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The Dawn of a New Age? Democracies and Military Victory

Author Biography

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Abstract

Democracies are perceived often by the public as relatively docile and not suited best for wars. This paper challenges this perception by analyzing the relationship between regime type and war outcomes. It builds upon David Lake's 1992 model in "Powerful Pacifists: Democratic States and War" by updating it to the present period. It examines the empirical evidence and scholarly debate in order to test and elaborate on the argument that democratic states in the modern era are more prone to fighting and winning wars. This paper, furthermore, adds a number of new variables to the Lake model to analyze the possibility that more factors are needed in the equation to better understand regime type and war outcomes. This research finds that regime type and alliances are significant variables in winning wars and that democracies win the large majority (84%) of wars that they are involved in. The paper concludes with recommendations for further research.

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Introduction

Democracies and war have been a major research topic for scholars in the last several decades. For centuries, it was a commonly held view that democracies were weak in prosecuting wars. It has only been recently that scholars have begun to test the democracies and war equation. The general public tends to assume that democracies act only defensively and rarely keep count on the number of conflicts. With the end of the Cold War, scholars have become more determined to analyze the "Free World's" power and decisiveness. These scholars have begun to put together all the wars since the 19th century and argue that democracies are not only war-prone but also highly successful in fighting wars. This is in stark contrast to prior popular beliefs and perceptions.

This research paper builds upon current scholarship on democracies and war. It focuses on the question as to how well democracies fight wars, using statistical analysis. This paper applies David Lake's 1992 "Powerful Pacifists: Democratic States and War" as the foundation to test the empirical evidence. After reviewing briefly the scholarly literature, Lake's model is updated from 1988 to 2008. This version adds five new wars that involved democracies and changes the total number of participants from 121 to 168. Following the analysis, this paper incorporates nine new independent variables that expand the analysis and evaluation of what may affect conflicts and outcomes. It is important to note that this research project is currently an exploratory analysis on a very important topic. It lays down the foundations for much more extensive theoretical studies on democracies and war. It first seeks to determine the prospects for more in-depth and comprehensive research within the parameters set by Lake and, then, attempts to expand the framework for possible greater insights and future scientific studies. The paper concludes with a number of recommendations for future research.

Historical Overview

Democracies used to be described as peace-loving and just. Immanuel Kant, in *Perpetual Peace* (1795), stated that democracies represented the people's will and the people often sought to avoid wars unless absolutely necessary. Kant argued that democracies will naturally form what he called a "league of peace" and that this alliance would eventually become strong enough to eliminate war as an instrument of resolving conflicts.[1] Many new democracies have been established since Kant's assertions, and no major wars have occurred between them. Scholars, nevertheless, point out that democracies go to war quite often and the type of government is not conclusive in predicting future conflict participation.[2]

[1] Kant, Immanuel, *Perpetual Peace* (New York: Bobbs-Merrill Company Inc., 1957).
[2] See scholarly works such as David J. Singer and Melvin Small, "The War-Proneness of Democratic Regimes, 1815-1965," *Jerusalem Journal of Conflict Resolution* 1:1 (1976): 50-69; Michael W. Doyle, "Kant, Liberal Legacies, and Foreign Affairs, Part I," *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 12 (Fall 1983): 323-353; Michael W. Doyle, "Kant, Liberal Legacies, and Foreign Affairs, Part II," *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 12 (Fall 1983): 323-353; Michael W. Doyle, "Liberalism and World Politics," *American Political Science Review* 80:4 (December 1986): 1151-1169; Erich Weede, "Democracy and War Involvement," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 28 (December 1984): 649-664; Steve Chan, "Mirror, Mirror on the Wall…: Are the Free Countries More Pacific?" *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 28 (December 1984): 617-648; Bruce Russett, "Can a Democratic Peace Be Built?" *International Interactions* 18:3 (1993): 277-282; Russett, Bruce, *Grasping the Democratic Peace: Principles for a Post-Cold War World* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993); Russett, Bruce, *Hegemony and*

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Throughout most of history, democracy and war were equated with military defeat and destruction. When the ancient and authoritarian Spartans defeated democratic Athens in the Peloponnesian War in the 5th century BC, democracy was labeled as weak and divisive. People were told that although democracy may be a good system theoretically and politically, democracy was not strong enough to maintain sufficiently homeland security and prosecute wars successfully. With the creation of the United States and other democracies, these countries challenged the notion that security was more important than political freedom. America's Founders, furthermore, had a lifetime of experiences in war. They made sure that the United States had a representative government—a republic—and not a pure democracy like ancient Athens. They incorporated a powerful central government in the Constitution in order to give the new nation a political system that was capable of protecting the people from external threats while not posing a serious danger to people's rights and freedoms. With the great expansion of democracy in the 20th century, there has been much more evidence to test the democracies and war proposition. Since the creation of the United States, democracies have fought many wars against autocracies. Scholars, thus, have posed the question as to how well democracies fight wars.[3]

Brief Scholarly Review

The common perception is that authoritarian regimes are war-prone and the sole culprits in initiating wars. However, it was not until the 1980s that there were a significant number of scholars willing to challenge this premise. Michael Doyle, Erich Weede, Steve Chan, and others argued that there is no definitive evidence proving that democracies are more pacific.[4] Weede, in fact, states that there have been times in which democracies have been led to war by their impassioned publics.[5] Doyle declares that the "historical liberal legacy is laden with popular wars fought to promote freedom, to protect private property, or to support liberal allies against

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Democracy (New York: Routledge, 2011); Randolph M. Siverson, "Democracies and War Participation: In Defense of the Institutional Constraints Argument," *European Journal of International Relations* 1:4 (1995): 481-489; Reiter, Dan and Allan C. Stam, *Democracies at War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002); Dan Reiter and Allan C. Stam, "Identifying the Culprit: Democracy, Dictatorship, and Dispute Initiation," *American Political Science Review* 97:2 (May 2003): 333-337; Rousseau, David, *Democracy and War: Institutions, Norms, and the Evolution of International Conflict* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005).

[3] Many of the writings and conversations by the Founders, especially in *The Federalist Papers*, emphasize the need for a compromise between democracy and a strong government that can maintain sufficient security and not go the way of ancient Athens. See previous citations for further elaboration on American democracy and government war powers and outcomes. See also Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, Translated by Richard Crawley and Revised With an Introduction by T. E. Wick (New York: Random House, 1982); Kenneth N. Waltz, "Kant, Liberalism, and War," *American Political Science Review* 56:2 (June 1962): 331-340; Brown, Michael E., Owen R. Coté Jr., Sean M. Lynn-Jones, and Steven E. Miller, eds., *Do Democracies Win Their Wars?: An International Security Reader* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2011); Brown, Michael E., Sean M. Lynn-Jones, and Steven E. Miller, eds., *Debating the Democratic Peace* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996); Alexander B. Downes, "How Smart and Tough Are Democracies? Reassessing Theories of Democratic Victory in War," *International Security* 33:4 (Spring 2009): 9-51; Francis Fukuyama, "The End of History?" *National Interest* 16 (Summer 1989): 3-18.

[4] Doyle, "Kant, Liberal Legacies, and Foreign Affairs, Part I"; Doyle, "Kant, Liberal Legacies, and Foreign Affairs, Part II"; Doyle, "Liberalism and World Politics"; Weede, "Democracy and War Involvement"; Chan, "Mirror, Mirror on the Wall…: Are the Free Countries More Pacific?".

[5] Weede, "Democracy and War Involvement," 652-653.

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nonliberal enemies."[6] Moreover, Chan concludes that there is no substantial evidence that democratic governments are more restrained from going to war, especially against non-democratic states.[7]

With the end of the Cold War in 1989, David Lake, Dan Reiter and Allan Stam, Michael Desch, and others continued to analyze the democracies and war topic but with much more empirical evidence and statistical computer programs at their disposal.[8] They built upon previous studies questioning the pacifism of democracies and emphasized wartime success. The Cold War's positive ending combined with victories in WWI and WWII suggested that democracies may actually be stronger than authoritarian regimes. Post-Cold War scholars came up with a number of explanations as to why democracies can be stronger than authoritarian regimes, including but not limited to: the existence of a free market; having greater popular support; a willingness to sacrifice economically and militarily, especially in wars of necessity/survival; maintaining a more conducive environment for economic and technological development; being more able to establish long-term, stable alliances between democracies and even authoritarian regimes; having a more educated and skilled civilian and military population; political leaders who are more vulnerable for removal if success is not achieved; being more absolute and impassioned to convert by force non-democracies; perceptual constraints towards democratic and authoritarian challengers; having a large private arms industry that can sell to their own country and world; and, having a greater demand and political willingness for continued economic expansion in order to maintain the country's standard of living and capitalism.[9]

Research Data and Methods: The Original Study

David Lake was one of the first to test empirically the idea of democracies fighting and winning wars. In "Powerful Pacifists: Democratic States and War," Lake examined thirty wars and 121 military participants from 1816-1988 (N=121).[10] Lake used the Correlates of War (COW) project (Singer and Small) to establish a pool of military conflicts and their participants and, then, he used Polity data (Gurr) to determine whether or not a democracy was involved in the war (see

[6] Doyle, "Liberalism and World Politics," 1160.
[7] Chan, "Mirror, Mirror on the Wall…: Are the Free Countries More Pacific?"
[8] David A. Lake, "Powerful Pacifists: Democratic States and War," *The American Political Science Review* 86:1 (March 1992): 24-37; Reiter and Stam, *Democracies at War*, and Michael C. Desch, "Democracy and Victory: Why Regime Type Hardly Matters," *International Security* 27:2 (Autumn 2002): 5-47.
[9] Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and Randolph M. Siverson, "War and the Survival of Political Leaders: A Comparative Study of Regime Types and Political Accountability," *American Political Science Review* 89:4 (December 1995): 841-855; Friedberg, Aaron L., *In the Shadow of the Garrison State: America's Anti-Statism and Its Cold War Grand Strategy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000); Reiter and Stam, *Democracies at War*; Reiter and Stam, "Identifying the Culprit: Democracy, Dictatorship, and Dispute Initiation"; Kenneth A. Shultz and Barry R. Weingast, "The Democratic Advantage: Institutional Foundations of Financial Power in International Competition," *International Organization* 57:1 (2003): 3-42; Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, James D. Morrow, Randolph M. Siverson, and Alastair Smith, "Testing Novel Implications of the Selectorate Theory of War," *World Politics* 56:3 (2004): 363-388; Jonathan Keller, "Leadership Style, Regime Type, and Foreign Policy Crisis Behavior: A Contingent Monadic Peace?" *International Studies Quarterly* 49:2 (2005): 205-231; Geis, Anna, Lothar Brock, and Harald Müller, eds., *Democratic Wars: Looking at the Dark Side of Democratic Peace* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006); Reiter, Stam, and Downes, "Correspondence: Another Skirmish in the Battle over Democracies and War"; Saunders, Elizabeth N., *Leaders at War: How Presidents Shape Military Interventions* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011); Russett, *Hegemony and Democracy*.
[10] Lake, "Powerful Pacifists: Democratic States and War."

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Appendix for full list of wars with democracies and overall statistics).[11] The Polity data covers from the 1800s to the present and defines the degree of both democracy and authoritarianism on a 0-10 scale (with 0 being the worst and 10 being the best). The overall scale is -10 to 10, with the democracy score minus the autocracy score equaling the Polity 2 score. Many scholars have used subsequently Polity 2 scores to determine when a democracy went to war, declaring a Polity 2 score of 6 or greater as the democracy threshold on the 21-point scale, with 10 being a full democracy and -10 being a full autocracy. Lake (and others) then took the list of democratic participants in war and went further in determining their degree of political freedom in order to get a better idea of democracies and war. Lake used the 0-10 point democracy score to establish a baseline for political freedom and military effectiveness (with 10 being the most democratic).

Once Lake determined the democratic regimes and the wars they fought in since the 1800s, he looked at the outcomes of the wars to see if democracies tended to win or lose wars. Lake found thirty wars that democracies fought in between 1816-1988. Of those thirty wars, he concluded that twenty-six of the wars had clear winners and losers between democratic and authoritarian opponents. What Lake found was that democracies won most of the time, in fact they won twenty-one (81 percent) and lost five times (19 percent). Lake's research concluded that democracies have actually been very effective in fighting and winning wars, despite historical and even current perceptions to the contrary. Although there are many critics of the Afghanistan and Iraq wars, it is important to distinguish between the conventional war period in which Lake and others consider as opposed to the post-war occupation and insurgency/terrorism aspects, which are a separate category not analyzed.[12]

The Present Study

This research paper updates Lake's study by including all the wars democracies have fought in since 1988. It should be noted that Lake's analysis actually ended with the 1982 Falkland Islands War between the United Kingdom and Argentina. All COW and Polity data to 2008 are used to extend Lake's study two decades to the present. The paper incorporates five more wars and forty-seven more participants (N=168). It determines the relationship between regime type and military victory or defeat by using logit analysis. The dependent variable (DV) is the war outcome. Regime type is the independent variable (IV), using the 11-point scale (0-10) for democracy in the Polity index. This paper, then, adds a number of new independent variables (nine total) to enhance the original and updated analyses and to see if there is more to military victory than the degree of democracy. These variables are included to extract more insight into possible motivations and outcomes behind democracies fighting wars and to address a number of factors that may challenge possible theoretical explanations for the wars, such as ideology, capitalism, balance of power, hegemonic stability, geopolitics, etc. Many of the additional variables have been postulated by a number of scholars, especially after the Lake study, as being

[11] "Correlates of War Project," available at: *http://www.correlatesofwar.org*; "Polity Project," *http://www.systemicpeace.org/polity*; Singer, J. David, *The Correlates of War II: Testing Some Realpolitik Models* (New York: The Free Press, 1980).

[12] See many of the books and articles on the Afghanistan and, especially, Iraq wars, including Ricks, Thomas E., *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq* (New York: Penguin Press, 2006); Ferguson, Charles, *No End in Sight: Iraq's Descent Into Chaos* (New York: Public Affairs, 2008); Clarke, Richard, *Your Government Failed You: Breaking the Cycle of National Security Disasters* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2008).

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important factors to consider in any democracy and war equation for causes and outcomes.[13] Moreover, this study establishes a known and consistent standard for scoring countries at war that have had their political regimes collapse due to revolution, civil war, and other reasons. Lake, in his original study, did not specify how he coded these countries with political breakdowns and, in a more recent though brief email exchange with the author, he acknowledged that he did not know how he scored these regimes and did not keep any original notes.[14]

This present study conducted all potential variations and none of these variations produced the exact results of Lake's original study, which means that there probably was an inconsistent scoring application. This study, therefore, corrects the situation by determining the best version to code regimes in transitional phases during wartime, in order to establish greater consistency in future studies. The research follows along the lines of Reiter and Stam and their coding methods.[15] The coding, specifically, uses the stable democracy score for a regime just prior to the war fought, in order to recognize that the original pre-war political regime probably played a significant part in the origins of the war and much of its characteristics are likely to have remained the following year(s) when war broke out and the regime collapsed, transitioned, or was incapacitated.

The five wars that are added for this study combined forty-seven more war participants and include the Persian Gulf War (1991), the Bosnian War (1995), the Kosovo War (1999), the Afghanistan War (2001), and the Iraq War (2003). All these wars involved democracies (Polity II scores of 6 or greater). All five wars included the United States and the United Kingdom. The Persian Gulf War had the United States taking the lead against Iraq, with the United Kingdom and France contributing significantly, while there were dozens of other countries playing minor supporting roles for Desert Storm. The Bosnian and Kosovo Wars involved NATO, which meant that sixteen NATO countries in the Bosnian War and nineteen NATO countries (three new members entered NATO in 1999) in the Kosovo War participated in military operations against Yugoslavia/Serbia. The two most recent wars in Afghanistan and Iraq consisted of the United States and the United Kingdom carrying out the primary military operations in the wars and

[13] The COW and Polity datasets now include a number of these variables, so the authors clearly believe that the variables are important enough to collect the data on and encourage scholars to utilize in their studies and statistical equations. See also the citations above, as well as some good studies that focus on a variety of other perspectives and variables, including Charles R. Boehmer, "A Reassessment of Democratic Pacifism at the Monadic Level of Analysis," *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 25:1 (2008): 81-94; Gleditsch, Kristian Skrede, *All International Politics Is Local: The Diffusion of Conflict, Integration, and Democratization* (Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press, 2005); Robert Latham, "Democracy and War-Making: Locating the International Liberal Context," *Millenium* 22:1 (1993): 139-164; John R. Oneal, "Confirming the Liberal Peace with Analyses of Directed Dyads, 1885-2001," in Harvey Starr (ed.), *Approaches, Levels and Methods of Analysis in International Politics: Crossing Boundaries* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 73-94; John R. Oneal and Bruce Russett. "The Classical Liberals Were Right: Democracy, Interdependence, and Conflict, 1950-85," *International Studies Quarterly* 41:2 (1997): 267-293; Russett, Bruce and John R. Oneal, *Triangulating Peace: Democracy, Interdependence, and International Organizations* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001); Schweller, Randall L., "Domestic Structure and Preventive War: Are Democracies More Pacific?" *World Politics* 44 (January 1992): 235-269; Weede, Erich, *Balance of Power, Globalization, and the Capitalist Peace* (Berlin: Liberal Verlag GmbH, 2005).

[14] Email correspondence with David A. Lake, May 4, 2010.

[15] Reiter and Stam, *Democracies at War*; Email correspondence with Alan C. Stam, May 5-6, 2010.

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other countries playing minor supporting roles during the wars and/or in the post-war operations, which became "extra-state" conflicts according to Polity when major combat operations ended. It should be pointed out that insurgencies and other solely unconventional conflicts were not included in this nor Lake's study and, thus, were not considered in the dataset outcomes of any war after major conventional operations were deemed officially over by Polity and others. Iraq and Afghanistan, therefore, are evaluated on the initial conventional war operations and not on the relatively low-scale guerrilla warfare responses that followed. Many wars have had unconventional resistance after major combat operations but the resistance is not considered anywhere near the level of being able to dislodge directly the conventional winner but rather meant to slowly exhaust, bleed, and make more uncomfortable and costly the occupation for however many years and decades it is necessary to persuade the once-victorious power that it is time to go home.

The following statistical model updates and tests Lake's original equation.

Figure 1: Lake's Study on Democracies and War—Updated

```
. logit War_Outcome Democ_Score

Iteration 0:   log likelihood = -106.93438
Iteration 1:   log likelihood = -83.133389
Iteration 2:   log likelihood = -82.187293
Iteration 3:   log likelihood = -82.172339
Iteration 4:   log likelihood = -82.172332

Logistic regression                                     Number of obs   =        168
                                                        LR chi2(1)      =      49.52
                                                        Prob > chi2     =     0.0000
Log likelihood = -82.172332                             Pseudo R2       =     0.2316

------------------------------------------------------------------------------
  War_Outcome |      Coef.   Std. Err.      z    P>|z|     [95% Conf. Interval]
--------------+---------------------------------------------------------------
  Democ_Score |   .3005334   .0487393     6.17   0.000     .2050061    .3960608
        _cons |  -.6724508   .2629283    -2.56   0.011    -1.187781   -.1571209
------------------------------------------------------------------------------
```

The test results in Figure 1 are consistent with Lake's original study. The results, in fact, provide much stronger support for the argument that democracies tend to win wars, with democracies winning all five wars that were added from the 1990s to the present. This means that out of the thirty-one wars that were considered, democracies won twenty-six of the thirty-one wars (84 percent), losing just the same five in Lake's study.

According to the updated results, the z-score is highly significant at 6.17, the p-value is significant at 0.000, and the 95 percent Confidence Interval is met. The slope coefficient indicates a positive relationship between democracy scores and war outcomes. The overall logistical regression model has a Pseudo R^2 of 0.2316, which means that the independent variable (democracy scores) explains approximately 23 percent of the variance in the dependent variable (war outcome), which is relatively significant in this case study. Thus, Lake's model is confirmed, strengthened, and updated.

In order to build upon Lake's study, this research project adds a number of new independent variables to possibly give us a better understanding of wars and regime type. The independent

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variables are *Contiguity, Regional, Fair Fight, Alliance, Initiator, Duration, Democracy Change, Autocracy Change,* and *Breakdown*. Many of these variables have been used in other datasets or considered in more qualitative studies before and after Lake's and have been recognized as important potential factors in conflicts and outcomes.[16] The variable information and general definitions come mainly from COW and Polity, while others are noted. The explanations/justifications for using the variables come primarily from this study. The democracy/autocracy changes and breakdown variables are new contributions for testing (although Polity considers them important enough data to collect), which this investigation is eager to determine the results. It has been a long historical question as to whether countries make fundamental adjustments to their political structures during wartime in order to win. This study examines the data and provides a preliminary analysis of these new variables before recommending further detailed research in this matter and the expansion of Lake's framework.

Contiguity determines whether or not the war participants were neighboring (bordering) countries. *Contiguity* may suggest that geographical proximity and not regime type has more to do with wars and their outcomes.

Regional considers whether or not the war participants were within the same region or continent as each other. This study has created this variable in order to expand the parameters of the *Contiguity* variable to include countries in close proximity to each other, although not neighbors. It acknowledges that transportation technology along with geopolitics make *Regional* the next step away from *Contiguity*. It also may indicate that a war participant fighting beyond its region may be more prone to militarization and imperialism. In other words, it is much harder to justify a war as defensive if it is being fought well beyond a country's region, though it has been done before.

Fair Fight refers to Desch's article and the claim that many of the wars democracies have fought in were very unfair fights against much weaker opponents—thus, skewing the war outcome results. This independent variable may give us a better understanding of regime type and military effectiveness when the war participants are closer to each other's power, based upon the existing military figures, technology, economy, and other key factors. It should be noted that this is a relative and somewhat imprecise standard, based primarily on sheer numbers (population, military, industrial power, etc.), quality of weaponry, and to some degree perception and an element of subjectiveness, although most people would agree with the general assessment based upon practical reasoning. This study makes the final assessment on the "fairness" of a war based upon the actual combatants, power comparisons, and past historical evaluations of the conflict.

Alliance determines whether or not a war participant, mainly the democracy, was part of a military alliance. This variable goes along with the scholarship that suggests that democracies are better at making and holding together alliances, especially among other democracies, but also including non-democracies.

[16] See the previous citations in #11, 13, 2, 3, and 9 to get the full picture of all the different types of variables considered in the democracies and war equation.

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Initiator tells us whether or not the specific war participant started the war. This variable tells us who tends to be the aggressor, the democratic or non-democratic state, which is a significant distinction.

Duration gives us the length of the war. It is coded in years. It is an important variable to consider when many have argued that democracies are weak and divisive and, in the long-term wars, will lose and be destroyed eventually. The greater the duration of a war, the more the democracy factor may come into play, for better or for worse. This may give us an idea of how well and long a democracy can fight a war successfully.

"Democracy Change" is the amount of change that occurs in the Polity democracy score of 0-10 during the war. It tells us if any of the war participants, especially the democracies, altered their political institutions and got tougher or softer during the war. This is the first time that this variable has been used in such a manner. It should be noted that the change can only occur with wars lasting more than one year, given the yearly (and not monthly) Polity index. All wars of one year or less were coded as having zero (0) change.

Autocracy Change is the same as above but with the Polity autocracy score of 0-10 being analyzed for any changes during a war of longer than one year. This variable tells us if the democratic or non-democratic states became more autocratic the longer a war lasted. If democratic states become more autocratic during wartime, then this may suggest that the willingness and ability to essentially switch off democracy and fight a war more aggressively, which could determine victory in the end, especially in prolonged wars. Whether or not the democracy returns afterwards, especially to its original levels, is a whole other case.

Breakdown determines whether or not a war participant had its government collapse at any point during the war. This data comes from Polity with specific scores based upon the different types of government breakdowns. This variable is another indicator of the strength, weakness, and durability of the democratic or autocratic governments involved in the war. This also may have an association with the duration of the war.

When the new set of independent variables given above is tested, we come up with the following results.

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Figure 2: New and Expanded Democracy and War Equation

```
. logit War_Outcome Democ_Score Contiguity Regional Fair_Fight Alliance Initiator
>  Duration Democ_Change Autoc_Change Breakdown

Iteration 0:   log likelihood = -106.93438
Iteration 1:   log likelihood = -75.738396
Iteration 2:   log likelihood = -72.779137
Iteration 3:   log likelihood =  -72.47188
Iteration 4:   log likelihood = -72.466128
Iteration 5:   log likelihood = -72.466125

Logistic regression                               Number of obs   =        168
                                                  LR chi2(10)     =      68.94
                                                  Prob > chi2     =     0.0000
Log likelihood = -72.466125                       Pseudo R2       =     0.3223
```

War_Outcome	Coef.	Std. Err.	z	P>|z|	[95% Conf.	Interval]
Democ_Score	.2706769	.0565718	4.78	0.000	.1597983	.3815555
Contiguity	.5961737	.9390864	0.63	0.526	-1.244402	2.436749
Regional	-1.74969	1.023732	-1.71	0.087	-3.756169	.2567885
Fair_Fight	.0836195	.5633023	0.15	0.882	-1.020433	1.187672
Alliance	1.563148	.5044885	3.10	0.002	.5743683	2.551927
Initiator	-.2088337	.4635514	-0.45	0.652	-1.117378	.6997104
Duration	-.1051989	.1419902	-0.74	0.459	-.3834945	.1730967
Democ_Change	-.193754	.3353717	-0.58	0.563	-.8510704	.4635625
Autoc_Change	-.239477	.2700102	-0.89	0.375	-.7686873	.2897332
Breakdown	-.5515476	.650436	-0.85	0.396	-1.826379	.7232836
_cons	-.3204115	.6495309	-0.49	0.622	-1.593469	.9526457

The new logistical regression in Figure 2 has a Pseudo R^2 of 0.3223, which means that the independent variables explain approximately 32 percent of the variance in the dependent variable (war outcome). This is significant, especially when compared with previous Pseudo R^2 results (23 percent) and the fact that the N is now 168. According to this multivariate analysis, the democracy score variable continues to remain significant, with a z-score of 4.78, a p-value of 0.000, and a 95 percent Confidence Interval. The slope coefficient indicates a positive relationship between democracy scores and war outcomes.

As for the other new independent variables, only the Alliance variable is significant, with a z-score of 3.10, a p-value of 0.002, and a 95 percent Confidence Interval. The Alliance slope coefficient indicates a positive relationship between alliances and war outcomes. Since democracies have won twenty-six of the thirty-one wars analyzed, these statistical results suggest that democratic states who are part of alliances are a very powerful and successful combination when it comes to warfare. A brief historical review shows that many countries who were part of these winning coalitions were not democratic states, which tells us that the democratic "league of peace" that Kant suggested has been expanded (so far, to the present) with democratic and non-democratic states forming long-term alliances or at least coming together on a case-by-case basis. This indicates that democracies are willing to forgo any political moral qualms and align with non-democracies if necessary in order to win wars.

The next equation is an abbreviated version of the model above, in order to confirm the results and see if a smaller number of variables can alter any of the key variables and, particularly, the very-close-to-significant regional variable.

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Figure 3: Abbreviated Democracy and War Equation

```
. logit War_Outcome Democ_Score Contiguity Regional Alliance

Iteration 0:   log likelihood = -106.93438
Iteration 1:   log likelihood = -77.511233
Iteration 2:   log likelihood =  -74.82374
Iteration 3:   log likelihood = -74.584069
Iteration 4:   log likelihood = -74.580754
Iteration 5:   log likelihood = -74.580754

Logistic regression                               Number of obs   =        168
                                                  LR chi2(4)      =      64.71
                                                  Prob > chi2     =     0.0000
Log likelihood = -74.580754                       Pseudo R2       =     0.3026
```

War_Outcome	Coef.	Std. Err.	z	P>|z|	[95% Conf.	Interval]
Democ_Score	.2739717	.0544729	5.03	0.000	.1672068	.3807365
Contiguity	.8597515	.7761627	1.11	0.268	-.6614995	2.381002
Regional	-1.970068	.8675452	-2.27	0.023	-3.670426	-.269711
Alliance	1.325211	.4506328	2.94	0.003	.4419872	2.208435
_cons	-.6022799	.5882475	-1.02	0.306	-1.755224	.5506639

The shortened version in Figure 3 confirms the original significance of the democracy score and alliance variables, but it also raises the regional variable to significance. The negative direction of the regional variable means that many of the victorious wars fought by democracies occurred beyond their region and, thus, power projection capabilities were a critical factor in fighting and winning the wars. The sizeable distance between combatants suggests colonies, markets and natural resources, and/or alliances, among other possible reasons, and less wars of necessity/survival. This adds greater depth to the overall explanation as to what conditions lead to wars and their final outcomes. Given the insignificance in the previous model, this tells us that the regional variable should always be taken seriously in any equation, regardless of the final outcome; it appears too close to call.

As for the insignificant variables in all of the equations above, these results are important findings in themselves, since they remove a number of explanations as to why democracies win wars. The more refined the analysis can be, the better understanding we can have regarding democracies and military victory. More studies should be conducted to improve our focus and provide us with the most efficient means of capturing and evaluating democratic combatants.

Conclusion

Overall, this updated and expanded study of Lake's "Powerful Pacifists" is an important means of analyzing past research findings, determining their reliability, and then building upon them. It, to restate from the beginning, is just an exploratory analysis that evaluates the prospects for much more comprehensive theoretical studies in the future using the scientific method. This paper confirms Lake's original model that democracies are much more effective in winning wars than non-democracies. It is an important finding, although scholars have produced studies suggesting that democracies may be less effective in fighting wars as Lake and others have suggested, but they still win nevertheless. This leads us to a compelling scholarly challenge of building upon previous research findings in order to prove/disprove them and add to the academic knowledge base. This research study supports the claim that the degree of democracy

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affects strongly war outcomes, from Lake's time period and then up through the post-Cold War period to the present. The additional independent variables that are used in the updated version suggest that alliances are a very important contributing factor to war outcomes and, thus, encourages further research on the matter. This finding is consistent with other research that stress that democracies tend to be much better at working with other countries (democracies or non-democracies) and that this ability to be more open and flexible can help establish and maintain strong alliances, in order to win wars.

Furthermore, this paper's other findings lead us to a number of important conclusions. Knowing that democracies can win wars beyond their borders and regions highlights the fact that major power projection capabilities and, to some degree, diplomatic skills are important in ensuring the communication lines from the home country all the way to the enemy. More detailed analytical and statistical research is recommended on this issue, although historically and qualitatively this has been common sense. The findings also make it clear that the fairness, initiator, and duration variables of the war do not play significant roles in most cases in the final war outcomes. The findings, moreover, indicate that democracies can win wars, even long wars, without sacrificing any significant degree of their political structures and without any political breakdowns in their governments. This does not mean that people's rights may not be limited or infringed upon during the war, but the Polity data suggests that no fundamental changes to the political system tend to be made during wars. Additional research should be made beyond this study's specific focus on Polity data and general political structures.

This paper contends that war outcomes and regime types provide a very fertile and exciting area for future research. More independent variables can be added to Lake's database in order to test additional hypotheses, including state GDP/GNP, level of industrialization, exact distance between warring parties, length (lifetime) of a democratic government, location of strategic minerals and resources, topography, ocean-access, freshwater availability and consumption (particularly in arid regions like Africa and the Middle East), education levels, size and quality of particular types of weapons arsenals, power projection capabilities, level of opposition forces (peaceful and armed) in one or more rivals, degree of internet accessibility, and other possible variables. These independent variables can be defined in greater detail and tested with rigorous empirical analysis and statistical formulas. More subjective approaches can be applied at the international, state, and individual levels, as well. Research should continue to be updated and the latest, cutting edge factors should be incorporated in studies. And, scholars should make a greater effort to get out and interact with key national security officials and bureaucracies, including the military itself.

In the end, it is a constant search for greater clarity and insight as to how well political systems can protect their citizens and win the ultimate contest for survival and military victory. It is a debate that has gone on for thousands of years since ancient Athens and Sparta fought. It continues to this day with scholars endeavoring to use increasingly powerful evidence and instruments to try to resolve finally this bi-millennial debate. This research paper contributes only a small part to these efforts, and it fits in to a larger and more vigorous debate on war and peace. Much more research needs to be done. But, the value and potential consequences can be significant in the policy realm as well as the public debate and perceptions on war. Thus, democracies and war should continue to be an intense topic of scholarly analysis and evaluation.

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Finally, no one should underestimate the military power and resolve of democratic countries once they go to war. Democracies, clearly, achieve military victory most of the time. Whether or not this will influence future international relations and the global structure, mainly driving more countries towards freedom, is still unknown. Yet, democracies may be their own worst enemies domestically, especially in terms of interfering with their economic and social systems. But, militarily they can still extract sufficient power and resources from their populations and private industries to make them a force to be reckoned with. If and when the popular and private support declines significantly, then democracies are likely to see the full force of their folly on the domestic, as well as military, front. Until then, democracies remain the ultimate military powers and not the ones that authoritarian regimes really want to go to war with. Times may change. Such may be the fate of humanity and its contradictory quests for freedom, domestic welfare equality, and military victory.

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Appendix[17]

All Wars With Democratic States, 1816-2008 (Original and Updated)

NOTE: Democracies are completely capitalized and in bold print.

1. Mexican-American 1846-1848
UNITED STATES defeats Mexico

2. Roman Republic 1849
FRANCE, The two Sicilies, and Austria-Hungary defeat the Papal States

3. Crimean 1853-1856
UNITED KINGDOM, France, Italy/Sardinia, and Turkey/Ottoman Empire defeat Russia

4. Anglo-Persian 1856-1857
UNITED KINGDOM defeats Iran/Persia

5. Sino-French 1884-1885
FRANCE defeats China

6. Greco-Turkish 1897
Turkey/Ottoman Empire defeats **GREECE**

7. Boxer Rebellion 1900
UNITED STATES, **UNITED KINGDOM**, **FRANCE**, Russia, and Japan defeat China

8. Spanish-Moroccan 1909-1910
SPAIN defeats Morocco

9. First Balkan 1912-1913
GREECE, Yugoslavia/Serbia, and Bulgaria defeat Turkey/Ottoman Empire

10. Second Balkan 1913
GREECE, Yugoslavia/Serbia, Turkey/Ottoman Empire, and Romania defeat Bulgaria

11. First World War 1914-1918
UNITED STATES, **UNITED KINGDOM**, **FRANCE**, **GREECE**, **PORTUGAL**, Belgium, Romania, Italy/Sardinia, Yugoslavia/Serbia, USSR/Russia, and Japan defeat Germany, Bulgaria, Austria-Hungary, and Turkey/Ottoman Empire

12. Hungarian-Allies 1919

[17] Most of the Appendix information comes from Lake's article and is presented in an organized and clear manner to enhance the overall study. The rest of the information, which is updated from Lake's time period, comes from this study and other basic sources and citations given above.

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CZECHOSLOVAKIA and Romania defeat Hungary
13. Russo-Polish 1919-1920
POLAND defeats USSR/Russia

14. Russo-Finnish 1939-1940
USSR/Russia defeats **FINLAND**

15. Second World War 1939-1945
UNITED STATES, **UNITED KINGDOM**, **FRANCE**, **AUSTRALIA**, **CANADA**, **BELGIUM**, **NETHERLANDS**, **NEW ZEALAND**, **SOUTH AFRICA**, **NORWAY**, Poland, USSR/Russia, Greece, Yugoslavia/Serbia, China, Brazil, Ethiopia, and Mongolia defeat Germany, Italy, Japan, Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and **FINLAND**

16. Palestine 1948
ISRAEL defeats Jordan, Iraq, Syria, Egypt/UAR, and Lebanon

17. Sinai 1956
ISRAEL, **UNITED KINGDOM**, and **FRANCE** defeat Egypt/UAR

18. Sino-Indian 1962
China defeats **INDIA**

19. Second Kashmir 1965
Pakistan defeats **INDIA**

20. Vietnamese 1965-1975
North Vietnam defeats **UNITED STATES**, **AUSTRALIA**, **REPUBLIC OF KOREA**, **PHILIPPINES**, South Vietnam, Thailand, and Cambodia

21. Six Day 1967
ISRAEL defeats Egypt/UAR, Jordan, and Syria

22. Football 1969 (sparked by a soccer game, though a number of other factors led up to it)
EL SALVADOR defeats Honduras

23. Bangladesh 1971
INDIA defeats Pakistan

24. Yom Kippur 1973
ISRAEL defeats Egypt/UAR, Iraq, Syria, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia

25. Turko-Cypriot 1974
TURKEY defeats Cyprus

26. Falklands 1982
UNITED KINGDOM defeats Argentina

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Updated War List from 1982 to the Present

27. Persian Gulf 1991
UNITED STATES, **UNITED KINGDOM**, **FRANCE**, et al. defeat Iraq

28. Bosnia 1995
NATO (**BELGIUM**, **CANADA**, **DENMARK**, **FRANCE**, **GERMANY**, **GREECE**, **ICELAND**, **ITALY**, **LUXEMBOURG**, **NETHERLANDS**, **NORWAY**, **PORTUGAL**, **SPAIN**, **TURKEY**, **UNITED STATES**, and **UNITED KINGDOM**) defeats Yugoslavia/Serbia

29. Kosovo 1999
NATO (**BELGIUM**, **CANADA**, **THE CZECH REPUBLIC**, **DENMARK**, **FRANCE**, **GERMANY**, **GREECE**, **HUNGARY**, **ICELAND**, **ITALY**, **LUXEMBOURG**, **NETHERLANDS**, **NORWAY**, **POLAND**, **PORTUGAL**, **SPAIN**, **TURKEY**, **UNITED STATES**, and **UNITED KINGDOM**) defeats Yugoslavia/Serbia

30. Afghanistan 2001
UNITED STATES, **UNITED KINGDOM**, et al. defeat Afghanistan

31. Iraq 2003
UNITED STATES, **UNITED KINGDOM**, et al. defeat Iraq

General Statistics

31 Total Wars
26 Democratic Victories (84 percent)
5 Democratic Losses (16 percent)—Greco-Turkish War (1897), Russo-Finnish War (1939-1940), Sino-Indian War (1962), Second Kashmir War (1965), Vietnam War (1965-1975).

168 War Participants
Winners= 80 Democracies and 32 Autocracies
Losers= 9 Democracies and 47 Autocracies (4 Democracies lost in the Vietnam War)

The United States, the United Kingdom, and France have fought in 16 of the 31 wars, winning 15 wars (the Vietnam War is the only loss for the United States).

The United Kingdom has been the democracy in the most wars, with 12. The United States and France both have fought in 10 wars each.

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