concepts and their empirical measurement, either qualitatively or quantitatively. They are also better able to discriminate among competing theoretical explanations insofar as they reconstruct leaders' processes of decisions. Indeed, we argue, as do others, that even were the community of scholars able to identify a sufficiently large number of cases of deterrence success, detailed comparative analysis of cases would still be necessary.[170] Only analyses of this kind can trace the process through which leaders make their decisions. We argue that these processes are important intervening variables between structural variables and the outcome of decisions. Their understanding is essential for the testing of deterrence theory and the validation of causal explanations derived from aggregate analysis.

In summary, we propose as the first essential step in the testing of deterrence theory the construction of a collection of cases of immediate deterrence success and failure. This kind of collection can be built only through collaboration among historians, area experts, and analysts of deterrence. It is the first essential step because without a valid data base the testing of deterrence theory is impossible. Once a valid data set is assembled, proponents and critics of deterrence can begin to test their respective hypotheses by their preferred methods with results that will be more meaningful to each other, more in accord with the canons of scientific inquiry, and more relevant to policymakers.

[170] Huth and Russett share this perspective. They argue the necessity of detailed case studies to complement the testing of models built on large numbers of cases and both include detailed analysis of cases in their work.