# The Democratic Peace through an Interaction of Domestic Institutions and Norms: Executive Constraints and Rule of Law

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## Abstract

In an attempt to explain the democratic peace phenomenon, existing studies postulate institutional and normative models but treat them as *contending* and mutually exclusive explanations. This approach is both theoretically and empirically flawed. Extant institutional models fail to acknowledge that institutional factors have an impact only in the presence of requisite normative factors. Similarly, normative models fail to acknowledge that normative factors have the hypothesized impact only in combination with institutional factors. Since the possibility of such an interaction effect is overlooked, existing empirical models of the democratic peace are misspecified. This study fills the gap by introducing a multiplicative interaction model. This study presents evidence that, *ceteris paribus*, for democratic dyads in which the interaction effect of institutional and normative constraints is high, the likelihood of interstate disputes is lower than for nondemocratic dyads. Consequently, the democratic peace phenomenon should be seen primarily as an outcome of institutional and normative constraints working together.

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The origin of democratic peace studies can be traced back to Babst's statistical analysis that reports a simple relationship between freely elected governments and peace.[1] Although numerous subsequent studies confirm the existence of a strong positive empirical connection between democratic political systems and international peace, they fall short of providing theoretical reasoning on the democratic peace phenomenon. It was only in the early 1990s that students of the democratic peace began to formulate explanations as to why such a phenomenon exists. Their inductive approach to theorizing has led to several causal models. In particular, structural models emphasize the importance of institutional constraints imposed on democratic leaders' conflict behavior, while cultural models stress the role of democratic norms, such as compromise and nonviolence that are shared by leaders who tend to act according to these democratic norms, when responding to external security threats. Although existing studies agree that both models matter in explaining the ubiquity of the democratic peace phenomenon, they tend to view them as two competing facets of democratic politics by comparing the relative explanatory power of institutional versus normative models. For this reason, Russett and Oneal lament that "[these two models] were treated as 'contending' approaches, as though one were correct and the other incorrect."[2]

Unsurprisingly, there are compelling reasons to view democratic institutions and norms as coproductive in strengthening the overall pacific qualities associated with democracy. For example, it has long been argued that "the necessary minimum of democratic self-control evidently requires a national character and national habits of a certain type which have not everywhere had the opportunity to evolve and which the democratic method itself cannot be relied on to produce."[3] From this perspective, it is possible to have in place the institutional trappings of democratic countries but lack the normative qualities that give them their pacific substance, evidenced in part by struggling processes of democratization in the global south. Likewise, situations in which normative qualities may be pervasive while the related institutions are lacking are also possible. Examples of this scenario can be seen with the recent spate of popular democratically inspired "revolutions," which have since floundered in the face of weak democratic institutions: Georgia's Rose revolution (2003), Ukraine's Orange revolution (2004), Kyrgyzstan's Tulip revolution (2005), and/or Lebanon's Cedar revolution (2005). In fact, Ward and Gleditsch made an insightful observation before the arrival of those revolutions: "not every political change is toward greater institutionalization of democratic norms and practice."[4]

Accordingly, the two competing model approach in the democratic peace literature is conceptually faulty because democratic political institutions and cultural norms should mutually reinforce each other in reducing international conflict among

democratic dyads. In this case, these two domestic features should not be conceived of as peace-building forces that are independent of each other. Specifically, extant institutional models fail to acknowledge that institutional factors have an impact only in the presence of requisite normative factors, and normative models fail to acknowledge that normative factors have the hypothesized impact only in combination with institutional factors. This situation demands a new theoretical probe into the interaction effect between domestic institutions and norms because the hypothesized peace-inducing effect of the democratic peace is conditional on both. In addition, since existing empirical analyses overlook the possibility of such a functional relationship between these two factors, the models that arise are susceptible to specification error; they thus fail to provide an accurate or complete estimation of the real relationship between democracy and peace.[5]

In attempting to fill the theoretical and empirical gaps in existing empirical research, I argue that an interaction effect between a high level of executive constraint (i.e., a key feature of democratic institutions) and a high-quality rule of law (i.e., a key feature of democratic norms) is likely to contribute to a decrease in international conflict among democratic dyads.[6] To empirically test this hypothesis, I employ a multiplicative interaction equation that is estimated with a logit model with peace-years correction, a standard statistical method in the conflict literature. I conduct an empirical analysis using a dataset of nondirected, politically relevant dyad years from 1984 to 2001. The statistical results reported below show that, other things being equal, democratic dyads in which the combined effect of domestic political institutions and cultural norms is strong are less likely to experience interstate disputes than nondemocratic ones. Consequently, the democratic peace phenomenon should be understood through the synergistic effect of institutions and norms rather than the separate effect of each of the two domestic features.

## Institutions, Norms, and an Interaction Effect between Institutions and Norms

Research questions in the democratic peace literature have been one-sided—neglecting a combined effect where institutional factors are only likely to have a hypothesized impact if cultural factors are also present, and vice versa—and thus fail to provide a complete picture of the democratic peace phenomenon. Despite previous studies that allude to an interaction effect between political institutions and cultural norms in their theoretical discussions, they do not carry out empirical testing on the joint effect of these two factors and only employ a single democracy variable based on a composite index collected from the Polity dataset.[7] Polity is assumed to assess the overall characteristics of a given democracy but its construction is based on institutional features, to the exclusion of cultural factors.[8] Thus, existing democratic peace research fails to link its theoretical arguments directly to empirical analysis, which violates King, Keohane, and Verba's proposition that "theory and empirical research must be tightly connected."[9] A few existing studies design two separate

measures (i.e., one for structural explanations and the other for cultural ones) and examine the independent influence of each constraining factor in the same model.[10] In one sense, this is an improvement in the causal explanations offered because it includes both structural and cultural causes in the research design, examining the democratic peace as an additive process. However, these works still remain theoretically and empirically flawed because they do not examine the interaction effect created by the two explanatory variables. By viewing culture and institutions as two contending factors, this type of examination fails to fully illustrate the actual dimensions of democracy, or the true determinants of the democratic peace phenomenon. In fact, it should be noted that, consistent with Immanuel Kant's evolutionary view about world politics,[11] Russett and Oneal briefly mention the possibility of an interaction in which ''culture influences the creation and evolution of political institutions, and institutions shape culture'' because they ''are really complementary.''[12] However, it appears that Russett and Oneal leave further investigation of this idea, as well as its empirical analysis, for future research. Thus, in this study, I attempt to more closely link the theoretical origins of the democratic peace with empirical testing.

To examine the issue of an interaction effect, I make three initial claims. First, I assert that a structural model can be built on the observation that mature democracies uphold high levels of institutional constraints on executive power. Because the executive is the major player in foreign policy decisions, the likelihood of conflict largely depends on how much his or her political authority is restrained. This line of reasoning is consistent with Starr's argument that ''the political structural argument holds that it is not democracy per se that makes such states less likely to war against each other, but that leaders of democracies tend to be more heavily constrained in their policy-making than leaders of other forms of government.''[13] Next, I assert that a cultural model can be built on the common knowledge that mature democracies maintain a tradition of high-quality rule of law.[14] Because a strong rule of law tradition nurtures democratic norms such as compromise and peaceful conflict resolution, it can serve as the underlying logic of a cultural model. This reasoning is in-line with Mulholland's argument that ''there can be no rule of law and no peace unless states can be trusted to commit themselves to law.''[15] Thus, without the benefits of a culture of democratic rule of law, political leaders are less likely to incorporate values of cooperation and pragmatism into their everyday political practices, and instead become the prisoners of collective action problems.[16] Finally, I argue that neither structural nor cultural models can alone accurately or compellingly explain democratic leaders' conflict behavior. Individually each model fails to capture the fact that the democratic peace phenomenon is an outcome of the combined effect of both structural and cultural factors. In this context, I argue that when states in a democratic dyad have both highly democratic institutions and highly democratic norms, the likelihood of violent confrontations occurring between them is dramatically reduced. As the first step toward conceptualizing the interaction effect between institutions and norms,

I will explain below the potential effect of each domestic feature on international conflict.

Of many possible types of institutional constraints, such as public opinion, mass media, opposition parties, separation of powers, and military structure, the focus of this study is the degree of institutional constraints imposed on the executive via opposition parties and separation of powers.[17] In democracies, although presidents and prime ministers are heads of state, they are unlikely to be the only decision makers in matters of foreign policy. If their policy agendas are to be successful, they must listen to, and cooperate with, political constituents like the elected body of the legislature. Put differently, before acting against foreign enemies, a leader's actions are tempered by the potential for negative political consequences caused by policy failures or costly mistakes. In this context, it is reasonable to argue that when two democracies in a dyad are in crisis, they are less likely to engage in a war due to the presence of high levels of institutional checks and balances in each country. In contrast, dictators do not necessarily seek support from other political participants because they are not fearful of losing their office or their monopoly on the decision-making processes. From this perspective, two autocracies in a dyad are, in times of crisis, more likely to engage in a war due to the lack of an effective constraining mechanism in place.

The above conceptualization is consistent with the essence of the democratic peace theory that democratic states rarely go to war with each other, although they are generally just as prone to conflict as autocratic states. The former is referred to as dyadic peace, while the latter as lack of a monadic peace. Puzzled with the bellicose nature of some democracies at the state level, several studies explore the question of why institutional constraints in a democracy fail to lead to a peaceful relationship with an autocracy (e.g., the United States vs. Panama in 1989). For example, Rosato points out that despite the existence of high levels of institutional constraints, U.S. presidents were able to launch military campaigns "to preempt nondemocracies that could become aggressive in the future or attack rather than give in to unacceptable negotiating demands during a crisis."[18] Similarly, Schjolset discusses that since an autocratic state is free to mobilize and act in times of crisis, a democratic country must react the same way to protect its citizens and territory. In this emergency situation, a democracy finds ways to get around the institutional mechanisms that otherwise slow down a timely military response to an autocracy's aggression.[19] Bueno de Mesquita et al. argue that to avoid possible electoral backlashes, U.S. leaders deliberately selected weak autocracies to make sure of easy and quick victories.[20] In this case, anticipating war victories in a short time makes the executive discount the institutional constraints because legislators and citizens would be less likely to complain over defeating foreign enemies. Cramer presents evidence that when confronted with domestic problems, President Bush sought to rally popular support by initiating Panama Invasion in 1989.[21] In other words, President Bush was able to initiate the diversionary war because he expected that the benefits from the war victory outweighed the possible political costs arising from the institutional constraints.

Although these studies shed light on the causes of the collapse of the institutional constraints holding democratic leaders back from committing to war, their explanations are limited to the war initiation and the absence of monadic peace, while not questioning the low risk of the onset of conflict between two democratic states at the dyadic level.

When previous studies discuss the pacifying effects of democratic norms such as compromise, negotiation, cooperation, logrolling, and mediation in their theoretical sections,[22] they simply assume that democratic leaders are socialized to accept those norms and to use nonviolent means of conflict resolution.[23] However, existing studies do not explain how or why political leaders in democratic societies—but not those in nondemocratic societies—learn or acquire liberal norms in the first place. In addition, most studies are unsuccessful in designing a direct and accurate measure that reflects their normative explanations due to a lack of data across countries over a long time period.[24] I argue that a tradition of high-quality rule of law is a necessary precondition of democracy because it allows political leaders to experience and then adopt peaceful measures, when dealing with conflicts of interest at home and abroad.[25] That is, the existence, within liberal societies, of a culture that emphasizes democratic rule of law fosters norms of cooperation and nonviolence among political leaders. I conceptualize a high-quality rule of law tradition as the presence of a fair and impartial judicial system and the respect held by ordinary people for the legal order.[26]

Independent justice systems allow the interests at stake in each case to be dispassionately and efficiently heard in legal outlets, so present and future leaders need not resort to physical violence to achieve their political goals or to resolve their grievances. Eyerman argues that since democracies "increase the expected return of legal activity and offer multiple channels of nonviolent expression without the threat of government retaliation,"[27] they assuage the potential bitterness and dissatisfaction that may turn average citizens into violent dissidents. Because fair and impartial judicial systems help reduce the possibility of erupting conflictual situations, they create a positive environment where present and future political leaders learn how to trust one another in resolving conflicts of interests. In such an environment, political participants are inclined to accept negotiated or mediated terms because they understand the underlying legitimacy of the system as well as the prospects for future political success. Thus, observing democratic law becomes part of political leaders' daily lives; coercion and physical violence become unthinkable or at least unviable options for resolving political and social differences.[28] Furthermore, since democratic citizens are also socialized to trust in the fairness and impartiality of the rule of law system in times of dispute, they subscribe to established laws and processes as a means to settle political grievances. From this perspective, democratic citizens are likely to put pressure on leaders' military assaults since they see engaging in war instead of peaceful mediation through the International Court of Justice as self-defeating behavior.[29] Simply put, a strong rule of law tradition makes the rules of the game clear and palatable; compromise, not conflict, becomes the rational

and moral strategy for democratic leaders to get what they want without facing serious repercussions or sanctions.

Because political leaders are exposed to such democratic norms throughout their lives, they first internalize and then externalize them in times of crisis. Political leaders have full confidence in the culture of democratic rule of law; as such, they view clashes over competing values as best settled through mediation, negotiation, or cooperation. In this context, leaders in a democratic dyad are much more likely to make peaceful settlements through compromise than are those in an autocratic dyad.[30] However, in the absence of a strong tradition of democratic rule of law, dissatisfied leaders are likely to embrace a principle of retributive justice and turn to illegitimate measures such as physical violence and political purges to achieve their goals. A weak rule of law culture causes constant fear among people since ''an eye for an eye'' or ''all against all'' is the norm, and only the powerful prevail[31]; respecting legal norms becomes a collective-action problem in which the incentives are aligned in such a way that nobody, even if they would like to, can rationally observe laws. In this environment, legal authorities are not habitually respected and the powerful do not feel compelled to lawfully settle political disputes. Because political leaders in autocratic countries are exposed to such destructive environments in their early lives, they are likely to play hardball to protect their political interests rather than compromise. For this reason, when two states in an autocratic dyad go through a crisis, they do not trust each other and refuse to cooperate with each other, resulting in a military clash. For example, the Football War between El Salvador and Honduras in 1969 can be attributed to the lack of the rule of law tradition in each country.[32]

While it is generally agreed that the democratic peace is created through shared norms at the dyadic level, some studies question why some democratic countries do not externalize democratic norms, when dealing with autocratic countries. One of the most influential works is Müller's study on militant versus pacifist democracies. Müller identifies Israel, the United States, India, and the United Kingdom as militant democracies that tend to initiate wars with autocracies to preserve international law, to terminate massive breaches of human rights, or to democratize resistant dictatorships. In contrast, pacifist democracies like Ireland, Finland, and Austria are more likely to strike an accommodationist position with nondemocracies.[33] Schjolset attributes the bellicose nature of democratic countries to the anarchic nature of international politics where a conflict between democratic and autocratic norms is dominated by the latter. Accordingly, democratic countries are often forced to adopt the norms of autocratic countries to ensure survival and security, urging them to initiate wars against nondemocracies. Based on the in-group versus out-group nature of conflict, Weart argues that while democracies cooperate with each other since they belong to the in-group, they do not negotiate with autocracies since the latter come from the out-group.[34] In this case, differences within states' political culture divide them into friends and foes, thus preventing the peace-inducing norms found in democracies from being transferred to autocracies. Rousseau argues that

democratic countries initiate wars against revolutionary regimes (e.g., the United States invaded revolutionary Grenada in 1983). "If democracies socialize their publics to fear socialism and socialist country, then they (consciously or unconsciously) manufacture a situation in which the use of force against leftist states is unlikely to be punishes."[35] It should be noted that these studies do not refute the logic of the normative argument of the democratic peace theory at the dyadic level. Rather, they try to explain why not all democracies are peaceful by taking a state-level approach.

I now explain how democratic political institutions and democratic norms work together in reducing international conflict. In *Cultures of Antimilitarism*, Berger argues that "institutions and culture exist in an interdependent relationship, each relying upon the other in an ongoing way."[36] Critical of the incomplete conceptualization of democratic peace studies, Owen points out that "just as gasoline and an engine are both necessary to make an automobile run, it could be that norms and institutions work in tandem."[37] In this context, for the democratic peace to come to light, democratic norms or shared social values should be developed along with the democratic institutions that define the rules of the game.[38] If researchers focus solely on the separate effect of either of these two domestic political features and not on their interactive dynamics, the line of theoretical reasoning becomes severely impaired. Unfortunately, numerous democratic peace studies primarily examine the role of institutions, while failing to examine its intrinsic relationship with culture, partly due to no readily available measure of culture. Culture, for this analysis, should be understood as "socially shared meanings that derive from the interaction of social beings and that are embedded in institutions."[39] To better explain and understand the democratic peace phenomenon, we must examine "how [institutions and norms] *interact* to generate peace between democracies."[40] For this purpose, my line of reasoning closely follows Russett and Starr's intuition that "both the cultural and structural arguments can be seen as contextual theories; theories that consider conditions existing within democracies to constrain and enable behavioral outcomes."[41] Similarly, Rousseau acknowledges that "norms and structures are theoretically, at least to some degree, *interactive*."[42] In this context, it is reasonable to argue that mature democratic countries, in which the executive's power is checked and balanced by other political institutions, should be coupled with the development of a high-quality rule of law tradition as to allow leaders and citizens to learn strong democratic norms of cooperation. If any country fails to develop either of the two domestic political features, it should not be considered a consolidated democracy. In essence, it is imperative to postulate a conceptual explanation: institutional factors will have a peace-building impact only in the presence of the normative factors, and vice versa. This postulation is appealing given the fact that the domestic political configuration of institutions and norms, which determines leaders' decisions on the use of force, differs for democracies and nondemocracies.

More specifically, when both states in a democratic dyad evince a high level of executive constraints and a strong rule of law culture, the likelihood of international conflict should decrease. It is fair to state that the quality of institutional constraints

determines how leaders deal with external challenges, such as territorial disputes or mistreatment of nationals abroad. Because leaders in a democratic dyad are constrained by exogenous, constitutional rules, they should behave moderately; otherwise, they risk institutional sanctions. Further, as Rousseau points out, "the establishment and maintenance of democratic institutions in a society inevitably shape the socialization of future leaders."[43] Because domestic political institutions are designed to uphold the separation of powers, leaders must learn how to compromise and negotiate in order to achieve their foreign policy goals. In such a competitive environment, it is hard for leaders to act alone without seeking support from their political competitors. For example, if leaders have not lived in a liberal society where a high-quality rule of law tradition is established, they are unlikely to look for cooperation from other political contenders and are instead likely to fall prey to political stalemate. Fair and impartial judicial systems create reasonable expectations for political leaders who are inclined to see compromise and negotiation as legitimate rules of the game. Neither political side will be a total winner or loser. In particular, if a majority of the population respects established rule of law, future and present political leaders are more completely socialized to expect and support the peaceful resolution of conflicts in their daily lives. A high-quality rule of law tradition facilitates political equilibrium because all players, but particularly losers, accept and obey institutional rules on the understanding that they may one day win politically. Consequently, a democratic culture is likely to establish a constructive political environment where compromise and logrolling become the norm to settle domestic and international disputes. More generally, in democratic countries, institutions establish and reinforce norms, while norms cultivate the respect necessary for institutions to function properly. In short, in democratic dyads, the evolution and respective strengths of executive constraints and the rule of law should be seen as conditional on the development of both. Accordingly, democratic leaders' foreign policy behavior is institutionally constrained and tends toward peaceful solutions through compromise and negotiation, reducing the likelihood of conflict in a democratic dyad. Thus, the hypothesis about the interaction effect is as follows:

> *Hypothesis 1:* When both states in a democratic dyad are exposed to the interaction effect of highly democratic institutions and highly democratic norms, they are less likely to experience international conflict.

## Research Design

To test the interaction effect hypothesis, I utilize a standard nondirected dyadic data analysis of international conflict. For this purpose, Oneal and Russett's research design is taken as a frame of reference.[44] Since their data have been widely replicated for years and have proven to be highly robust, the possibility of coding errors on my part should be reduced. However, this study is notably different from Oneal and Russett's study in four ways: (1) the inclusion of three interaction effect-related

variables, (2) the exclusion of their democracy variable, (3) the exclusion of their contiguity, major power, and system size variables, and (4) the shorter time horizon. The first condition will be explained in detail below. The second condition is added because Oneal and Russett's democracy variable is conceptually related to the inter-action effect-related variables as all the variables intend to capture the characteristics of democratic governance.[45] The third condition is implemented to take into account three criticisms: (1) contiguity and geographic distance are related to each other by definition because both measure the geographic relationship between two states, (2) major power serves to remove variance in the dependent variable but it has no the-oretical meaning aside from its reflecting a state's frequent involvement in interna-tional conflict, and (3) system size has no theoretical justification to be included in a dyadic analysis. The final condition is necessary because of the limited data avail-ability for the rule of law variable. Oneal and Russett's study spans from 1885 to 2001 but the data on rule of law are only available as far back as the year 1984.

The multiplicative interaction equation that estimates the joint effect of institu-tions and norms on international conflict is expressed as follows:

Onset of International Conflict$_{it}$

$$= \alpha + \beta_1(\text{Institutions}_{it-1}) + \beta_2(\text{Norms}_{it-1}) + \beta_3(\text{Institutions} \times \text{Norms}_{it-1})$$
$$+ \beta_4(\text{Economic Interdependence}_{it-1}) + \beta_5(\text{Geographic Distance}_{it-1})$$
$$+ \beta_6(\text{Capability Ratio}_{it-1}) + \beta_7(\text{Allies}_{it-1}) + \varepsilon$$

As indicated in the subscripts of the equation, the data structure is a cross-sectional and time-series design. The sample includes politically relevant dyads during the period from 1984 to 2001.[46] Politically relevant dyads are considered to have highly destabilizing effects on the international system because they consist of either a major power or have states that share a common border, situations that often result in an heightened chance of conflict.[47] The statistical equation includes the three main variables of interest, Institutions, Norms, and Institutions × Norms (the inter-action effect variable), plus four conflict-related controls. These four control vari-ables are economic interdependence, geographic distance, capability ratio, and allies. To mitigate problems of reverse causality, all independent variables are lagged 1 year. This study fits the multiplicative interactive model with a standard logit regression with peace-years correction (also known as logit splines).[48]

The dependent variable is dichotomized for the onset of a militarized interstate dispute (MID) of any severity. A MID is "a set of interactions between or among states involving threats to use military force, displays of military force, or actual uses of military force."[49] Since this study is interested in understanding the correlates of dispute onset, the years in which a pair of states is engaged in an ongoing dispute are excluded from the analysis. Dispute onset is studied over dispute involvement since dispute involvement measures treat ongoing dispute years as if they were a series of new disputes that began each individual year. Furthermore, since the correlates that

bring about a conflict may differ from the correlates that ensure that the conflict continues, dispute onset and dispute involvement should be conceptual distinguished from each another.

The testing of the interaction effect hypothesis requires three variables: Institutions, Norms, and Institutions × Norms.[50] The first two variables are constitutive terms used to create the interaction term. The institutions variable measures the extent of institutionalized constraints imposed on the decision-making powers of the executive and is measured on a 7-point scale, with "0" denoting unlimited executive authority and "6" indicating executive parity or subornation, based on the Polity IV subcomponent variable of executive constraints (i.e., XCONST).[51] The measure reflects my conceptual discussion that the likelihood of conflict partly depends on how much the executive's political authority in each state in a dyad is constrained. The institutions variable assumes the weak link[52]: The score for the less institutionalized state in a dyad is taken to be the stronger determinant of interstate disputes.

The norms variable is collected from the International Country Risk Guide (ICRG), compiled by the Political Risk Services Group. It measures the quality of rule of law in a culture by evaluating the strength and impartiality of the legal system and the extent of popular observance of law and order. It is recorded on a 7-point scale, with "0" indicating that there is a very weak or nonexistent law and order tradition (e.g., depending on physical force or illegal means of resolving grievances), and "6" denoting a strong law and order tradition.[53] The Norms variable also follows the weak link assumption: the smaller score in a dyad is recorded for estimation. It should be noted that since the synthesis of independent judicial systems and popular observance of law creates a strong tradition for the institution of law and order in a democratic society, the rule of law indicates the presence of a sound law and order tradition. This line of reasoning is consistent with Davis' observation: "the most commonly used source of data on respect for *the rule of law* is a private publication known as the International Country Risk Guide (ICRG), which provides quantitative assessments by [area] experts of the strength of *the law and order tradition* in various countries."[54]

The Institutions × Norms variable that tests the interaction effect hypothesis is created by multiplying the Institutions variable by the Norms variable. This is consistent with the aforementioned theoretical discussion that the effects of domestic institutions and norms on the probability of international conflict are conditional on each other. However, one may claim that when we observe one (institutions), we observe the other (norms), not that the effect is conditional. A cross-tabulation between institutions and norms in Table 1 dispels this claim because the levels of institutions and norms vary conditionally on each other. For example, when the level of institutions is at its highest value (i.e., 6), 92 out of 2,288 observations exhibit a level of 1 on norms; 145 show a level of 2; and 255 reveal a level of 3 (see the row with bold numbers in Table 1). To provide more specific examples, states that have high norms and low institutions include Saudi Arabia in 1995, Qatar in 1994, and Bahrain in 1993, while those that have

**Table 1.** A Cross-Tabulation between Institutions and Norms.

| | | | ← Weak | Rule of Law Tradition | | | | | Strong → | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | |
| Institutions | Weak | 0 | 8 | 550 | 1,126 | 593 | 354 | 320 | 33 | 2,984 |
| | ↑ | 1 | 0 | 115 | 458 | 384 | 205 | 152 | 8 | 1,322 |
| | Executive | 2 | 12 | 359 | 1,098 | 1,680 | 929 | 641 | 57 | 4,776 |
| | Constraints | 3 | 2 | 42 | 81 | 170 | 51 | 36 | 0 | 382 |
| | ↓ | 4 | 19 | 159 | 238 | 476 | 363 | 252 | 70 | 1,577 |
| | | 5 | 0 | 125 | 214 | 201 | 305 | 250 | 86 | 1,181 |
| | Strong | 6 | **0** | **92** | **145** | **255** | **533** | **499** | **764** | 2,288 |
| | Total | | 41 | 1,442 | 3,360 | 3,759 | 2,740 | 2,150 | 1,018 | 14,510 |

*Note:* The correlation between Institutions and Norms is 0.40.

low norms and high institutions are South Africa in 1990, Peru in 1989, and Bolivia in 1984. In other words, the highest level of institutions does not necessarily mean the highest level of norms; the former does not necessarily proxy the latter. In addition, the fact that the correlation between institutions and norms is 0.40 further supports my argument that these two domestic features are not proxies to each other.

The explanation for the rest of the variables is summarized from Oneal and Russett's study.[55] The economic interdependence variable also assumes the weak link: the score for the less interdependent state in a dyad is taken to be the stronger determinant of interstate disputes. Since geographic proximity between dyadic states is likely to affect the likelihood of conflict, geographic distance is included as a control variable. To control for an asymmetric power relationship between dyadic states (which leads to a decrease in disputes), the national capability ratio variable is incorporated. The allies variable is included to take into account the argument that military alliances diminish the possibility of disputes, especially within the bipolar international system. Finally, to account for the years of peace since the last dyadic conflict, the years-of-peace and its cubic splines are included in the standard logit regression.

## Empirical Results

Table 2 shows multiplicative interaction logit regression results. I employ a one-tailed test for each hypothesis not only to reflect its one-sided causal direction but also to remain consistent with Oneal and Russett's analysis. To save space, the estimated coefficients for years-of-peace and its cubic splines, which show statistical significance in a consistent manner, are not reported in Table 2. Model 1 intends to see whether the pacifying effect of Oneal and Russett's democracy variable holds up during the shorter time span of this study, 1984–2001. Since the democracy

**Table 2.** An Interactive Effect between Institutions and Norms on Interstate Disputes, 1984–2001.

| Variable | | Politically Relevant Dyads | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 | Model 5 | Model 6 | Model 7 | Model 8 | Model 9 |
| Democracy | −0.026* | | | | | | | | |
| | (0.014) | | | | | | | | |
| Institutions | | −0.119* | 0.094 | 0.183** | 0.126 | 0.327** | 0.008 | 1.075*** | 0.181 |
| | | (0.060) | (0.109) | (0.071) | (0.095) | (0.129) | (0.043) | (0.307) | (0.242) |
| Norms | | −0.019 | 0.138 | 0.130* | 0.134 | 0.271** | 0.499** | 0.081 | 0.356* |
| | | (0.065) | (0.087) | (0.067) | (0.084) | (0.100) | (0.181) | (0.057) | (0.179) |
| Institutions × Norms[a] | | | −0.068** | −0.083*** | −0.073** | −0.108** | | | |
| | | | (0.028) | (0.020) | (0.026) | (0.036) | | | |
| Institutions × Norms[b] | | | | | | | −0.222*** | | |
| | | | | | | | (0.064) | | |
| Norms × Institutions[c] | | | | | | | | −0.455*** | |
| | | | | | | | | (0.092) | |
| Institutions × Norms[d] | | | | | | | | | −1.313*** |
| | | | | | | | | | (0.372) |
| Economic interdependence | | | | −12.582 | −4.284 | −26.592 | −17.454 | −13.549 | −17.416 |
| | | | | (11.668) | (6.464) | (32.921) | (14.506) | (11.401) | (12.656) |
| Geographic distance | | | | −0.451*** | −0.485*** | −0.546*** | −0.442*** | −0.461*** | −0.448*** |
| | | | | (0.060) | (0.058) | (0.150) | (0.060) | (0.060) | (0.092) |
| Capability ratio | | | | −0.334*** | −0.117 | −0.311*** | −0.339*** | −0.331*** | −0.336*** |
| | | | | (0.048) | (0.198) | (0.083) | (0.048) | (0.048) | (0.070) |
| Allies | | | | −0.482*** | −1.158*** | −0.844*** | −0.447*** | −0.466*** | −0.442* |
| | | | | (0.140) | (0.292) | (0.251) | (0.140) | (0.143) | (0.203) |
| Constant | −2.158*** | −1.797*** | −2.217*** | 1.752*** | | 1.955* | 1.930*** | 1.890*** | 1.947*** |
| | (0.139) | (0.190) | (0.281) | (0.424) | | (1.014) | (0.388) | (0.424) | (0.587) |
| Wald $\chi^2$ | 324.61 | 335.06 | 335.76 | 619.27 | 409.78 | 232.38 | 636.93 | 618.55 | 452.15 |
| Prob > $\chi^2$ | 0.001 | 0.001 | 0.001 | 0.001 | 0.001 | 0.001 | 0.001 | 0.001 | 0.001 |
| Pseudo $R^2$ | 0.1257 | 0.1283 | 0.1316 | 0.2036 | 0.1853 | 0.2022 | 0.2019 | 0.2056 | 0.2043 |
| Observations | 14,510 | 14,510 | 14,510 | 14,510 | 14,510 | 8,161 | 14,510 | 14,510 | 14,510 |

*Note:* Numbers in parentheses are robust standard errors adjusted for clustering on dyads.
[a]Both Institutions and Norms are ordinal.
[b]Institutions is ordinal and Norms is dichotomous.
[c]Norms is ordinal and Institutions is dichotomous.
[d]Both Institutions and Norms are dichotomous.
*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001, one-tailed tests.

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variable is statistically significant at the .05 level and in the hypothesized direction, it is fair to state that the replication results are representative of what Oneal and Russett found during the longer study period from 1816 to 2001.[56] Put differently, because the replication corroborates Oneal and Russett's original findings on the democratic peace, sample biases such as limited temporal domain are unlikely to cause problems in the following analysis. As noted, the democracy variable exclusively measures institutional features of democracy as a form of a Polity composite index on the scale of $-10$ (least democratic) to $+10$ (most democratic), so Model 1 does not examine the peace-building interaction effect between institutional and cultural features of democratic dyads.

While Model 2 is based on a standard additive equation, Model 3 is built on a multiplicative interaction equation.[57] By comparing the overall fit of the two competing models, we can determine whether the interaction variable included in Model 3 contributes enough additional information to assist in explaining the absence of conflict among democratic dyads. I implement two commonly used comparative statistics: an information criterion (AIC) test and Bayesian information criterion (BIC) test. The AIC value is 2934.632 for Model 2 and 2925.332 for Model 3. The smaller value of Model 3 indicates that the multiplicative specification does a better job than the additive specification in explaining the relationship between democracy and peace. The BIC value has 2987.71 for Model 2 and 2985.993 for Model 3. Since the model with the lower value of BIC indicates the better result, the multiplicative model is again shown to be the better choice. In short, these two comparative statistics consistently point to the superiority of the multiplicative interaction Model 3 to the additive Model 2, which is consistent with the theoretical expectations about the interaction effect between institutions and norms.

It is worth noting that Model 3 follows Achen's "rule of three," including no more than three predictors.[58] Achen argues that control variables should be used sparingly and only when one is testing for the possibility of a spurious relationship between the main variables in the model. Otherwise a model simply gets cluttered up with unnecessary terms that do not themselves help clarify the analytic question. However, one may contend that Model 3 reports spurious results because it does not account for other key confounding factors that commonly appear in the conflict literature. For this reason, Model 4 extends Model 3 by including four more control variables: economic interdependence, geographic distance, capability ratio, and alliance. It appears that the Norms × Institutions variable in Model 4 is still significant and in the hypothesized direction, indicating that the synergistic effect of institutions and norms leads to the democratic peace. One may contend that the geographic distance variable should be excluded from the model since the sample of political relevant dyads itself accounts for a great deal of the effect of distance. Model 5 is built to assuage this concern by dropping the geographic distance variable from Model 4. As far as the interaction effect of institutions and norms is concerned, there is no

substantive change. Norms × Institutions appears to be an important predictor of the democratic peace phenomenon.

One may also assert that since the executive branch within presidential systems is imbued with greater power than the executive branch found in parliamentary ones, presidents are more likely to engage in a dispute than prime ministers. In fact, Maoz and Russett claim that "presidential systems should be less constrained than parliamentary systems, in which the government is far more dependent on the support it gets from the legislature. Coalition governments or minority cabinets are far more constrained than are governments controlled by a single party."[59] For example, U.S. presidents often ignore the War Powers Act and pressure the Congress into signing off on one war resolution and then another. Model 6 is built to account for such intriguing theoretical implications by dropping parliamentary countries from Model 4. The Norms × Institutions variable still achieves significance with a negative sign, meaning that the democratic peace emerging from the synergistic effect of institutions and norms is unlikely to be confined to those dyads with parliamentary systems.

It is important to note that because Models 4, 5, and 6 are *nonlinear* logit models, the sign of the coefficients on the three interaction effect-related terms—Institutions, Norms, and Institutions × Norms—may not correspond to the hypothesized direction, and the standard error of these coefficients is not directly useful for the statistical significance test.[60] These difficulties of interpreting interaction terms require special caution. For this reason, this study will below turn to the graphical method developed by King, Tomz, and Wittenberg and extended by Zelner.[61] In addition, to help facilitate the explanation about the interaction effect between Institutions and Norms when using Zelner's graphical method, this study makes a minor modification on Model 4 by changing the second constitutive term from an ordinal variable to a dichotomous variable.[62] More specifically, to visually show the pacifying effect of democratic institutions (ordinal variable), conditional on the existence of high levels of democratic norms (dichotomous variable), Model 7 is built; to visually demonstrate the peace-building effect of democratic norms (ordinal variable), conditional on the existence of high levels of democratic institutions (dichotomous), Model 8 is introduced.[63] In other words, while controlling for four other conflict-related variables, Model 7 is constructed to show the existence of a strong relationship between executive constraints and conflict when the scores for states on norms are high, but no relationship between executive constraints and conflict when the analysis is restricted to a set of states where norms are low. Model 8 shows that among states with weak scores on the executive constraint variable, there is no relationship between norms and conflict, but among states with high scores on the executive constraint variable, there is a strong relationship between norms and conflict.

The interaction effect between Institutions and Norms is shown in Figure 1.[64] While the two graphs on the left side are based on Model 7, the two graphs on the right side are based on Model 8. The top graph on the left side portrays the predicted probabilities and confidence intervals for Institutions × Norms, while the bottom
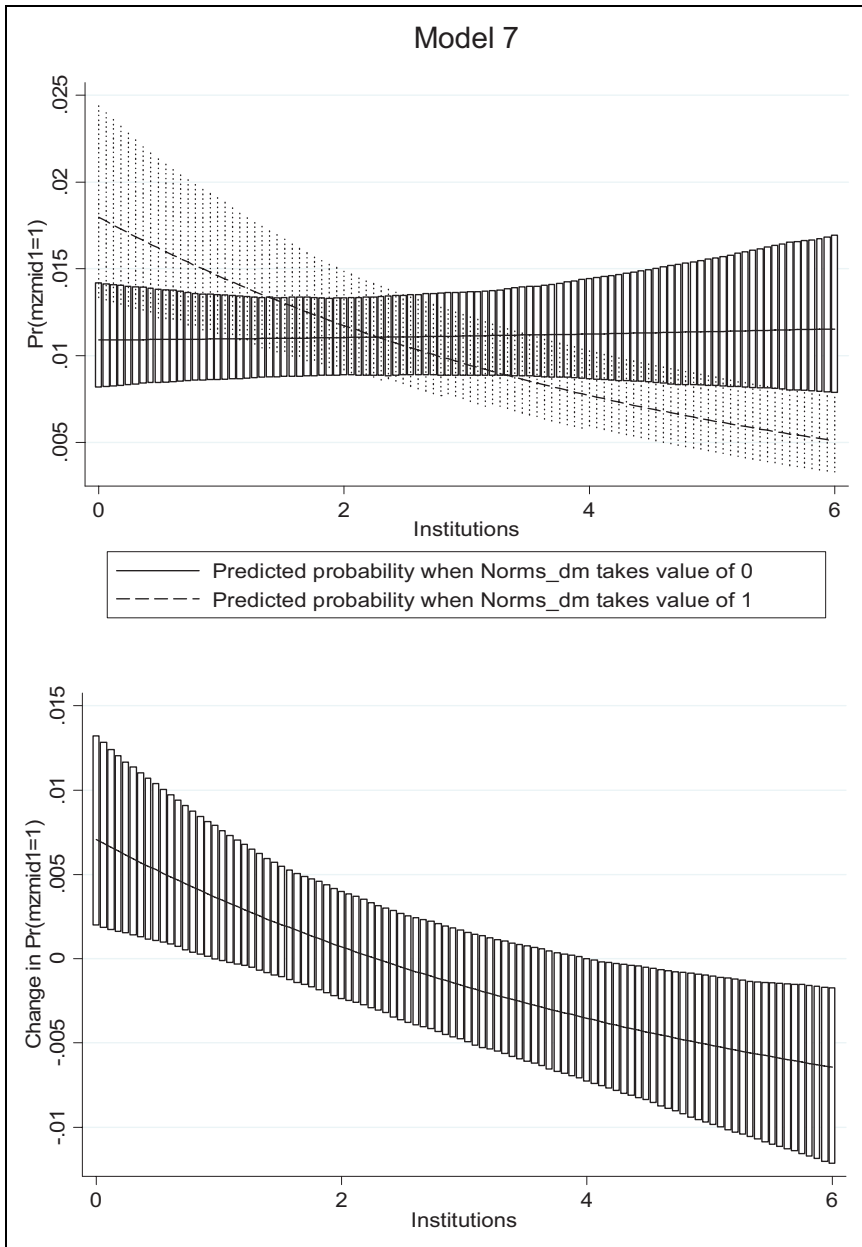
**Figure 1.** An interaction effect between institutions and norms.
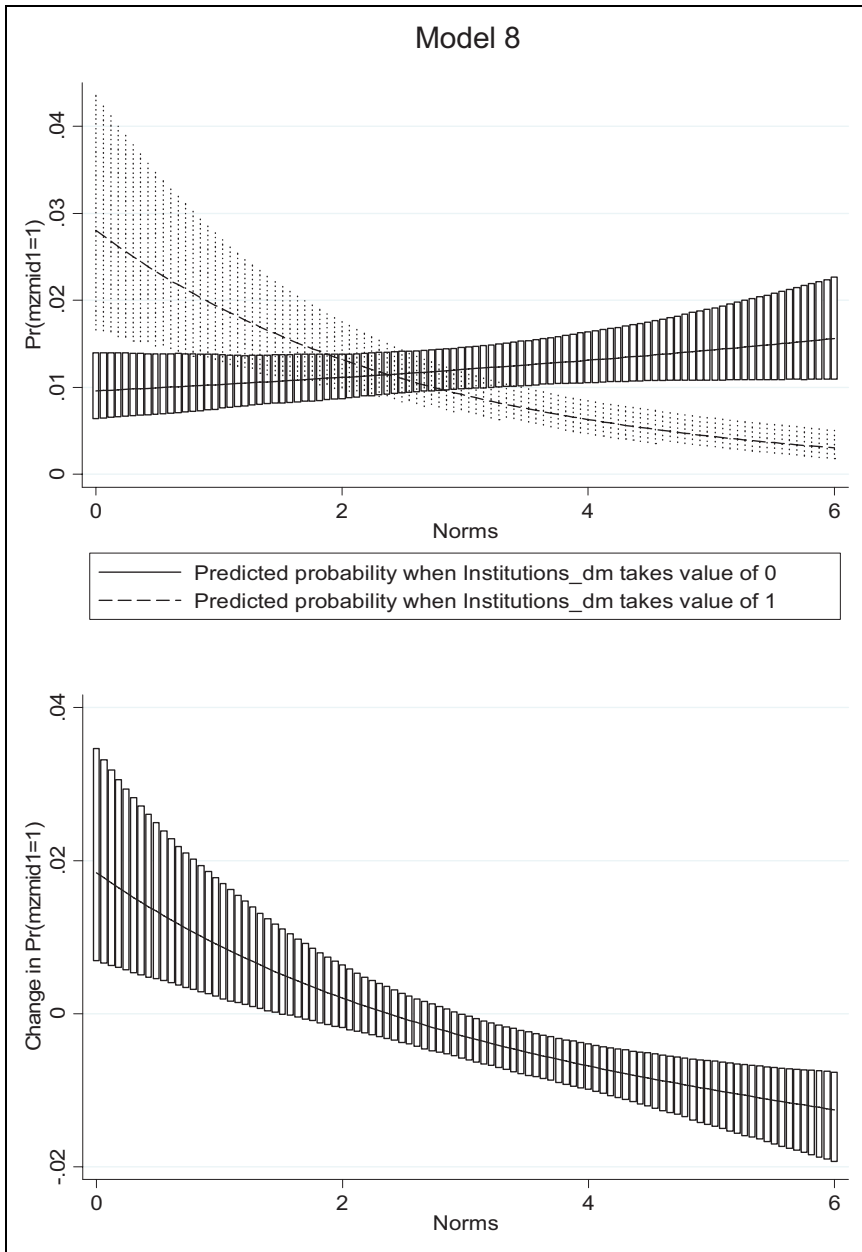
**Figure 1 (continued).** An interaction effect between institutions and norms.

shows the difference in the predicted probabilities associated with a change in Norms (i.e., the vertical distance between Norms and No Norms in the top graph).[65] In the top graph on the left side, the dotted line that represents the predicted probability when the Norms variable takes a value of 1 is downward, while the solid line that represents the predicted probability when the Norms variable takes a value of 0 is upward. This means that the likelihood of politically relevant MIDs decreases only when both states in a dyad preserve high levels of both Institutions and Norms.[66] The bottom graph also shows a positive effect at lower values of Institutions, and a negative effect at high values. Since the 95 percent confidence interval includes a zero in the middle segment of the bottom graph, a slope test is required to see whether the slope of the specified segment of the schedule representing the difference in predicted probabilities in the default chart type is significantly different from zero.[67] This test result confirms the presence of the pacifying effect of Institutions in combination with Norms.

The pacifying interaction effect is also confirmed in the two graphs on the right side where the level of the Norms variable is conditional on the presence of the Institutions variable. In the top graph, the dotted line which represents the predicted probability when the Institutions variable takes a value of 1 is downward, while the solid line which represents the predicted probability when the Institutions variable takes a value of 0 is upward[68]; although the 95 percent confidence interval for the difference in the predicted probabilities includes zero in the middle segment of the bottom graph, the significance of Norms × Institutions is verified by a slope test.

The results in Models 7 and 8 in Table 2, and Figure 1 indicate that the existence of either Institutions or Norms alone is not a sufficient condition for the absence of a militarized dispute between two democratic states in a dyad but the synergistic interaction between the two ought to be present for peace. Only when democratic leaders' foreign policy decisions are constrained by high levels of both domestic political institutions and cultural norms of the rule of law will the likelihood of a dispute be smaller. More specifically, having a high level of political constraints may be necessary but not sufficient to discourage democratic leaders' conflict behavior; likewise, the cultivation of a high-quality rule of law tradition may also be necessary but not sufficient to decrease interstate disputes. A necessary and sufficient condition that *does* lead to peace in democratic dyads should be found in the form of the joint effect of both institutions and norms.

Model 9 in Table 2 is built to more closely test the synergistic effect of institutions and norms. In fact, this may be precisely what Kant argues in *Perpetual Peace*, that is, all factors need to be present for the peace-building effect to occur. For empirical testing, the Institutions and Norms variables are recorded as ''1,'' when the required minimum level of executive constraints and the rule of law exhibits in a dyad for peaceful coexistence; their interaction term is also dichotomous. The results again reveal that the Norms × Institutions variable is significant and in the

hypothesized direction. The democratic peace phenomenon is an outcome of institutional and normative constraints working together.

## Additional Robustness Tests

As noted earlier, given their controversial nature, Oneal and Russett's major power, contiguity, and system size variables have been excluded for empirical analysis. However, since Oneal and Russett's original model specification has become a standard choice for replication, it is intriguing to see whether or not the interaction effect between institutions and norms holds up in the presence of those control variables. As shown in Models 1 and 2 in Table 3, the combination of a high level of executive constraints and a high-quality rule of law is a contributing factor in reducing international conflict, not the independent additive impacts of these two variables.

I have not yet included joint membership in international organizations as a control, following Oneal and Russett's approach in which they "focus on the effects of the liberal variables democracy and interdependence because ... research on the role of IGOs is rapidly evolving."[69] However, what would happen if a control variable for joint intergovernmental organization (IGO) membership were to be added? To address this question, I add the IGOs variable to Models 1 and 2 in Table 3. Models 3 and 4 show the results. While the interaction effect between institutions and norms holds up in both models, the IGO variable fails to achieve significance.

This study has relied on politically relevant dyads due to the two following criticisms against the use of all possible dyads: (1) theoretically, there is no reason to expect a militarized dispute between Malaysia and Uganda and (2) methodologically, this renders the nonzero militarized dispute event an extreme rarity. Models 5–8 show the estimated coefficients and standard errors when all possible dyads are used instead of politically relevant dyads. The results in Models 5–8 are quite similar to those in Models 1–4. Thus, it is fair to state that regardless of sample selection, the interaction effect between institutional constraints and cultural norms is unlikely to be a statistical artifact.

## Conclusion

Existing studies of the democratic peace have overlooked an interaction effect between domestic political institutions and peaceful norms of conflict resolution as a cause for the absence of interstate disputes between two democratic states in a dyad. These studies have conceived of structural constraints and shared democratic norms *antithetically* in the sense that one model is assumed to be better in discouraging dyadic democracies from engaging in a military dispute than the other. Put differently, the absence of a multiplicative interaction term in empirical design is subject to model specification error, which makes existing democratic peace research at risk of having led to inconclusive or biased results about the true relationship between democracy and peace. This study is the first attempt to examine

**Table 3.** An Interaction Effect between Institutions and Norms on Interstate Disputes, 1984–2001: Additional Robustness Tests.

| Variable | Politically Relevant Dyads | | | | All Dyads | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 | Model 5 | Model 6 | Model 7 | Model 8 |
| Institutions | 0.009 | 1.176*** | 0.014 | 1.180*** | −0.052 | 0.984*** | −0.055 | 0.983*** |
| | (0.046) | (0.312) | (0.046) | (0.311) | (0.040) | (0.292) | (0.040) | (0.292) |
| Norms | 0.474** | 0.058 | 0.461** | 0.056 | 0.278* | 0.069 | 0.289* | 0.071 |
| | (0.187) | (0.059) | (0.193) | (0.060) | (0.162) | (0.048) | (0.168) | (0.049) |
| Institutions × Norms[a] | −0.210** | | −0.203** | | −0.179** | | −0.185** | |
| | (0.073) | | (0.074) | | (0.067) | | (0.069) | |
| Norms × Institutions[b] | | −0.457*** | | −0.448*** | | −0.476*** | | −0.485*** |
| | | (0.099) | | (0.102) | | (0.095) | | (0.098) |
| Economic interdependence | −29.662 | −22.836 | −27.961 | −21.498 | −35.513 | −28.892 | −37.048 | −30.505 |
| | (24.474) | (20.848) | (24.882) | (20.646) | (24.292) | (21.996) | (26.422) | (24.126) |
| Joint membership in IOs | | | −0.003 | −0.003 | | | 0.002 | 0.003 |
| | | | (0.006) | (0.006) | | | (0.006) | (0.006) |
| Geographic distance | −0.265*** | −0.318*** | −0.267*** | −0.319*** | −0.670*** | −0.701*** | −0.667*** | −0.698*** |
| | (0.080) | (0.081) | (0.080) | (0.081) | (0.078) | (0.078) | (0.079) | (0.079) |
| Capability ratio | −0.327*** | −0.326*** | −0.333*** | −0.332*** | −0.298*** | −0.294*** | −0.295*** | −0.289*** |
| | (0.054) | (0.053) | (0.054) | (0.053) | (0.051) | (0.050) | (0.051) | (0.051) |
| Allies | −0.492*** | −0.530*** | −0.464*** | −0.507*** | −0.557*** | −0.539*** | −0.577*** | −0.560*** |
| | (0.141) | (0.143) | (0.142) | (0.143) | (0.141) | (0.141) | (0.140) | (0.139) |
| Major power | 1.003*** | 1.097*** | 1.013*** | 1.110*** | 1.418*** | 1.440*** | 1.408*** | 1.425*** |
| | (0.194) | (0.190) | (0.194) | (0.192) | (0.199) | (0.193) | (0.202) | (0.197) |
| Contiguity | 1.798*** | 1.775*** | 1.807*** | 1.787*** | 1.483*** | 1.454*** | 1.477*** | 1.444*** |
| | (0.216) | (0.216) | (0.217) | (0.219) | (0.215) | (0.212) | (0216) | (0.214) |
| Constant | −0.976 | −0.748 | −0.878 | −0.6560.710 | 1.806** | 1.789** | 1.719** | 1.678** |
| | (0.629) | (0.669) | (0.666) | | (0.598) | (0.618) | (0.639) | (0.664) |
| Wald $\chi^2$ | 637.76 | 633.86 | 641.98 | 637.09 | 2127.59 | 2093.52 | 2154.20 | 2103.38 |
| Prob > $\chi^2$ | 0.001 | 0.001 | 0.001 | 0.001 | 0.001 | 0.001 | 0.001 | 0.001 |
| Pseudo $R^2$ | 0.2241 | 0.2277 | 0.2242 | 0.2278 | 0.3203 | 0.3230 | 0.3204 | 0.3230 |
| Observations | 14,510 | 14,510 | 14,510 | 14,510 | 1,13,430 | 1,13,430 | 1,13,430 | 1,13,430 |

*Note:* Numbers in parentheses are robust standard errors adjusted for clustering on dyads. IOs = international organizations.
[a]Institutions is ordinal and Norms is dichotomous.
[b]Norms is ordinal and Institutions is dichotomous.
*$p$ < .05, **$p$ < .01, ***$p$ < .001, one-tailed tests.

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institutional and cultural constraints as a joint peace-building effect. Based on a cross-sectional, time-series nondirected dyadic data analysis, I have demonstrated that, everything else being equal, the *combination* of high levels of institutional constraints on leaders and domestic norms of a strong rule of law tradition in two democratic states in a dyad results in a decrease of interstate disputes. Accordingly, the ubiquity of the democratic peace, at least during the last two decades and perhaps far longer, appears unlikely to have been caused by either institutional or cultural constraints alone but by the power of their consistent synthesis.

The findings of this study substantiate earlier but untested musings on the democratic peace regarding the synergistic relationship between democratic institutions and norms.[70] Thus, to fully appreciate the democratic peace phenomenon, future research should incorporate both constitutive terms and the interaction term rather than a single measure of institutional democracy based on the Polity dataset; treating institutions and norms as interactions is the appropriate way to estimate the democratic peace model. Or, alternatively, it would also be beneficial if researchers could design and use a novel aggregate measure of democracy that captures both institutional features and cultural norms simultaneously. This approach could contribute to an advance of the democratic peace scholarship because the ubiquity of the democratic peace should be explained through the combined effect of the two domestic political features of democracy.

## Appendix 1. An Interaction Effect between Institutions and Norms When the Second Constitutive Term is Continuous
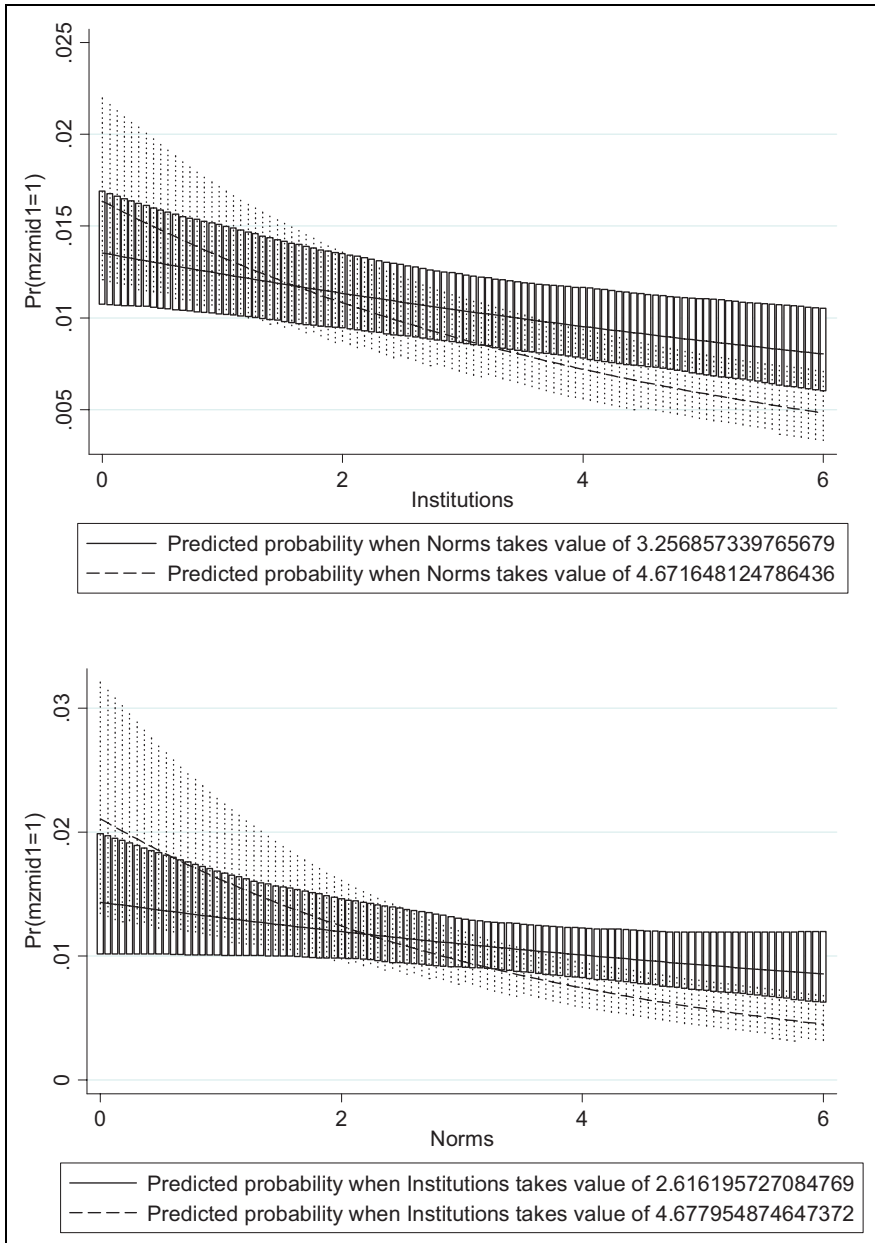
## Acknowledgments

## Declaration of Conflicting Interests

## Funding

## Notes

1. Dean V. Babst, "A Force for Peace," *Industrial Research* 14, 4 (1972): 55–8.
2. Bruce Russett and John R. Oneal, *Triangulating Peace* (New York, NY and London: W. W. Norton, 2001), 53.
3. Joseph A. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* (New York, NY and London: Harper & Brothers, 1942), 195.
4. Michael D. Ward and Kristian S. Gleditsch, "Democratizing for Peace," *American Political Science Review* 92, 1 (1998): 51–61. Although Ward and Gleditsch focus on the monadic aspects of changes in regime characteristics and employ no measure of cultural norms, their findings suggest that the degree of democratic commitment or time since democratization matters in cultivating democratic institutions and norms. See also Edward D. Mansfield and Jack Snyder, "Democratization and the Danger of War," *International Security* 20, 1 (1995): 5–38.
5. See Robert Friedrich, "In Defense of Multiplicative Terms in Multiple Regression Equations," *American Journal of Political Science* 26, 4 (1982): 797–833.
6. Since this study focuses on the democratic peace phenomenon, other international issues such as rivalry, military coups, and war victory are not discussed (on these issues, see Brandon C. Prins, "Interstate Rivalry and the Recurrence of Crises: A Comparison of Rival and Nonrival Crisis Behavior, 1918–1994," *Armed Forces & Society* 31, 3 (2005): 323–51; Patrick J. McGowan, "Coups and Conflict in West Africa, 1955–2004: Part II, Empirical Findings," *Armed Forces & Society* 32, 2 (2006): 234–53; Robert Mandel, "Reassessing Victory in Warfare," *Armed Forces & Society* 33, 4 (2007): 461–95.
7. On Polity, see Monty G. Marshall and Keith Jaggers, *Polity IV Project, Dataset Users' Manual* (2002).
8. For more detailed criticisms on Polity, see Gerardo Munck and Jay Verkuilen, "Conceptualizing and Measuring Democracy," *Comparative Political Studies* 35, 1 (2002): 5–34.
9. Gary King, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), 29.

10. See Zeev Maoz and Bruce Russett, "Normative and Structural Causes of Democratic Peace, 1946–1986," *American Political Science Review* 87, 3 (1993): 624–38; David. L. Rousseau, *Democracy and War* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005); David Sobek, M. Rodwan Abouharb, and Christopher G. Ingram, "The Human Rights Peace: The Respect for Human Rights at Home Leads to Peace Abroad," *Journal of Politics* 68, 3 (2006): 519–29.

11. Immanuel Kant, "Perpetual Peace," in *Kant's Political Writings*, ed. Hans Reiss (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1795 [1970]).

12. Russett and Oneal, *Triangulating Peace*, 53.

13. Starr's observation appears to question the democratic peace studies that test the utility of the institutional model on the basis of an aggregate multidimensional indicator constructed from the Polity dataset, Harvey Starr, "Democracy and War," *Journal of Peace Research* 29, 2 (1992): 208.

14. Guillermo O'Donnell, "Why the Rule of Law Matters," *Journal of Democracy* 15, 4 (2004): 32–46.

15. Leslie A. Mulholland, *Kant's System of Rights* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1990).

16. Mancur Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971).

17. See Kenneth A. Schultz, *Democracy and Coercive Diplomacy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Seung-Whan Choi and Patrick James, "Civil-Military Relations in a Neo-Kantian World, 1886–1992," *Armed Forces & Society* 30, 2 (2004): 227–54; Seung-Whan Choi and Patrick James, "Media Openness, Democracy, and Militarized Interstate Disputes," *British Journal of Political Science* 37, 1 (2007): 23–46.

18. Sebastian Rosato, "The Flawed Logic of Democratic Peace Theory," *American Political Science Review* 97, 4 (2003): 587.

19. Anita Schjolset, *Institutional Variance of the Democratic Peace, 1816–2002: Electoral, Executive, and Federal Systems in Time and Space*, PhD dissertation, 2008.

20. Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, Alastair Smith, Randolph M. Siverson, and James D. Morrow, *The Logic of Political Survival* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2003).

21. Jane Kellett Cramer, "'Just Cause' or Just Politics? U.S. Panama Invasion and Standardizing Qualitative Tests for Diversionary War," *Armed Forces & Society* 32, 2 (2006): 178–201.

22. In this study, I follow Coleman's definition of a norm: "a norm concerning a specific action exists when the socially defined right to control the action is held not by the actor but by others", James S. Coleman, *Foundations of Social Theory* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1990), 243. Not surprisingly, several scholars extend the beneficial effect of mediation to examine internationalized ethnic conflicts (e.g., Jacob Bercovitch and Karl DeRouen, Jr., "Mediation in Internationalized Ethnic Conflicts: Assessing the Determinants of a Successful Process," *Armed Forces & Society* 30, 2 (2004): 147–70.

It is worth noting that transparency may also be a powerful explanation of the democratic peace phenomenon. When democracies become more transparent, they can more easily

signal each other's intentions, thereby avoiding costly missteps that can lead to war. Or it can be argued that democratic leaders' conflict behavior is likely to be constrained due to the transparency of their policy processes and the norms of official accountability. However, Finel and Lord provide evidence that transparency can lead to greater noise and confusion in times of crisis (Bernard I. Finel and Kristin M. Lord, "The Surprising Logic of Transparency," *International Studies Quarterly* 43, 3 (1999): 315–39; see also Ronald B. Mitchell, "Sources of Transparency: Information Systems in International Regimes," *International Studies Quarterly* 42, 1 (1998): 109–30; Peter J. Partell and Glenn Palmer, "Audience Costs and Interstate Crises: An Empirical Assessment of Fearon's Model of Dispute Outcomes," *International Studies Quarterly* 43, 2 (1999): 389–405.

23. Rousseau, *Democracy and War*.

24. For instance, although Maoz and Russett examine the relative importance of institutions and norms (Maoz and Russett, "Normative and Structural Causes"), their operationalization of liberal norms is problematic because it is based on either the persistence of political stability or the level of violent internal social and political conflict. The former is measured with the Polity data by counting the number of years that a country has been democratic, and the latter is operationalized as the number of deaths from political violence or the extent of domestic conflict from the Conflict and Peace Database (COP-DAB). These measures are clearly not capturing the democratic norms, such as compromise and cooperation, that they are intended to measure. In fact, Owen demonstrates the key problem with these measurements, when he points out that "totalitarian regimes such as the Soviet Union would rate high on such a scale—higher than, for example, the United States—yet have not adhered to liberal norms." John M. Owen, *Liberal Peace, Liberal War: American Politics and International Security* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997), 11.

    However, several recent studies provide an improved test regarding the role of domestic political norms. For example, Mousseau's work shows how political leaders in democratic societies may learn or acquire liberal norms through market contracting (Michael Mousseau, "Democracy and Compromise in Militarized Interstate Conflicts, 1816–1992," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 42, 2 (1998): 210–30; Michael Mousseau, "The Social Market Roots of Democratic Peace," *International Security* 33, 4 (2009): 52–86). Sobek, Abouharb, and Ingram argue that respect for human rights is an important cultural norm that restrains leaders' conflict behavior (Sobek, Abouharb, and Ingram, "The Human Rights Peace"). Danilovic and Clare identify liberal constitutionalism as a democratic political norm; Vesna Danilovic and Joe Clare, "The Kantian Liberal Peace (Revisited)," *American Journal of Political Science* 51, 2 (2007): 397–414.

25. Kant believes that nation-states can subsume their national interests under the rule of international law. The rule of international law undoubtedly reflects the rule of domestic law. See Kant, *Perpetual Peace*; Helga Haftendorn, "The Security Puzzle," *International Studies Quarterly* 35, 1 (1991): 6.

26. O'Donnell, "Why the Rule of Law Matters."

27. Joe Eyerman, "Terrorism and Democratic States," *International Interactions* 24, 2 (1998): 154.

28. Russell Hardin, "Law and Social Order," *Philosophical Issues* 11 (2001): 61–85.

29. I believe that since democratic citizens often have general impressions about the International Court of Justice due to international political events, such as Slobodan Milosevic's war crimes trial, these general impressions typically guide the reactions of citizens to leaders' military adventures. Or, on the other hand, a simpler explanation is that democratic citizens perceive war as a negative and costly activity, so they do not want it to happen.

30. William J. Dixon and Paul D. Senese, "Democracy, Disputes, and Negotiated Settlements," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 46, 4 (2002): 547–71.

31. Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan/Thomas Hobbes*, ed., with Introduction, J. C. A. Gaskin (Oxford and New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1651 [1996]).

32. The root causes of the Football War are related to issues concerning immigration from El Salvador to Honduras. Salvadoran immigrants in Honduras were mistreated and expelled after their land was taken. Both countries had no desire to resolve the tension arising from the immigration issue through international legal institutions. The tension exploded in inflamed rioting during the second North American qualifying round of the 1970 FIFA World Cup and ultimately led to a military conflict. William H. Durham, *Scarcity and Survival in Central America: Ecological Origins of the Football War* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1979).

33. Harald Müller, "The Antinomy of Democratic Peace," *International Politics* 41, 4 (2004): 494–520; Thomas J. Nisley, "Militant Democracies or Just States with (Realist) Issues," *International Politics* 45, 2 (2004): 168–81. It should be noted that Müller's arguments revolve around the involvement of interstate dispute at the state level, not the onset at the dyadic level. In addition, Russett is critical of the concept of militant democracies by stating that "[Müller's conceptualization] does not, however, lead to confident predictions of which set of norms may prevail in a particular state and time." Bruce Russett, "Bushwhacking the Democratic Peace," *International Studies Perspectives* 6, 4 (2005): 398.

34. Schjolset, Institutional Variance; Spencer R. Weart, *Never at War: Why Democracies will not Fight One Another* (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 1998).

35. Rousseau, *Democracy and War*, 347.

36. Thomas U. Berger, *Cultures of Antimilitarism* (Blatimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), 11–12.

37. Owen, *Liberal Peace, Liberal War*, 10.

38. Coleman, *Foundations of Social Theory*.

39. Lawrence R. Jacobs, "Institutions and Culture," *World Politics* 44, 2 (1992): 181.

40. Russett and Oneal, *Triangulating Peace*, 53, the emphasis added.

41. Bruce Russett and Harvey Starr, "From Democratic Peace to Kantian Peace," in *Handbook of War Studies II*, ed. Manus I. Midlarsky (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2000), 100.

42. Rousseau, *Democracy and War*, 7, the emphasis added.

43. Rousseau, *Democracy and War*, 7.

44. John R. Oneal and Bruce Russett, "Rule of Three, let it be?" *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 22, 4 (2005): 293–310. The statistical programs and dataset are publicly available at http://www.bama.ua.edu/~joneal/CMPS2005.

45. To be precise, Oneal and Russett's democracy variable measures exclusively institutional features of democracy as a form of a composite indicator collected from Polity.

46. The politically relevant dyads consist of 132 countries.

47. In *Triangulating Peace*, Russett and Oneal limit their statistical analyses to the politically relevant dyads over the period 1885–1992 since "[they] are the cases for which [their] theories of conflict are more applicable" (Russett and Oneal, *Triangulating Peace*, 102–03). There are also many other proponents of politically relevant dyads for theoretical reasons. For example, Weede argues that "only in this relatively small subset of dyads is there a possibility for irreconcilable conflicts of interest to arise and create a substantial risk of war" (Erich Weede, "Overwhelming Preponderance as a Pacifying Condition among Contiguous Asian Dyads," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 20, 3: 396). Lemke goes a step further, contending that "the reason the set of relevant dyads is the correct referent group for war dyads is that it is only the relevant dyads that might have had a war" (Douglas Lemke, "The Tyranny of Distance: Redefining Relevant Dyads," *International Interactions* 21, 1: 29. See also Douglas Lemke and William Reed, "The Relevance of Political Relevant Dyads," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 45, 1: 126–44. Interestingly, Sobek, Abouharb, and Ingram test the effect of political relevance as a control variable, treating political relevance as a causal factor (Sobek, Abouharb, and Ingram, "The Human Rights Peace," 526).

48. Nathaniel Beck, Jonathan Katz, and Richard Tucker, "Taking Time Seriously," *American Journal of Political Science* 42, 4 (1998): 1260–88. When generalized estimating equations (GEEs) and rare event logits fit the data, the results are similar. The results can be obtained from the author upon request.

49. Charles S. Gochman and Zeev Maoz, "Military Interstate Disputes, 1816–1976," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 28, 4 (1984): 587.

50. Thomas Brambor, William Roberts Clark, and Matt Golder, "Understanding Interaction Models," *Political Analysis* 14, 1 (2006): 63–82; Bennet A. Zelner, "Using Simulation to Interpret Results from Logit, Probit, and Other Nonlinear Models," *Strategic Management Journal*, doi: 10.1002/smj.783 (2009).

51. Marshall and Jaggers, *Polity IV Project*, 23–4.

52. William J. Dixon, "Democracy and the Management of International Conflict," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 37, 1 (1993): 42–68.

53. More detailed information about the measure can be found at http://www.prsgroup.com/Default.aspx.

54. Kevin E. Davis, "What can the Rule of Law Variable tell us about Rule of Law Reforms?" *Michigan Journal of International Law* 26, 1 (2004): 148, the emphases added.
    It should be emphasized that a high-quality rule of law tradition is considered a liberal norm that is found in democratic societies. If a country lacks either law or order, it is not a liberal democracy (Owen, *Liberal Peace, Liberal War*). For example, in the case of Iraq prior to 2003, there was political and social order but no law in the sense of impartial legal systems and voluntary obedience by citizens. Any appearance of political or social order in Iraq under Saddam Hussein was illusory and illegitimate, since it was not based on the

liberal democratic principles of the rule of law, but rather resulted from oppressive measures such as mass murder and genocide enacted by an unaccountable dictator. Saddam Hussein would be better understood as ruling *through* law, which does not constitute a tradition of high-quality rule of law. Fascist countries such as Mussolini's Italy also lacked a high-quality rule of law tradition. In this sense, my conceptualization of ''liberal democratic rule of law'' should be understood as conceptually distinct from ''autocratic, pseudo rule of law.''

55. Oneal and Russett, ''Rule of Three, let it be?''

56. Oneal and Russett, ''Rule of Three, let it be?'' 299. When Oneal and Russett's original model is replicated during the shorter period 1984–2001, Democracy remains significant with a negative sign.

57. It is worth noting that the log pseudolikelihood is $-1464.5966$ for Model 1, $-1460.3161$ for Model 2, and $-1454.6662$ for Model 3, indicating that Model 3 provides an improved model specification over Models 1 and 2.

One may contend that given that the other elements of the democracy and autocracy indices capture elements of constraint, the most common operationalization in the literature (i.e., Oneal and Russett's composite democracy variable from the Polity dataset) should be used for a robustness check. When my Institutions variable is replaced with the composite democracy variable, the results are similar to those reported below. Although the interaction term and the composite democracy score are constructed with different conceptual reasoning, the correlation between them is as high as 0.80 (In a recent issue of *American Political Science Review*, Clark and Stone test winning coalition size ($W$) and the composite democracy variable in the same model though their correlation is 0.83, and Morrow et al. include $W$ and executive constraints in the same model despite the fact that the correlation is 0.75; Kevin A. Clarke and Randall Stone, ''Democracy and the Logic of Political Survival,'' *American Political Science Review* 102, 3 (2008): 387–92; James D. Morrow, Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, Randolph M. Siverson, and Alastair Smith, ''Retesting Selectorate Theory,'' *American Political Science Review* 102, 3 (2008): 393–400. The reason for the somewhat high correlation is empirical coincidence: the composite democracy score is heavily weighted by the executive constraint score. Put differently, the composite democracy score merely captures constraints on executive power rather than the presumed multidimensional aspects of democratic institutions put forward by democratic peace proponents (see Kristian S. Gleditsch and Michael D. Ward, ''Double Take: A Reexamination of Democracy and Autocracy in Modern Polities,'' *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 41, 3 (1997): 361–83; Munck and Verkuilen, ''Conceptualizing and Measuring Democracy''). The correlation between the composite democracy variable and the Institutions variable (i.e., executive constraints) is 0.90 and the correlation between the composite democracy variable and the Norms variable (i.e., rule of law) is 0.35.

58. Christopher Achen, ''Toward a New Political Methodology,'' *Annual Review of Political Science* 5 (2002): 423–50.

59. Maoz and Russett, ''Normative and Structural Causes,'' 626.

60. Brambor, Clark, and Golder, ''Understanding Interaction Models''; Zelner, ''Using Simulation to Interpret Results.''

61. Gary King, Michael Tomz, and Jason Wittenberg, "Making the Most of Statistical Analyses," *American Journal of Political Science* 44, 2 (2000): 347–61; Zelner, "Using Simulation to Interpret Results."

62. I am grateful to an anonymous reviewer for suggesting the modification.

63. According to Zelner's statistical program, the first constitutive term must be a continuous variable by default, while the second constitutive term can be either continuous or dichotomous.

64. The Stata command, intgph, is used to draw Figure 1. The command estimates a selected nonlinear model that includes a multiplicative interaction term, and uses simulated parameters generated by King, Tomz, and Wittenberg's "estsimp" command (part of the "Clarify" suite of commands) to evaluate and graphically portray the effect of one interacted variable conditional on different values of the other interacted variable (King, Tomz, and Wittenberg, "Making the Most of Statistical Analyses"; Zelner, "Using Simulation to Interpret Results").

65. Note that the Institutions variable is ordinal (i.e., 0–6), while the Norms variable is dichotomous (i.e., 1 if the level of Norms is 4, 5, and 6 on the scale of 0–6).

66. One may wonder what ensues if the second constitutive term is continuous. As shown in Appendix A, the pacifying interaction effect becomes greater as the level of the second constitutive term increases. In each figure, the solid line, which represents the predicted probability, when the second constitutive term takes a lower value is slightly downward, while the dotted line, which represents the predicted probability, when the second constitutive term variable takes a higher value is considerably downward.

67. Zelner, "Using Simulation to Interpret Results."

68. Note that the Institutions variable is dichotomous (i.e., 1 if the level of Institutions is 4, 5, and 6 on the scale of 0–6). The choice of the three highest levels of Institutions (i.e., executive constraints) follows Marshall and Jaggers' criterion for the presumed democratic checks and balances that should exhibit a *substantial* influence in each polity. Marshall and Jaggers operationally define "a mature and internally coherent democracy" in which "(1) [its] political participation is fully competitive, (2) [its] executive recruitment is elective, and (3) [its] constraints on the chief executive are *substantial*" (Marshall and Jaggers, *Polity IV Project*, 14).

69. Oneal and Russett, "Rule of Three, let it be?" 298.

70. For example, Owen, *Liberal Peace, Liberal War*.

## Author Biography

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