 1988, 1993), France, Switzerland (Killias 1977; Queloz 1986; Kunz 1989), and Sweden (Sveri 1987; Martens 1990; Ahlberg 1996) has attempted to test that model and has to some extent validated it. Killias (1989) has surveyed the German and French research. Earlier Swiss research showed that Italian labor migrants in the 1950s and 1960s had lower crime (conviction) rates than native Swiss males of comparable ages (Neumann 1963; Pradervand and Cardia 1966; Gillioz 1967).

However, from the essays on European research in this volume, we now know that the multigeneration immigration and crime model based on American experience is simplistic and is only partly true even for the self-selected economic migrants whose experience it describes.

1. Self-Selected Economic Migrants from Many Asian Cultures Have Lower Crime Rates than the Resident Population in the First and in Subsequent Generations. The traditional model does not take account of Asians: immigrant groups deriving directly (Chinese, Japanese, and Koreans to the United States, Indian subcontinent migrants to England) and sometimes indirectly (e.g., "Hindustanis" from Surinam to the Netherlands, "African Asians" from East Africa to England) from South and East Asia typically have low crime rates in the first and in subsequent generations.

In England, where comparisons have been made between the experiences of Asian immigrants from the Indian subcontinent and black immigrants from the Caribbean and Africa, Asian immigrants typically have lower crime and imprisonment rates than whites' and Afro-Caribbeans' higher ones. The contrast is particularly marked for Bangladeshi immigrants who are as, if not more, economically and socially disadvantaged as Afro-Caribbeans (also though, as noted earlier, Ban-
gladeshis are relatively recent immigrants and their crime rates could rise over time). David Smith's essay in this volume summarizes research that shows that Asians were no less the victims of bias and stereotyping in England than were Afro-Caribbeans but from the outset adapted differently. Most notably, many expected to be discriminated against and organized their lives in ways that depended less on fair treatment than on self-help and ethnic-group networks (as, for example, seeking economic opportunities primarily within their own ethnic communities).

2. Cultural Differences between Structurally Similarly Situated Immigrants Can Result in Sharply Different Crime Patterns. The traditional model insufficiently takes account of cultural differences between groups that differentially affect their adaptation: the model would predict that Moroccans and Turks should have similar experiences in the Netherlands, both being economically and socially disadvantaged migrant groups who arrived as self-selected guest workers between 1950 and 1973, augmented by natural increase and by family unification policies; yet Turks have markedly lower self-reported and official crime rates than Moroccans (Junger-Tas, in this volume), and similar contrasts distinguish the two guest-worker groups in other countries (e.g., in Germany: Albrecht, in this volume). The essays in this volume on Sweden (Martens) and Germany (Albrecht) document other stark contrasts between the experiences of different nationality groups. Some of the contrasts may reflect age or class composition differences between groups, or the influence of the behavior of transients (illegals and tourists), but those considerations cannot explain all of the differences.

3. There Are Grounds for Hypothesizing That, All Else Being Equal, Some Countries' Policies for Aiding Immigrants' Assimilation Can Reduce Crime Rates, Including Those of Their Second- and Third-Generation Descendants. The traditional model insufficiently takes account of differences in receiving countries' social welfare (and settlement) policies. Martens (in this volume) provides plausible evidence that Swedish social welfare policies have reduced the "second-generation effect" even among economic intra-European migrants. Data covering many national origin groups, developed by Ahlberg (1996), indicate that crime rates for most groups are lower in the second than in the first generation, but that relative crime rate differences between groups remain the same. Overall, however, the second generation's crime rates were higher than those for nonimmigrant Swedes. These findings are striking because they simultaneously suggest that settlement policies can
suppress crime rates and confirm the observation in the preceding paragraph that cultural or other differences between groups are independently predictive of criminality.

4. The Reasons Groups Migrate Powerfully Shape Criminality and Other Indications of Successful Adaptation. The traditional model insufficiently takes account of the reasons why groups migrate: Swedish research shows that the adaptation experiences of guest-worker migrants in the fifties and sixties from Croatia and Serbia have been very different from those of demographically comparable war refugees from Serbia and Croatia in the eighties and nineties. The experience of the first wave roughly followed the North American pattern. In the second wave, first-generation migrants had high crime and victimization (and unemployment, welfare dependence, family breakup, and mental health problem) rates (Martens 1995).

A remarkable essay by Peter Martens (1995) gives insight into the special problems refugees face. It has been estimated that between 20 and 25 percent of recent refugees who immigrated to Sweden had earlier experienced physical torture. Many suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder. Angel and Hjern (1992, p. 36) observe that “seeing a close relative being ill-treated, killed or arrested or personally being subject to injustice are examples of mentally traumatic experiences that are common in refugees.” Human beings suffer many kinds of traumatic experiences, and sizable psychological and psychiatric literatures document their effects. These include alienation, apathy, lack of trust in personal relationships, reduced ability to plan for the future, irritability, and exaggerated reactions to emotionally charged situations. Martens (1995, p. 287) observes, “Reduced self-esteem and alienation are expressed both in reduced self-control and in social isolation, which increase the individual tendency to commit crime.”

Martens’s work, and that of other Swedish researchers, forces attention on the reasons why people immigrate. Once the question is recast from “What do we know about the adaptation and criminality of economic migrants?” to “What do we know about the ways people respond to traumatic experiences?” the observation that the reasons why people immigrate are important predictors of their subsequent behavior becomes unexceptionable. It is, however, an observation that is seldom made concerning “immigration and crime.”

5. Many Categories of Immigrants Do Not Fall within Any of the Preceding Generalizations. The traditional model does not describe the experiences of many immigrant groups that for one or another reason have
economic or social characteristics that fundamentally shape predicted criminality. Large numbers of Hong Kong Chinese have in the 1980s and 1990s either moved to Pacific Canada or purchased homes and made investments that will make it possible to make such a move after the transfer of governance of Hong Kong from Great Britain to China. As a group, expatriate Hong Kong Chinese are likely to be affluent and well-educated, characteristics that are seldom associated with high crime rates. Similarly, thousands of Americans migrated to Canada in protest against the Vietnam War. As a group the American expatriates were by definition politically conscious and are likely disproportionately to have been middle-class and relatively well-educated. For these two groups and for many others, their economic, social, and cultural characteristics are likely to be much better behavioral predictors than is any broadly phrased immigration and crime hypothesis.

IV. Learning More
Unanswered questions leap from the pages of this book. Why do some Asian groups adjust more readily to immigration than other groups? Are there lessons that can be drawn from such groups' experiences and then incorporated into settlement policies to help other groups adapt as successfully? Is it true that Swedish settlement policies have suppressed the second-generation effect and, if so, how? Can a taxonomy of settlement policies be developed that will permit matching of optimal policies to address the distinctive special needs of different migrant groups? Why do some seemingly similarly situated groups, like the Turks and Moroccans in the Netherlands, have such different crime patterns? Are there ways that legal practices and rules can be altered to lessen the adverse effects of some "neutral" policies on disadvantaged minority groups? Does the traditional immigration and crime model provide grounds for optimism that Afro-Caribbeans in England, who until the mid-1970s were not seen as a high-crime-rate group (Smith, in this volume), are simply passing through the second- and third-generation phases, amplified by an age distribution skewed toward young adults? If so, as with many other economic migrant groups in many countries, the problem of race and crime in England is likely gradually to disappear. Less optimistically, are the aboriginal populations of Canada and Australia in effect chronically traumatized peoples whose overinvolvement in crime is not likely to abate until the underlying causes abate, something that has not happened over several hundred years of exposure to colonization?
This book focuses primarily on crime and the justice system, but the focus could be made broader. There are a number of important related, but little studied, phenomena. First, minority group involvement in organized and transnational crime receives much media and policy attention in Europe. Second, similarly, minority groups are at least as likely as majority groups (probably more likely) to participate in black markets and the underground economy. Third, in Europe, at least, members of many migrant groups retain active ties to their home countries and yet intend to remain in their new countries; the effects of these multiple bonds on economic, social, and psychological integration (and crime) remain unstudied. Fourth is the increasing social segmentation of many European countries; members of many migrant groups fall into blue-collar and low-wage strata, which makes them highly vulnerable as semi-skilled and low-paid jobs become less available and economic pressures to survive make both work in the underground economy and crime more tempting.

A great deal can be learned about “race and crime” and “immigration and crime” by looking at the issues comparatively and cross-nationally. What needs to be done now is to move beyond single-country analyses to work that integrates those analyses: comprehensive efforts to combine learning in different countries, comprehensive efforts to establish what data are needed and available in each country to answer the questions that should be asked, development of a comprehensive research agenda that can begin to provide policy makers with the information they need to anticipate and work to prevent or ameliorate the kinds of problems that particular kinds of migrant groups are likely to experience. The political and ethical sensitivities that cause many countries to omit race and ethnicity data from their official records no doubt present a formidable challenge to the kind of projects described here. Unless that challenge can be overcome, however, little more will be learned and governments will have great difficulty improving the justice system experiences of members of minority groups.

Every Western country faces and will continue for many years to face political and policy issues related to race, ethnicity, population migration, and crime. Work like that discussed in this volume promises to provide crucial knowledge for addressing those issues.

The next step is to create a community of researchers and policy makers in many countries who will attempt to establish what is known, what is knowable, and how current knowledge might be advanced through comparative inquiry.
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