

The Flawed Logic of Democratic Peace Theory

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Democratic peace theory is probably the most powerful liberal contribution to the debate on the causes of war and peace. In this paper I examine the causal logics that underpin the theory to determine whether they offer compelling explanations for the finding of mutual democratic pacifism. I find that they do not. Democracies do not reliably externalize their domestic norms of conflict resolution and do not trust or respect one another when their interests clash. Moreover, elected leaders are not especially accountable to peace loving publics or pacific interest groups, democracies are not particularly slow to mobilize or incapable of surprise attack, and open political competition does not guarantee that a democracy will reveal private information about its level of resolve thereby avoiding conflict. Since the evidence suggests that the logics do not operate as stipulated by the theory's proponents, there are good reasons to believe that while there is certainly peace among democracies, it may not be caused by the democratic nature of those states.

Democratic peace theory—the claim that democracies rarely fight one another because they share common norms of live-and-let-live and domestic institutions that constrain the recourse to war—is probably the most powerful liberal contribution to the debate on the causes of war and peace.¹ If the theory is correct, it has important implications for both the study and the practice of international politics. Within the academy it undermines both the realist claim that states are condemned to exist in a constant state of security competition and its assertion that the structure of the international system, rather than state type, should be central to our understanding of state behavior. In practical terms democratic peace theory provides the intellectual justification for the belief that spreading democracy abroad will perform the dual task of enhancing American national security and promoting world peace.

In this article I offer an assessment of democratic peace theory. Specifically, I examine the causal logics that underpin the theory to determine whether they offer compelling explanations for why democracies do not fight one another.

A theory is comprised of a hypothesis stipulating an association between an independent and a dependent variable and a causal logic that explains the connection between those two variables. To test a theory fully, we should determine whether there is support for the hypothesis, that is, whether there is a correlation between the independent and the dependent variables and whether there is a causal relationship between

them.² An evaluation of democratic peace theory, then, rests on answering two questions. First, do the data support the claim that democracies rarely fight each other? Second, is there a compelling explanation for why this should be the case?

Democratic peace theorists have discovered a powerful empirical generalization: Democracies rarely go to war or engage in militarized disputes with one another. Although there have been several attempts to challenge these findings (e.g., Farber and Gowa 1997; Layne 1994; Spiro 1994), the correlations remain robust (e.g., Maoz 1998; Oneal and Russett 1999; Ray 1995; Russett 1993; Weart 1998). Nevertheless, some scholars argue that while there is certainly peace among democracies, it may be caused by factors other than the democratic nature of those states (Farber and Gowa 1997; Gartzke 1998; Layne 1994). Farber and Gowa (1997), for example, suggest that the Cold War largely explains the democratic peace finding. In essence, they are raising doubts about whether there is a convincing causal logic that explains how democracies interact with each other in ways that lead to peace. To resolve this debate, we must take the next step in the testing process: determining the persuasiveness of the various causal logics offered by democratic peace theorists.

A causal logic is a statement about how an independent variable exerts a causal effect on a dependent variable. It elaborates a specific chain of causal mechanisms that connects these variables and takes the following form: A (the independent variable) causes B (the dependent variable) because A causes x, which causes y, which causes B (see, e.g., Elster 1989, 3–10). In the case at hand, democratic peace theorists maintain that democracy has various effects, such as support for peaceful norms of conflict resolution, which, in turn, increase the prospect for peace.

I adopt two strategies for testing the persuasiveness of the causal logics that underpin democratic peace theory. First, I take each logic at face value and ask

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I would like to thank Alexander Downes, John Mearsheimer, Susan Pratt, Duncan Snidal, and three anonymous reviewers for their helpful comments and suggestions and the Smith Richardson Foundation for financial support. A previous version of this paper was presented at The University of Chicago's Program on International Politics, Economics and Security (PIPES).

¹ The democratic peace research program has generated several additional empirical regularities. See, for example, Bueno de Mesquita et al. 1999, 791.

² On correlation versus causation see Dessler 1991 and Waltz 1979, 1–13.

FIGURE 1. Democratic Peace Theory's Causal Logics

Logic	Independent Variable		Causal Mechanisms		Dependent Variable
Normative	Democracy	→	Externalization	→	Trust and Respect → Peace
Institutional	Democracy	→	Accountability	→	Public Constraint → Peace
Institutional	Democracy	→	Accountability	→	Group Constraint → Peace
Institutional	Democracy	→	Accountability	→	Slow Mobilization → Peace
Institutional	Democracy	→	Accountability	→	No Surprise Attack → Peace
Institutional	Democracy	→	Accountability	→	Information → Peace

whether the hypothesized causal mechanisms operate as stipulated by the theory's proponents (George and McKeown 1985, 34–41; King, Keohane, and Verba 1994, 226–28; Van Evera 1997, 64–66). In other words, does the available evidence support the claims that A causes x, that x causes y, and that y causes B? If it does, then the theory must be considered compelling because, as mentioned above, it is widely agreed that there is strong correlational support for its main hypothesis. If not, there is good reason to be skeptical of the theory.

Second, I use the logics to generate additional testable propositions about the effects of democracy on state behavior. If we accept that A does cause x, that x causes y, and that y causes B, then logical deduction can yield other propositions that should also be true. These too can be checked against the historical record, and the theory will be strengthened or weakened to the extent that they find empirical support. Before performing these tests, however, a brief summary of the causal logics is in order.

CAUSAL LOGICS

Normative Logic

Proponents of the normative logic argue that one important effect of democracy is to socialize political elites to act on the basis of democratic norms whenever possible. In essence, these norms mandate nonviolent conflict resolution and negotiation in a spirit of live-and-let-live.³ Because democratic leaders are committed to these norms they try, as far as possible, to adopt them in the international arena. This in turn means that

democracies both trust and respect one another when a conflict of interest arises between them. Sentiments of respect derive from a conviction that the other state adheres to the same norms and is therefore just and worthy of accommodation. Trust derives from the expectation that the other party to the dispute is also inclined to respect a fellow democracy and will be proscribed normatively from resorting to force. Together these two causal mechanisms—*norm externalization* and mutual *trust and respect*—make up the normative logic and explain why democracies rarely fight one another (e.g., Dixon 1994, 16–18; Russett 1993, 31–35; Weart 1998, 77–78, 87–93) (Fig. 1).

While mutual trust and respect generally ensure that conflicts of interest between democracies are resolved amicably, there will be some situations in which ostensibly democratic states do not perceive each other to be democratic and therefore fight one another. In particular, a democracy may not be recognized as such if it is in the early stages of democratization or if it does not meet the criteria that policymakers in another state have adopted to define democracy (e.g., Russett 1993, 34–35; Weart 1998, 90–92, 132–34).

This logic also explains why democracies have often been prepared to go to war with nondemocracies. Simply put, nondemocracies are neither trusted nor respected. They are not respected because their domestic systems are considered unjust, and they are not trusted because neither do they respect the freedom of self-governing individuals, nor are they socialized to resolve conflicts non-violently. Large-scale violence may therefore occur for one of two reasons. First, democracies may not respect nondemocracies because they are considered to be in a state of war against their own citizens. War may therefore be permissible to free the people from authoritarian rule and introduce human rights or representative government. Second, because democracies are inclined toward peaceful conflict resolution, nondemocracies may be tempted to try and extract concessions from them by attacking or threatening to use force during a crisis. In such circumstances democracies may either have to defend themselves from attack or launch preemptive strikes (e.g., Doyle 1997, 30–43; Russett 1993, 32–35).

³ Strictly speaking, liberal and democratic norms are not equivalent and may be contradictory. With some notable exceptions, however, democratic peace theorists have tended to equate the two. I therefore use the terms “liberal state,” “democracy,” and “liberal democracy” interchangeably throughout my discussion of the normative logic to mean states based on both liberal and democratic norms. On liberal theory and norms see Doyle 1997, 4–7, and Owen 1997, 32–37. On democratic theory and norms as defined by democratic peace theorists see Dixon 1994, 15–16; Russett 1993, 31; and Weart 1998, 59–61.

Institutional Logic

According to the institutional logic, democratic institutions and processes make leaders accountable to a wide range of social groups that may, in a variety of circumstances, oppose war. *Accountability* derives from the fact that political elites want to remain in office, that there are opposition parties ready to capitalize on unpopular policies, and that there are regular opportunities for democratic publics to remove elites who have not acted in their best interests. Moreover, several features of democracies, such as freedom of speech and open political processes, make it fairly easy for voters to rate a government's performance. In short, monitoring and sanctioning democratic leaders is a relatively straightforward matter (e.g., Lake 1992, 25–26; Owen 1997, 41–43; Russett 1993, 38–40).

Because they are conscious of their accountability, democratic leaders will only engage in large-scale violence if there is broad popular support for their actions. This support is essential both because they may be removed from office for engaging in an unpopular war and because society as a whole, or subsets of it, can be expected to oppose costly or losing wars. There are several social groups that may need to be mobilized to support a war including the general public, those groups that benefit from an open international economy, opposition political parties, and liberal opinion leaders. The idea that publics generally oppose wars because of the costs they impose can be traced back to Kant's *Perpetual Peace* and continues to inform democratic peace theorists today (Doyle 1997, 24–25; Russett 1993, 38–39). Another established intellectual tradition argues that economic interdependence creates interest groups that are opposed to war because it imposes costs by disrupting international trade and investment (Doyle 1997, 26–27). Still other scholars have argued that opposition parties can choose to support a government if it is carrying out a popular policy or to oppose it for initiating domestically unpopular policies (Schultz 1998, 831–32). Finally, Owen has focused on the role of liberal opinion leaders in foreign policy decisions. These elites oppose violence against states they consider to be liberal and can expect the general public to share their views in times of crisis (Owen 1997, 19, 37–39, 45–47; see also Mintz and Geva 1993). In short, domestic groups may oppose war because it is costly, because they can gain politically from doing so, or simply because they deem it morally unacceptable.

Five causal mechanisms, and therefore five variants of the institutional logic, flow from elite accountability and the need to mobilize social groups for war. Each outlines a different path to peace between democracies. Two of them claim that democracies will often be unwilling to resort to force in an international crisis. According to the *public constraint* mechanism, this reluctance arises because leaders respond to the general public's aversion to war. The *group constraint* mechanism is similar; democratic leaders carry out the wishes of antiwar groups. In a crisis involving two democracies, then, the leaders of both states are constrained from engaging in large-scale violence, perceive their

counterparts to be similarly constrained, and will be inclined to come to an agreement short of war (e.g., Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman 1992, 155–58; Russett 1993, 38–40).⁴

Two other causal mechanisms focus on the claim that democracies are slow to use force. The *slow mobilization* mechanism holds that democracies cannot mobilize quickly because persuading the public and potential antiwar groups to support military action is a long and complex process. The *surprise attack* mechanism shares this insight but also notes that mobilization takes place in the public domain, thereby precluding the possibility of a surprise attack by a democracy. In purely democratic crises, then, both sides will have the time to come to a mutually acceptable agreement and be able to negotiate in good faith without fearing attack (e.g., Russett 1993, 38–40).

Finally, the *information* mechanism suggests that democracies provide information that can avert wars. Because democratic elites are accountable to their citizens and can expect opposition parties to oppose unpopular policies, they will be cautious about deciding to escalate a crisis or commit the country to war. Indeed, they will only select themselves into conflicts if they place a high value on the outcome of those conflicts, if they expect escalation to be popular at home, if there is a good chance that they will emerge victorious, and if they are prepared to fight hard. This sends a clear signal to other parties: If a democracy escalates or stands firm, it is highly resolved. In democratic crises, then, both states will have good information about the resolve of the other party, will be unlikely to misrepresent their own resolve, and will therefore be able to reach a negotiated solution rather than incur the risks and costs associated with the use of force (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 1999, 802–03; Schultz 1998, 840–41; see also Reiter and Stam 1998 and Fearon 1994).

These mechanisms also explain why democracies will often fight nondemocracies even as they remain at peace with one another. Nondemocratic leaders cannot be easily sanctioned or monitored and consequently do not need to enlist broad support when deciding to go to war. This means that they are, in general, more likely to act aggressively by either initiating military hostilities or exploiting the inherent restraint of democracies by pressing for concessions during a crisis. Alternatively, they may be unable to signal their true level of resolve. Wars between democracies and nondemocracies can therefore occur for three reasons. First, democracies may have to defend themselves from the predatory actions of nondemocracies. Second, they may have to preempt nondemocracies that could become aggressive in the future or attack rather than give in to unacceptable negotiating demands during a crisis. Third, they may decide to fight nondemocracies in the mistaken belief that peaceful bargains are not available (e.g., Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman 1992, 158–60; Lake 1992, 26–30; Russett 1993, 39–40).

⁴ It may not be necessary for two states to perceive each other to be constrained. The fact that they *are* both constrained may in itself be sufficient to ensure that war does not break out.

FLAWS IN THE NORMATIVE LOGIC

The causal mechanisms that comprise the normative logic do not appear to operate as stipulated. The available evidence suggests that, contrary to the claims of democratic peace theorists, democracies do not reliably externalize their domestic norms of conflict resolution, nor do they generally treat each other with trust and respect when their interests clash. Moreover, existing attempts to repair the logic are unconvincing.

Norm Externalization

The historical record indicates that democracies have often failed to adopt their internal norms of conflict resolution in an international context. This claim rests, first, on determining what democratic norms say about the international use of force and, second, on establishing whether democracies have generally adhered to these prescriptions.

Liberal democratic norms narrowly circumscribe the range of situations in which democracies can justify the use of force. As Doyle (1997, 25) notes, "Liberal wars are only fought for popular, liberal purposes." This does not mean that they will go to war less often than other kinds of states; it only means that there are fewer reasons available to them for waging war.

Democracies are certainly justified in fighting wars of self-defense. Locke ([1690] 1988), for example, argues that states, like men in the state of nature, have a right to destroy those who violate their rights to life, liberty, and property (269–72). There is considerable disagreement among liberal theorists regarding precisely what kinds of action constitute self-defense, but repulsing an invasion, preempting an impending military attack, and fighting in the face of unreasonable demands all plausibly fall under this heading. Waging war when the other party has not engaged in threatening behavior does not. In short, democracies should only go to war when "their safety and security are seriously endangered by the expansionist policies of outlaw states" (Rawls 1999, 90–91).

Another justification for the use of force is intervention in the affairs of other states or peoples, either to prevent blatant human rights violations or to bring about conditions in which liberal values can take root. For Rawls (1999, 81), as for many liberals, human rights violators are "to be condemned and in grave cases may be subjected to forceful sanctions and even to intervention" (see also Doyle 1997, 31–32, and Owen 1997, 34–35). Mill ([1859] (1984)) extends the scope of intervention, arguing that "barbarous" nations can be conquered to civilize them for their own benefit (see also Mehta 1990). However, if external rule does not ensure freedom and equality, it will be as illiberal as the system it seeks to replace. Consequently, intervention can only be justified if it is likely to "promote the development of conditions in which appropriate principles of justice can be satisfied" (Beitz 1979, 90).

The imperialism of Europe's great powers between 1815 and 1975 provides good evidence that liberal democracies have often waged war for reasons other

than self-defense and the inculcation of liberal values. Although there were only a handful of liberal democracies in the international system during this period, they were involved in 66 of the 108 wars listed in the Correlates of War (COW) dataset of extrasystemic wars (Singer and Small 1994). Of these 66 wars, 33 were "imperial," fought against previously independent peoples, and 33 were "colonial," waged against existing colonies.

It is hard to justify the "imperial" wars in terms of self-defense. Several cases are clear-cut: The democracy faced no immediate threat and conquered simply for profit or to expand its sphere of influence. A second set of cases includes wars waged as a result of imperial competition: Liberal democracies conquered non-European peoples in order to create buffer states against other empires or to establish control over them before another imperial power could move in. Thus Britain tried to conquer Afghanistan (1838) in order to create a buffer state against Russia, and France invaded Tunisia (1881) for fear of an eventual Italian occupation. Some commentators describe these wars as defensive because they aimed to secure sources of overseas wealth, thereby enhancing national power at the expense of other European powers. There are three reasons to dispute this assessment. First, these wars were often preventive rather than defensive: Russia had made no move to occupy Afghanistan and Italy had taken no action in Tunisia. A war designed to avert possible action in the future, but for which there is no current evidence, is not defensive. Second, there was frequently a liberal alternative to war. Rather than impose authoritarian rule, liberal great powers could have offered non-European peoples military assistance in case of attack or simply deterred other imperial powers. Finally, a substantial number of the preventive occupations were a product of competition between Britain and France, two liberal democracies that should have trusted one another and negotiated in good faith without compromising the rights of non-Europeans if democratic peace theory is correct.

A third set of cases includes wars waged directly against non-Europeans whose territory bordered the European empires. Because non-Europeans sometimes initiated these wars contemporaries tended to justify them as defensive wars of "pacification" to protect existing imperial possessions. Again, there are good reasons to doubt the claim that such wars were defensive. In the first place, non-Europeans often attacked to prevent further encroachment on their lands; it was they and not the Europeans that were fighting in self-defense. Moreover, there is considerable evidence that the imperial powers often provoked the attacks or acted preventively and exploited local instabilities as a pretext for imposing control on the periphery of their empires (Table 1).

Nor were any of the extrasystemic wars fought to prevent egregious abuses of human rights or with the express purpose of replacing autocratic rule with a more liberal alternative. The "colonial" wars, by definition, were conflicts in which imperial powers sought to perpetuate or reimpose autocratic rule. The "imperial" wars simply replaced illiberal indigenous government

TABLE 1. Imperial Wars Involving Liberal Democracies

War	Description
British–Zulu, 1838	Zulus retaliated against territorial encroachment. Suppressed.
British–Afghan, 1838	Preventive war to create buffer against Russia. No Russian action.
First Opium, 1839	British attempt to force open Chinese markets.
British–Baluchi, 1843	Annexation to control southern route to Afghanistan and border regions.
Uruguayan Dispute, 1845	British intervention in local conflict.
British–Sikh, 1845	Attempt to control Sikhs. Massed troops on border. Sikhs preempted.
British–Kaffir, 1846	Kaffirs retaliated against territorial encroachment. Suppressed.
British–Sikh, 1848	Revolt against British control. Suppressed and annexed.
British–Burmese, 1852	Annexation after Burmese court insulted British merchants.
Second Opium, 1856	British attempt to force open Chinese markets.
British–Maori, 1860	Maoris retaliated against territorial encroachment. Suppressed.
British–Bhutanese, 1865	Expedition to eliminate Bhutanese threat to control on empire's periphery.
British–Ethiopian, 1867	Invasion in retaliation for imprisonment of British subjects.
Franco–Tonkin, 1873	Disorder in Tonkin used as pretext for expanding influence.
Dutch–Achinese, 1873	Dutch demanded control of ports. Aceh refused, so Dutch invaded.
British–Afghan, 1878	Preventive war to establish control before Russia attempted to do so.
British–Zulu, 1879	Provoked Zulu attack to establish control and prevent growth of Zulu power.
Franco–Tunisian, 1881	Preventive war: fear Italy would seek control. No Italian action.
Franco–Indochinese, 1882	Attempt to impose control.
Franco–Madagascan, 1883	Attempt to consolidate sphere of influence.
British–Burmese, 1885	Preventive war: fear France would seek control. No French action.
Mandigo, 1885	French attempt to establish control.
Franco–Dahomeyan, 1889	Conquest to provide access to Niger River and evade British customs.
Franco–Senegalese, 1890	Attempt to control and exploit resources of West Africa.
Belgian–Congolese, 1892	Attempt to control and exploit resources of Congo.
British–Ashanti, 1893	Attempt to establish control and preempt France. No French action.
Franco–Madagascan, 1894	Conquest to consolidate control.
Mahdi Uprising, 1896	British attempt to control Nile and preempt France. No French action.
British–Nigerian, 1897	Attempt to establish control. Punitive expedition for killings of Europeans.
Boer, 1899	British preventive war to destroy growing power of Boers.
First Moroccan, 1911	French attempt to establish control: feared German action. No such action.
British–Afghan, 1919	Afghan attempt to escape British control.
Franco–Syrian, 1920	Attempt to establish influence. Syria declared independence in 1918.

Note: I use Przeworski et al. 2000, 18–29 throughout to code states as democratic or nondemocratic. Where they do not provide a coding I use their criteria to determine regime type. (1) The chief executive must be directly elected or responsible to an elected legislature. (2) The legislature must be elected. (3) There must be more than one party. If there were no parties, there was only one party, the incumbents established nonparty or one-party rule, or the incumbents unconstitutionally closed the legislature and rewrote the rules in their favor, then the regime was nondemocratic. (4) Incumbents must allow the possibility that they will lose an election and allow a lawful alternation of office if defeated in elections. These criteria precisely replicate the features that democratic peace theorists claim are characteristic of democracy (e.g., Dixon 1994, 15–16; Russett 1993, 14–16, 31; Weart 1998, 59–61). A complete dataset based on these criteria and covering all states from 1800 to 1999 is available upon request. I use Doyle 1997 to code states as liberal or illiberal. To be a liberal democracy, then, a state must be both liberal as defined by Doyle and democratic as defined by Przeworski et al. *Sources:* Farwell 1972; Featherstone 1973; Haythornthwaite 1995; Hernon 2000.

with authoritarian rule. When imperial rule was not imposed directly, the European powers supported local elites but retained strict control over their actions, thereby underwriting unjust political systems and effectively implementing external rule. In short, despite protestations that they were bearing the “white man’s burden,” there is little evidence that liberal states’ use of force was motivated by respect for human rights or that imperial conquest enhanced the rights of non-Europeans.⁵

⁵ An analysis of decolonization is beyond the scope of this paper, but some preliminary comments are in order. According to Russett (1993, 35), decolonization came about at least in part because Western forms of self-rule took root in the colonies and the European powers therefore “lost confidence in their normative right to rule.” The evidence suggests otherwise. Of the 67 states that gained their independence between 1950 and 1980, 50 had autocratic governments (Przeworski et al. 2000, 59–69).

There are, then, several examples of liberal states violating liberal norms in their conduct of foreign policy and therefore the claim that liberal states generally externalize their internal norms of conflict resolution is open to question.

Proponents of the democratic peace have downplayed the importance of these findings in three ways. First, they have restated their argument and claimed that democracies remain at peace because they trust and respect one other and fight nondemocracies because they neither trust nor respect them. As Doyle (1997, 32) notes, “Extreme lack of public respect or trust is one of the major features that distinguishes relations between liberal and nonliberal societies from relations among liberal societies.” According to this restatement, we should not be surprised to observe European democracies fighting non-Europeans and the normative logic can therefore accommodate the imperial evidence. This alternative presentation of the logic is,

however, ad hoc. A more satisfying logic, and the one put forward by most democratic peace theorists, is more complex: Democracies rarely fight each other because they trust and respect one another, and they are able to do so because they know that their democratic counterparts will act on the basis of democratic norms, that is, they will only fight in self-defense or to democratize others. The key to this logic is that democracies must reliably externalize democratic norms. If they do, then trust and respect will prevail; if they do not, then we cannot be confident that peace will obtain between them. The history of imperialism suggests that they do not and therefore casts doubt on the normative logic's explanatory power.

Second, democratic peace theorists have claimed that Britain, France, and the United States were not sufficiently liberal in the period under review and thus cannot be expected to reliably externalize their internal norms (e.g., Rawls 1999, 53–54). If this claim is true, the normative logic cannot tell us a great deal about international politics. Britain, France, and the United States are generally considered to be classic liberal democracies; if they cannot be expected to behave in a liberal fashion, then few, if any, states can.

Finally, democratic peace theorists assert that they do not claim that liberal norms are the sole determinant of decisions for war; factors such as power and contiguity matter as well (e.g., Russett 1995). This defense would be convincing if I were claiming that liberal norms were not the only factors that went into decision making or that they were not as important in the decision making process as other factors. However, the claim made here is quite different: Liberal states have consistently violated liberal norms when deciding to go to war. It is not

that liberal norms only matter a little; they have often made no difference at all.

In sum, there are good reasons to believe that one of the normative logic's key causal mechanisms does not operate as advertised. Liberal democratic great powers have frequently violated liberal norms in their decisions for war, thereby casting doubt on the claim that democracies generally externalize their internal norms of conflict resolution.

Trust and Respect

The available evidence suggests that democracies do not have a powerful inclination to treat each other with trust and respect when their interests clash. Instead, they tend to act like any other pair of states, bargaining hard, issuing threats, and, if they believe it is warranted, using military force.

Cold War Interventions. American interventions to destabilize fellow democracies in the developing world provide good evidence that democracies do not always treat each other with trust and respect when they have a conflict of interest. In each case, Washington's commitment to containing the spread of communism overwhelmed any respect for fellow democracies. Although none of the target states had turned to communism or joined the communist bloc, and were led by what were at most left-leaning democratically elected governments, American officials chose neither to trust nor to respect them, preferring to destabilize them by force and replace them with autocratic (but anticommunist) regimes rather than negotiate with them in good faith or secure their support by diplomatic means (Table 2).

TABLE 2. American Cold War Interventions Against Democracies

Target	Description
Iran (1953)	Mossadeq's foreign policy aimed at disengagement from superpower rivalry. Domestically, allied with or suppressed communists as necessary. United States assisted coup that overthrew him.
Guatemala (1954)	Four communists in government and hardly any in general population. Army, the key institution in politics, was anticommunist. Arbenz undertook a number of leftist reform programs. United States financed and directed invasion that replaced him.
Indonesia (1957–)	Sukarno's "guided democracy" only way simultaneously to democratize Indonesia and prevent civil war. Communists performed well in 1955 elections. United States assisted rebels seeking to oust Sukarno.
British Guyana (1961–)	Jagan consistently sought American support. Washington convinced he was leftist and sponsored terrorist efforts to subvert him, then changed election laws to remove him.
Brazil (1961, 1964)	American role in Quadros's resignation (1961) unclear. Goulart's foreign policy neutral. At home made no effort to legalize communist party or extend term illegally. Accepted East European aid and undertook some leftist reforms. United States assisted in red scare and coup that overthrew him.
Chile (1973)	Allende a socialist, but legislature controlled by center-right. United States approved Chilean military coup that overthrew him.
Nicaragua (1984–)	Sandinistas were more democratic than American-backed Somoza dynasty. Held elections in 1984 and bowed to international pressure in respecting a number of civil rights. United States sought to roll back apparent communist threat.

Note: Democratic Britain assisted the United States in Iran and British Guyana. For regime coding see Table 1. Iran had not yet experienced a peaceful transfer of power in 1953. The American-backed coup meant that Mossadeq was not given an opportunity to prove that he would hand over power were he to lose an election. He was, however, democratically elected and committed to future elections. *Sources:* Barnett 1968; Bill 1988; Forsythe 1992; Gardner 1997; Gleijeses 1991; Gurtov 1974; Leacock 1990; Ryan 1995; Sater 1990; Tillema 1973; Weis 1993.

Three features of these cases deserve emphasis. First, all the regimes that the United States sought to undermine were democratic. In the cases of Guatemala, British Guyana, Brazil, and Chile democratic processes were fairly well established. Iran, Indonesia, and Nicaragua were fledgling democracies but Mossadeq, Sukarno, and the Sandinistas could legitimately claim to be the first proponents of democracy in their respective countries. Every government with the exception of the Sandinistas was replaced by a succession of American-backed dictatorial regimes.

Second, in each case the clash of interests between Washington and the target governments was not particularly severe. These should, then, be easy cases for democratic peace theory since trust and respect are most likely to be determinative when the dispute is minor. None of the target governments were communist, and although some of them pursued leftist policies there was no indication that they intended to impose a communist model or that they were actively courting the Soviet Union. In spite of the limited scope of disagreement, respect for democratic forms of government was consistently subordinated to an expanded conception of national security.

Third, there is good evidence that support for democracy was often sacrificed in the name of American economic interests. At least some of the impetus for intervention in Iran came in response to the nationalization of the oil industry, the United Fruit Company pressed for action in Guatemala, International Telephone and Telegraph urged successive administrations to intervene in Brazil and Chile, and Allende's efforts to nationalize the copper industry fueled demands that the Nixon administration destabilize his government.

In sum, the record of American interventions in the developing world suggests that democratic trust and respect has often been subordinated to security and economic interests.

Democratic peace theorists generally agree that these interventions are examples of a democracy using force against other democracies, but they offer two reasons why covert interventions should not count against the normative logic. The first reason is that the target states were not democratic enough to be trusted and respected (Forsythe 1992; Russett 1993, 120–24). This claim is not entirely convincing. Although the target states may not have been fully democratic, they were more democratic than the regimes that preceded and succeeded them and were democratizing further. Indeed, in every case American action brought more autocratic regimes to power.

The second reason is that these interventions were covert, a fact believed by democratic peace theorists to reveal the strength of their normative argument. It was precisely because these states were democratic that successive administrations had to act covertly rather than openly initiate military operations. Knowing that their actions were illegitimate, and fearing a public backlash, American officials decided on covert action (Forsythe 1992; Russett 1993, 120–24). This defense fails to address some important issues. To begin with, it ignores the fact that American public officials, that is,

the individuals that democratic peace theory claims are most likely to abide by liberal norms, showed no respect for fellow democracies. Democratic peace theorists will respond that the logic holds, however, because these officials were restrained from using open and massive force by the liberal attitudes of the mass public. This is a debatable assertion; after all, officials may have opted for covert and limited force for a variety of reasons other than public opinion, such as operational costs and the expected international reaction. Simply because the use of force was covert and limited, this does not mean that its nature was determined by public opinion.

But even if it is true that officials adopted a covert policy to shield themselves from a potential public backlash, the logic still has a crucial weakness: The fact remains that the United States did not treat fellow democracies with trust or respect. Ultimately, the logic stands or falls by its predictive power, that is, whether democracies treat each other with respect. If they do, it is powerful; if they do not, it is weakened. It does not matter why they do not treat each other with respect, nor does it matter if some or all of the population wants to treat the other state with respect; all that matters is whether respect is extended. To put it another way, we can come up with several reasons to explain why respect is not extended, and we can always find social groups that oppose the use of military force against another democracy, but whenever we find several examples of a democracy using military force against other democracies, the trust and respect mechanism, and therefore the normative logic, fails an important test.⁶

Great Powers. Layne (1994) and Rock (1997) have found further evidence that democracies do not treat each other with trust and respect in their analyses of diplomatic crises involving Britain, France, Germany, and the United States. Layne examines four prominent cases in which rival democracies almost went to war with one another and asks whether the crises were resolved because of mutual trust and respect. His conclusion offers scant support for the normative logic: “In each of these crises, at least one of the democratic states involved was prepared to go to war. . . . In each of the four crises, war was avoided not because of the ‘live and let live’ spirit of peaceful dispute resolution at

⁶ We cannot conclusively reject the trust and respect mechanism on the basis of these cases since the United States may have been significantly more likely to intervene covertly against nondemocracies during the Cold War. Creating a comprehensive dataset of covert interventions to test this claim is, however, unlikely to be a simple task. Moreover, a chi-square test indicates that we would have to find in excess of 30 American covert interventions against nondemocracies before we could claim that it was significantly more likely to intervene covertly against nondemocracies than democracies ($p < .05$). This calculation rests on (a) the fact that there were 1,682 years of democracy and 3,007 years of nondemocracy between 1950 and 1990 (Przeworski et al. 2000, 29); (b) the fact that there were eight covert interventions against democracies in this period; and (c) the assumption that the United States had the capacity to intervene anywhere in the world in any given year.

TABLE 3. American Perceptions of Liberal Status of Foreign Powers

	Party	Status	Party	Status	Level of Consensus	
Britain	1794–96	Federalists	Liberal	Republicans	Illiberal	No across-party agreement
France	1796–98	Federalists	Illiberal	Republicans	Liberal	No across-party agreement
Britain	1803–12	Federalists	Liberal	Republicans	Illiberal	No across-party agreement
Britain	1845–46	Whigs	Liberal	Democrats	Illiberal	No across-party agreement
Mexico	1845–46	Whigs	Liberal	Democrats	Illiberal	No across-party agreement
Britain	1861–63	Republicans	Liberal	Democrats	Illiberal	No across-party agreement
Spain	1873–73	Republicans	Mixed	Democrats	Mixed	No within-party agreement
Chile	1891–92	Republicans	Mixed	Democrats	Mixed	No within-party agreement
Britain	1895–96	Republicans	Mixed	Democrats	Mixed	No within-party agreement
Spain	1896–98	Republicans	Illiberal	Democrats	Illiberal	Consensus—illiberal

Source: Owen 1997.

democratic peace theory's core, but because of realist factors" (Layne 1994, 38).⁷

Similarly, Rock finds little evidence that shared liberal values helped resolve any of the crises between Britain and the United States in the nineteenth century. In addition, his analyses of the turn-of-the-century "great rapprochement" and naval arms control during the 1920s show that even in cases where liberal states resolved potentially divisive issues in a spirit of accommodation, shared liberal values had only a limited effect. In both cases peace was overdetermined and "liberal values and democratic institutions were not the only factors inclining Britain and the United States toward peace, and perhaps not even the dominant ones" (Rock 1997, 146).⁸

In sum, the trust and respect mechanism does not appear to work as specified. Shared democratic values provide no guarantee that states will both trust and respect one another. Instead, and contrary to the normative logic's claims, when serious conflicts of interest arise between democracies there is little evidence that they will be inclined to accommodate each other's demands or refrain from engaging in hard line policies.

Repaired Normative Logic

Given that democracies have not treated each other as the normative logic predicts, democratic peace theorists have tried to repair the logic by introducing a new causal factor: perceptions. In the revised version of the logic, democracies will only trust and respect one another if they consider each other to be democratic. This adjustment can only improve the logic's explanatory power if we can predict how democracies will categorize other states with a high level of confidence and if this categorization is relatively stable. The available evidence suggests, however, that policymakers' personal beliefs and party affiliations, or strategic interest, often preclude coherent, accurate, and stable assessments of

regime type, thereby lessening our confidence that joint democracy enables democracies to remain at peace.

Elusive Consensus. There is rarely agreement, even among well-informed policymakers, about the democratic status of a foreign power and we are, therefore, unlikely to be able to predict how democracies will classify other states' regime type with a high level of confidence.⁹ Owen (1997) has examined the views of liberal elites in 10 war-threatening crises involving the United States and another state between 1794 and 1898. In six of the cases, the major political parties in the United States disagreed about the liberal status of France, Britain, Chile, and Spain. In three other cases, these disagreements extended both across and within parties. In only one case, the Spanish American Crisis, was there a consensus within the American elite regarding the liberal status of the foreign power (Table 3).

In sum, the evidence from Owen's cases suggests that we are unlikely to be able to predict how states will perceive one another's regime type: Opinion is almost always divided, even for cases that look easy to outside observers. This being the case, the repaired normative logic can only tell us if liberal states will view each other as such after the fact: If they treat each other with trust and respect, then they must have viewed each other as liberal; if they do not, then they must have viewed each other as illiberal.

In these circumstances, the only way to create a more determinate logic is to predict whose opinions will win out in the domestic political game. If, for example, we can predict that doves, republicans, or business interests will generally get their way, then we may be able to predict policy outcomes. Such predictions have, however, eluded democratic peace theorists (see Autocratic Restraint, below).

Inaccurate Assessment. Democracies will also often simply get another state's regime type wrong, thereby lessening our confidence that objectively democratic states will not fight one another. In five of the nine cases where Owen evaluates how other states perceived America, foreign liberal elites either classified the United States as illiberal or were unsure as to its

⁷ Layne 1997 examines three further cases and comes to the same conclusion.

⁸ Rock's analysis of the naval arms control agreements of the 1920s misses an important critique of the normative logic. It is not clear, if we accept the logic, why the United States should be so concerned about a naval alliance between democratic Britain and a democratizing Japan. See, for example, P. Kennedy 1983, 267–98.

⁹ Hartz (1955) argues that although America is a thoroughly liberal state, there have always been violent disagreements about the meaning of liberalism.

status. In 1873, Spanish liberals, most of whom identified with the Spanish Republican party, disagreed over the status of the United States. All Chilean elites and all Spanish elites, regardless of their party affiliation, regarded the United States as illiberal in the 1890s. Finally, British opinion leaders, who had agreed that the United States was liberal for over a century, were divided over its liberal status in 1895–96. The paradigmatic liberal state was, then, often perceived as anything but. Even more surprising is the fact that as the nineteenth century wore on, and the United States became more liberal by most objective standards, other states increasingly viewed it as illiberal.

Regime Type Redefined. Not only are perceptions of other regimes often contested or inaccurate, but they are also subject to redefinition, and this redefinition does not always reflect the actual democratic attributes of those states. Oren (1995) conducts an in depth study of the United States' changing relationship with Imperial Germany prior to World War I and finds that American opinion leaders stopped defining Germany as a democracy as the two countries' strategic relationship began to deteriorate. This observation leads him to conclude that democracy is not a determinant as much as it is a product of America's foreign relations: "The reason we do not to fight 'our kind' is not that 'likeness' has a great effect on war propensity, but rather that we from time to time subtly redefine our kind to keep our self image consistent with our friends' attributes and inconsistent with those of our adversaries" (Oren 1995, 147). In other words, contrary to the expectations of the normative logic, perception of regime type is an outcome rather than a causal factor.

Liberal states appear especially prone to this practice of reinterpreting who should be trusted and respected. In the nineteenth century, non-European peoples could be put under autocratic imperial rule for their own good. In the early twentieth century, as Oren has noted, the bar was raised higher and Imperial Germany was judged worthy of neither trust nor respect. By the end of the century, even liberal democratic Japan could not count on unquestioning American friendship. In each case, prestige, security concerns, or economic interests shaped perceptions of regime type.¹⁰

These examples raise serious problems for any causal logic based on perceptions. Discerning whether perceptions matter inevitably becomes a question of sifting through the statements of policymakers and opinion leaders during a crisis or war. At the same time, public figures will try to distinguish their own state from the enemy in these situations, both for their own cognitive consistency and to rally the public. Since people in the modern world generally identify themselves as members of a nation state, these distinctions will tend to focus on political structures. Scholars will therefore

¹⁰ Oren notes that American perceptions of the democratic nature of Japan and the Soviet Union in the twentieth century have tended to reflect their behavior rather than their domestic institutions and values. Similarly, Blank (2000) argues that strategic factors influenced British and American perceptions of each other's liberal status in the nineteenth century.

always be able to find "evidence" that the other state was not perceived to be sufficiently "democratic" as leaders go about demonizing the enemy. I am not arguing that this represents a misreading of the evidence—perceptions of another state are bound to change in crisis situations—I am only suggesting that these perceptions are caused by factors other than the objective nature of foreign regimes.

In sum, proponents of the normative logic have done little to strengthen their case by introducing perceptions as an independent variable. Often states do not have a unified perception of the liberal attributes of a foreign power and it is therefore difficult to argue that perceptions of regime type affect policy. Moreover, these perceptions may change independently of the objective nature of the other regime, suggesting that it is entirely possible for liberal states to fight one another.

FLAWS IN THE INSTITUTIONAL LOGIC

The causal mechanisms that make up the institutional logic do not appear to operate as stipulated. There are good reasons to believe that accountability, a mechanism common to all five variants of the institutional logic, does not affect democratic leaders any more than it affects their autocratic counterparts. Nor does the available evidence support the claims of the institutional logic's other causal mechanisms. Pacific publics and antiwar groups rarely constrain policymakers' decisions for war, democracies are neither slow to mobilize nor incapable of launching surprise attacks, and open political competition provides no guarantee that a state will be able to reveal its level of resolve in a crisis.

Accountability

Each variant of the institutional logic rests on the claim that democratic institutions make leaders accountable to various groups that may, for one reason or another, oppose the use of force. I do not dispute this claim but, instead, question whether democratic leaders are more accountable than their autocratic counterparts. Since we know that democracies do not fight one another and autocracies do fight one another, democrats must be more accountable than autocrats if accountability is a key mechanism in explaining the separate peace between democracies. On the other hand, if autocrats and democrats are equally accountable or autocrats are more accountable than democrats, then there are good reasons to believe that accountability does not exert the effect that democratic peace theorists have suggested.¹¹

Following Goemans (2000a) I assume that a leader's accountability is determined by the consequences as well as the probability of losing office for adopting an unpopular policy. This being the case, there is no a priori reason to believe that a leader who is likely to lose office for fighting a losing or costly war, but unlikely to be

¹¹ Evaluations of the effects of war on the tenure of leaders include Bueno de Mesquita and Siverson 1995 and Goemans 2000a.

TABLE 4. Consequences of Engaging in Losing or Costly Wars

	Wars	Removed	Punished
Democratic losers	4	3 (75%)	0 (0%)
Autocratic losers	89	31 (35%)	26 (29%)
Democrats in costly wars	15	4 (27%)	1 (7%)
Autocrats in costly wars	77	27 (35%)	21 (27%)

exiled, imprisoned, or killed in the process, should feel more accountable for his policy choices than a leader who is unlikely to lose office but can expect to be punished severely in the unlikely event that he is in fact removed.

Therefore, determining whether autocrats or democrats are more accountable and, consequently, more cautious about going to war rests on answering three questions: Are losing democrats or losing autocrats more likely to be removed from power? Are losing democrats or losing autocrats more likely to be punished severely? and Are democrats or autocrats more likely to be removed and/or punished for involvement in costly wars, regardless of the outcome?

To answer these questions I have used a modified version of Goemans's (2000b) dataset. Our analyses differ in one fundamental respect: While he counts the removal of leaders by foreign powers as examples of punishment, I do not. This decision is theoretically informed. The purpose of the analysis is to determine whether leaders' decisions for war are affected by their domestic accountability, that is, if there is something about the domestic structure of states that affects their chances of being punished. Punishment by foreign powers offers no evidence for or against the claim that democrats or dictators have a higher or lower expectation of being punished by their citizens for unpopular policies, and these cases are therefore excluded. I have also made two minor changes to the data that do not affect the results: I have added 19 wars that appear in the COW dataset but not in Goemans's dataset and coded 11 regimes that Goemans excludes.¹² The results appear in Table 4.

Although democratic losers are two times more likely to be removed from power than autocratic losers, this evidence is not strong. This is because there are only four cases of democratic losers in the entire dataset, making it impossible to draw any firm conclusions about the likelihood that losing democrats will be removed. Prime Minister Menzies of Australia, for example, resigned early in the Vietnam War, but his resignation may have had more to do with the fact that he was in his seventies than the expectation of defeat in South East Asia a decade later. If this case is recoded, as it probably should be, democratic losers have only

¹² Nondemocracies: Mecklenburg-Schwerin, Hesse Grand Ducal, Hesse Electoral, and Hanover in the Seven Weeks War; Germany in the Franco-Prussian War; Greece in the war of 1919 with Turkey; Ethiopia, Bulgaria, and Italy in World War II; and Cyprus in 1974. Democracy: Israel in 1948.

been removed from power 50% of the time and the distinction between democrats and autocrats is small.

Losing autocrats are more likely to suffer severe punishment than their democratic counterparts. None of the four losing democrats was punished, whereas 29% of autocratic losers were imprisoned, exiled, or killed. Thus, while democratic and autocratic losers have similar chances of being removed from office, autocrats seem to be more likely to suffer severe punishment in addition to removal.

The evidence from costly wars, regardless of whether the leader was on the winning or losing side, confirms these findings. Costly wars are defined as wars in which a state suffered one battle fatality per 2,000 population, as the United States did in World War I.¹³ Historically, autocrats have been more likely both to lose office and to be punished severely if they become involved in a costly war. Autocrats have been removed 35% of the time and punished 27% of the time, while democrats have only been removed 27% of the time and punished 7% of the time.¹⁴

In short, there is little evidence that democratic leaders face greater expected costs from fighting losing or costly wars and are therefore more accountable than their autocratic counterparts. This being the case, there is good reason to doubt each variant of the institutional logic.

Public Constraint

Pacific public opinion does not appear to place a fundamental constraint on the willingness of democracies to go to war. If it did, then democracies would be more peaceful in their relations with all types of states, not just other democracies. However, instead of being more peaceful, on average democracies are just as likely to go to war as nondemocracies (Farber and Gowa 1995).

There are three reasons why publics are unlikely to constrain democratic war proneness. First, the costs of war typically fall on a small subset of the population

¹³ The results do not change with alternative definitions of costly wars (one fatality per 1,000 population and one fatality per 500 population).

¹⁴ Proponents could still interpret the evidence as supporting democratic peace theory. The very fact that democratic leaders rarely lose wars suggests that they know that they will be punished for losing wars and therefore only select themselves into wars they can win. There are good reasons to dispute this selection effects argument. Desch (2002) estimates the probability that a state will start a war, then win it, and finds that democracy has one of the smallest effects of any variable. Stam (1996) reaches a similar conclusion. Reiter and Stam (2002) find that democracies are more likely to win wars they initiate but do not report the relative effect of democracy compared to other variables. Desch also notes that if democratic leaders are more selective about choosing wars, and only start easy ones, then they should engage in fewer wars than autocratic leaders since war is inherently risky and few wars are sure bets. The evidence, however, suggests that democracies are just as war prone as other types of states. It is also worth noting that if democrats are more selective about the wars they get involved in, then we should see them engage in fewer costly wars since they know that costly wars threaten their incumbencies. However, there is little difference between the propensity for democracies and that for autocracies to incur high costs. Democracies incur high costs in 34% of cases, while autocracies do so 42% of the time.

that will likely be unwilling to protest government policy. Excluding the two World Wars, democratic fatalities in war have exceeded 0.1% of the population in only 6% of cases. In 60% of cases, losses represented less than 0.01% of the population or one in 10,000 people. Most democratic citizens, then, will never be personally affected by war or know anyone affected by military conflict. Adding the many militarized disputes involving democracies strengthens this finding. Both the United States and Britain have suffered fewer than 100 battle casualties in approximately 97% of the militarized disputes in which they have been involved (Singer and Small 1994). Moreover, modern democracies have tended to have professional standing armies. Members of the military, then, join the armed forces voluntarily, accepting that they may die in the service of their countries. This in turn means that their families and friends, that is, those who are most likely to suffer the costs of war, are unlikely to speak out against a government that chooses to go to war or are at least less likely to do so than are the families and friends of conscripts. In short, the general public has little at stake in most wars and those most likely to suffer the costs of war have few incentives to organize dissent.

Second, any public aversion to incurring the costs of war may be overwhelmed by the effects of nationalism. In addition to the growth of democracy, one of the most striking features of the modern period is that people have come to identify themselves, above all, with the nation state. This identification has been so powerful that ordinary citizens have repeatedly demonstrated a willingness to fight and die for the continued existence of their state and the security of their co-nationals. There are, then, good reasons to believe that if the national interest is thought to be at stake, as it is in most interstate conflicts, calculations of costs will not figure prominently in the public's decision process.

Third, democratic leaders are as likely to lead as to follow public opinion. Since nationalism imbues people with a powerful spirit of self-sacrifice, it is actively cultivated by political elites in the knowledge that only highly motivated armies and productive societies will prevail in modern warfare (e.g., Posen 1993). Democratically elected leaders are likely to be well placed to cultivate nationalism, especially because their governments are often perceived as more representative and legitimate than authoritarian regimes. Any call to defend or spread "our way of life," for example, is likely to have a strong resonance in democratic polities, and indeed the historical record suggests that wars have often given democratic leaders considerable freedom of action, allowing them to drum up nationalistic fervor, shape public opinion, and suppress dissent despite the obligation to allow free and open discussion.

Events in the United States during both World Wars highlight the strength of nationalism and the ability of democratic elites to fan its flames. Kennedy (1980, 46) notes that during the First World War, President Wilson lacked "the disciplinary force of quick coming crisis or imminent peril of physical harm" but turned successfully to "the deliberate mobilization of emotions and ideas." At the same time his administration turned

a blind eye to, or actively encouraged, the deliberate subversion of antiwar groups within the United States. The Roosevelt administration was equally successful at generating prowar sentiment during World War II. Early in the war the president spoke for the nation in asserting that the German firebombing of population centers had "shocked the conscience of humanity," and yet, remarkably, there was no sustained protest in the United States against the bombing of Japanese cities that killed almost a million civilians a few years later. This abrupt transformation, notes Dower (1986), was made possible by a massive propaganda campaign, condoned by the political elite, describing the Japanese as subhuman and untrustworthy "others." In stark contrast, America's allies were forgiven all their faults "Russian Communists were transformed into agrarian reformers, Stalin into Uncle Joe . . ." (Ambrose 1997, 150).

Sentiments like these are not aroused only in the victims of aggression. Although Lord Aberdeen's government was reluctant to go to war with Russia over the Crimea in 1854, "There was no doubt whatever about the enthusiasm of British public opinion, as expressed by every conduit open to it." The protests of Cobden and Bright, leaders of the British Peace Movement, "were howled down in the House of Commons, in the Press, and at meeting after public meeting. . . . [They] were thus the first liberal leaders, and by no means the last, to discover that peace and democracy do not go hand in hand; that public opinion is not an infallible specific against war; and that 'the people,' for whatever reasons, can be very bellicose indeed." The next generation of pacifists, the opponents of the Boer War, "were vilified in the popular press, had their meetings broken up, [and] were subjected to physical attack" (Howard 1978, 45–46, 68).

These are not isolated examples. The world's most militarily active democracies—Britain, France, India, Israel, and the United States—have gone to war 30 times since 1815. In 15 cases, they were the victims of attack and therefore we should not be surprised that publics reacted in a nationalistic fashion or were persuaded to support decisions for war. There are, however, 15 other cases in which one could plausibly argue that it was not obvious to the public that war was in the national interest because there was no immediate threat to the homeland or vital national assets. In 12 of these cases, the outbreak of war was greeted by a spontaneous and powerful nationalistic response or, in the absence of such a reaction, policymaking elites successfully persuaded a previously unengaged public to acquiesce to, and in some cases support, the use of force. In only three cases—the French and British attack on Egypt (1956) and the Israeli attack on Lebanon (1982)—did publics not spontaneously support the war and remain opposed to it despite policymaking elites' best efforts to influence their opinions.¹⁵

¹⁵ Democratic victims: the United States in World War II; Israel in the Palestine War, War of Attrition, and Yom Kippur War; Britain in both World Wars and the Falklands War; France in both World Wars;

One way to try and rescue the public constraint mechanism would be to combine constraints with respect for fellow democratic polities (e.g., Mintz and Geva 1993). This new argument would hold that democracies have formed a separate and joint peace because democratic citizens are only averse to costs in their relations with other democracies. There are, however, several cases that belie this claim.¹⁶

There are, then, good reasons to believe that pacific public opinion does not significantly reduce the likelihood that democracies will go to war. In the majority of cases, the public is likely to be unaffected by war and therefore adopt a permissive attitude towards the use of force. Moreover, in those cases where the national interest or honor is at stake, democratic publics are as likely as any other to disregard the costs of war and democratic leaders have considerable opportunities both to encourage and to exploit nationalistic fervor.

Group Constraint

There are two problems with the group constraint mechanism. First, there is little evidence for the claim that antiwar groups will, more often than not, capture the democratic policymaking process. Second, if the mechanism is to explain why democracies do not fight one another but also account for wars in other kinds of dyads, then group constraints must be weaker in autocracies than democracies, but this does not appear to be the case.

Capturing the State. States are “representative institution[s] constantly subject to capture and recapture, construction and reconstruction by coalitions of societal actors” (Moravcsik 1997, 518). Moreover, they

India in the Sino-Indian, Second Kashmiri, and Bangladesh Wars; and Britain, France, and the United States in the Boxer Rebellion. Wars supported by public or to which public acquiesced even though they were not clearly in the national interest: the United States in the Mexican-American, Spanish-American, Korean, Vietnam, and Gulf Wars and World War I; Israel in the Sinai and Six Day Wars; Britain in the Crimean and Anglo-Persian Wars; France in the Roman Republic and Sino-French Wars. I only consider the major protagonists in any given war and, therefore, exclude cases like Britain's decision to support the United States in the Gulf War. Also, I only consider public opinion early in a war since it is presumably this initial reaction that concerns policymakers the most.

Democratic peace theorists could still claim that these examples do not invalidate the public constraint mechanism because there are many more examples where democracies have not escalated a crisis or have pulled back from the brink because leaders anticipated public opposition. These nonevents are difficult to observe but if there are a lot of them, then 12 examples of public constraints not operating do not provide conclusive proof that the mechanism generally fails to operate. Proponents of the democratic peace have not, however, uncovered a large number of such non-events.

¹⁶ Britain and France over Belgium (1830–32), the Near East (1838–41), Tahiti and Tangier (1844), and Fashoda (1898); Britain and the United States in the Oregon Crisis (1845–46), the Trent Affair (1861), and the Venezuelan Crisis (1895–96); Britain and the Boers in the Boer War (1899–1902); France and Germany in the Ruhr Crisis (1923); arguably France, Britain, and Germany before World War I; Peru and Ecuador in the Amazon in the 1980s and 1990s; and India and Pakistan over Kashmir in the 1990s. See Howard 1978; Layne 1994, 1997; and Rock 1997.

are imperfect representative institutions, more likely to represent those groups that are better organized and have more at stake in a given issue. Based on this insight, there is no reason to believe that pacific interest groups will generally win out over prowar groups. While liberal elites, for example, may be well organized and have a powerful incentive to avoid war with other democracies, other more bellicose actors such as the military industrial complex are likely to have just as much at stake and be equally proficient at furthering their own interests.

Indeed, the historical record suggests that proponents of foreign aggression can often prevail in domestic debates. Owen (1997) examines four cases of the United States going to war in the nineteenth century. In three of his cases, one of the two major political parties was opposed to war but failed to avert it. In the fourth case, the antiwar group was smaller and also lost out to the prowar group. Similarly, Snyder (1991) finds that both Britain and the United States have adopted aggressive foreign policies in the past as prowar groups have effectively captured the state. Britain's expansionist policy in the middle of the nineteenth century owed much to the fact that imperialist groups were able to influence policymaking: “Imperial ideologists were able to have a large impact because of their apparent monopoly on expertise and effective organization, and because of the ambivalent interest of the audience.” In the American case, despite a Cold War consensus against involvement in “high-cost, low benefit endeavors,” the United States became involved in both Korea and Vietnam as a result of coalitional logrolling (Snyder 1991, 206, 209).¹⁷ In sum, there are good reasons to believe that pacific interest groups may not generally influence the foreign policies of democratic states.

Autocratic Constraint. Autocratic leaders typically represent themselves or narrow selectorates and these groups have powerful incentives to avoid war.

The first reason for avoiding war is that wars cost money and solving the problem of war finance ultimately poses a threat to an autocrat's hold on power. The argument here is straightforward. The costs of war have risen exponentially since the middle of the nineteenth century and governments have had to figure out how to meet these costs. Although the money can theoretically be raised with or without the consent of those from whom it is demanded, in practice “non-consensual sources of revenue have generally proved less elastic than taxation based on consent.” Participation in war has, therefore, tended to go hand in hand with expansion of the franchise (Ferguson 2001, 32–33, 77, 80; see also Freeman and Snidal 1982). This being the case, autocrats have a powerful incentive not to go to war for fear of triggering social and political changes that may destroy them.

The nature of civil military relations in civilian-led authoritarian states provides another incentive for

¹⁷ Snyder argues that democracies are moderate overexpanders rather than extreme overexpanders because open debate encourages quick learning. The fact remains, however, that while they may be smart about their overexpansion, they are still prone to it.

ruling groups to avoid war. Since civilian control of the military is often more tenuous in autocracies than in democracies, nonmilitary leaders of autocratic states have a powerful incentive to maintain weak militaries for fear of domestic coups. The problem, from a foreign policy standpoint, is that states with weak militaries are vulnerable to foreign aggression. Thus an absolute ruler faces a “dual problem” according to Gordon Tullock (1987, 37): “[H]e may be overthrown by his neighbor’s armies, or by the armies he organizes to defend him against his neighbors.” Because they recognize this problem, civilian authoritarian leaders will generally prefer to avoid rather than wage war.

A different set of factors can inhibit the war proneness of military dictators. First, since they must devote considerable time and energy to repressing popular dissent at home, they have fewer military resources to devote to external wars. Second, because the military is used for internal repression it is unlikely to have a great deal of societal support and will be ill equipped to deal with external enemies. Third, leaders who assume control of the army run the risk of being held personally responsible for any subsequent failures and may not be prepared to take that risk. Finally, time spent organizing military campaigns is time away from other governmental duties on which a dictator’s tenure also depends (Andreski 1980; Tullock 1987, 37; see also Dassel 1997).

In sum, it is not clear that states behave as the group constraint mechanism suggests. Although democracies and autocracies have selectorates of differing size and allow social groups different levels of access to the policymaking process, they may nevertheless adopt similar policies. Not only are democratic governments able to resist the influence of antiwar groups, but they are in fact subject to capture by prowar groups. Autocracies, on the other hand, often represent groups that have a vested interest in avoiding foreign wars (see, e.g., Peceny, Beer, and Sanchez-Terry 2002).

Slow Mobilization

The historical record offers scant support for the claim that the complexity of mobilizing diverse groups in democracies slows decisions to use force.

American presidents have often circumvented or ignored checks and balances, thereby speeding up the war decision process.¹⁸ The United States has taken military action abroad more than 200 times during its history, but only five of these actions were wars declared by Congress, and most were authorized unilaterally by the president (Rourke 1993, 11). Circumventing the democratic process has taken several forms. Some presidents have simply claimed that matters of national security are more important than observing the constitution. Jefferson was the first to assert that obeying the constitution was the mark of a good president, but that

“the law of necessity, of self preservation, of saving our country when in danger, are of the higher obligation” (75). Another common tactic has been to redefine the action as anything but a war, thereby obviating the need for consultation or debate. Washington added hot pursuit and preemption to the president’s prerogatives, Jackson popularized reprisals, and Wilson unilaterally authorized interventions, most notably in Russia after World War I. Alternatively, presidents have used their powers to put troops in harm’s way in order to precipitate wider conflicts. Both Polk’s actions prior to the Mexican American War and Roosevelt’s tactics prior to America’s official entry into World War II fit this pattern. Finally, incumbents of the White House have often simply ignored Congress. Truman ordered forces into Korea without even asking Congress for retroactive support, and at the height of the “Imperial Presidency,” Nixon rejected the need for congressional authority when he invaded Cambodia.

While efforts have been made to ensure that choices for war and peace are subject to open debate—notably with the passage of the War Powers Resolution (1972)—checks and balances have generally failed to operate and there have been frequent violations of the spirit if not the letter of the Resolution (Rourke 1993, 119–38). The Gulf War provides a recent example. Bush administration officials decided to launch Operation Desert Shield without consulting Congress and repeatedly put off a congressional vote fearing that it might go against them. The decision for Desert Storm was also made unilaterally. Bush argued that he did not need a congressional resolution and was determined to avoid asking for authorization lest this imply that the Executive did not have the final say on matters of war. His reaction to Congress’s authorization of the use of force is instructive: “In truth, even had Congress not passed the resolution I would have acted and ordered our troops into combat. I know it would have caused an outcry, but it was the right thing to do. I was comfortable in my own mind that I had constitutional authority. It had to be done” (Bush and Scowcroft 1998, 446).

In sum, the slow mobilization mechanism does not appear to function as claimed. Democratic leaders frequently decide that protecting what they deem to be the national interest requires swift and decisive action. When they believe such situations have arisen they have been able and willing simply to bypass the democratic imperative of open debate and consensus decision making.

Surprise Attack

Democracies are no less capable of carrying out surprise attacks than other kinds of states.¹⁹ The main reason for this is that an attacker’s regime type is largely unrelated to the success or failure of an attack.

¹⁸ The focus here is on American foreign policy. Other democratically elected leaders have adopted similar tactics to initiate military action with only minimal legislative input. This paragraph relies on Reveley 1981, 135–69, and Rourke 1993, 63–106.

¹⁹ A surprise attack is an attack against a target that is not prepared for it due to mistaken estimates of whether, when, where, and how the enemy will strike (Betts 1982, 11).

“Analysis of surprise attacks,” notes Kam (1988, 37), “suggests that the intelligence community seldom fails to anticipate them owing to a lack of relevant information. In most cases the victim possesses an abundance of information indicating the imminence of the attack.” Instead, the common wisdom holds that attacks achieve surprise because defenders cannot identify the relevant signals amidst the “noise,” and because of cognitive or organizational shortcomings (Betts 1982, 87–149; Kam 1988, 7–212). In short, regardless of whether attackers are democratic or autocratic, they do not appear to be able to keep their attacks secret; attacks achieve surprise because defenders are poor at evaluating information.

Even if we accept that the achievement of surprise is a function of the transparency of the attacker, there is little historical support for the claim that democracies are less able to conceal their intentions or impending actions. There have been approximately 10 cases of surprise attack since the beginning of World War II.²⁰ Two of these attacks, the British–French–Israeli coalition’s attack on Egypt (1956) and the Israeli initiation of the Six Day War (1967), were carried out by democracies. There are not enough cases to make any statistical claims but we should note that democracies have made up approximately one third of state-years since 1939, and therefore, one would expect on the basis of chance alone to see three surprise attacks by democracies in this period. Therefore, democracies do not appear to be less likely than nondemocracies to launch surprise attacks.

Israel, France, and Britain planned the Suez War of 1956 in such secrecy that even Eisenhower was surprised by the attack when it came (Betts 1982, 63–65).²¹ Dayan, the Israeli Chief of Staff, engaged in a successful campaign of deliberate deception leading outside observers to believe that any attack would merely be an extended reprisal campaign. Meanwhile, the relevant decision makers in Britain justified secrecy in stark terms: “It is never agreeable to have to refuse, in the national interest, information to the House of Commons. But it has to be done from time to time” (Lloyd 1978, 250). If democratic government officials believe that the national interest is at stake, they will sacrifice disclosure to military necessity. Similarly, Israel achieved

surprise through deception in launching the Six Day War (1967). Dayan, then the defense minister, publicly stated that Israel was in no position to reply to the blockade of the Strait of Tiran, that the Israeli army could not remain mobilized for an extended period, that the army could fight successfully after suffering a first strike, and that diplomacy must be given a chance, all in a successful attempt to lull the Arabs into a false sense of security. Only 38 hours later Israel attacked (Betts 1982, 65–68; Van Evera 1999, 66–67). Nor does the ability of democratic governments to maintain secrecy appear to be restricted to extreme cases of surprise attack. The United States kept its decisions for war from the British before the War of 1812, Lord Grey did not publicize his agreement to defend French Channel ports prior to World War I, and Roosevelt did not reveal his agreements with Churchill prior to World War II.

Democratic politics are typically marked by the open discussion of differing opinions in multiple public forums, but this characterization does not appear to hold when democratic leaders perceive a threat to the national interest. In such circumstances the requirement for transparency and consensus can be decisively subordinated to the twin requirements of military success: secrecy and speed.

Information

The available evidence suggests that democracies cannot clearly reveal their levels of resolve in a crisis. There are two reasons for this. First, democratic processes and institutions often reveal so much information that it is difficult for opposing states to interpret it. Second, open domestic political competition does not ensure that states will reveal their private information.

Transparency may contribute little to peace because a lot of information is not always good information. Simply because democracies provide a substantial amount of information about their intentions from a variety of sources does not mean that their opponents will focus on the appropriate information or that the information will be interpreted correctly. In a crisis with a democracy, the other state will receive signals not only from the democracy’s appointed negotiators but also from opposition parties, interest groups, public opinion, and the media. Deciding which signal is truly representative is a difficult task. Moreover, individuals faced with an overwhelming amount of information are likely to resort to mental shortcuts based on existing views of the adversary or analogous situations in the past to make sense of it. Information contradicting the accepted wisdom is likely to be ignored and confirmatory evidence will be highlighted. Additional information may, then, have a limited impact on perceptions (e.g., Jervis 1976). In short, the mistake has been to equate plentiful information with perfect information. If the information is plentiful, there is no reason to believe that states will come to a mutually acceptable agreement. On the other hand, if the information is perfect, then states may avoid war.

²⁰ I have compiled the following list using Betts (1982) and Kam (1988): Germany’s attack in Western Europe (1940); Germany’s attack on the Soviet Union (1941); Japan’s attack on Pearl Harbor (1941); North Korea’s attack on South Korea (1950); China’s entry into the Korean War (1950); Israel, Britain, and France’s attack on Egypt (1956); China’s attack on India (1962); Israel’s attack on Egypt (1967); the Soviet attack on Czechoslovakia (1968); and the Arab attack on Israel (1973). I have excluded cases of surprise attack in the context of an ongoing war based on the assumption that, regardless of their regime type, once they are in a war states will enforce secrecy and try to achieve surprise as a matter of military necessity. There are, of course, several instances of democracies achieving surprise during wars. These include the British bombing of the Italian fleet in Taranto (1941), the D-day landings (1944), and the American assault at Inchon (1950).

²¹ The fact that three democratic governments were involved in successful collusion is especially powerful evidence of the ability of democracies to maintain secrecy.

There is good evidence for these claims. Bernard Finel and Kristin Lord (1999) have highlighted the negative effects of transparency in seven case studies of interstate crises between 1812 and 1969. They find that open political systems do indeed provide a great deal of information, but its sheer volume either has confused those who observe it or has merely served to reinforce their prior misperceptions. In 1967, for example, Nasser was “overwhelmed by the ‘noise’ of Israeli domestic politics” and “had enough information to see whatever he wanted and confirm existing misperceptions about Israeli intentions” (Finel and Lord 1999, 334–35). Democracies may not be better at signaling their intentions, and even if they are, these intentions may be prone to misperception.

In response, proponents of the informational story argue that it is the signal sent by opposition parties that provides the most credible evidence of a state’s intent: If they support the administration, then the state is committed, otherwise it is not (Schultz 2001, 95–97). There are two problems with this argument. First, there is powerful support for the claim that the general public and opposition generally “rally round the flag” and support governments during crises. Kenneth Waltz neatly summarizes this finding: “The first effect of an international crisis is to increase the President’s popular standing. One may wonder if this is so only when the response of the President is firm or he otherwise gives the impression of being able to deal with the situation effectively. . . . It is, in fact, not necessary to add such qualifications to the statement” (Waltz 1967, 272).²² Indeed, Schultz notes that democratic governments that have issued deterrent threats have received opposition support 84% of the time (Schultz 2001, 167). Moreover, democratic leaders can lead rather than follow public opinion during international crises by controlling what information reaches the public and by exploiting the media. Reaching high office in a democracy rests, to a large degree, on persuading voters, and one would therefore expect democratic government officials to be especially adept at shaping public opinion. What this means is that democracies may often not be able to signal their private information. Since publics and oppositions generally rally to the government’s side or are persuaded to support the administration during crises, and hostile states know this to be the case, opposition support is not an informative signal.

Second, in the few cases where opposition parties have spoken out against military action, democratic governments have been prepared to take action nonetheless. In other words, when opposition statements should lead us to expect that a government would not be resolved on war, they have instead been prepared to escalate disputes. Examples are not hard to find: (1) The Federalists opposed war with Britain in 1812, but Madison went to war nonetheless;

(2) Truman went to war in Korea despite the protests of Senate Republicans; (3) the British Labour Party publicly opposed action against Egypt in 1956, but the Eden government plotted and executed an attack on Egypt with the governments of France and Israel; and (4) several Democrats publicly opposed the Gulf War in 1990–91, but the Bush administration was determined to act. In short, there does not appear to be a strong correlation between declarations by opposition parties and decisions to avoid war.²³

In sum, the purported informational properties of democratic institutions are unlikely to improve the prospects for peace. It is not clear that democracies can reveal private information or that it will be interpreted correctly, and even in cases where signaling and interpretation are accurate there are reasons to doubt that this will remove the cause of war.

CONCLUSION

The causal logics that underpin democratic peace theory cannot explain why democracies remain at peace with one another because the mechanisms that make up these logics do not operate as stipulated by the theory’s proponents. In the case of the normative logic, liberal democracies do not reliably externalize their domestic norms of conflict resolution and do not treat one another with trust and respect when their interests clash. Similarly, in the case of the institutional logic, democratic leaders are not especially accountable to peace-loving publics or pacific interest groups, democracies are not particularly slow to mobilize or incapable of surprise attack, and open political competition offers no guarantee that a democracy will reveal private information about its level of resolve. In view of these findings there are good reasons to doubt that joint democracy causes peace.

Democratic peace theorists could counter this claim by pointing out that even in the absence of a good explanation for the democratic peace, the fact remains that democracies have rarely fought one another. In addition to casting doubt on existing explanations for the democratic peace, then, a comprehensive critique should also offer a positive account of the finding.

One potential explanation is that the democratic peace is in fact an imperial peace based on American power. This claim rests on two observations. First, the democratic peace is essentially a post-World War II phenomenon restricted to the Americas and Western Europe. Second, the United States has been the dominant power in both these regions since World War II and has placed an overriding emphasis on regional peace.

There are three reasons we should expect democratic peace theory’s empirical claims to hold only in the post-1945 period. First, as even proponents of the democratic peace have admitted, there were few democracies

²² On the rally effect see Mueller 1970. Rourke (1993) argues that the extension of the President’s power over decisions to use force has owed as much to Congress’s willingness to defer to him during international crises as to his seizure of such powers.

²³ Kirschner (2000) suggests that even if all parties know each others’ private information, there are still good reasons to expect them to go to war.

in the international system prior to 1945 and even fewer that were in a position to fight one another. Since 1945, however, both the number of democracies in the international system and the number that have had an opportunity to fight one another have grown markedly (e.g., Russett 1993, 20). Second, while members of double democratic dyads were not significantly less likely to fight one another than members of other types of dyads prior to World War II, they have been significantly more peaceful since then (e.g., Farber and Gowa 1997). Third, the farther back we go in history the harder it is to find a consensus among both scholars and policymakers on what states qualify as democracies. Depending on whose criteria we use, there may have been no democratic wars prior to 1945, or there may have been several (see, e.g., Layne 1994; Ray 1995; Russett 1993; Spiro 1994). Since then, however, we can be fairly certain that democracies have hardly fought each other at all.

Most of the purely democratic dyads since World War II can be found in the Americas and Western Europe. My analysis includes all pairs of democracies directly or indirectly contiguous to one another or separated by less than 150 miles of water between 1950 and 1990 (Przeworski et al. 2000; Schafer 1993). This yields 2,427 double democratic dyads, of which 1,306 (54%) were comprised of two European states, 465 (19%) were comprised of two American states, and 418 (17%) comprised one American state and one European state. In short, 90% of purely democratic dyads have been confined to two geographic regions, the Americas and Western Europe.

American preponderance has underpinned, and continues to underpin stability and peace in both of these regions. In the Americas the United States has successfully adopted a two-pronged strategy of driving out the European colonial powers and selectively intervening either to ensure that regional conflicts do not escalate to the level of serious military conflict or to install regimes that are sympathetic to its interests. The result has been a region in which most states are prepared to toe the American line and none have pretensions to alter the status quo. In Europe, the experience of both World Wars persuaded American policymakers that U.S. interests lay in preventing the continent ever returning to the security competition that had plagued it since the Napoleonic Wars. Major initiatives including the Marshall Plan, the North Atlantic Treaty, European integration, and the forward deployment of American troops on German soil should all be viewed from this perspective. Each was designed either to protect the European powers from one another or to constrain their ability to act as sovereign states, thereby preventing a return to multipolarity and eliminating the security dilemma as a factor in European politics. These objectives continue to provide the basis for Washington's European policy today and explain its continued attachment to NATO and its support for the eastward expansion of the European Union. In sum, the United States has been by far the most dominant state in both the Americas and Western Europe since World War II and has been committed,

above all, to ensuring that both regions remain at peace.²⁴

Evaluating whether the democratic peace finding is caused by democracy or by some other factor such as American preponderance has implications far beyond the academy. If peace and security are indeed a consequence of shared democracy, then international democratization should continue to lie at the heart of American grand strategy. But if, as I have suggested, democracy does not cause peace, then American policymakers are expending valuable resources on a policy that, while morally praiseworthy, does not make America more secure.

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²⁴ The American preponderance argument may also account for other findings in the democratic peace research program including the fact that democracies are more likely to trade with each other, that they are more likely to ally with each other, and that they are more likely to enter wars on behalf of fellow democracies.

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No Rest for the Democratic Peace

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Proponents of the democratic peace are accustomed to criticism. Early refutations of the research program's findings focused on questions of measurement and statistical inference. Skepticism about such matters has not fully subsided, but many more now accept the democratic peace as an empirical regularity. The aim of recent complaints has shifted to democratic peace theory. The typical approach has been to highlight select historical events that appear anomalous in light of the theory and the causal mechanisms it identifies. Sebastian Rosato's (2003) is one such critique, noteworthy for the range of causal propositions held up for scrutiny and the unequivocal rejection of them all. But Rosato fails to appreciate the dyadic logic central to democratic peace theory, and much of his criticism is therefore misdirected. Those cases that remain unexplained by the theory are not especially problematic for this progressively evolving research program.

Sebastian Rosato (2003) has given us another spirited critique of the democratic peace project. His argument is similar to other realists' claims that the correlation between democratic-state interaction and peace is spurious, better understood as a function of power, threat, and national interests. His approach differs from others in that he attempts to scrutinize the many causal propositions contained in democratic peace theory, concluding in the end that all of them are contradicted by empirical evidence, and are consistently contradicted. But it fails on at least two counts. First, most of what Rosato cites as evidence against democratic peace theory does not in fact contradict the theory. Second, the evidence that does contradict the theory, in addition to being widely known among democratic peace researchers, is not particularly damaging to the theory, which continues to evolve at the core of a progressive research program.

The democratic peace is a dyadic empirical phenomenon. The empirical evidence that democracies rarely fight *each other* is robust, and most theoretical efforts have kept this finding front and center. Yet Rosato (2003, 589, 596), at various points in his critique, suggests that the dyadic claim is a retreat from some original monadic position in the face of arguments and examples to the contrary. Thus, dyadic propositions are cast as "restatements" or "new arguments" designed to "rescue" the theory's causal logic. This mischaracterizes the evolution of the democratic peace research program. Although some studies have offered evidence that democratic states generally conduct their foreign affairs more peacefully than non-democratic states (Benoit 1996; Ray 1995; Rousseau et al. 1996; Rummel 1995), the early theoretical and empirical work on the democratic peace, and most of what has followed, recognizes that a core element of democratic peace theory must be located in the nature of democratic states' *interaction*. Doyle (1983a, 1983b), one of the founders of the democratic peace project, is

very clear on this score: "liberalism is not inherently 'peace-loving'; nor is it consistently restrained or peaceful in intent." It has, however, "strengthened the prospects for a world peace established by the steady expansion of a separate peace among liberal societies" (Doyle 1983a, 206; see also Russett and Starr 1981, 439–44).

Rosato (2003) is well aware of the dyadic argument, but he does not seem to take it seriously. In dissecting the normative explanation, he identifies two links in the causal chain connecting domestic conduct in democracies to peaceful conduct in foreign affairs: elites externalize their norms of negotiation and non-violent conflict resolution, which in turn encourages them to trust and respect their counterparts in other democracies. If this is the case, Rosato believes, then democracies should have a record of fighting wars only in self-defense or to prevent egregious violations of human rights. Clearly democracies have not limited themselves to such conflicts and Rosato produces a list of wars fought for other, imperial reasons; this is supposed to refute the claim that democracies "*generally* externalize their internal norms of conflict resolution" (589, 590, my emphasis). The list does refute the claim, of course, but it is not a claim made by the corpus of democratic peace theory.

According to most variants of the theory, democratic restraint is conditioned on expectations about the conduct of the other party in the interaction, expectations informed by the other's internal political processes.¹ We need to know something about those processes (or perceptions of those processes) if the cases are to be counted as anomalies. Rosato (2003) acknowledges the rebuttal, but again does not take it seriously, insisting that "[t]he key to this logic is that democracies must *reliably* externalize democratic norms" (590, my emphasis). Ultimately, however, his assertion is much stronger than this: "[l]iberal states have *consistently*

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My thanks to Bruce Russett for some very helpful suggestions and comments.

¹ Russett and Oneal (2001, 49–52) discuss the dyadic focus of democratic peace research, but go on to suggest that more recent research may be pointing toward the conclusion that democracies generally are more peaceful than nondemocratic states, especially when considering which side in a mixed dyad initiates or escalates a militarized dispute.

violated liberal norms when deciding to go to war” (590, my emphasis). If this is not true by definition— isn’t the decision to go to war, in the end, always a violation of liberal norms of conflict resolution?—then it is hard to imagine the type of evidence that would count against it. And even if democratic states did reliably externalize their norms, Rosato maintains that “[s]hared democratic values provide no guarantee that states will both trust and respect each other” (592). If it has come to making guarantees, then democratic peace theory surely must throw in the towel.

The dyadic logic of democratic peace theory is also set aside when Rosato (2003) turns to explanations focusing on the institutional constraints operating in democracies. He finds unconvincing the classical liberal argument that mass publics, because they bear the costs of war, have an interest in peace, and that mass publics in democracies, because their voices are heard, are a force for peace. Nor does he buy the variation on this argument, which states that certain groups within society, if not the masses, are advocates of peace, and their views are more likely to have an impact on the foreign policies of democracies than those of nondemocracies. That democratic publics and interest groups are not always pacific has long been established in public opinion research (Mueller 1973), and democratic leaders often look forward to a rally-‘round-the-flag effect even when the balance of prewar opinion tilts against the use of force.

Rosato (2003) cites several examples of supportive (or quiescent) democratic publics during wars fought for reasons other than self-defense—but all of them involved nondemocratic opponents. Noting the character of opponents is the sort of “restatement” he dismisses as an attempt to save the theory from contradictory evidence—a charge that sticks only if one paints dyadic democratic peace theory as a retreat from the monadic argument, which it is not. Moreover, the examples adduced to falsify the claim that “democratic citizens are only averse to costs in their relations with other democracies” include colonial conflicts between Britain and France during the first half of the 19th century, when France was not democratic, and between Ecuador and Peru during the 1990s, when Peru was not democratic (596, note 16). During the 1830–32, 1838–41, and 1844 confrontations with Britain, the Polity Project locates France at –1 on their democracy–autocracy scale ranging from +10 to –10; whereas in the 1990s, Peru is scored as +1 (and –3 in 1992). Even if Rosato has some reason to believe that the regimes ought to be considered democratic, he gives us no indication of prowar public sentiments in these or any of the other democratic societies involved in the crises.² After all,

² He does refer us to some case studies, however. Disputes concerning the proper classification of regime types have characterized the debate between democratic peace researchers and their critics from the beginning. Rosato (2003, 600) asserts that “the farther we go back in history the harder it is to find a consensus among scholars and policymakers on what states qualify as democracies.” That is probably true, but among quantitative researchers, both partisans of the democratic peace and skeptics, the classification scheme of choice

the stated purpose of his analysis is not to challenge the “powerful empirical generalization” that democracies rarely fight each other, which “remain[s] robust” (585), but to dispute the causal mechanisms that purportedly steer democracies away from war with each other.

Few would deny that hawkish interest groups often prevail in domestic debates or that “pacific interest groups may not generally influence the foreign policies of democratic states” (596). In the case of the recent Iraq War, there was indeed surprisingly little debate in the United States—until after the war. Rosato (2003) goes further, hypothesizing that, when contemplating going to war, autocratic leaders are *more* constrained by domestic constituents than are democratic leaders. He believes this may be true because wartime taxation without representation threatens to mobilize domestic opposition to nonrepresentative political institutions, sweeping away the autocracy in the process. This is an interesting argument, perhaps, as long as it applies to the avoidance of very costly wars. Autocrats do not typically shy away from taxation in pursuit of personal enrichment—presidential palaces and Swiss bank accounts—for fear of domestic disapproval, so they are unlikely to avoid foreign conflicts that they expect will not be terribly costly. In the end, the persuasiveness of Rosato’s own causal logic will turn on the evidence. Curiously, although Rosato cites them to support his statement that autocracies “often represent groups that have a vested interest in avoiding foreign wars” (597), Peceny, Beer, and Sanchez-Terry (2002, 25) find “no unambiguous evidence of a dictatorial peace”; “only joint democracy was consistently related to a lower frequency of militarized disputes.”³

The possibility that autocrats exercise more restraint in international crises is also raised in the discussion of political accountability. The argument found in democratic peace theory is that democratic leaders risk removal from office after unsuccessful and/or costly wars, a risk that is much diminished for autocratic leaders (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 1999, 2003, chap. 6; Gelpi and Griesdorf 2001; Reiter and Stam 2002). Rosato (2003, 594) disputes this logic, reasoning instead that a democratic leader is no more accountable than an autocratic leader “who is unlikely to lose office but

is the Polity Project (Marshall and Jaggers 2002). As far as I know, those who collect and maintain the Polity data are not invested one way or another in the democratic peace debate (see, e.g., Layne 1997, 65). Rosato’s cited source for regime classification is Przeworski et al. (2000), who also are not participants in the debate, but their data cover the 1950–90 period only. Prior to 1950—the period covered by all of Table 1—he determines regime type himself, apparently using Przeworski et al.’s criteria. Likewise for the period after 1990. We are not told why he finds Polity’s judgment to be wrong—way wrong—in the cases he cites.

³ Peceny, Beer, and Sanchez-Terry (2002) show that of the various autocratic pairings, only those involving two single-party states have a reduced likelihood of militarized dispute, controlling for other factors. Their causal argument rests on these regimes’ shared commitment to socialism, and thus is analogous to the normative explanation for the democratic peace. I assume Rosato (2003) would also reject the socialist norms argument as flawed causal logic.

can expect to be punished severely in the unlikely event that he is in fact removed.” “Fear” is perhaps a better word for what the autocratic leader is feeling here—certainly the leader is not “answerable” in the sense understood by political theorists (e.g., Pitkin 1972, 55–9)—but Rosato’s point is worth considering. To support the contention, he reports that after participation in costly wars, a larger percentage of autocrats than democrats are removed from office, and a larger percentage are punished (594, Table 4). He finds that after losing wars, democrats, not autocrats, are more likely to be removed from office (though not punished), but he dismisses this contrary result. “This evidence is not strong,” he says, because there are so few instances of democratic losers. Rosato is right, but his evidence that autocrats are more likely to be removed from office as a consequence of involvement in costly wars is also weak. The relative infrequency of democratic involvement in both lost and costly wars argues against making much of these differences.⁴

A better interpretation of the results is that democrats tend to avoid wars they do not expect to win with modest cost. Rosato (2003, 594, note 14) rejects the plausibility of this “selection effect,” but his reasoning is suspect. He refers to Desch’s (2002, 23) calculations that the marginal effect of democracy on the probability of victory is lower than the marginal effects of other predictors, like terrain and military capabilities. Even if these calculations are taken at face value, they are irrelevant. The selection effects argument is not that democratic governance per se increases the likelihood of winning, but that democracies have access to better information about the likelihood of winning—whatever the factors contributing to victory—and are more inclined to stay out of conflicts when this information suggests that war is a losing proposition.⁵ This means that militarized disputes between democracies, if they do occur, are more likely to become especially bloody affairs, and are avoided by leaders concerned with their political survival. The dyadic logic of democratic peace theory thus pertains to the probability of such nonevents, and the challenge for empirical investigation is well beyond the reach of Rosato’s *ex post* evidence on office removal and punishment rates (Smith 1999). If fear of punishment is supposed to serve as a restraint on autocrats’ propensity to resort to ill-conceived wars, what his evidence tells me is that a fair number of them have not gotten the message.

If there were a dictatorial or autocratic peace alongside the democratic peace, the causal logic explaining

it almost certainly would be dyadic (e.g., Peceny, Beer, and Sanchez-Terry 2002). Rosato’s autocratic constraints proposition is intriguing, to say the least, but to date the empirical evidence has not shown autocracies to be generally less disputatious than other regime types. Either way, his critique of democratic peace theory stumbles on just this point. Aware of the dyadic arguments found in the literature, he nevertheless does not take the dyadic logic of the theory seriously. If democratic dyads are more than the sum of the democratic monads, as virtually all proponents of the democratic peace maintain, then the theory does not collapse under the weight of evidence suggesting less-than-virtuous behavior by democratic states.

Among the starkest empirical anomalies for democratic peace theory are those instances of American military interventions against other, weaker democratic regimes, so Rosato is correct to once again draw our attention to such cases. However, his list of seven or eight anomalies (590, Table 2) is longer than most democratic peace researchers will concede. The U.S. intervention in a democratic Chile in 1973 is beyond dispute, and in Guyana—not formally independent in 1961—American subversion occurred during a time of limited democratic self-government. Brazil was democratic in the early 1960s, but Rosato says the U.S. role in Quadros’s resignation is unclear. Guatemala might be called democratic under Arbenz, but the Polity Project locates the regime only at +2 on their democracy–autocracy scale. The other three targets of American intervention are even less democratic according to Polity: Nicaragua, Indonesia, and Iran (each with a scale value of –1). In the cases of Indonesia and Iran, Rosato’s own source classifies these regimes as “bureaucracies”—that is, “institutionalized dictatorships” (Przeworski et al. 2000, 32, 65).

Regardless of how these cases are ultimately judged, most proponents of the democratic peace are probably not inclined to quarrel with Rosato’s conclusion that at least some of the American interventions are at odds with the normative logic of the theory. The real difference of opinion concerns the implications of these and other anomalies for the theory-building enterprise. Throughout his critique, Rosato adopts a falsificationist stance, suggesting that in the face of historical cases that belie the causal logic he distills from the democratic peace literature, the theory should be thrown out. Actually, Rosato does not devote much effort to revealing flawed *logic*.⁶ Instead, he recites a list of *empirical* exceptions to the democratic peace—many of which are acknowledged as such by democratic peace proponents and some others that are not—while taking extra care to identify the causal mechanisms, postulated in democratic peace theory, that nevertheless seem to have gone missing in these cases. Thus, in regard to one such mechanism, he states that “whenever we find several examples of a democracy using military force against other democracies, the trust and respect

⁴ Although Rosato is not inferring from a sample to a population, one indication that he overstates the difference between democratic and autocratic political survival rates due to costly wars is that it would fail a *t* test for statistical significance ($t = 0.65$, $p = 0.53$).

⁵ In addition to the selection effects explanation, Reiter and Stam (2002) also examine a warfighting explanation, which does posit that democratic governance affords certain advantages on the battlefield. Although Rosato (2003) relies on Desch (2002) to refute the selection effects argument, Desch’s logic and methodology are severely flawed; see Reiter and Stam 2003 and Lake 2003.

⁶ For an analysis of the logic of democratic peace theory, see Zinnes 2004.

mechanism, and therefore the normative logic, fails an important test" (591). Many will not agree that Rosato has refuted the dyadic hypotheses, but even accepting those particular refutations would not mean accepting that democratic peace theory itself has been falsified. The more fundamental problem is that the hypotheses Rosato derives from his rendition of democratic peace theory, and presumes to test, are too often monadic and do not square with the theory's prevailing dyadic logic.

Rosato (2003) states clearly at the outset that the democratic peace project has discovered a "powerful empirical generalization." He simply wants to replace their theory with an explanation centering on U.S. hegemony in the Americas and Western Europe, where most democracies happen to be located during the cold war period. Although elaborating his alternative "imperial peace" theory is not the main thrust of his critique, his brief presentation of the argument does suggest that, maybe, his is—to use the distinction drawn by Lakatos (1970)—a "sophisticated," as opposed to "naive," falsificationism. At various places in his essay, his complaints are directed at democratic peace theory as a degenerating research program.⁷ Owen (1997), for instance, is taken to task for his attempt to "repair" the theory by introducing perceptions: to wit, what matters to democratic elites, when they contemplate resorting to force, is whether they *perceive* their opponents as liberal, not whether they *are* liberal. Elsewhere, he refers to "*ad hoc*" adjustments and other attempts to "rescue" the theory's logic (589–90, 596).

Scrutinizing research programs for signs that they may be degenerating is essential for scientific progress, but Waltz (1997) makes a useful point about the difference between theory and the application of theory as the target of scrutiny. In response to Vasquez's (1997) critique of neorealism as a degenerating research program, Waltz argues that although the concept of "threat" is introduced by Walt (1987) for purposes of applying balance-of-power theory to some seemingly anomalous cases, it does not thereby become part of the theory. More generally, there does appear to be a strong temptation to call on perceptions—perceptions of intentions in the case of Walt, perceptions of liberalism in the case of Owen (1997)—when the application of theory confronts discordant diplomatic behavior. Rosato is right to say that we are "unlikely to be able to predict how democracies will classify other states' regime type with a high level of confidence" (592); the temptation to revise theory ought to be resisted.

⁷ "'Falsification' in the sense of naive falsificationism (corroborated counterevidence) is not a *sufficient* condition for eliminating a specific theory: in spite of hundreds of known anomalies we do not regard it as falsified (that is, eliminated) until we have a better one" (Lakatos 1970, 121). Of course, when it comes to the democratic peace, not even the most committed proponents would tolerate "hundreds of known anomalies." Still, Lakatos's stipulation regarding the availability of a better theory is clear. That Rosato (2003) seemingly accepts the sophisticated falsificationist position is my interpretation of his critique; he is not explicit about his philosophical stance regarding the cumulation of knowledge in international relations and does not use the term "degenerating research program."

However, the attempt to explain anomalies by looking more closely at the perceptions of the actors involved is a worthy endeavor, as it improves our understanding of particular events. This sort of analysis may suggest that a revision of theory is in order if, for example, actors' perceptions are shown to be systematically biased under certain conditions, but it need not. And the undertaking of such studies is not perforce an indication that a research program is degenerating.⁸

There is a curious omission from Rosato's (2003) wide-ranging critique. Although he is aware of their analysis, the game-theoretic model of the democratic peace developed by Bueno de Mesquita et al. (1999) does not receive the attention it deserves in Rosato's discussion of political accountability (593–94). The omission is curious because Bueno de Mesquita and his colleagues offer a logically coherent theory that explains not only the propensity of democracies to remain at peace with each other but also many (I think most) of the empirical anomalies that Rosato finds problematic for democratic peace theory: namely, that democracies have often fought wars for reasons other than self-defense, including colonial wars; and that democracies have often attacked or destabilized weaker, nonthreatening states, including other democracies. Their model abandons the normative logic of democratic peace theory and retains just one basic element of the institutional logic—that a democratic government depends, for its political survival, on a larger constituency (winning coalition) than does a nondemocratic government. Beyond that, all the model assumes is that political leaders do in fact want to stay in power, and the policies they pursue, which yield a mix of public and private goods, are directed toward that end. It is thus in keeping with the democratic peace research program by virtue of the centrality of regime type in the theory.⁹

Whether Rosato's (2003) "imperial peace" theory represents a progressive problemshift—again, the term is Lakatos's (1970)—relative to this or other constructive efforts within the democratic peace project remains to be seen.¹⁰ Its focus on American hegemonic

⁸ The fact remains that researchers who do focus on the role of perceptions as an auxiliary factor in explaining the democratic peace often feel compelled to interpret their findings as calling for a revision of democratic peace theory. Thus, Owen (1997, 15) believes that "if liberal peace is real, a theory is needed to account for these perceptions." Rosato's (2003) frustration is understandable.

⁹ The key intuition is that the political survival of democratic elites is relatively more dependent on the distribution of public goods, whereas the political survival of autocratic elites is more easily assured by the distribution of private goods. Because public goods are made available by successful public policies (including foreign policies), democratic leaders devote more resources to policy success, especially success in war. Democratic leaders, knowing that their democratic counterparts also try hard to succeed, avoid military confrontations with them, but not with their autocratic counterparts. Nor do they avoid confrontations with significantly weaker states, including democracies, because regardless of those states' level of effort, it is not likely to affect the outcome. The model is more fully developed and tested in Bueno de Mesquita et al. (2003).

¹⁰ For an extended discussion of the applicability of Lakatos's (1970) criteria for appraising scientific progress in international studies, see Elman and Elman (2002). Chernoff (2004) provides a favorable

power as the key explanatory factor will displease most outside the realist tradition. Be that as it may, that Rosato prefaces the brief summary of his theory by restricting its temporal and spatial scope—that is, to the post-World War II period and to the Western Hemisphere and Western Europe—is not promising.¹¹ Neither is his blanket dismissal of every causal argument contained in an alternative theory that has nevertheless received extraordinarily robust empirical support by social science standards. Parsimony may be an admirable quality of realist international relations theory, but we should be wary of essentially monocausal explanations put forward with such conviction. A virtue of the democratic peace research program has been a willingness to represent competing arguments in their multivariate models—including realist hypotheses, like Rosato's, that regional hegemony has a pacifying effect on conflict propensity. Indeed, empirical researchers working in this tradition have done much to confirm the validity of certain realist propositions, even while demonstrating the limits of realist theory. Nevertheless, there seems to be no rest for the democratic peace.

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evaluation of the democratic peace project using several alternative metatheories, including Lakatos's (see also Ray 2003).

¹¹ Early indications from the quantitative literature are that hegemonic power does not have a pacifying effect—and, what is most important for democratic peace theory, the pacifying effect of dyadic democratic interaction is still in evidence after controlling for hegemonic power as well as other geopolitical factors highlighted by realist theory. Furthermore, this finding emerges from an analysis of the entire 20th century, not just the post-World War II period (Oneal and Russett 1999). Oddly, although Rosato (2003) cites them in support of his statement that democratic dyads were not any less likely to fight one another before the post-World War II period, Farber and Gowa (1997, 409) actually provide evidence that democracies were less likely to become embroiled in militarized disputes with each other as far back as 1919—and Gowa (1999, 99–100) acknowledges a similar finding for the decade preceding World War I.

Probabilistic Causality, Selection Bias, and the Logic of the Democratic Peace

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Rosato (2003) claims to have discredited democratic peace theories. However, the methodological approach adopted by the study cannot reliably generate the conclusions espoused by the author. Rosato seems to misunderstand the probabilistic nature of most arguments about democratic peace and ignores issues that an appropriate research design should account for. Further, the study's use of case studies and data sets without attention to selection-bias produces examples that actually support theories it seeks to undermine. These problems place in doubt the article's findings.

Rosato (2003) purports to demonstrate that the enormous literature on the democratic peace rests on dubious microfoundations. Reduced to its most basic, the claim is that none of the causal mechanisms advanced by the proponents of numerous different theories of the liberal peace hold up to empirical scrutiny. This is certainly an important finding if true. Unfortunately, the method employed in reaching these conclusions makes it impossible for us to know whether the author is right.

Despite the title of the article, the author does not engage the logic of the theories. Rather, he seeks to evaluate the empirical plausibility of the mechanisms they specify. We identify several problems with this methodology, each of which places in doubt the validity of the author's claims. Indeed, the study serves to catalogue research design flaws that are not uncommon in international relations research.

First, Rosato (2003) ignores fundamental issues of hypothesis testing and inference from historical data. We detail two possible interpretations of theoretical statements and show that the author's methodology does not allow him to draw the conclusions he does from either one. Second, the author ignores selection bias problems affecting observed behavior. This leads him to advance cases that actually support democratic peace theories instead of contradicting them.

We do not catalog all such errors, due to space constraints. Instead, we use the signaling theory (what Rosato refers to as "the information mechanism," 587) to illustrate most of our concerns.

THE LOGIC OF INFERENCE: CAUSALITY AND EMPIRICAL TESTING

The most important errors in Rosato's article stem from inappropriate methodological choices and re-

search design. The basic setup of the study is a reduction of democratic peace theories to logical statements of implication of the form $D \rightarrow S \rightarrow P$, where D stands for "state is democratic," S is a consequence implied by democracy (e.g., "state externalizes norms" or "state can signal better"), and P is the consequence of S (e.g., "states signaling or externalizing norms tend to resolve crises peacefully").¹

Rosato (2003) seems to treat these statements as sufficient conditions. That is, $D \rightarrow S$ means that democracy is all that is needed to achieve better signaling. The idea is to demonstrate that $\neg[D \rightarrow S]$, or that democracy does not imply the causal mechanism proposed by the theory. For example, Rosato (589) asserts that there are "several examples of liberal states violating liberal norms in their conduct of foreign policy and therefore the claim that liberal states generally externalize their internal norms of conflict resolution is open to question." In sentential logic, the argument boils down to $\neg[D \rightarrow S] = [D \wedge \neg S]$. Rosato reasons that if he demonstrates that $[D \wedge \neg S]$ is true, then he can reject the claim that $[D \rightarrow S]$, which in turn negates the link between D and P . In other words, if he finds cases where a democracy (D) failed to externalize norms ($\neg S$), then he can infer that the causal connection postulated by the particular theory is empirically invalid and that the theory is thereby discredited.²

The problem with this reasoning is that democratic peace theories, as social scientific claims, do not typically offer hypotheses in the form of sufficient conditions. Instead, these theories make probabilistic claims for two reasons we explain in the following sections. We argue that Rosato's (2003) critique does not succeed irrespective of the source of the resulting empirical nondeterminism.

EVALUATING THEORIES

Theoretical models express claims about *tendencies* that are contributions of one or several causal factors

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We thank Hein Goemans, and Robert Northcott for useful discussions.

¹ $D \rightarrow P$ means " D implies P " (i.e., D is a sufficient condition for P and P is a necessary condition for D ; $\neg D$ means "not D "; and $D \wedge S$ means " D and S ."

² Rosato (2003) does not appear to challenge the $S \rightarrow P$ component, at least in the cases we examine.

that would prevail and produce the anticipated effect *all other things being equal* (Hausman 1992, Mill 1967 [1836]). Take, for example, the signaling theory in Schultz (1998). The formal model demonstrates that public endorsement by the opposition tends to contribute positively (and, conversely, the absence of endorsement contributes negatively) to the credibility of the government's threat. The theory does *not* claim that (1) the opposition's actions will always (or even most of the time) lead to credible threats, or that (2) when a government's threats are credible, that this can be credited to the opposition. Liberal governments will make credible threats in the face of domestic dissent, even as they are bound to bluff occasionally, even when benefiting from domestic political consensus.

Because any theoretical model requires assumptions to produce its deductions, a careful theorist will be especially cautious in making predictions in cases where these assumptions may not hold; a judgment that is further complicated by the fact that we do not possess complete models and hence do not know the full set of assumptions that might be operating. The model expresses a tendency that should prevail in certain circumstances, but this tendency can also be overwhelmed by other, countervailing, ones. Anyone who seeks to assess a theory must make a reasoned judgment about where the theory applies. This requires that we identify a sample where the theory's assumptions are approximately satisfied. This would let the theory express a tendency claim about the real world rather than the neat stylized one of the model. Were one then to demonstrate that hypotheses from the theory do not obtain, one would have a serious challenge to the theory.

Rosato does not do this. Instead, he seeks to undermine democratic peace theory by selecting examples where the assumptions of theories are not satisfied, or where other factors held sway. For example, Rosato (2003, 589) challenges signaling theory in the following manner:

The available evidence suggests that democracies cannot clearly reveal their levels of resolve in a crisis. There are two reasons for this. First, democratic processes and institutions often reveal so much information that it is difficult for opposing states to interpret it.³ Second, open domestic political competition does not ensure that states will reveal their private information.

The first sentence is demonstrably false. At least on occasion, democracies do appear to have been able to signal through open political contestation (see Schultz 1998). In addition, the two reasons Rosato gives for the alleged failure of democracies to signal are simply illustrations of countervailing tendencies. As such, Rosato's (2003) critique amounts to the rather unambi-

tious point that the theory applies in some cases more clearly than in others.

PROBABILISTIC THEORIES

In drawing his conclusions, Rosato seems to treat theories as deterministic, whereas they are almost invariably couched in probabilistic terms. Theories in social science usually say things like "the probability of war is lower when informative signals can be sent" (Schultz 2001, 7), or "in any equilibrium of any game with the above format, the probability of war is an increasing function of the expected benefits from war of the informed player" (Banks 1990, 600).

Why couch theories in probabilistic terms? The probabilities in models can come from two sources. One of them is internal to models in the sense that a model may itself specify a probability distribution over outcomes arising from strategic factors. For example, it may be optimal to play a mixed strategy and bluff on occasion. Although we can specify the probability of bluffing, we cannot predict with certainty whether a player would bluff or not in any given realization of the game even if we hold everything else constant.

Another source of indeterminacy is external. Suppose the model itself makes a deterministic prediction. We still should not expect this prediction to hold once we "export" it to the empirical world. We simply cannot be sure how other factors, unforeseen by the theory, will play themselves out in individual cases. Because we do not have the complete specification of all contributing variables to social processes, we generally treat these unknowns as "noise." In testing, we seek to control for major disturbing factors (through case selection, multivariate statistical analysis, or experiment) and hope that the predicted tendency is robust enough to reveal itself regardless of other confounding influences.

Rosato (2003, 599) states that "the purported informational properties of democratic institutions are unlikely to improve the prospects for peace." The probabilistic claim that democracies do not lead to more credible signaling, and hence peace, is an assertion about statistical tendencies, not about behavior in individual cases, where outcomes can only occur or not occur. Though Rosato provides no carefully reasoned explication of the claim, let us assume that he is correct and that democracies do not strongly correlate with credible revelation of information. Suppose we found that out of five hundred interstate crises involving at least one democracy, only in 10% of the cases were democracies able to signal credibly, and in the remaining 90%, the tendency was supplanted by other causes. Is this democratic tendency then useless? The assertion that democracy does not explain anything would miss the point: after all, we may have a perfectly good explanation for 50 crises, and in the remaining cases, we may have a partial one. Focusing on the 90% of cases where the tendency was not decisive would mislead us to ignore the 10% where it was. Rejecting the theory on these grounds is unwarranted.

³ The everyday use of the word "information" confuses the distinction between data (facts about defense spending, public statements, etc.) and private knowledge (e.g., one's reservation level). Rosato's (2003) claim appears to be that democracies make so much data available, that one would have difficulty inferring the privately known values from them. That is, he is saying that democracies do not reveal information, in the sense the concept is used in signaling games. We thank a reviewer for pointing this out.

Rosato's (2003) methodology, which fails for deterministic theories, is on even shakier ground for probabilistic claims. Under what conditions can we conclude that a tendency identified by a model is sufficiently causally relevant to explain outcomes in an appropriate sample of cases? Causality in these theories is not in the form of implications, but rather of probabilities. We say that D causes P if $\Pr(P|S \wedge T) > \Pr(P|\neg S \wedge T)$ for every test situation T .⁴ An appropriate test situation is one in which all other independent causally relevant factors are held fixed (Cartwright 1979). This condition was proposed to avoid Simpson's Paradox, where depending on how a population is partitioned a cause may actually decrease the probability of its effect.⁵ We can interpret this as a requirement that the sample used for testing be chosen so as to respect the model's applicability. A researcher collects a sample of cases in which the model more or less applies and then measures the probability of its prediction coming true. Rosato's research design does not follow this widely accepted methodology for testing probabilistic hypotheses.

Because Rosato (2003) does not fully engage some of the theories he criticizes, the critique sometimes uses cases that actually support the theory he wants to discredit. Take, for example, the 1967 crisis between Egypt and Israel preceding the Six Days War. Citing Finel and Lord (1999), Rosato states that "Nasser was 'overwhelmed by the "noise" of Israeli domestic politics' and 'had enough information to see whatever he wanted and confirm existing misperceptions about Israeli intentions.'" This is said to illustrate how democracies cannot signal credibly.

Let us look at the tendencies the signaling theory expresses: democracies tend to signal credibly, and democratic signaling tends to decrease the probability of war. The hypothesis is that we are disproportionately unlikely to see democracies engaged in wars in cases where they are successful in signaling. Therefore, crises where for some reason the signaling tendency is overwhelmed by other factors are more likely to end in war. The theory leads us to expect that crises that involve democracies and that end in war are precisely the ones where democracies failed to reveal information through signaling. Rosato's (2003) example refers to just such a crisis and thus lends support to the theory.

⁴ $\Pr(P|S \wedge T)$ reads "probability of event P conditional on events S and T occurring jointly."

⁵ Suppose that democracies signal more credibly but also tend to be weak militarily. If credible signaling is a cause of peace, but military weakness is an even greater cause of war (by inviting attack), then democracies may appear more likely to end up at war than nondemocracies. If S represents credible signaling and M represents military weakness, $\Pr(P|S) > \Pr(P|\neg S)$. However, if we condition on whether the military is weak, the inequality is reversed: $\Pr(P|S \wedge M) < \Pr(P|\neg S \wedge M)$ and $\Pr(P|S \wedge \neg M) > \Pr(P|\neg S \wedge \neg M)$. These reversals constitute Simpson's Paradox (Hitchcock 2002). The requirement that only independent causal factors are held fixed is also necessary. Suppose that some cause M of P is itself caused by S . If S causes P exclusively through M , then holding M fixed would screen off S from P , something we clearly want to avoid.

SELECTION BIAS

One must be careful in using cases presumably produced by the data-generating process that the models are trying to explain. Selection bias in conflict datasets has been a well-known problem for some time, and researchers are typically at pains to ensure that they account for its misleading effects. In particular, one must infer the consequences of a theory for observable behavior or else risk reaching incorrect conclusions.

Take, for example, the theory that democratic leaders are more readily punished if they lose a war, and hence that they are more reluctant to engage in wars, making democracies less likely to escalate crises to the highest level of violence. Rosato (2003, 594) uses Goemans (2000) data of the fates of leaders after war "to determine whether leaders' decisions for war are affected by their domestic accountability, that is, if there is something about the domestic structure of states that affects their chances of being punished."

According to the theory, leaders take into account the chances of being punished if they lose, and the fear of punishment affects their conflict decisions. Therefore, cases where war actually occurs already tend to contain leaders who have discounted the probability of punishment. Suppose that democratic leaders who lose a war are more likely to be punished than autocratic ones (we are not saying that this is true; we are just conducting a thought experiment). It follows that democratic leaders would tend to get involved only in wars they believe they can win; hence, democracies would tend to win the wars they fight (this is what we observe empirically). What happens in the few cases where democratic leaders lose? As Rosato (2003) himself finds, these leaders tend to get removed from office disproportionately.

Rosato (2003, 594) concludes that "this evidence is not strong. This is because there are only four cases of democratic losers in the entire dataset, making it impossible to draw any firm conclusions about the likelihood that losing democrats will be removed." But this conclusion is clearly wrong, for, according to the logic of the argument, the evidence is overwhelmingly in support of the self-selection hypothesis: few democracies lose, and in those cases that democracies do lose, leaders get removed at very high rates. We would conclude that (1) democratic leaders are, in fact, more likely to be removed if they lose, and therefore (2) they would only fight when the chances of losing are sufficiently small, and so (3) we should observe very few cases where democratic leaders lose wars. Similar arguments apply to costly wars: after all, few leaders would deliberately begin wars that they expect to be costly and long.

CONCLUSION

The method Rosato (2003) uses to discredit democratic peace theories is inappropriate in most social science contexts. Because Rosato's article is a manifestation of a widespread misconception in our discipline, we

believe it is worth drawing attention to the problems inherent in such approaches.

Despite the title of his article, Rosato does not engage the logic of the theories he wants to discredit. We are willing to believe that many explanations for the democratic peace offer internally inconsistent or *ad hoc* arguments. For many of these theories, it is an open question under what assumptions their claims hold. However, using historical examples to challenge logic is misleading; we know neither that the logic of the theory is correct nor that the implications of the theory are wrong. We suspect, for example, that any reasonably competent student of history can interpret a given case in various ways to support contradictory hypotheses.

Without a proper evaluation of the logic of competing theories, one might (charitably) assume equal deductive consistency for all. We would then hope to see a demonstration that some theories are less useful empirically than others. Instead, Rosato (2003) offers yet another theory: American preponderance, principally through NATO, is said to explain the democratic peace. But this theory needs a proper empirical evaluation missing from the article.⁶

We believe that progress in social science is best achieved through an interactive simultaneous advance on two fronts: the construction of internally consistent theories and the careful comparative empirical evaluation of competing models. If Rosato's (2003) critique of democratic peace theory fails to strike its target, it stands to do substantial damage by legitimizing a fundamentally incorrect method of evaluating social science theories. Although scholars with normative

aversion to the democratic peace or the scientific method may conclude that their views have been vindicated, we hope to have demonstrated that such a conclusion cannot depend on Rosato's study.

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⁶ Rosato's (2003) hypothesis is not supported by a large-N analysis: Adding joint NATO membership in a dyad as a dummy variable to standard statistical models of the democratic peace does not alter the effects of democracy, and is itself statistically insignificant (Gartzke 2004). The hypothesis is easily refuted even by Rosato's own approach to testing: The peace observation holds for non-NATO dyads (Austria-Switzerland) and fails for NATO partners (Greece-Turkey).

Three Pillars of the Liberal Peace

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Sebastian Rosato (2003) finds the logic of the “democratic peace” flawed in his “*The Flawed Logic of Democratic Peace Theory*,” and he cites my work and other studies as examples of the flawed logic. Some of the logic he describes is flawed, and it may characterize some of the literature in the wide field of “democratic peace,” but it is not the logic underlying the core of liberal peace theory. Indeed, the persuasive core of the logic underlying the theory of liberal democratic peace is missing from Rosato’s account. Republican representation, an ideological commitment to fundamental human rights, and transnational interdependence are the three pillars of the explanation. The logic underlying the peace among liberal states rests on a simple and straightforward proposition that connects those three causal mechanisms as they operate together and only together, and not separately as Sebastian Rosato claims.

I explain the persuasive core of the logic underlying the theory of liberal democratic peace logic in three places. The two-part essay “Kant, Liberal Legacies and Foreign Affairs” published in *Philosophy and Public Affairs* (1983) showed how Immanuel Kant’s (1970) 1795 essay, “Perpetual Peace,” could be constructed as a coherent explanation of two important regularities in world politics—the tendencies of liberal states simultaneously to be peace-prone in their relations with each other and war-prone in their relations with nonliberal states. Republican representation, an ideological commitment to fundamental human rights, and transnational interdependence are the three causal mechanisms of the explanation. These are Kant’s three “definitive articles”—the constitutional, international and cosmopolitan laws—of the hypothetical peace treaty he asks states to sign. The first part of the two-part essay focuses on the liberal peace and its Kantian sources. The second part of the two-part essay focuses on exposing the dangers of liberal imperialism, liberal aggression and liberal appeasement (Rosato 1996 cites the reprints of the two articles in *Debating the Democratic Peace*). I also addressed these themes in the *American Political Science Review* in December 1986 and distinguished Kantian “liberal internationalism” from “liberal pacifism” and “liberal imperialism.” In 1997, in *Ways of War and Peace*, I distinguished liberalism from the two other major traditions of international thought, Realism and Marxism.

All three have one consistent and key argument: “No one of these constitutional, international or cosmopolitan sources is alone sufficient, but together (and only where together) they plausibly connect the characteristics of liberal politics and economies with sustained liberal peace” ([1983a, 1983b] 1996, 27). I repeat the same sentence as the summary of the argument—“No single constitutional, international . . .” in the *American Political Science Review* (Doyle 1986, 1162); and the identical sentence (this time in italics for emphasis) in *Ways of War and Peace* (1997, 284). I explicitly

say that the three causes explained liberal peace and liberal war when, and only when, combined. Rosato’s critique of the work, nonetheless, rests on treating each of these factors—“normative,” “institutional,” etc.—in isolation as if they were sufficient.

This is important because, in my view, no one of the factors alone is a sufficient explanation of the liberal peace or liberal war. First, as Rosato correctly suggests, there is no reason for all direct or indirectly majoritarian governments to be peaceful toward other majoritarian governments. Clearly, a democracy of xenophobes or hyper-nationalists would externalize their preferences. Anticipating Rosato’s critique, I (1997, chaps. 4 and 9) pointed out in *Ways of War and Peace*—in chapters that discuss Rousseau and Marx—that democratic institutions are completely compatible with Realist foreign policy when preferences are integrally and exclusively nationalist and with Socialist solidarity and international class warfare when strictly egalitarian (and societies lack individual liberties and private property). Jean Jacques Rousseau’s classic account of democratic theory, for example, anticipates that democracies will be locked, as any Realist would agree, in a generalized “state of war” with all other states, whether democratic or not (Rousseau 1756/1917). If information flows across borders are limited, subject to manipulation and nationalist myth-making, and each democracy cultivates a normative commitment to complete autonomy and self-help, democracies will be likely to clash (Mearsheimer 1990; VanEvera 1990).

Second, there should be no expectation that a population widely sharing liberal values associated with human rights norm will shape policy unless they have democratic representation with the transparency and accountability that can shape public decision-making.¹

And third, there is no guarantee that commercial and other forms of interdependence will alone provide material foundations for cooperation among societies, rather than for sources of imperial rivalry and fuel to balance of power competition, unless trade and investment are part of a relationship of trust and respect.²

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The author thanks Robert Jervis and Frank Wayman for advice on an earlier draft of this note.

¹ Mueller (1989) stresses the norms of peace in his explanation, but also links these norms to democratic institutions.

² Cobden (1901) is a classic source on the pacifying effects of trade. Russett and O’Neal (2001) and Gartzke, Li, and Boehmer (2001)

Rosato (2003) is right to criticize the logic of each of these strands of the “democratic peace” standing alone.

Once combined, however, the three sources do help explain why liberal states maintain peace with each other and are, nonetheless, and for explicable reasons prone to war and imperialism with nonliberal states. Given the absence of this explanation in Mr. Rosato’s (2003) critique, it is worth briefly summarizing the three hypotheses here. Each emphasizes one aspect of what characterizes a liberal republic.

First, republican representative democratic governments tend to create an accountable relationship between the state and the voters, particularly median voters. They preclude monarchs or dictators turning their potentially aggressive interests into public policy while assuming that the costs will be borne by a subordinate public. Democratic representation introduces republican caution, Kant’s (1970) “hesitation,” in place of autocratic caprice. Representative government allows for a rotation of elites. This encourages a reversal of disastrous policies as electorates punish the party in power with electoral defeat. Legislatures and public opinion further restrain executives from policies that clearly violate the obvious and fundamental interests of the public, as the public perceives those interests.

As importantly, representation together with transparency (what Kant [1970] called “publicity”) may provide for effective signaling, assuring foreign decision makers that democratic commitments are credible because rash acts and exposed bluffs will lead to electoral defeat. Able to make more credible commitments than regimes with more narrow selectorates, democracies would thus be less likely to stumble into wars.³

We should not, however, overemphasize rational signaling. The division of powers and rotation of elites characteristic of republican regimes can permit mixed signals, allowing foreign powers to suspect that executive policies might be overturned by legislatures, courts, or the next election. On the other hand, the shared powers of republics should encourage better chances for deliberation. Most importantly, the combination of representative institutions and purely rational material interests do not control for the possibility that powerful states can have rational incentives to conquer wealthy and exploit wealthy, weak democracies. If reputations are short and differentiable and supposedly pacifying long-run interests are indeterminate, as they often are, something more than rational material interest will be needed to explain liberal peace.

Representation should, however, ensure that liberal wars are only fought for popular, liberal purposes. This does not produce peace. The historical liberal legacy is laden with popular wars fought to promote freedom, protect private property or support liberal allies against nonliberal enemies.⁴ In order to see how the

pacific union removes the occasion of wars among liberal states and not wars between liberal and nonliberal states, we need to shift our attention from liberal representation to liberal principles and liberal interests, the other two elements in the liberal explanation of peace and war. These latter two elements account for the purposes that representative processes promote and what credible signaling needs to signal.

Second, liberal principles add the prospect of international respect. Liberal principles, or norms, involve an appreciation of the legitimate rights of all individuals. Connecting these principles to public policy requires publicity. Domestically, publicity helps ensure that the officials of republics act according to the principles they profess to be just and according to the interests of the electors they claim to represent. Internationally, free speech and the effective communication of accurate conceptions of the political life of foreign peoples are essential to establish and preserve the understanding on which the guarantee of respect depends.

These principles begin the differentiation of policy toward liberal and nonliberal states, requiring trust of and accommodation toward fellow liberals and producing distrust of and opposition toward nonliberals. Domestically just republics, which rest on the consent of free individuals, presume foreign republics to be also consensual, just, and therefore deserving of the accommodation that the individuals that compose them deserve. The experience of cooperation helps engender further cooperative behavior when the consequences of state policy are unclear but (potentially) mutually beneficial. At the same time, liberal states assume that nonliberal states, which do not rest on free consent, are not just. Because nonliberal governments are perceived to be in a state of aggression with their own people, their foreign relations become, for liberal governments, deeply suspect. In short, fellow liberals benefit from a presumption of amity; nonliberals suffer from a presumption of enmity. Both presumptions may be accurate. Each, however, may also be self-fulfilling.

Democratic liberals do not need to assume either that public opinion rules foreign policy or that the entire governmental elite is liberal. They can assume that the elite typically manages public affairs but that potentially nonliberal members of the elite have reason to doubt that antiliberal policies would be electorally sustained and endorsed by the majority of the democratic public.

Third and last, material incentives sustain interliberal normative commitments. The “spirit of commerce” spreads widely and creates incentives for states to promote peace and to try to avert war. Liberal economic theory holds that these cosmopolitan ties derive from a cooperative international division of labor and free

draw links between trade and peace, but only in the context of wider relationships favoring accommodation.

³ For further discussion, see Fearon 1994, Gaubatz 1996; Schultz 1998, and Lipson 2003.

⁴ This is the theme of Small and Singer (1976) and Doyle (1983b), Chan (1984), and Weede (1984). Many liberal philosophers, includ-

ing Kant in “Perpetual Peace,” regard these wars as unjust, and Kant warns liberals of their susceptibility to them (see 1970, 106). At the same time, he argues that each nation “can and ought to” demand that its neighboring nations enter into the pacific union of liberal states (102) whose first requirement is domestically liberal institutions.

trade according to comparative advantage when the parties can expect to be governed by a rule of law that respects property and that enforces legitimate exchanges. Each economy is said to be better off than it would have been under autarky; each thus acquires an incentive to avoid policies that would lead the other to break these economic ties. But, because keeping open markets rests on an assumption that the next set of transactions will also be determined by prices rather than coercion, a sense of mutual security is vital to avoid security-motivated searches for economic autarky. Thus, avoiding a challenge to another liberal state's security or even enhancing each other's security by means of alliance naturally follows economic interdependence.

In this same regard, a further cosmopolitan source of liberal peace is that the international market removes difficult decisions of production and distribution from the direct sphere of state policy. A foreign state thus does not appear directly responsible for these outcomes; states can stand aside from, and to some degree above, these contentious market rivalries and be ready to step in to resolve crises. The interdependence of commerce and the international contacts of state officials help create cross-cutting transnational ties that serve as lobbies for mutual accommodation. According to modern liberal scholars, international financiers and transnational and transgovernmental organizations create interests in favor of accommodation. Moreover, their variety has ensured no single conflict sours an entire relationship by setting off a spiral of reciprocated retaliation.

Conversely, the suspicion that characterizes relations between liberal and nonliberal governments can lead to restrictions on the range of contacts between societies. And this can increase the prospect that a single conflict will determine an entire relationship. As importantly, in relations with weak societies, "protecting "native rights" from native oppressors, and protecting universal rights of property and settlement from local transgressions, introduced especially liberal motives for imperial rule" (Doyle [1983a, 1983b] 1996, p. 37). When property lacks clear title and exchanges are subject to manipulation and uncertain legal enforcement—the typical environment of non-liberal states—then economic contact generates strife.

No single constitutional, international, or cosmopolitan source alone is sufficient. This variant of liberal theory is neither solely institutional, nor solely ideological, nor solely economic. But together (and only together) the three specific strands of liberal institutions, liberal ideas, and transnational ties plausibly connect the characteristics of liberal polities and economies with sustained liberal peace. But in their relations with nonliberal states, liberal states have not escaped from the insecurity caused by anarchy in the world political system considered as a whole. Moreover, the very constitutional restraint, international respect for individual rights, and shared commercial interests that establish grounds for peace among liberal states establish grounds for additional conflict in relations between liberal and nonliberal societies.

Thus, when Rosato (2003, 588, 593) criticizes the "norm externalization" argument or the "institutional logic" explanations, he is in each case missing two thirds of the liberal argument. When he argues that economic interests and local strategic interests shaped liberal imperial policy in the 19th century, he is not refuting—he is confirming—the logic of the liberal peace. In these cases, principled liberal motives joined material interests in liberal imperialism. Campaigns against the slave trade destabilized commercial oligarchies, making them prone to collapse. The *mission civilatrice* and the "dual mandate" imperial ideologies both included liberal principles, albeit ones that allowed for liberal imperial paternalism of the sort J. S. Mill (1859/1973) endorsed for societies he and his fellow liberals saw as incapable of governing themselves. But commercial and property interests, which lacked institutionalization in much of Africa and Asia, were even more important. Lacking both legal recognition and the context of interliberal respect, commercial and property claims fueled imperialism. (Doyle [1983a, 1983b] 1996, 37–9). Liberals were all too ready to enforce those property claims both as a matter of material interest and principled defense of rights. Interliberal peace rests on the combined effect of the three pillars. Absent one of them, pacific policy is underdetermined and undermined.

During the Cold War, the United States did intervene against or take measures to undermine covertly numerous popular regimes in the Third World. In many cases the U.S. administration in office was convinced that the regimes in question (Mossadegh in Iran, Arbenz in Guatemala, Jagan in Guyana, Allende in Chile, and the Sandinistas in Nicaragua) were threats both to property and to the rule of law. The fact that these regimes were more progressive and popular than any previous regime in those countries (and, in some cases, since) did not make them well-established liberal democracies. Many U.S. officials doubted their stability as democracies. They were also seen as influenced by and allied with communist regimes. President Kennedy articulated the logic clearly, referring to the assassination of Trujillo in the Democratic Republic: "There are three possibilities in descending order of preference, a decent democratic regime, a continuation of the Trujillo regime or a Castro regime. We ought to aim at the first, but we cannot really renounce the second until we are sure that we can avoid the third" (Schlesinger 1965, 769, quoted in Doyle [1983] 1996, 41). As importantly, all of these interventions were covert; they lacked the mechanisms of publicity on which the liberal peace rests. The explanation underlying the liberal peace makes no assumption that every official, always and everywhere, is motivated by liberal principle and interest—just that over the normal political cycle nonliberal principles and interests will not become the norm in the formation of liberal foreign policy.

A much more logical explanation comes with methodological costs. Data sets on the liberal peace do not adequately code for these three pillars together and separately. My own coding (1983a, 1983b, 1986, 1997)

was approximate. The most thorough recent empirical test of Kantian propositions (Russett and O'Neal 2001) shows the separate positive effects of democratic institutions and trade (and membership in international organizations), but it doesn't separately code for liberal norms. The substantial statistical confirmation that inter-democratic peace, (coding for democratic institutions), does receive is thus probably a reflection of the tendency for principles of liberal individualism and democratic institutions to evolve together.⁵ But we cannot be sure of this. Compared to other testable international theories of similar scope, the empirical confirmation of the liberal peace is exceptionally strong, but that does not mean that the theory does not need additional testing.

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⁵ For thorough surveys of empirical literature see Rummel (1997) and Lai and Reiter (2000).

Explaining the Democratic Peace

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I am grateful for the opportunity to respond to the rejoinders to my article, "The Flawed Logic of Democratic Peace Theory" (Rosato 2003). In each case, I summarize the core issues at stake and explain why I do not believe that my critics have succeeded in casting serious doubt on my original argument.

KINSELLA ON CAUSAL LOGICS AND THEORY REJECTION

Monadic Logics

David Kinsella's (2005) first major claim is that my criticism of democratic peace theory is misdirected because I test the theory's causal logics as if they are monadic when they are in fact dyadic. Evidence from conflicts between democracies and non-democracies is irrelevant, he argues, because the logics state that democracies will only externalize their domestic norms of conflict resolution or act cautiously in conflicts with other democracies.

What Kinsella fails to realize is that although the democratic peace *finding* is dyadic, the *logics* adduced to explain it are monadic. The six logics that I identified in my article all begin with the claim that democratic norms and institutions cause democracies to behave differently from nondemocracies in systematic ways: there are fewer reasons available to them for going to war, they are more constrained in the use of violence, they are slower to resort to force, and they are better at signaling their levels of resolve. In essence, the argument is that democracies are less violence-prone than are other kinds of states and/or more effective at engaging in the kind of behavior that makes war less likely. Proponents of the democratic peace then use these monadic tendencies to explain why democracies have not fought one another. Simply put, in a crisis involving two democracies, each side has a low propensity for violence and a high aptitude for the kind of behavior that makes war less likely, and each knows that its democratic opponent also has these qualities. Therefore, they are able to remain at peace (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 1999; Russett 1993; Schultz 2001).¹

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I thank Alexander Downes, John Mearsheimer, John Schuessler, Robert Trager, and my colleagues at the Olin Institute for their comments and suggestions.

¹ The perceptual versions of these logics are also monadic. They take the following form. Democracy A is constrained and, because it perceives State B as a democracy, believes B is also constrained. B carries out the same calculation. Thus, A and B are able to remain at peace. Doyle's (1997) claim that democracies remain at peace because they trust and respect one another and fight nondemocracies because they neither trust nor respect them is the only example of democratic peace theorists proposing a dyadic logic. As I explained in my article, however, this logic is *ad hoc* (Rosato 2003, 589–90).

Let me approach this same point from a slightly different perspective. The logics underpinning the democratic peace refer to how democracies act with respect to all states, whether democratic or not. The public constraint logic, for example, states that pairs of democracies remain at peace because both parties face above average constraints in deciding to go to war with any adversary, not just with other democracies. Similarly, the information logic suggests that members of democratic dyads do not fight because they are both good at signaling their level of resolve, not because they are only good at signaling other democracies. In short, democratic peace theory's logics rest on a "multiplier" argument: if a state with a low propensity for violence comes into contact with another state that also has a low propensity for violence, then the likelihood of war breaking out is very low indeed.²

Therefore, in order to evaluate democratic peace theory's logics, we must determine whether democratic norms and institutions actually cause democracies to behave differently from nondemocracies in systematic ways. For example, is there good evidence that democracy causes greater elite accountability, better access to the policy process for peace-loving interest groups, better signaling in crises, and a greater commitment to the use of peaceful norms of conflict resolution? If there is, then we have a plausible explanation for the democratic peace finding. If not, then the peace that exists among democracies may not be caused by the democratic nature of those states.

This is the kind of evaluation that I carried out in my article before concluding that democracy does not have the effects that proponents of the democratic peace attribute to it (Rosato 2003, 599). Liberal democracies do not reliably externalize their domestic norms of conflict resolution. Democratic leaders are not especially accountable to peace-loving publics or pacific interest groups. Democracies are not particularly slow to mobilize or incapable of surprise attack. And open political competition offers no guarantee that a democracy will reveal private information about its level of resolve. Therefore, the existing logics cannot explain the democratic peace finding: two democracies, each relatively unconstrained and expecting the other to be similarly unconstrained, may well fight one another.

In sum, the logics underpinning democratic peace theory are monadic in form; thus the tests that I carried

² Similarly, if a state that can effectively reveal private information about its level of resolve comes into contact with another state that can do the same, then the likelihood that they will fight is quite low.

out provide good evidence that the absence of war between democracies may not be caused by their democratic nature.

Theory Rejection

Kinsella's other major claim is that the criteria that I adopted to reject democratic peace theory are unfair. He argues, first of all, that I cannot reject the theory on the basis of a handful of select historical examples that belie its causal logics. Moreover, he faults me for claiming that democratic peace theory is a degenerating research paradigm because scholars in that tradition focus on perceptions. I agree that had I adopted either of these approaches, then my critique of democratic peace theory would have been inadequate. However, I used neither strategy in my article.

Selected Cases. Rather than relying on a few examples to show that democratic peace theory's causal logics *occasionally* fail to play out as advertised, I used large numbers of cases to show that the causal mechanisms *often* fail to operate as stipulated. Moreover, I tested the logics on sets of cases that were most likely to support democratic peace theory. My reasoning was that if there was little evidence that the logics operated in these "easy" cases, then this would cast serious doubt on the theory. That said, Kinsella is right to note that I did not make either point explicit in my article. A brief summary and evaluation of my findings is therefore in order.³

In examining the argument that democracies generally externalize their domestic norms of conflict resolution, I identified 33 wars in which they failed to do so. In each case, I looked for evidence that the war in question could plausibly be justified on the grounds of self-defense or the inculcation of liberal values and found that it could not. I also argued that there may be up to 33 more wars in which democracies attempted to perpetuate or reimpose autocratic rule in direct violation of their domestic norms of conflict resolution. In the case of the trust and respect logic, I cited a total of 18 examples of democracies failing to trust and respect one another. Because every case involved a pair of democracies, they should have lent support to the logic rather than contradicting it. My analysis of the group constraint mechanism found that prowar groups in the United States and Britain have often prevailed over antiwar groups in domestic debates during the last two centuries. Similarly, an analysis of U.S. foreign policy decisions since 1789 suggests that American presidents have been able to circumvent or overcome checks and balances almost at will. My decision to focus on Britain and the United States when evaluating these mechanisms was intentional: if the logics fail to operate in the most democratic of states, then they are likely to fare even worse in states that are less democratic. Finally, in the case of the public constraint mechanism, I showed that the logic failed to operate as stipulated in 12 of

15 cases where democratic peace theorists would most expect it to apply. In addition, I cited a dozen crucial examples where democratic publics appear to have imposed no constraints on their leaders even though the other state was democratic (Rosato 2003, 588–99).

These findings would cast doubt on any set of causal logics, but they are especially damaging to democratic peace theory because its principal finding holds that democracies have rarely if ever fought one another. If democratic peace theory's causal logics are to explain this finding, then they should rarely fail to operate as stipulated. But they appear to fail fairly frequently, and we therefore have reason to doubt their explanatory power.

Perceptions. I did not argue that democratic peace theorists' attempts to repair their logics by introducing perceptions are an indication that the research program is degenerating. If there is good evidence that, in order to remain at peace, states must not only be democratic but also perceive one another as such, then a focus on perceptions is entirely appropriate. In other words, I agree with Kinsella that the turn to perceptions need not be an indication that the research program is degenerating. In fact, Kinsella appears to acknowledge this, noting that I did not use the term "degenerating research program" in my evaluation of democratic peace theory's causal logics.

My point about perceptions was different. In essence, I argued that bringing in perceptions can only improve a logic's power if we can predict how democracies will categorize other states with a high level of confidence and if this categorization is relatively stable. I then provided evidence that strategic interest or policymakers' personal beliefs and party affiliations have often prevented democracies from forming coherent, accurate, and stable assessments of other states' regime type, thereby lessening our confidence that joint democracy can enable democracies to remain at peace. Moreover, I argued that democratic peace theorists have failed to come up with a compelling theory of perceptions; they cannot tell us when democracies will perceive other states as democratic and when they will not (Rosato 2003, 592–93). Because Kinsella disputes neither my reasoning nor my findings, I find his critique unconvincing.

SLANTCHEV, ALEXANDROVA, AND GARTZKE ON SCIENTIFIC INQUIRY

Probabilistic Causality and the Information Logic

Branislav Slantchev, Anna Alexandrova, and Erik Gartzke's (2005) first criticism of my article is that I mistakenly treat theories as if they are deterministic rather than probabilistic and that I evaluate them on that basis.

I agree that social science theories are probabilistic: they are designed to simplify reality and, in the course of simplifying, theorists are bound to sacrifice some explanatory power. It is for this reason that I

³ I deal with the accountability and information mechanisms in my response to Slantchev, Alexandrova, and Gartzke below.

chose to cast doubt on the causal logics by citing large numbers of anomalies rather than selected historical cases. I reasoned that this would allow me to claim that the logics *rarely* operated as stipulated or were *frequently* overwhelmed by other factors. Although such an approach cannot decisively disconfirm probabilistic logics, it can suggest that their explanatory power is highly circumscribed.

My analysis of the information logic explicitly recognizes the fact that it is probabilistic and demonstrates that it *frequently* fails to operate as advertised.⁴ The logic states that opposition-party support tends to contribute positively to the credibility of a democracy's threat, whereas lack of support contributes negatively to the credibility of a threat. In response, I argued that opposition party support *rarely* contributes positively to the credibility of a threat because it is what we *expect* opposition parties to do. There are several reasons why support for the government is likely to be the default strategy, including "rally round the flag" effects, nationalism, and elite control over relevant information. Schultz's (2001) data provide evidence for this claim: democratic governments that have issued deterrent threats have received opposition-party support 84% of the time. In short, the fact that a democracy's opposition party supports the government rarely conveys information during a crisis because this is what the other state expects it to do (Rosato 2003, 598–99).

The important fact to note about *opposed* threats is that they are rare. This should not surprise us because, as I have just noted, opposition parties will overwhelmingly support their governments. This means that we need only cite a handful of examples where opposition parties opposed the use of force but governments went to war anyway in order to cast doubt on the logic. This is what I did in my article (Rosato 2003, 599). Alternatively, we can identify crises in which an opposition party opposed a deterrent threat—as Schultz does—and check to see whether deterrence failed more often than it succeeded. Contrary to what democratic peace theorists would expect, we find that the opposite is true: deterrence succeeded in three of the five cases (Schultz 2001, 167). In sum, there are good reasons to believe that democracies are not especially good at conveying information about their levels of resolve. Most of the time they convey little if any information, and on the rare occasions that they do convey information, that information does not appear to exert a substantial impact on crisis outcomes.

Although I identified several cases where the information logic does not apply or does not operate as stipulated, Slantchev, Alexandrova, and Gartzke argue that it cannot be rejected because there are still some cases that it *can* explain. What fraction of a given set of cases must a logic explain for us to accept it? My critics are prepared to endorse a logic with a 10% success rate.

I do not find this argument convincing for two reasons. First, although I agree that theories are probabilistic, it is not clear to me that we should be satisfied with a logic that has a 10% success rate. This is not to say that it is useless, but we should make every effort to come up with logics that explain a larger fraction of the empirical record. A related issue here is the question of falsifiability. All logics can explain at least some cases because scholars generate theories from their observation of historical events (Powell 1999). If we note this fact and couple it with the claim that even theories that explain a small percentage of cases are useful, we are in effect arguing that theories cannot be falsified: all theories can explain a few cases (the cases that they are based on) and theories that can explain a few cases cannot, apparently, be thrown out.

Second, a theory with a 10% success rate is hardly satisfying if we consider that democracies have rarely fought one another. Instead, we are left wondering what other factors are at work in bringing about this result. A possible fallback position here would be the claim that there are several logics associated with democracy, and although each logic only explains a fraction of the cases, they explain most of the cases when taken together. The implication of this argument would be that democracy is a "master variable" that explains the democratic peace through several causal mechanisms. We should, however, be wary of claims such as this one. Any research program can presumably proliferate logics that explain a fraction of the cases from a single master variable, but were we to adopt this approach we would simply be engaging in "curve-fitting" exercises rather than coming up with powerful logics that propose simple explanations for large numbers of cases.

There is, however, no need to engage in a debate about the requirements of a good theory to make my point. Recall that my central claim about the information logic is that democracies are not especially good at revealing their levels of resolve in a crisis because the stance taken by opposition parties rarely sends an informative signal. This implies that if we conduct a statistical test of the kind recommended by Slantchev, Alexandrova, and Gartzke, then we should find little support for the information logic. In order to evaluate this proposition, I took the cases of attempted deterrence that Schultz used to test the information logic in his own work and carried out a probit analysis to determine whether the stance taken by opposition parties correlates with the probability of deterrence success. I included one control variable—the balance of power—based on my intuition that states are more likely to deter potential attackers if they are more powerful than they are and less likely to do so if they are weaker.

According to the results, neither "supported democratic defender" nor "opposed democratic defender" are significant at the 5% level (Table 1). The coefficient on "balance of power" is, however, both large and significant ($p = 0.01$). These results suggest that (1) opposition party support or lack of support is not significantly associated with the probability of deterrence

⁴ I focus on Schultz's (2001) information logic in order to reply directly to Slantchev, Alexandrova, and Gartzke. Schultz himself argues that his contribution to democratic peace theory is suggestive rather than conclusive.

TABLE 1. Probability of Deterrence Success (Probit Estimates)

Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error
Constant	-0.85	0.40
Supported democratic defender	0.69	0.40
Opposed democratic defender	0.24	0.62
Balance of power	1.08*	0.44
χ^2	10.63*	
N	57	

Notes: * $p < 0.05$. I thank Kenneth Schultz for providing me with his data. I coded balance of power using Singer and Small 1993. In order to determine whether the attacker or defender was more powerful, I first added their total military personnel and calculated the percentage of that total accounted for by the attacker and defender. I did the same for military expenditure, steel production, and electricity consumption. Then I averaged together each state's percentages for personnel, expenditure, steel, and electricity and determined which of the two possessed a greater share of their total power. Like Schultz (2001) I calculated Huber-White robust standard errors and clustered cases within the same crisis. The dataset is available upon request.

success, and (2) threats made by democratic governments and supported by opposition parties are no more likely to succeed than are threats by nondemocracies.⁵ In short, as I argued in my article, democracy does not appear to be associated with better signaling.

Selection Bias and the Accountability Logic

Slantchev, Alexandrova, and Gartzke's other major criticism is that my analysis of the accountability logic is plagued by selection bias, which leads me to cite evidence that supports the logic rather than discrediting it. I am puzzled by the accusation of selection bias. I did not select cases on the dependent variable in my analysis, and my critics give no evidence that I did so.

This methodological quibble aside, the evidence in my article casts significant doubt on the accountability logic. According to Slantchev, Alexandrova, and Gartzke, my finding that democratic leaders are more likely than autocratic leaders to be removed from office for losing a war lends credence to democratic peace theorists' claims that democrats are more accountable than are autocrats. In my article, however, I argued that accountability is determined not only by the probability of removal, but also by the costs that leaders will incur in the event they are removed from office. These costs include imprisonment, exile and death or, simply, "punishment." Thus I argued (Rosato

2003, 593-94) that leaders make decisions based on *expected costs*. Slantchev, Alexandrova, and Gartzke do not dispute this claim; they simply ignore it.

What do we see when we factor in costs? Using a well-known dataset I compared the fates of democratic and autocratic leaders who took their countries into costly or losing wars. In the case of costly wars, there is little debate: autocrats are both more likely to be removed and more likely to be punished. Losing wars provide a more complicated picture. On the face of it, democratic losers are removed 75% of the time, whereas autocratic leaders are removed 35% of the time. But as I argued in my article, we should not count the Menzies resignation as an example of removal and therefore democrats are more likely to be removed 50% to 35%. Autocrats are, however, far more likely to be punished (29% to 0%). Because democrats are more likely to be removed and autocrats are more likely to be punished, I argued that we cannot claim that either are more accountable (Rosato 2003, 594).

There is now more evidence for my claims. Chiozza and Goemans (2004) use a dataset of all leaders between 1919 and 1999 to determine whether defeat in war affects the tenure of democratic and nondemocratic leaders. Their findings are stronger even than mine: defeat in war significantly reduces the tenure of nondemocratic leaders, but does not significantly affect the tenure of democratic leaders. In other words, autocrats know that war involvement can reduce their time in power, and democrats know that war involvement has little if any effect on their chances of retaining power. In sum, the evidence does not support the claim that democrats are more accountable than autocrats.

Faced with these findings, my critics shift their position on the accountability issue. Their new argument goes as follows. If we assume that democrats are more likely than autocrats to be punished for losing a war, then it follows that democrats will only get into wars that they can win and will therefore win most of the wars that they fight. Slantchev, Alexandrova, and Gartzke then note that democracies do indeed win most of their wars and assert that this must be because democratic leaders are more accountable than their autocratic counterparts.

This argument is unconvincing. The problem is that, as I have shown, there is scant evidence for the initial premise of my critics' new argument. Slantchev, Alexandrova, and Gartzke are wrong to assume that democrats are more likely to be punished for losing a war and are therefore more accountable than autocrats. Therefore, they cannot assert that democrats will only get into wars that they can win and will consequently win most of the wars that they fight. This is not to say that democracies do not win a lot of wars—there is good evidence that they do—but their war-winning cannot be attributed to their greater accountability.

Evaluating Theories

Slantchev, Alexandrova, and Gartzke do more than simply question the persuasiveness of my critiques:

⁵ I ran another probit that included the 10 independent variables that Schultz (2001) used with one exception: I replaced his balance of forces variable with my balance of power variable. Neither supported nor opposed democratic defender were significant at the 5% level, whereas the coefficient on the balance of power variable was both large and significant ($p < 0.001$). We must treat these results with caution, because they rest on a sample of only 57 cases. At a minimum, however, we can conclude that support for the information logic is not robust.

my article, they argue, legitimizes “a fundamentally incorrect method of evaluating social science theories.” For them a causal logic ought to be evaluated in two ways. First, we must establish whether it is logically consistent. Second, we must determine whether, all else equal, its independent and dependent variables are correlated. Take their restatement of the accountability logic: they argue that it must be considered powerful because it is logically consistent and because democracies win most of the wars that they fight (democracy and war-winning are highly correlated).

My approach to theory testing is different. In addition to checking for logical consistency and correlation, I seek to establish whether the logic actually operates as stipulated (Rosato 2003, 585–86). Where is the evidence that democratic leaders think and act in accordance with the logic and choose easy wars for fear of losing office if they are defeated? In short, where is the evidence that the relationship is *causal* rather than merely *correlational*?

Despite Slantchev, Alexandrova, and Gartzke’s claims, this debate cannot be won by asserting that their testing method is scientific while mine is not—both of our approaches have a scientific basis (MacDonald 2003). Indeed, democratic peace theorists appear to be gravitating toward my way of doing business. Having established that there is a correlation between joint democracy and peace, they have turned to the task of developing a set of causal logics connecting the two variables.⁶ If they are successful and we find good evidence that these logics actually operate as stipulated, then their theory must be considered compelling. However, as I argued in my article, the logics that they have provided so far do not work as advertised; therefore, the democratic peace continues to be an empirical finding in search of an explanation.

DOYLE’S THREE PILLARS

According to Michael Doyle (2005), my article ignores his seminal claim that democracies remain at peace because they are simultaneously cautious, respectful towards one another, and committed to promoting peace among themselves. I do not doubt that states that are fundamentally cautious, respect each other, and want to remain at peace, will remain at peace. Instead, my claim was that democratic norms and institutions do not reliably cause caution and respect, and therefore cannot be the cause of the peace that exists among democracies.

Doyle’s explanation for the democratic or liberal peace rests on three logics. The first logic states that democratic institutions and processes “create an accountable relationship between the state and the voters.” This in turn induces “caution” in the international arena because there are a variety of circumstances in which voters—broadly defined to include the general public, interest groups and legislatures—are likely to

oppose war. According to the second logic, elites in democracies “act according to the principles they profess to be just,” assume that other democracies are also just, and therefore respect one another. The institutional and normative logics that I describe in my article are identical to these two logics (Rosato 2003, 586–87). Doyle’s third logic holds that a basic commitment to liberal economic norms encourages a “spirit of commerce” among democracies, which in turn impels them to promote peace and try to avert war with one another. I did not lay out or test a logic analogous to this one since most democratic peace theorists focus on regime type and ignore economic interdependence. Moreover, as I demonstrate below, the fact that I ignored this “third pillar” does not weaken my claims.

Having elaborated these three logics, Doyle goes on to argue that they operate “together and only together” to bring about peace between democracies. In other words, the democratic peace finding exists because all three of the following obtain simultaneously: democracies are fundamentally cautious about using force, democracies respect one another, and democracies work hard to promote peaceful relations with fellow democratic states. It follows—and Doyle is explicit about this—that if any one of these factors does not obtain, then we should not expect to see peace among democracies.

I did not question this core argument in my article. In fact, I agree that two states that are fundamentally hesitant to use force, respect one another, and work to remain at peace will rarely if ever fight one another. I am also satisfied with the claim that in the absence of one of these factors states may well fight one another.

My argument was different: I checked the historical record to see whether there is good evidence that democratic institutions do indeed induce caution and whether a domestic commitment to democratic norms does indeed cause states to respect one another. In other words, I did not ask whether caution plus respect causes peace; rather, I asked whether democracy reliably causes caution and respect. I found that it does not. Democratic leaders do not appear to be especially accountable to peace-loving publics or pacific interest groups, therefore casting doubt on the claim that democracy induces caution (Rosato 2003, 593–99). Similarly, there is substantial evidence that democracies do not reliably externalize their domestic norms of conflict resolution and do not respect one another when their interests clash (Rosato 2003, 588–93). In sum, democracy does not reliably induce caution or respect and, crucially, rarely causes both simultaneously.

By Doyle’s own reasoning this finding means that we should see several wars between democracies and, because democracies appear to act little differently from nondemocracies, as many wars between democracies as between other kinds of states. Yet democracies have rarely if ever fought one another and have created a separate peace. There is, in short, a mismatch between the outcome predicted by Doyle’s logic and what we actually observe in the world. The source of this mismatch is obvious: having discovered that democracies

⁶ Note, however, that the finding itself has recently come under attack (Henderson 2002).

are consistently peaceful in their relations with one another, Doyle has explained the finding with a set of criteria that, as I demonstrated in my article, do not reliably obtain separately and rarely obtain simultaneously.

Curiously, Doyle's critique actually undermines democratic peace theory by making it harder to validate. When I wrote my article, I reasoned that I would have to show that neither the institutional logic nor the normative logic operated as stipulated. Doyle's rejoinder, however, makes it clear that in order to cast doubt on democratic peace theory we need only find evidence that one logic rarely operates as advertised. If democracy does not reliably lead to caution, for example, then he would predict at least a handful of wars between democracies. Because democracies have not fought one another a handful of times, his argument falls short.

CONCLUSION

My purpose in writing "Flawed Logic" was to cast doubt on the logics underpinning the democratic peace. I do not find the criticisms leveled at the piece convincing and stand by my claim that, although there is peace among democracies, it does not appear to be caused by the democratic nature of those states. Nevertheless, I did not intend or expect to have the last word on the subject. Rather, my intention from the start was to spark a debate about the most important liberal theory of war and peace. I thank my critics for joining that debate and hope that others will follow suit.

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