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# A Cross-National Analysis of the Impact of Conscription on Crime Rates

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A CROSS-NATIONAL ANALYSIS OF THE IMPACT OF  
CONSCRIPTION ON CRIME RATES

by

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A Thesis Submitted to the Faculties of  
Old Dominion University and Norfolk State University  
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## ABSTRACT

### A CROSS-NATIONAL ANALYSIS OF THE IMPACT OF CONSCRIPTION ON CRIME RATES

Nicolette G. Rose  
Old Dominion University and Norfolk State University, 2004  
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Research has repeatedly shown that males in the age range of 16 to 24 years account for a disproportionately large volume of crime (Sampson and Laub 1993). The armed forces are major employers of young males in this crime-prone age range and could thus play an important role in crime prevention. The military provides many varied opportunities including a highly structured and regimented institution in which rigid behavioral norms and close monitoring are imposed. Some other incentives that service provides include educational opportunities through the “Advanced Individual Training”, the GI Bill, in-service tuition assistance, and world-wide travel. All these are available to those who serve in the military and without the military these opportunities may not be available.

This paper examines the relationship between conscription laws (mandatory military or social service) and crime rates across countries. This cross-national study focuses on three major crimes: burglary, robbery, and homicide. In addition to conscription laws several control variables have been included in the analyses are: percent of the labor force that is military, level of civil liberties/freedom, level of industrialization, illiteracy rates, percent of urban population, unemployment rates, percent under the international poverty line, income disparity (measured using the Gini index), and population.

This study assesses the impact of conscription on crime rates by formulating and testing three hypotheses. First, mandatory military service and mandatory military with social service option is negatively related to crime across nations. Secondly, mandatory military service with a social service option has stronger affects on crime than simply mandatory military service. Lastly, both types of mandatory service will be significant when the control variables are included in analyses.

As there are few studies that look into the relation of conscription and crime I believe the findings to have policy implications throughout the world. The findings indicate that mandatory military service is highly related to reducing property crimes (burglary and robbery). This result is consistent with social control theory, in that military service may serve as a process of socialization through which people identify with each other and their community, thus reducing the likelihood of property crime. There appears to be no link between any type of mandatory service and homicide.

For all those who have served this country in various ways.  
I thank you for your tireless efforts to the  
pursuit of freedom and protection of the innocent.  
Thank you! You are heroes!

I dedicate this work to my heroes:  
My Mom, Janella  
My Dad, Gene  
My Uncle, Maj. Victor J. Apodaca, Jr (POW/MIA)

“Enslave the liberty of but  
one human being and the liberties of  
the world are put in peril.”

-William Lloyd Garrison

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The social sciences have made many attempts to explain why some societies or areas within societies have more criminal activity than others. Many theories have been developed to address this problem. Social control and bonding theories, in particular, posit that education, marriage, children, and employment restrain or control people's behavior and thus lower crime. There are various theories that have been used in research on cross-national crime. Some of those theories include social support theory, institutional anomie theory, and macro-level general strain theory. Social support theory is based on the belief that "the perceived or actual instrumental and/or expressive provisions supplied by the community, social network, and confiding partners" (Pratt and Godsey 2003:612). Institutional anomie theory is the belief that "crime rates are a result of the cultural emphasis on economic success," therefore crime rates are part of societies with an institutional structure dominated by the economy (Pratt and Godsey 2003:615). Macro-level general strain theory argues that "strain and stress is a major source of the motivation to commit crime... Variations in crime across macro-social units can be explained in terms of the differences in strain and in those factors that condition the effect of strain on crime" (Pratt and Godsey 2003:616). However, for this study I will be examining the potential social bond that mandatory military or social service provides. Specifically, I will be estimating the relationship between conscription and crime rates across nations.

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This format of this thesis follows the current style requirements of the American Sociological Association.

The military has played an important role in the lives of a large proportion of the U.S. population, serving as one of the largest employers and educators of young adults (Sampson and Laub 1996). For some individuals, the military offers the opportunity to escape from disadvantaged environments by providing job training and educational opportunities (Janowitz 1978). Alternatively, combat training and other dangerous experiences may produce psychological and behavioral dysfunctions (Bohannon and Drosser, 1995; Janowitz 1978). Despite its potential influence (both positive and negative), Glen Elder and Elizabeth Clipp (1988:133) note that “surprisingly little is known about the short-term and enduring influences of military experiences.”

My hypothesis on conscription is based on Durkheim’s theory and research. I believe that conscription, either military or social, functions as a social integrator and regulator. In Durkheim’s view, conditions of social solidarity based on highly developed functions of social integration and social regulations allowed the more primal self to become humanized fully in a life shared with others on a common moral ground. One of the implications is that unless such solidarity is developed and maintained, we may expect high rates of crime and delinquency (Durkheim 1933). This can be seen in the U.S. and other industrialized countries where violence, crime and terrorism are common.

Durkheim’s theory can help to better understand that crime is a result of a lack of solidarity that can be seen in many societies. Theft of any sort flourishes in societies in which some members do not care a great deal about the deprivations they cause their fellow citizens (Messner and Rosenfeld 2001). Stealing is higher in societies in which the collective conscience has been broken down. Theft is common because some people want certain things and how they acquire those things matters less than having them. Burglary, theft, and robbery happen because victims become impersonal and faceless to a

point where they are almost non-human to the perpetrator (Messner and Rosenfeld 2001).

Comparisons of crime rates across different nations must be viewed with considerable caution. Both the reporting of crimes to the police and police recording practices differ from nation to nation, as do procedures for reporting crime statistics to international agencies. Most important, different nations usually employ different definitions of crime. However these problems are less likely to affect comparisons across developed nations of the most serious offenses (Messner and Rosenfeld 2001). Violent crime like homicide and property crimes including theft, robbery, and burglary are similarly defined across nations (Messner and Rosenfeld 2001).

Although the problems within cross-national studies often occur it is important to realize that the international comparison of serious crime is an important component of this study. In order for a sociological theory to be considered worth its weight it should withstand cross-national analyses. However, most of the studies on social control or social bonding theory have focused on individuals in a single country. Although there are problems with cross-national comparisons it is the obvious choice for this study because nations vary so much in terms of military service and crime.

Thus I propose to test Durkheim's theory by examining the relationship between mandatory military service, mandatory military service with social service options, and crime rates across nations. The following reviews the literature on social control theory, international conscription laws, and cross-national analysis.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In this chapter I will review social control and bonding theory and related studies, international conscription data and laws, and cross-national analysis. I will end the chapter by discussing various studies on the influence of military service on criminal behavior.

#### SOCIAL CONTROL THEORY

Criminological theorists must address the question: “Why do people commit crimes?” Most criminological theorists attempt to discern what social conditions motivate individuals to engage in illegal acts. Control theorists start out with a different premise about human nature: people will “naturally” break the laws (Hirschi 1969). It is not necessary to show what humans have an “id”, as psychoanalytic theory would suggest, or that they have unique “animal impulses” or are innately aggressive, as some biological theories contend (Caspi and Moffitt 1992). Rather, for control theorists, it is sufficient to observe that like other animals, humans seek gratification and that crime is often an easy means to secure such gratification. People may vary in their need for gratification, but humans generally have enough desire to seek pleasure that they have ample motivation to commit crimes on a regular basis (Hirschi 1969).

Social control is a concept that refers to the ways in which people’s thoughts, feelings, appearances, beliefs, and behavior are regulated in social systems. What is important to the social control theorist is the process of socialization through which people come to identify with a social system (Marshall 1998). By identifying the

system's values and norms a person acquires a stake in maintaining these values and norms. There is a fundamental belief that social systems and their norms are legitimate and therefore binding on their participants (Marshall 1998).

### *Durkheim's Anomie Theory*

A forerunner of control theory was Emile Durkheim. Durkheim's work was a product of the late nineteenth century, a period that had seen dramatic social change in the wake of the industrial revolution. In his study of suicide, Durkheim used the concept of anomie to describe a social condition in which institutions lost their power to regulate human needs and action (Durkheim 1951; Lilly, Cullen, and Ball 1995). He described anomie not simply as "norm-less-ness" but as more or less the complete collapse of social solidarity. Included in the definition of anomie, Durkheim believed that destruction of the fundamental bonds uniting individuals in a collective social order so that each is forced to go it alone (Durkheim 1951).

Durkheim believed that as Western society modernized, a large emphasis was placed on "achieving industrial prosperity" without corresponding attention given to restraining people's appetites for success. This development had left the economy in a chronic state of anomie. People were now encouraged to seek limitless economic success but those who succumbed to the temptations dealt with awful consequences. "Nothing gives satisfaction and all this agitation is uninterruptedly maintained without appeasement" (Durkheim 1951:60). For many, suicide was viewed as the only means of escape from the pain caused by the state of anomie.

For Durkheim the moral order was more fundamental than the economic order. "Everything which is a source of solidarity is moral, everything which forces man to take

account of other men is moral, everything which forces him to regulate his conduct through something other than the striving of his ego is moral and morality is as solid as these ties are numerous and strong” (Durkheim 1933:398). To Durkheim social solidarity was moral. He watched as technology changed and combined with the rise of capitalism and caused the old agrarian society to fall. The sense of community eroded. The large extended family consisting of many relatives working together was being torn apart and replaced with the new nuclear family (Durkheim 1951). The pace of life was accelerating with an increasing division of labor separating different individuals into occupational specialties. As family and labor separated so did social solidarity.

To keep social solidarity maintained, Durkheim believed that both integration and regulation were of importance. Integration is a state of cohesion that amounts to a common “faith” that is sustained by collective beliefs and practices leading to strong bonds and subordination of self to a common cause. When integrative functions failed the “collective force of society” was weakened, “mutual moral support” was eroded, and there was a “relaxation of social bonds” leading to extreme individualism (Durkheim 1951:209-214). Integration is the sum of various social forces of attraction that draw people together. Regulation is considered the sum of those forces of constraint that bond individuals to norms of a society (Durkheim 1951). For Durkheim, collective activity was what gave purpose and meaning to life. Is it possible that military service, being a collective activity, aid in giving purpose and meaning to life? For this study, conscription is examined as an integrative force that may aid in bonding people to a community.

#### *Support for Policy Change by Durkheim's Research*

It could be argued that conscription policies should also include the choice

between military or social service. One of the reasons that many citizens oppose conscription is because of the view that the policy is too burdensome. Different individuals may be attracted to a common goal and may be very willing to submit to the authority of the social system, but their efforts must be coordinated properly if society is to function smoothly. Even if an individual wished to work with others towards a common goal or social purpose, he or she might turn in a deviant direction if the norms regulating the common effort were perceived as unnecessary, overly burdensome, or otherwise questionable (Durkheim 1951).

The forced military service aspect of the historical and current conscription policies can be seen as one of the reasons people believe conscription as unnecessary and infringing on their rights (burdensome). It is my view that the alternative of social service for those who do not feel compelled to serve in the military is the best policy option. In terms of this research I also believe that nations with both social and military service will have higher social solidarity and therefore lower rates of crime.

### *Life-Course and Social Bond Theory*

The over representation of youth in crime has been demonstrated using multiple sources of measurement including: official arrest reports, self reports of offending, and victims reports of the ages of their offenders. Each of these have been used in studies by sociologists. For example, Hindelang (1981) used victims' reports and Rowe and Tittle (1977) used self-reports.

The age-crime curve has had a massive impact on the organization and content of sociological studies of crime. Many studies have focused on adolescents and as a result the theoretical significance of childhood characteristics and the link between early



childhood behavior and later adult behaviors has been neglected (Caspi and Moffitt 1992; Gottfredson and Hirshi 1990). By ignoring all but the adolescent age, many studies have failed to address the life span implications on crime. Some of those implications include desistance from crime and the transitions from criminal to non-criminal behavior in adulthood (Sampson and Laub 1993). The links between the social structures as mediating processes of informal social control are examined in Sampson and Laub's study (1993) "Toward an Age-Graded Theory of Informal Social Control" which can be found in their book *Crime in the Making*.

Two main concepts underline the study of life-course dynamics. The first is a trajectory, a pathway of development over the life span. Trajectories refer to long term patterns of behavior and are marked by transitions. Transitions, the second concept, are marked by life events, a first job for instance (Elder 1985). Some transitions are age-graded and some are not (Elder 1985). Subsequently, life-course analyses are often characterized by a focus on duration, timing, and ordering of major events and their consequences for later development (Sampson and Laub 1993).

The interlocking nature of trajectories and transitions may generate "turning points" or a change in the life-course (Elder 1985:32). These transitions and turning points can modify life trajectories and redirect paths. Some social trajectories that trigger life events include school, work, military service, college, marriage, and parenthood (Elder 1986; Sampson and Laub 1993). Sampson and Laub's work on the life-course addresses adult social bonds and changes in criminal behavior. They state that "social ties to the adult institutions of informal social control (family, work, community) may serve as links in the chain connecting deviant behavior across the life course" (Sampson and Laub 1993:138). It is my belief that military and social service can be viewed as

informal social control and ties those serving to the community. Military service therefore provides attachments and commitments to the community preventing deviant behavior.

### *Empirical Evidence Regarding Social Control Theory*

Caspi and Moffitt's (1992) study in antisocial behavior found large variation in the stability of antisocial behavior over time, although antisocial behavior appears to be highly stable and consistent in a relatively small number of males whose behavior is quite extreme. Moffitt decided to dub this group as "life-course persistent" (1993). Her study suggests that social controls may work to modify childhood trajectories for the majority of youth who are not life-course persistent.

Other studies support Caspi and Moffitt's findings. Research suggests that salient life events influence behavior and modify trajectories, which also supports the life-course/social bond model. Gibbons (1992) found that marriage led to increasing social stability. Farrington et al. (1986) found that episodes of unemployment led to higher levels of crime. Rand (1987) and Elder (1985) found that criminal behavior declined during and after military service. They also found that for some military service had no deterrent affect on deviant (drinking and drug use) and criminal behavior. It was speculated that these persons were the life-course persistent type.

### CONSCRIPTION

I believe that it is important to understand the history of the conscription in the United States before going on to analyze conscription across nations. The United States has tried to enact conscription laws since Colonial times. In the 1600s and 1700s each colony

formed militias made up of all adult male citizens. It wasn't until the Revolutionary War (1775-1783) that a regular army was made through conscription. At first, cash and land bonuses were promised to enlisted men after the war but when that did not attract enough troops, General George Washington called up members of the state militias (Public Broadcasting System, PBS 2003). However these militias were poorly trained and often left the army due to duties back home, for example taking care of the family farm. Once Washington became president he tried to pass legislation to register all men for service. Congress did not pass legislation for Washington or for other presidents who proposed it including Adams, Jefferson, and Madison (PBS 2003).

It wasn't until the Civil War (1861-1865) that conscription was needed. Because of the need for large amounts of troops the Confederate Army enlisted volunteer troops for one year periods while the North enlisted for 3-9 month periods. Eventually, due to many lost lives both sides turned to conscription as a means to keep up army numbers after other soldiers' enlistment periods ended.

In April of 1862 the Confederacy passed their conscription law. Three years of military service is "required from all white men between the ages of 18-35" (PBS 2003: np). In March of 1863, Congress gave President Lincoln the authority to require conscription or draft registration by "all able-bodied men between the ages of 20-45, regardless of marital status or profession" (PBS 2003:np).

Controversy surrounding conscription goes back to the New York City Draft Riots. On July 13, 1863 an angry mob set a four day riot that seized control of the Second Avenue Armory, interrupting the selection of draft registrants' names. City buildings, abolitionists' homes, and conscription offices were burned. Anyone who refused to join the protest was tortured. Around one thousand people died, necessitating

New York troops being called back from Gettysburg to quell the riot (PBS 2003). In 1898, the Spanish-American War spurred Congress to declare that all males between the ages of 18-45 were subject to military duty. In May of 1917 the Selective Service Act was passed by Congress. The Act established local, district, state, and territorial civilian boards to register men between the ages of 21 and 30 for service in World War I. During the first drawing 50,000 men applied for exemptions and over 250,000 failed to register at all (PBS 2003).

In 1940 Congress enacted the Selective Training and Service Act. All males between 21 and 35 were ordered to register for the draft and the first U.S. national lottery was held. As World War II progresses, the draft age was lowered to 18 and men were called to service not by lottery number but by age, with the oldest going first (PBS 2003). From 1941 to 1952 many changes were made to the laws of conscription in the United States. These changes were due to the fluctuations in world relations. The attacks on Pearl Harbor, the Cold War era, and the Korean War all caused conscription changes and fueled the hatred of the draft by many U.S. citizens (PBS 2003). The Vietnam War era brought the most opposition to the draft. Many college campuses held anti-draft and anti-war demonstrations. Thousands of young men destroyed their draft cards or left the country to avoid service. It wasn't until 1973 that the Selective Service Act expired. Currently the U.S. still operates a draft board and requires "all male citizens between the ages of 18 and 26 to register for the draft and are liable for training and service until age 35" (PBS 2003:np). This is the selective service that young men must register for to this day in the United States.

In the United States the draft was only enacted during times of war, when the need for troops increased. Times of war are also occasions where opposition to the draft

increasingly occurs. Many other countries across the world do not draft the way the United States did. There are countries that have mandatory service during war and peace times. There are also countries that allow for those who cannot serve in the military to serve their country through civil service jobs. It is important to ask whether such policies might be more popular in the United States.

With the attacks of September 11<sup>th</sup> and the War on Terrorism, the need for military service has become a heated subject. There is an undeniable need for more troops in all branches of the military and the way to get those much needed troops is currently the subject of Capital Hill policy meetings. The research stemming from this study is significant for many reasons, theoretically, politically, and realistically.

First, examining the effect of conscription on crime rates can provide insights into social bonding theory as it applies to military service. In political and realistic circumstances this research and subsequent research stemming there from, has policy implications on the future of military service in the United States and elsewhere. Representative Charles Rangel, D-NY, wrote an op-ed piece in *The New York Times* promoting the return of the draft in January 2003. He wrote, "We need to return to the tradition of the citizen soldier -- with alternative national service required for those who cannot serve because of physical limitations or reasons of conscience" (CNN 2003:np).

### *Conscription Laws from Around the World*

Conscription or "the draft" as it is more commonly known, is simply a mandatory term of military service. According to the United Nations Economic and Social Council on Human Rights (UNCHR), conscription is simply a mandatory term of military service imposed on all, or a select group, of citizens by a government (UNCHR 1997). While

many countries with a draft in place only use it during times of war, there are just as many countries that have service during wartime and peacetime (UNCHR 1997). It is important to note that conscription is actively discouraged by the United Nations as stated by the United Nations Economic and Social Council on Human Rights meeting in 1997 (UNCHR). However there is no reason stated in the notes of this meeting as to why the UN discourages conscription.

When Americans think of "the draft" we tend to think of Vietnam, the last war in which Americans were forced into combat and it makes us think that conscription only happens during times of war. This is not the case in many countries. Some countries make conscription provisions to exclude people based on conscientious objection, religious objection, extra-ordinary family obligations, compassionate grounds and/or voluntary enrollment in alternative civilian or non-military service (UNCHR 1997). For example in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, conscientious objection for professional soldiers is only possible on grounds of absolute and universal pacifism (UNCHR 1997).

Other countries have exceptions to military service if mandatory service can be done in a civil service setting. For example, during the Vietnam Era the United States allowed civil service to the National Guard instead of military service. In Angola, "There are no problems with conscientious objection to military service... Those who refuse to bear arms are asked to serve in the administrative sector" (UNCHR 1997:16). The Ukraine recognizes objection by the Ukrainian Alternative (Non-Military) Service Act, which defines the institutional and legal bases for such service. This act provides that alternative service shall, as a rule, be performed in the area where the person lives and only in State enterprises. The conditions of employment of persons performing such

service are governed by Ukrainian labor law. In other words, they enjoy all rights on an equal footing with the enterprise's regular workforce. The Act stipulates that alternative service shall be performed in institutions in the fields of social welfare, health care or environmental protection, or in municipal or agricultural enterprises or organizations. There is, however, a downside; length of service is twice that of military service.

There are countries that will draft for non-combatant jobs (e.g., medical service personnel, humanitarian aids, office workers, and cooks) usually only on an as needed basis. These persons are usually already established in the civilian world. These countries include: Croatia, Yugoslavia, Bosnia, Herzegovina, the Russian Federation, and Switzerland. Other countries force military service no matter one's health, thinking, feelings, or what one does for a living. These countries are known as countries that have conscription with no alternative services. For example, Cuba does not recognize conscientious objection. Under Article 54 of their Constitution, refusal to defend the country with arms on grounds of religious belief is a punishable offence (UNCHR 1997).

### *Those Who Can Be Drafted*

Most countries draft males between the ages of 18-22, but this is only the average. All countries reporting to the United Nations Office of Human Rights, lists that all males between the ages of 15 to 49 as draftable. The age requirement drops in time of war because of the great need for military power. That is why the larger age range is reported to the UN, they must report the age range at which they could draft.

There is no officially reported age range for draftable women. It is assumed that the age range is the same for both men and women in those countries that draft both men and women (UNCHR 1997). For example, the countries of Benin, Burma, Cuba, and

Israel require service from both males and females (UNCHR 1997). The following countries will draft both males and females on a mandatory basis when the country needs to (e.g., in times of war): Angola, Chile, Israel, Libyan Arab Jamahirya, and Paraguay. The countries of Croatia, Yugoslavia, and Switzerland will draft women as non-combatants (e.g., support, humanitarian and medical roles) on an as needed basis (UNCHR 1997).

Most countries imprison “draft dodgers” for terms of varying lengths (in other countries they are imprisoned for life). For instance, unwillingness to perform compulsory military service in Colombia may lead to the unwilling recruit being tried for disobedience and possibly being sentenced to a prison term of from one to three years (UNCHR 1997). Some countries simply arrest dodgers and then force them into military service, often indefinite service, even in countries with set terms of military service for non-dodgers. For instance in Greece, if an individual simply fails or ignores his obligation to define his military status (register for the draft) and lets time pass, he may be fined when he does register, even if he is not recruited (UNCHR 1997). If he fails to appear before the recruitment authorities to register his military status, he runs the risk of being recruited by force if he is discovered and cannot submit documents proving that he has either registered or objected based on one of the reasons for exemption (UNCHR 1997). Some countries will even execute people who dodge the draft (e.g., Cuba and Albania). In extreme cases family members will be held accountable for the draft dodger's actions being fined, sent to prison, or even killed. There is one officially known case in which an “objector” was found forced to serve. He was sentenced for desertion and both he and his family were fined in Colombia (UNCHR 1997).



### *Length of Conscription Service*

Many countries have a two to four year conscription period (CIA 1994; UNCHR 1997). Whereas other countries have service periods based on particular requirements. For instance the Philippines have conscription for all who want an education. If a citizen wishes to pursue a high school degree, one year of mandatory service is required. If one wishes to pursue a college degree another three years of service is required (UNCHR 1997).

Still other countries require three years of actual service. This means that if your Military Occupation Specialty or MOS has training to teach you how to do your job that last one year, there is a commitment of four years in total. This is how conscription works in many European countries (UNCHR 1997).

### *Conscription Laws in Non-conscription Nations*

Countries that do not draft usually have legislation that makes the draft unlawful and it is no quick or easy task in most democratic nations to undo legislation. This is especially true with controversial legislation like conscription. Unless a war lags on for a very long time it is unlikely that non-conscription countries will see the need to change its laws and enact conscription legislation. However, there is always the possibility that "the draft" could be applied or reinstated in any country.

As stated in the meeting notes of the United Nations Economic and Social Council on Human Rights, there are a few simple reasons that a country may enact conscription back into legislation. Drafting may happen in the event that a war is dragged out or takes longer than first expected, in the event that a nation's very existence is at risk, and/or in the event that casualties in a war are much higher than expected

(UNCHR 1997). Under international laws and treaties there is no reason why a country cannot change its own laws and enact a draft if it feels the move is necessary for its survival or to win a war (UNCHR 1997).

#### EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE REGARDING MILITARY SERVICE

Sampson and Laub's (1993) research suggests that the military may be related to both continuity of criminal behavior and beneficial change for different individuals. One of the main criticisms of Sampson and Laub's (1993) theory is the generalizability of their results. Most believe that the findings are able to be applied to other groups not included in the study. It is this generalizability that I propose needs to be tested on a cross-national basis. Sampson and Laub's theory is based on an analysis consisting of a sample of white men from the Boston area who were born in the 1920s and 1930s and who served in the military during World War II and Korea. This sample is in no way a representative sample of the U.S. but was a representative sample of the military servicemen of the time.

The military has played an important role in the lives of a large proportion of the U.S. population also serving as one of the largest employers and educators of youths (Sampson and Laub 1996). Does serving in the military turn a person's life around from delinquency to conformity? Or is it a school of violence that instills values of macho-ism and aggression that leads to later criminal behavior (Martin 1976).

Glen Elder used archived data from the Berkeley Guidance Study to investigate military service as a "turning point" in men's lives. He studied the lives of American Veterans born in 1928-1929 who served in the Armed Forces from the late 1940s into the Korean War. The Berkeley cohort is made of children from the Great Depression with a

history of disadvantage which increased the appeal of military service. Of the 214 subjects in the original Berkeley sample, some were non-veterans and others were veterans. Of the original 214 subjects, 182 provided information through the age of forty. Seven out of ten Berkeley men were mobilized for the military and served at least two years in the Armed Forces (Elder 1986). Many of the servicemen served in World War II or the Korean War. Only one member of the cohort was known to have lost his life in military service, a prisoner of war in Vietnam. The Berkeley cohort data did not have a high rate of attrition like some other longitudinal studies and therefore allowed a good basis for the study.

Economic deprivation, poor grades, and feelings of self-inadequacy made these men more likely to enter service at the earliest possible time. Early entry meant a later transition into first marriage and first child, moments that are considered steps into adulthood (Hogan 1981). Young veterans were able to use their military job experience in the civilian world to equal or in some cases exceed the occupational achievements of non-veterans. Early entrants showed a larger gain in psychological health and strength from adolescent age to midlife than did non-veterans (Elder 1986). Veterans also had more stable marriages up to middle age than did their non-veterans counterparts (Elder 1986).

The appeal of military service for some people stems from the belief that service is a way to escape disadvantages and to help in later life success (Thurnher 1983; Elder 1986). The educational and vocational benefits of the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 and the GI Bill were a large draw to military service (Olson 1974). The final provisions of the GI Bill included one year of college for any person who entered service before the age of 25, if their duty equaled at least 90 days. Veterans were also offered a

block of higher education beyond the first year, that would match overall active duty time (Olson 1974; Elder 1986). For instance if a person served 3 years, the government paid for one year of college under the first (90 day) provision and an additional 3 years of college under the second provision. Only 10% of the Berkeley cohort veterans ignored the educational possibilities, whereas a third of the cohort's non-veterans pursued no education. Estimates of nearly half a million veterans across America took advantage of a college education that might not have done so without the GI Bill (Olson 1974; Elder 1986).

Military service was viewed as a path to adulthood or as a passage into manliness (Elder 1986). For many servicemen in World War II the break military service provided meant a chance to evaluate where they had gotten thus far and to reconsider where they were going in their life (Moskos 1970; Elder 1986). Elder's (1986:238) research found that military service opens up new options and experiences from "exposure to competent male models to the discipline of group effort and social responsibility and the wider perspective associated with travel." The uniform of an American soldier, sailor, or marine ensured a measure of respect and self-confidence. For the youth who felt insignificant, the military promised they could be someone (Elder 1986).

Some persistence of life disadvantage after service was found in Elder's study but overall the military served as an opportunity. It offered new directions and new beginnings. The military was a stabilizing mechanism that better prepared servicemen for adulthood (Elder 1985, 1986; Sampson and Laub 1993). Less than a third of early entrants' marriages failed, compared to more than half of the cohort who never served in the military (Elder 1986). Marriage is also considered a life stabilizing mechanism that binds a person to their social system (Sampson and Laub 1993).

In Elder and Caspi's latest study (1990) they describe three possible reasons that the military may have a beneficial influence in life: the military encourages social independence, it provides time away from the pressures of the transition to adulthood, and it allows for a broader range of perspectives and experiences. Some individuals view the military as an opportunity for achievement and as a way to escape disadvantaged backgrounds.

Other life-course perspective studies argue that the influences may differ depending on the historical context in which they occur (Elder and Caspi 1990). Therefore it is important to consider how the influence of military service may be different during different time periods. The American Soldier Studies of World War II began in 1949. The War Department established a Special Services Division in the summer of 1941. Within the Special Services a Research Branch was developed and told to research the attitudes of enlisted men in the Army (Schwartz and Marsh 1999). In the first volume of *The American Soldier*, author and researcher Samuel Stouffer notes, "Its purpose was to provide the Army command, quickly and accurately, with facts about the attitudes of soldiers which, along with other facts and inferences, might be helpful in policy formulation" (Schwartz and Marsh 1999:21).

The study found that most frequently mentioned desirable effect of the military was that soldiers now considered themselves "intellectually broadened, able to think deeper, and understand things or people better" (Stouffer et al 1949:632). Seventy-nine percent of respondents reported that combat "increased their faith in God" (Stouffer et al. 1949:187). Leadership and discipline was viewed as the number one combat incentive among 1,116 officers for their enlisted men.

Some men with criminal records were allowed to serve in the military during World War II, Edward Shattuck (1945) found that these men performed just as well as soldiers without a criminal background. Michael Hakeem (1946) interviewed a group of new admission to state prisons to compare who had served in the military during World War II to non-veterans. He found that the majority of incarcerated men with military experience had a criminal background prior to entering the military. Another study conducted follow-up interviews of individuals released from Illinois penitentiaries to serve during the war found that recidivism for men paroled into the Army was less than the rate for those paroled into civilian life (Mattick 1954). Looking at these three studies one could conclude that criminal behavior after military service was for the most part a continuation of pre-existing behavior patterns, supporting Moffitt's "life-course persistent" beliefs.

Many studies argue that military service or combat experience during Vietnam would increase later violent behavior among veterans (Moskos 1970). One study found that even after ten years after military service, Vietnam combat veterans were more violent than non-combat veterans (Boulanger 1986). Studies on criminal behavior (measured by arrest rates) found that veterans with combat experience tended to commit more violent crimes than non-combat veterans (Laufer et al. 1981; Resnick et al. 1989). One longitudinal study of individuals who had committed serious offenses found that there were no apparent differences between those who served in the military and those who did not (Rand 1987).

Unlike some of the criminal background studies of World War II and Korea, the Vietnam-era veteran studies found that a large majority of the men who served during the Vietnam-era did not have an official criminal record until after they had entered the

military. This finding points to a possible criminogenic effect. In a study on combat veterans it was concluded that the “violent reactions of Vietnam Veterans appears to be something learned in Vietnam rather than long-standing personality traits” (Yesavage 1983:384).

This possible criminogenic effect of military service on the Vietnam-era veterans can be attributed to many various factors. One of the main differences from the World War II and Korean War eras to the Vietnam-era is the enormous increase of drug use by servicemen. Some studies have indicated that individuals who served both during the Vietnam War and during the all-volunteer era achieved less education, had lower earnings, and had higher unemployment rates than non-veterans (Angrist and Krueger 1994; Cohen, Warner, and Segal 1995), therefore increasing their likelihood to criminally offend after their service time was over.

There has been one study about mandatory conscription and its effects on crime. The study was published in 1966 in *The International Annals of Criminology*. The study was conducted in Greece and published in French. It has yet to be fully translated into English. Based on Greece's experience, military service seems to be a positive factor in reducing the incidence of crime among young men. One of the findings that has been translated in the abstract include: military service as an excellent stimulant for the economy. The study concluded that military service is a way that crime age men are taken off the streets and given the opportunity to perform a service to society, thusly keeping Greece's crime rate down. The abstract also stated that should military service ever be abolished, it may have to be replaced by another obligatory service, the essential goal of which would be collaboration in the cultural development of society and the nation (Karanikas 1966).

In general, the studies of individuals who served during World War II or Korea concluded that military service had a beneficial influence in individual's lives. The American Soldier Studies of World War II provide a background on veterans' attitudes which were not found in Elder's or later Vietnam-era studies. All the studies are useful to better understand the life-course perspective and social control/bond theory from a military view point. Through the analysis of both social control studies and military studies it is evident that military service can provide stabilization for some, thus linking them to society and away from crime.

#### FACTORS RELATED TO CRIME ACROSS COUNTRIES

In sociological research, the "cross-cultural perspective" is based on the idea that society cannot be fully understood without comparing it with other societies or systems. Developed most extensively by anthropologists, the cross-cultural, cross-national, or comparative approach is particularly useful for explaining how social systems change and develop. It is tempting, for example, to conclude that the pattern of change in our own society reflects universal human tendencies, until we compare it with other societies and discover the rich variety of patterns that characterize human social life.

The earliest known collection of crime data at the international level began with the General Statistical Congress held in Brussels in 1853. The next known major effort was made at the International Congress on the Prevention and Repression of Crime held in London in 1872 (UNODC 2003:1). It was at these meetings that problems concerning the comparability of definitions emerged and has remained a key issue in subsequent meetings on international crime statistics. The presentation of large amounts of reported crime data in the same format, as is the case with the various country results reported to



the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol), raises questions about the possibility of comparing reported crime levels in different countries (Messner and Rosenfeld 2001; UNODC 2003). In fact, experts generally regard cross-country comparisons of crime statistics as being characterized by methodological difficulties for at least the following three reasons (UNODC 2003).

The United Nations Statistical Division (UNSD) suggests that there are different definitions for specific crime types in different countries (UNSD 1996). The category in which any incident of victimization is recorded relies on the legal definition of crime in any country. Should that definition be different, and this is often the case, comparisons will not be made of exactly the same crime type. This is particularly the case in crimes that require some discretion from a police officer or relevant authority when they are identified. For example, differences in definitions between serious or common assault in various legal jurisdictions may be different, and this will be reflected in the total number of incidents recorded (UNSD 1996).

Second, there are different levels of reporting and traditions of policing (UNODC 2003). Different societies across the globe have been shown to have different levels of reporting of criminal incidents. This relates closely to levels of development in any society, most clearly reflected in accessibility to the police. For example, the number of police stations or telephones in a society can both be viewed as factors that affect reporting levels. The level of insurance coverage in any community is also a key indicator of the likelihood of citizens approaching the police as their claim for compensation may require such notification. In addition, in societies where the police are or have been mistrusted by the population, most specifically during periods of

authoritarian rule, reporting levels are likely to be lower than in cases where the police are regarded as important members of the community (UNSD 1996).

Third, there are different social, economic and political contexts (UNODC 2003). Comparing crime data from societies that are fundamentally different may ignore key issues present in the society that affect levels of reporting. For example, different social norms in some societies may make it almost impossible for women to report cases of rape or sexual abuse, while in others women are encouraged to come forward (UNSD 1996; UNODC 2003).

These factors, while alerting the reader to the potential pitfalls of comparisons, apply more to some crimes than others. In selected cases, most notably homicide, country to country comparisons are safer, although they may still be subject to the drawbacks outlined above. For example, is the death caused by the governmental issuance of the death penalty considered homicide? In the case of some categories of violent crime – such as rape or assault – country to country comparisons may simply be unreliable and misleading. Ultimately, however, previous cross-national research on crime has found that homicide, burglary, and robbery are considered crimes and are by definition similar (UNODC 2003:3).

### *Social Indicators Related to Crime*

In the cross-national analysis of “The Deterrent Effect of Police Forces on Crime Rates” (Sun 1995) the economic indicators of industrialization, urbanization, and population of a country were used in the analysis. The level of industrialization, operationally defined as the level of energy consumption (KwH) per capita was taken from the World Development Indicators-CD. The percentage of urbanization was

obtained from the World Development Indicators-CD and is operationally defined as the percentage of the nation that lives in an urban area. The population is the number of people who are known to share a particular geographical territory, in this case a nation.

Unemployment and total employment in an economy are the broadest indicators of economic activity as reflected by the labor market. The International Labour Organization (ILO) defines the unemployed as members of the economically active population who are without work but available for and seeking work, including people who have lost their jobs and those who have voluntarily left work. This is the operational definition used by the World Bank. Some unemployment is unavoidable in all economies. At any time some workers are temporarily unemployed—between jobs as employers look for the right workers and workers search for better jobs. Such unemployment, often called “frictional unemployment”, results from the normal operation of labor markets (World Bank 2003).

Changes in unemployment over time may reflect changes in the demand for and supply of labor, but they may also reflect changes in reporting practices. Ironically, low unemployment rates can often disguise substantial poverty in a country, while high unemployment rates can occur in countries with a high level of economic development and low incidence of poverty (World Bank 2003). In countries without or with poor unemployment or welfare benefits, people eke out a living in the informal sector, such as crime. In countries with well-developed safety nets, workers can afford to wait for suitable or desirable jobs. But high and sustained unemployment indicates serious inefficiencies in the allocation of resources (World Bank 2003).

The international poverty lines are based on nationally representative primary household surveys conducted by national statistical offices or by private agencies under

the supervision of government or international agencies and obtained from government statistical offices and World Bank country departments. Poverty rates are comparable across countries, but as a result of revisions in purchasing power parities (PPPs) and exchange rates, they cannot be compared with poverty rates reported in previous editions for individual countries (World Bank 2003). The poverty measures are prepared by the World Bank's Development Research Group. The national poverty lines are based on the World Bank's country poverty assessments.

In this study income disparity is measured by the Gini index. The Gini index is a measure of the extent to which the distribution of income among individuals within an economy deviates from a perfectly equal distribution (World Bank 2003). A distribution of perfectly equal incomes has a Gini index of zero. As inequality increases the Gini index moves toward its maximum value of one-hundred, where only one recipient receives all income.

Infant mortality rate is operationally defined as the number of infants dying before reaching one year of age, per 1,000 live births in a given year (World Bank 2003). Mortality rates for different age groups—infants, children, or adults—and overall indicators of mortality—life expectancy at birth or survival to a given age—are important indicators of health status in a country. Because data on the incidence and prevalence of diseases (morbidity data) are frequently unavailable, mortality rates are often used to identify vulnerable populations. They are among the indicators most frequently used to compare levels of socioeconomic development across countries (World Bank 2003). The main sources of mortality data are vital registration systems and direct or indirect estimates based on sample surveys or censuses. A "complete" vital registration system—one covering at least 90 percent of vital events in the population—is the best source of

age-specific mortality data. But such systems are fairly uncommon in developing countries. Thus estimates must be obtained from sample surveys or derived by applying indirect estimation techniques to registration, census, or survey data.

Survey data are subject to recall error, and surveys estimating infant deaths require large samples because households in which a birth or an infant death has occurred during a given year cannot ordinarily be pre-selected for sampling. Indirect estimates rely on estimated actuarial ("life") tables that may be inappropriate for the population concerned. Because life expectancy at birth is constructed using infant mortality data and model life tables, similar reliability issues arise for this indicator. To produce harmonized estimates of infant mortality rates that make use of all available information in a transparent way, a methodology that fits a regression line to the relationship between mortality rates and their reference dates using weighted least squares was developed and adopted by both UNICEF as reported by the World Bank (2003).

Along with the studies used above I gleaned illiteracy rates as a social indicator of crime after reading a study of military service and the education attainment of the all-volunteer force (Cohen et al. 1995). For this study illiteracy, operationally defined, is when a person is unable to read or write at least one sentence. This means that persons who can read and write their name or any other "memorized" sentence are considered illiterate (World Bank 2003).

#### *Indicators Used Specifically for Military Crime Studies*

There are two social indicators used that were not gleaned from the above studies. They are degree of freedom (civil liberties) and the percent of the labor force that is military. The percent of the military in the labor force is an important indicator for this

study. As the military is one of the main employers of crime age males, I feel it's inclusion as an indicator is important. One study, "Collateral Gains from the Military? A Cross-National Analysis of the Armed Forces-Crime Relationship," used the percent of the military in the labor force (Sung and Chu 2003). An abstract of the study was presented at the annual meeting of the American Society of Criminology in November 2003. I use this study to back my belief that the percent of military in the labor force as an important indicator of crime for this study.

Two studies employed the idea of using civil liberties as an indicator of crime in cross-national analysis. The first is a study on "The Deterrent Effects of Police Forces on Crime Rates" (Sun 1995) and a study titled "Collateral Gains from the Military? A Cross-National Analysis of the Armed Forces-Crime Relationship" (Sung and Chu 2003). An abstract of the latter study was presented at the annual meeting of the American Society of Criminology in November 2003. Operationally defined the overall degree of freedom is combined data, gathered by The World Bank, on levels of political and civil rights. The measure was taken from The World Development Indicators CD-ROM as reported to them by the Freedom House Group. The index is an average of two seven category scales of political and civil rights into an overall freedom rating for each country. The higher the number on a seven point scale, the lower the country's level of freedom (World Bank 2003). The indicator is important because it considers some cultural differences that may contribute to a country's civil rights/liberties and thus contribute to crime rates.

In David Bayley's (1991) analysis of crime in Japanese society he found that a burglar was caught when he stopped to put his shoes on. In Japan, it is customary to remove one's shoes when entering a private home, especially if the home has the traditional woven straw flooring. The burglar had to cross such a floor to get at a bureau

that he wanted to ransack; thus in accordance with Japanese tradition he removed his shoes. As seen in this story it is evident that the Japanese sense of propriety affects even the way burglars conduct their illegal activities. In other eastern countries burglars, thieves, and robbers must face consequences of caning, stoning, and even the loss of the “offending” hand. This is all part of the cultures’ level of freedom.

### *Problems with Cross-National Social Indicator Analysis*

Example of the same problems seen in cross-national crime data can also be seen in social indicators. The World Bank Development Data Group provides data on poverty. Poverty will serve as an example indicator of problems in cross-national social indicator analysis. It is first important to understand that problems also exist in comparing poverty measures within countries. For example, the cost of living is typically higher in urban than in rural areas. So the urban monetary poverty line should be higher than the rural poverty line. But it is not always clear that the difference between urban and rural poverty lines found in practice properly reflects the difference in the cost of living (World Bank 2003). In some countries the urban poverty line in common use has a higher real value than does the rural poverty line. Sometimes the difference has been so large as to imply that the incidence of poverty is greater in urban than in rural areas, even though the reverse is found when adjustments are made only for differences in the cost of living. As with international comparisons, when the real value of the poverty line varies, it is not clear how meaningful such urban-rural comparisons are (World Bank 2003).

The problems of making poverty comparisons do not end there. More issues arise in measuring household living standards. The choice between income and consumption

as a welfare indicator is one issue. Income is generally more difficult to measure accurately than poverty and consumption is more consistent with the idea of the standard of living than income, which can vary over time even if the standard of living does not (World Bank 2003). But consumption data are not always available, and when they are not there is little choice but to use income. There are still other problems; household survey questionnaires can differ widely, for example, in the number of distinct categories of consumer goods they identify (World Bank 2003). Survey quality varies, and even similar surveys may not be strictly comparable.

Comparisons across countries at different levels of development also pose a potential problem, because of differences in the relative importance of consumption of non-market goods (World Bank 2003). The local market value of all consumption in kind (including consumption from own production, particularly important in underdeveloped rural economies) should be included in the measure of total consumption expenditure. Similarly, the imputed profit from production of non-market goods should be included in income. In early surveys (before 1980s) The World Bank had a bigger problem with such omissions. Most survey data now include valuations for consumption or income from own production. Nonetheless, valuation methods vary. For example, some surveys use the price in the nearest market, while others use the average farm gate selling price (World Bank 2003).

Wherever possible, consumption has been used as the welfare indicator for deciding who is poor. Where consumption data are unavailable, income data are used. In the past The World Bank used the average income and adjusted to approximate with consumption and income data from national accounts. This approach was tested using data for more than 20 countries for which the surveys provided both income and



consumption expenditure data (World Bank 2003). Income gave a higher mean than consumption but also greater income inequality. These two effects roughly canceled each other out when poverty measures based on consumption were compared with those based on income from the same survey; statistically, there was no significant difference (World Bank 2003).

International comparisons of poverty data entail both conceptual and practical problems (World Bank 2003). Different countries have different definitions of poverty, and consistent comparisons between countries can be difficult. Local poverty lines tend to have higher purchasing power in rich countries, where more generous standards are used than in poor countries (World Bank 2003). Is it reasonable to treat two people with the same standard of living—in terms of their command over commodities—differently because one happens to live in a better-off country? Can we hold the real value of the poverty line constant across countries, just as we do when making comparisons over time?

Poverty measures based on an international poverty line attempt to do this. The commonly used \$1 a day standard, measured in 1985 international prices and adjusted to local currency using purchasing power parities (PPPs), was chosen for the World Bank's World Development Report of 1990 on Poverty because it is typical of the poverty lines in low-income countries. PPP exchange rates, such as those the World Bank, are used because they take into account the local prices of goods and services not traded internationally (World Bank 2003). But PPP rates were designed not for making international poverty comparisons but for comparing aggregates from national accounts. Thus there is no certainty that an international poverty line measures the same degree of need or deprivation across countries (The World Bank 2003).

Even if problems occur with cross national comparisons it is important to continue these types of studies. Cross national comparisons provide important information about the economy, criminal activity, and overall environment of the world around us.

## HYPOTHESES

Based on the previous literature review concerning social control theory and factors associated with crime across nations I propose the following hypotheses:

- 1) Mandatory military service and mandatory military with social service option is negatively related to crime across nations.
- 2) Mandatory military service with a social service option has stronger affects on crime than simply mandatory military service.
- 3) Both types of mandatory service will be significant when the control variables are included in analyses.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

This analysis is based on aggregate level country data. There are approximately one-hundred and fifty countries with available data on the key independent variable, conscription. When looking at the available data for homicide, robbery, and conscription there are much fewer countries available with data. There are over fifty countries with all the data available to analyze. Table 1 presents break down of the type of conscription.

#### SOCIAL INDICATORS RELATED TO CRIME

The social indicators presented here consist mainly of the minimum list which has been proposed for follow-up and monitoring implementation of recent major United Nations conferences on crime, population and development, social development, and women and children (UNODC 2003). This list is contained in two United Nations Statistical Office (UNSO) publications, *Handbook of Social Indicators* (1989) and *Towards a System of Social and Demographic Statistics* (1975). The *World Development Indicators-CD* (2003), a database developed by The World Bank Development Data Group, provided many of the social indicators used in this study as control variables. The nine control variables in this study are: level of industrialization, percent of urbanization, population, unemployment rates, degree of freedom (civil liberties), percent under the international poverty line, Gini index, infant mortality rates, adult illiteracy rate, and the percent military.

International studies on crime were necessary to review for this thesis. From three main studies I am able to find that a number of social indicators used, have also

been used in other international analyses on crime (Bayley 1991; Shelley 1981; Gurr 1979). The level of industrialization, percent of urbanization, population, unemployment rates, percent under the international poverty line, income disparity (Gini index), infant mortality rates, and the adult illiteracy rate were all used and found to be related to crime rates in these studies. In the following paragraphs the operational definitions of the indicators used in this study are described.

#### DEPENDENT VARIABLES

The dependent variables are homicide, burglary, and robbery. These measures were taken from the fifth wave of the International Crime Statistics 1990-1995 published by the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC). Only data from 1994 and 1995 were used from the fifth wave in this study. They represent crimes that were reported to authorities in surveyed countries (UNODC 2003). The UNODC and the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol) defines homicide as “death by injury purposely inflicted on others” (Messner and Rosenfeld 2001:19).” Burglary is defined as “the taking of a physical object of value away from its legal owner” and defines robbery as “violent theft” (Messner and Rosenfeld 2001:19).

#### CONSCRIPTION AND CONTROL VARIABLES

The independent variable of concern is conscription status of a country. The status of countries conscription laws were taken from the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Factbook of 1994 and 1995. The specifics of each country’s laws were taken from the United Nations Economic and Social Council’s (UNCHR) *Commission on Human Rights* 53<sup>rd</sup> session (1997).

Table 1. Mandatory Service Descriptive

	Valid N	Valid%
No Mandatory Service	70	46.7
Mandatory Military Service	53	35.3
Mandatory Military and Social Service Option	27	18.0
Total	150	100.0

The social indicators presented here consist mainly of the minimum list which has been proposed for follow-up and monitoring implementation of recent major United Nations conferences on crime, population and development, social development, and women and children (UNODC 2003). This list is contained in two United Nations publications, *Handbook of Social Indicators* (1989) and *Towards a System of Social and Demographic Statistics* (1975). The *World Development Indicators-CD* (2003), a database developed by The World Bank Development Data Group, provided many of the social indicators in this study.

There are nine social indicators used as control variables are: level of industrialization, percent of urbanization, population, unemployment rates, degree of freedom (civil liberties), percent under the international poverty line, Gini index, infant mortality rates, adult illiteracy rate, and the percent military. The data on these indicators was taken from the *World Development Indicators-CD* produced by The World Bank (2003).

## STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The analysis will begin with descriptive statistics and a comparison of countries with different types of conscription to the control variables. Regression analysis will be used to test for a relationship between conscription and the crime statistics across countries. Because the sample size is limited we will first include the major variables (conscription type) and then enter control variables one by one to see how robust these relationships are to the inclusion of the other variables. In the following chapter the findings of these analyses will be discussed.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

#### DIFFERENCES BETWEEN COUNTRIES WITH AND WITHOUT CONSCRIPTION

Before testing the key hypotheses of the study, it makes sense to examine the general differences (other than crime) between countries with mandatory military, mandatory military with social service as an option, and those with no conscription at all. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to examine these different types of countries in terms of civil liberties, percent in the military, population, illiteracy, unemployment, poverty, income disparity (Gini Index), infant mortality, percent urban, and level of industrialization.

Table 2 presents an analysis of variance, means, and standard deviations for each type of service. Civil liberties are measured with the higher values indicating lower levels of in civil liberties. Countries with mandatory military with the social service option have the highest rates of civil liberties. I expect that civil liberties, urbanization, and industrialization will all be related to the same type of mandatory service. When looking at these results it is clear that countries with greater civil freedom have allowed for their citizens to choose their type of service.

Countries with the social service option are more urbanized and they have higher levels of industrialization than countries with only mandatory military service. This may indicate that these countries are more than just technologically advanced, but that they may also be more forward thinking by allowing their citizens to choose where they would better serve their country. Thus lowering the “dodging” that occurs in some mandatory military service only countries.

Countries with mandatory military with social service option have the higher overall percent of the labor force in the military. This finding does not necessarily indicate that in these countries people choose to serve the military instead of taking the social service option. In some countries the social service option is still within the military setting, for example having a job that does not carry a weapon or is a desk job (Croatia). In the regression analysis

Countries with the social service option have the lowest percent of the population under the international poverty line and less income inequality (Gini). These countries also have a large percent of the labor force employed by the military. The military has a very regulated pay scale based on time in service and rank. It also is a guaranteed job in most countries for at least three years. These countries have more people employed in secure and well-paying jobs.

#### **BIVARIATE ANALYSIS RESULTS**

The first equation in (column 1) Tables 3 through 5, show the standardized regression coefficients for mandatory military service and mandatory military or social service for robbery, burglary and homicide, respectively. These are the total or baseline effects of these variables without any of the control variables in the model. Looking across the tables we find some support for hypothesis 1: countries with conscription have lower crime rates.



Table 2. Variance; Means & Standard Deviations for Each Type of Service

	No Mandatory Service		Mandatory Military		Mandatory Military with Social Service		N
Example Countries	USA, England		Israel, Philippines		Belarus, Denmark		
Means (Std. Dev)							
Civil Liberties*	3.4	(1.8)	4.4	(1.8)	3.4	(1.9)	188
% Military*	1.7	(1.9)	.9	(.8)	1.9	(2.1)	149
Population (in millions)	30.1	(115.0)	43.2	(163.0)	22.6	(34.4)	202
Illiteracy	21.9	(22.1)	30.1	(21.6)	22.5	(19.9)	127
Unemployment	20.7	(16.1)	22.5	(18.3)	24.2	(15.5)	116
Poverty*	38.5	(9.3)	34.9	(13.8)	18.7	(6.7)	55
Gini*	42.0	(10.9)	43.0	(8.1)	32.3	(8.1)	119
Infant Mortality	72.0	(73.3)	75.4	(74.8)	41.6	(64.9)	180
% Urban*	52.5	(27.2)	50.9	(23.5)	65.3	(12.3)	204
Level of Industry*	3808.6	(4316.8)	1331.8	(1404.5)	5145.4	(4936.9)	124

\* p < .05 significance level

For robbery, both coefficients are negative, but only mandatory military service has a significant effect. This shows that countries with mandatory military service have lower crime rates than countries with no conscription at all. Because the dependent variables were logged we can also examine the un-standardized coefficients (not presented in the tables) to see how much lower the robbery rates are in those countries in terms of a percentage. The un-standardized coefficient for robbery ( $b = -.453$ ) suggests that robbery rates in countries with mandatory military service are approximately 45% lower than ones that have no conscription.

For burglary the data are more inconsistent. As was the case with robbery, countries with mandatory military service have lower rates of burglary (approximately 77% lower), however, countries with mandatory social service as an option to mandatory military service actually have higher rates of burglary than those without conscription (approximately 30% higher). Countries with social service as an option to military service have lower rates of burglary than countries without any type of mandatory service (approximately 47% lower). For homicide, however, neither mandatory military nor mandatory social service is significant. For robbery the coefficients are consistently negative and significant for mandatory military service. Mandatory military service is negatively related to burglary. This provides some support for hypothesis 1 and suggests that mandatory military service is more strongly related to crimes that have a clear financial or profit motive behind them. This issue will be returned to once the multivariate models and the other factors that affect each of the crimes have been discussed.

## MULTIVARIATE ANALYSIS RESULTS

Now focusing on multivariate equations for each type of crime separately, I will discuss how the influence of conscription changes with the introduction of the control variables as well as the other factors that affect crime rates across countries. These equations (2-11) can be found in Tables 3-5.

In Table 3, when controlling for civil liberties, population, unemployment, income disparity (Gini), infant mortality, percent urban, and the level of industrialization; mandatory military service remains a significant predictor of robbery rates ( $p < .05$ ). Consistent with Hypothesis 1, mandatory military service remains a robust predictor of robbery controlling for 8 of the 10 control variables. Two variables reduce mandatory military service to being statistically insignificant: percent in the military and percent below poverty. The percentage in the military is not itself a significant predictor of robbery rates but as might be expected is fairly strongly correlated with mandatory service ( $r = .125$ ). Income inequality (Gini) however, is a strong predictor of robbery rates ( $\beta = .385$ ). The only other variable significantly related to robbery is unemployment. Thus it would seem that although mandatory military is a fairly robust predictor, income inequality and unemployment also contribute to higher rates of robbery.

Interestingly and consistent with Hypothesis 2, mandatory military service with social service option is significantly and negatively related to robbery when the military labor force is controlled for. This suppression effect shows that once we control for differences in the percent of the labor force in the military, that having conscription with the option of social service is associated with lower robbery rates.

Table 3. Regression Analysis of Robbery Data

Independent Variables	Eq.1	Eq.2	Eq.3	Eq.4	Eq. 5	Eq.6	Eq.7	Eq.8	Eq. 9	Eq. 10	Eq.11
Mandatory Military	-.344*	-.356*	-.106	-.322*	-.280	-.358*	.091	-.365*	-.315*	-.332*	-.387*
Mandatory w/ Social Service	-.077	-.075	-.053*	-.088	-.114	-.003	.449	.098	-.062	-.069	-.125
Civil Liberties		-.067	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
% Military			-.082	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Population				-.151	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Illiteracy					.149	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Unemployment						.291*	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Poverty							.328	-----	-----	-----	-----
Gini								.385*	-----	-----	-----
Infant Mortality									-.004	-----	-----
% Urban										-.065	-----
Level of Industry											.033
R-Square	.103	.125	.016	.125	.073	.230	.123	.218	.088	.107	.126
N	79	77	60	79	53	52	22	64	75	79	69

\* p< .05 significance level

+ p< .10 significance level

Table 4. Regression Analysis of Burglary Data

Independent Variables	Eq.1	Eq.2	Eq.3	Eq.4	Eq.5	Eq.6	Eq.7	Eq.8	Eq.9	Eq.10	Eq.11
Mandatory Military	-.400*	-.352*	-.321*	-.386*	-.559*	-.512*	-.441	-.424*	-.418*	-.392*	-.403*
Mandatory w/ Social Service	.271*	.268*	.274+	.259*	.187	.143	.308	.200	.273*	.273*	.206+
Civil Liberties		-.175	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
% Military			.023	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Population				-.118	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Illiteracy					.039	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Unemployment						.079	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Poverty							-.366	-----	-----	-----	-----
Gini								-.167	-----	-----	-----
Infant Mortality									.016	-----	-----
% Urban										-.029	-----
Level of Industry											.210
R-Square	.311	.341	.234	.324	.416	.359	.553	.362	.328	.311	.393
N	66	64	49	66	45	44	18	51	62	66	57

\* p< .05 significance level

+ p< .10 significance level

Table 5. Regression Analysis of Homicide Data

Independent Variables	Eq.1	Eq.2	Eq.3	Eq.4	Eq.5	Eq.6	Eq.7	Eq.8	Eq.9	Eq.10	Eq.11
Mandatory Military	.086	.036	.303*	.089	.154	.117	.032	-.032	.056	.115	-.097
Mandatory w/ Social Service	-.102	-.084	-.059	-.105	-.052	-.081	.095	.051	-.141	-.083	-.094
Civil Liberties		.209+	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----
% Military			.139	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----
Population				-.042	----	----	----	----	----	----	----
Illiteracy					.080	----	----	----	----	----	----
Unemployment						.337*	----	----	----	----	----
Poverty							.207	----	----	----	----
Gini								.489*	----	----	----
Infant Mortality									.055	----	----
% Urban										-.232*	----
Level of Industry											-.327*
R-Square	.025	.062	.117	.027	.046	.126	.029	.212	.038	.078	.110
N	74	72	56	74	50	47	19	58	69	74	65

\* p< .05 significance level

+ p< .10 significance level

This suggests that conscription may have an effect independent of simply having people participate in the military (perhaps a social integration or bonding effect). The most powerful model includes mandatory military service and unemployment which explains about 22% of the variation in robbery rates.

As can be seen in Table 4 and consistent with the first hypothesis, when controlling for civil liberties, percent military in labor force, population, urbanization, and industrialization both types of mandatory service are significantly related to burglary, although mandatory military service with a social service option is consistently positive. When we control for unemployment, illiteracy, income disparity, and infant mortality, mandatory military service is significantly related. This finding is consistent with the first hypothesis. When examining the cross-national burglary data, none of the nine social indicators were significantly related. Interestingly, 55% the variation in burglary rates can be explained by examining both types of mandatory service and the poverty within a nation. Mandatory military with social service option is reduced with military service, however, the effect is still relatively robust and significant at the .10 level. Poverty is also highly correlated with mandatory military with social service ( $r = -.534$ ).

In Table 5, when we control for the military personnel in the labor force, mandatory military service is significantly and positively related to homicide suggesting that these countries actually have higher rates once this variable is controlled for. The control variables of civil liberties, unemployment, income disparity (Gini), urbanization, and industrialization are all significantly related to homicide.

## CONCLUSIONS

Overall, we find some (but inconsistently) support for a relationship between mandatory military service for both property crime (burglary) and violent crime (robbery), this is consistent with hypothesis 1. Consistent with hypothesis 1, mandatory military service has a significant relationship with burglary. For this data set, the violent crime of homicide is better explained through our control variables whether social, economic, or demographic in nature, then through mandatory service of any sort.

The data suggests that mandatory military service may have a greater effect on crimes that have a clear financial or profit motive behind them. This may in part be due to the fact that mandatory service provides employment for a large amount of the population. It may also be associated to the collective identity that prevails in the military and their indoctrinated beliefs and bonds to their country. Interestingly and inconsistent with the hypothesis mandatory military with the social service option is positively related to burglary and unrelated to robbery and homicide. This issue will be continued in the discussion of theory and findings in the following chapter.



## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

#### OVERVIEW OF RESULTS

The findings provide some support that mandatory military service is highly related to reducing property crimes. This result is consistent with social control theory, meaning that military service may serve as a process of socialization through which people identify with each other and their community, thus reducing the likelihood of property crime. The relationship between military service and property crimes is consistent with Sampson and Laub's beliefs of the life-course. They state that "social ties to the adult institutions of informal social control (family, work, community) may serve as links in the chain connecting deviant behavior across the life course" (1992:138). From the results in this thesis and some other studies (Elder 1985, Caspi and Moffitt 1992) we might also include the military institution.

There was less evidence of a negative effect for the social service option style of conscription. In Chapter III, I reviewed Durkheim's belief that different individuals may be attracted to a common goal and may be very willing to submit to the authority of the social system, but their efforts must be coordinated properly if society is to function smoothly. One of the main reasons given by many citizens in opposition to military conscription is that the policy is too burdensome. By looking over the results this may not be a widely held belief, as there are more mandatory military service countries with lowered crime rates. Therefore indicating more support for mandatory military service as a social control and social bond. This is against part of the Durkheim theory that even if an individual wished to work with others towards a common goal or social purpose, he or

she might turn in a deviant direction if the norms regulating the common effort were perceived as unnecessary, overly burdensome, or otherwise questionable (Durkheim 1951).

## LIMITATIONS

Having multiple years for analysis reduces the likelihood of cross-national analysis error. However, being able to get full data for the countries for multiple years was not possible the time given. One of the main limitations of this study was finding the status of conscription in a country and being able to find subsequent crime and social indicator data all covering the same years. Therefore I was able to only gather sufficient data for one year. Having data covering 5 years or more may have yielded different results.

There was variation in the definitions of conscription among the various countries. This is important to understand when looking through this study. Not all non-conscripting countries have a military to conscript for. Some conscripting countries draft citizens into a police force not a military. The United States is considered a non-conscripting country, however, we still have a draft board, males 18 and over are still required to register, and the US is ready to begin conscripting if needed.

Another limitation was not having more reliable and valid measures of crime rates across nations. Eventually more sophisticated and internationally accepted ways to gather demographic and crime data will become common practice. This will aid in many of the limitations that happen within cross-national analysis now. There was a large number of missing data from countries that were large enough to have the ability to gather and report the data requested by the collection agencies.

## FUTURE RESEARCH

There are several reasons that this type of research needs to be continued into the future. As was obvious while I searched for literature, there are very few studies of this sort. To better understand how conscription works in some countries and not in others is important, especially to countries that are looking to implement conscription or to improve their policies on conscription. Another study with data covering multiple years should be done to check this thesis's findings.

Perspective studies should include the analysis of how military service effect people across the age-crime curve. Two main concepts underline the study of life-course dynamics. The first is a trajectory, a pathway of development over the life span. Trajectories refer to long term patterns of behavior and are marked by transitions. Transitions, being the second concept, are marked by life events, for instance a first job (Elder 1985). Some transitions are age-graded and some are not. Subsequently, life-course analyses are often characterized by a focus on duration, timing, and ordering of major events and their consequences for later development (Sampson and Laub 1993). So examining where in the life course military service most impacts people is important.

A time series analysis across one or several countries would be very helpful. A time series analysis of a country like the United States who has drafted at different times through history would be interesting. Since the beginning of the twentieth century violent crime rates in the United States have far exceeded those in many other modern industrial societies (Messner and Rosenfeld 2001). The annual rates of homicide recorded in the United States over the past ninety years are greater than the highest rates found in other industrial societies (Zahn 1989). Data on robbery trends in the United States have been available only since the early 1930s, but they display essentially the

same pattern of change as homicide rates over this period (Zahn 1989:218-219). A time series analysis of conscription and crime should be done in other industrial societies. The analysis should also look into the possibility that the fluctuations in crime could be due to crime age men taken off the streets by military service. A comparison of how conscription/crime varies in countries with mandatory military or social service with a country that only uses its' mandatory military service in a time of war should be done.

## CONCLUSIONS

It is of importance for the future of policy and procedures of military around the world that studies similar to this thesis continue. One of the main limitations of this study is the inability to determine the mechanism responsible for the reduction in criminal behavior attributed to military service. The goal of this study was to find out if there is a relationship between conscription and criminal behavior. Future studies must address the specific characteristics of military service that may play a role in this relationship. These studies will help to come to a better understanding of the life course perspective and the military as a social bond or control.

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