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978-0-521-43602-1 - The Comparative Political Economy of the Welfare State

Thomas Janoski and Alexander M. Hicks

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New methods in comparative and historical research in political economy have not been recognized either within an integrated framework or as a major field of comparative research methodology. The most recent works have stressed historical or qualitative approaches, but not the wide range of quantitative work. Existing comparative methodology texts were written before most new methods were in widespread use; Thomas Janoski and Alexander Hicks fill the gap in comparative political economy by focusing on these new comparative/historical methods – time-series, pooled time and cross-sectional, event history, and Boolean analyses. In the introduction, they provide a sweeping overview of the comparative research process and the methods that have been used in the past decade. In subsequent chapters, distinguished scholars in the field introduce specific methods and then demonstrate each one by applying it to social and economic policy in advanced industrialized states. In the conclusion, Janoski and Hicks clarify the slippery topic of “political economy” and identify the four directions they expect the comparative political economy of the welfare state to take over the next few decades.

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To our political economy and methodology teachers
at Berkeley and Wisconsin
as well as
Nancy, Ryan, and Nat

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Preface

This book is intended to be an analog of sorts to Theda Skocpol's edited volume *Vision and Method in Historical Sociology*. The format is entirely different in that we organize it around method rather than author, focus it as much on specific policy theories as on general visions, and target it as much on methodological techniques as on designs. Yet the intent is the same – to introduce a broad range of methodological approaches to the comparative social sciences. In keeping with Charles Ragin's concept of *synthetic analysis*, we see this volume joining together an ample range of comparative, quantitative, and, indeed, historical methods. A mesh of methods enriches a field. We hope that our net is tight and broad enough to gather a rich new catch of insights about the welfare state.

This book began in the planning of a Southern Sociological Society session and then reached fruition in the “New Compass of the Comparativist” conference held at Duke University in 1991. Three sources in Durham, New York, and Washington, D.C., provided approximately equal funding to finance the conference on which this book is largely based. First, we would like to thank Edward Tiryakian, Director of the Center for International Studies at Duke University, for providing the seed funding that started the ball rolling on this project. Without his help, this project would probably not have gotten off the ground. Second, we would also like to thank Dr. Ioannis Sinanoglou and the Council for European Studies for their Western European Studies Workshop Grant. And third, we thank William V. D'Antonio for funding from the joint American Sociological Association/National Science Foundation Fund for the Advancement of the Discipline. All three sources contributed equally in making the conference a success and this book a reality.

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University, Larry Griffin of Vanderbilt University, Larry Isaac of Florida State University, Miguel Korzeniewicz of the University of New Mexico, Peter Lange of Duke University, Philip O'Connell of the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, Charles Ragin of Northwestern University, Richard Rubinson of Emory University, David Smith of the University of California-Irvine, David Strang of Cornell University, George Tsebellis of the University of California-Los Angeles, Chikako Usui of the University of Missouri-St. Louis, and Michael Wallerstein of the University of California-Los Angeles. We would especially like to thank Charles Ragin for his roles as discussant and presenter and in helping us obtain two key participants. Graduate students from the Duke University sociology and political science departments played an important role in the conference. They met with paper presenters concerning the methodology and substance of each paper presented. We would like to thank these discussants also: Michael Alvarez, Phillip Atkison, Jihee Choi, Adele Cummings, Stephanie Fonda, Fabrice Laboucq, Patrice LeClerc, Bryan Lyond, P. A. McManus, Stephen Russell, and Vince Salazar. Finally, we thank Judith Dillon for her conference planning and Adele Cummings, Rhonda Dollas, and Brigitte Neary for their logistical support.

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This book is in part dedicated to our political economy and methodology teachers at Berkeley and Madison. Although many teachers made important contributions, the Berkeley author would like to thank Harold Wilensky, who has been a driving force in welfare state analysis and has always warned against methodological dogmatism. The Madison author additionally would like to thank the originators and participants in the weekly "social organization" and "methodology" seminars of the 1970s Sociology Department, exemplary intellectual pluralists all.