

“critical” cases to assess the impact of both structural and process variables; and analysis by aggregating data across a large number of cases to permit the quantitative testing of causal models which incorporate the principal structural explanations. Although these methods are often treated as mutually exclusive, they are more appropriately conceived of as complementary.<sup>164</sup> Each method has different data requirements and permits different kinds of inference.

Aggregate data analysis across cases places a heavy burden on investigators. They must examine large numbers of cases in sufficient historical detail to establish the intentions of putative challengers and document the behaviour of the defenders. They must do this to determine in the first instance whether a case qualifies as a deterrence encounter. Examination of cases must go well beyond existing data collections to a wide range of primary and secondary sources, since the intentions of alleged initiators are critical to the identification of relevant cases. Investigators must also make explicit their criteria for coding outcomes in each case included in their collection. This kind of documentation is essential, given the multiple interpretations characteristic of many of the cases. It is misleading, then, to assume that the analysis of data aggregated across large numbers of cases can be less labour intensive or less demanding in the evidence that it requires.<sup>165</sup>

A further requirement of aggregate data analysis is a large enough number of cases to test even the small number of explanatory variables identified by deterrence theory as critical. At a minimum, the number of both deterrence successes and failures must be

---

<sup>164</sup> For the most recent debate on this subject, see Achen and Snidal, “Rational Deterrence Theory and Comparative Case Studies;” Alexander L. George and Richard Smoke, “Deterrence and Foreign Policy,” *World Politics* 41 (January, 1989), pp.170-182; Jervis, “Rational Deterrence: Theory and Evidence;” Lebow and Stein, “Rational Deterrence Theory: I Think, Therefore I Deter;” and George Downs, “The Rational Deterrence Debate,” *World Politics* 41 (January 1989), pp.225-237.

<sup>165</sup> For a carefully constructed data set across cases of international crisis, which draws exhaustively on the primary and secondary literature, see Michael Brecher, Jonathan Wilkenfeld, *et al.*, *Crises in the Twentieth Century* Vols. I and II (London: Pergamon Press, 1988), Vol. III (London: Pergamon Press, 1989).