

Political Interstate Community and Peace: Fostering Common State Preferences through Intergovernmental Organizations

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Abstract

Arguments abound in international relations scholarship that the interests, similarity, or affinity of states shapes the tone of their interactions. Karl Deutsch and colleagues advocated these characteristics between states as sources of peace. We similarly argue that states attempt to form similar preferences by forming parallel portfolios of IGO memberships. The more similar the portfolio between two states, the more political community the two will share. Our theory subsumes arguments regarding liberalism and peace by Russett & Oneal (2001) and Gartzke (1998, 2001). The latter claims that the democratic peace is a mere function of similar state preferences. We will show that liberalism is related to state preferences through attempts to form political community, which we measure as the similarity of IGO memberships. We also show that political interstate community can be distinct from liberalism—directly implying that nondemocratic states could form political interstate community as well. We show that the similarity of IGO memberships between two states explains both similar state preferences and peace separate from liberalism.

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In this paper, we compare the explanatory power of our theory of *Political Interstate Community* to alternative theories. That the study of International Relations is theory rich but data poor has been said by many but directly attributed to none (although AFK Organski and J David Singer would be surely be likely suspects). This is becoming less true. The study of International Relations has more data to test theory than ever before. As evidenced by Bennett and Stam (2004), scholars are using the data lately to accumulate systematically findings. Bennett and Stam's opus takes a wide swipe at sixteen general explanations for interstate conflict, their focus being the "state of the field" and thus all of international relations theory.

Motivated by similar concerns of systematic accumulation and theory discrimination, this paper pursues a far less ambitious goal of distinguishing empirically between Russett and Oneal's Kantian Liberalism, Gartzke's Rationalism, and our theory based on Karl Deutsch's Political Community. That is, which theory, as operationalized, possesses the most explanatory power? According to King, Keohane, and Verba (1994), a theory with much explanatory power should be able to account for the explanatory power of competing theories. Hence, we will show here how our theory of Interstate Political Community subsumes in part the effects of democracy and affinities between states concerning interstate violence. To this end, we offer an empirical measure for Deutsch's Political Community, test each theory, and then assess the relative explanatory power of each approach.

The policy implications of each theory are substantially different and this underscores the importance of this study. According to Russett and Oneal (2001), the path to peace lies through the Kantian tripod of liberalism (democracy, trade, and IGOs).

Gartzke (1998) disagrees and argues that the liberal peace is rooted in state affinities. The substantive difference between these two contentions is profound and hence highly important for foreign policy and international organization. Should states value the spread of democracy and commerce to forge peaceful state relations? Our theory explains that neither state affinities nor liberalism that is simply the best, or at least exclusive, means to achieving peace. Our theory of Political Interstate Community (PIC) argues that the most important step to peace is the formation of a political community, whether states are similar or not, whether states are democratic or not. By forging an interconnecting array of relations through common IGOs, states may obtain peace.

This is the second stage of our project to show that political interstate community is an effective way for states to avoid militarized conflict with each other. In the first stage of our project, we presented our theory of PIC and tested it using a global sample of states across time. We found not only strong empirical evidence to support our theory but also that it provides a more general explanation for peace compared to state affinities and liberalism. We accomplish two objectives in this paper. First, we further explore the robustness of our earlier findings by applying various approaches of comparative theory testing. We then compare how our theory's explanatory power compares to the other theories across the multiple methods. Second, we expand our earlier study by examining how PIC explains militarized escalations, especially in relation to the competing theories. The next section reviews the three theories and past findings. We then explain why our theory of PIC should possess a more general explanation of peace compared to the other two theories. We then demonstrate such in the final two sections of the paper.

Comparing Theories and Empirical Evidence

This section looks at two sets of literature. The first discussion reviews the scholarship offering arguments that compete with our theory. We accentuate the similarities and differences of theory, research design, and results from such studies. The remaining discussion explores recent methods of comparative theory testing, which forms the basis for our discussion of the methods we employ later.

Liberalism, Affinities, and Political Interstate Community

The path to peace appears clear if states can build trust and eliminate security dilemmas. Deutsch, and colleagues, (Deutsch et al. 1957, vii, 6; Deutsch et al 1967; Deutsch 1979) sought to eradicate nationalism, the key source of distrust and insecurity, by means of political unification and international organization. However, nationalism has not faded and little political unification has occurred leading to the creation of *amalgamated* communities. Instead, *pluralistic* security communities were found to have more potential and have become the main focus of scholarship over roughly the last decade (Acharya 1996; Khong 1997; Narine 1998; Kacowicz 1998; Adler and Barnett 1998; Wæver 1998; Hurrell 1998; Väyrynen 1998, 1999, 2000).

Deutsch found that the integration process in the formation of political community required aligning on matters of security (internal and external), commerce (a single economy), social connections between peoples leading to a common identity, and other functional areas of cooperation. Deutsch et al. (1957) seemed to subsume the functionalist theory of Mitrany (1933, 1966) and others (144) in a behavioralist approach that also centered on values, norms, and trust, which speaks today to constructivists as well. The “essential conditions for pluralistic and amalgamated security communities”

(123-133, Deutsch 1957) include (1) compatibility of major values, such as common regime type or ideology, and (2) mutual responsiveness regarding sympathies and loyalties. By mutual responsiveness, Deutsch meant that people (not just foreign policies) would integrate and share collective identities and outcomes, which he attempted to measure using data on the amount of personal communications between peoples (transactions studies).

Considering that although Deutsch's work, despite being often cited, never was developed fully or was well supported empirically, Boehmer and Sacko (2007) reformulated and simplified the core of Deutsch's theory and goals into their theory of *Political Interstate Community*. We argue in this theory that for states to obtain peace they must intentionally set out to mitigate the myopic and unilateralist effects of state-centric nationalism. This can be accomplished by forging common state preferences through intergovernmental organizations (IGOs). In that study, we explained that leaders must intentionally seek peace by forming joint preferences with the help of international institutions. We argue that the ultimate expression of common preferences and trust is the degree of *similarity* of IGO membership between states, which means not only joining the same IGOs but also bringing IGO portfolios into parallel alignment. We found that when states enjoy a high level of similarity in their IGO portfolios, they are more likely to avoid the onset of militarized conflicts. These findings did not pertain exclusively to democracies but instead to all states. The effects of political interstate community were stronger and independent of state affinity and democracy.

Russett and Oneal (2001) have also invoked the work of Deutsch in order to explain the democratic or liberal peace. They highlight the role that integration and

social communication serve as a foundation for peace (74). Democracy is also a “shared major value” allowing for increased social communication and Deutsch saw economic interdependence and IGOs as essential means in the integration process to eliminate war. They, like Deutsch, combine norms and institutions in their theory but also carry on the neo-functionalist theme. Where they differ from Boehmer and Sacko (2007) is that they do not provide a theory of security community per se. Their work is partially similar to ours in regard to their measure of joint IGO memberships. We incorporate this IGO count in an interaction term with the broader similarity measure, the S-score (Signorino and Ritter, 1999). They argue that democracy, bilateral trade relations, and joint membership all reinforce peaceful relations between dyads of states. Nevertheless, others have criticized Russett and Oneal (2001) for two issues relevant to our study.

The first issue is theoretical and relates to the source of peace between states. Erik Gartzke (1998) has argued that the liberal peace is a function of underlying state affinities. Other jointly shared national attributes such as similar economic systems and cultures may be of greater importance and thus the deeper source of the reduction in conflict observed between liberal states. Gartzke creates a variable “Affinity” based on United Nations General Assembly roll-call votes that in tests of conflict reduces the explanatory power of democracy (1998, 2000). His initial tests (Gartzke 1998) and those in an additional round of debate (Gartzke 2000) appear to support his claim. However, we agree with Russett and Oneal that Gartzke’s measure of Affinity, as a concept of state preferences, is ambiguous. Where do common preferences come from, besides democracy? Similar culture appears to be one possibility, but Gartzke has not provided a distinct definition.

The second relevant issue here stemming from Russett and Oneal is the construction of their IGO variable. Russett and his coauthors sum the joint IGO memberships of two states into a count variable, which requires the assumption that all IGOs have the same influence on international interactions. This assumption was more practical than theoretical given the need of a more specific theory to guide the necessary data collection (Russett, Oneal, and Davis 1998; Oneal and Russett 1999; Russett and Oneal 2001). Studies using this variable construction for joint IGO memberships have failed to produce robust evidence that IGOs contribute to peace. Some studies have shown that IGOs contribute to peace but are sensitive to sampling and estimator choices (Russett, Oneal, and Davis 1998; Oneal and Russett 1999; Russett and Oneal 2001; Oneal, Russett, and Berbaum 2003). Boehmer, Gartzke, Nordstrom (2004) show that the omnibus IGO count variable is also prone to spurious relationships with the level of state diplomatic activity in the international system. Past studies have shown that IGOs have either no effect on interstate conflict (Singer and Wallace 1970; Jacobson et al. 1986; Domke 1988) or even cause lead to new conflicts (Gartzke, Li, and Boehmer 2001; Kinsella and Russett 2002). Boehmer et al. (2004) show that only certain IGOs, those that are most institutionalized or security related, reduce international conflict. Pevehouse and Russett (2006), having recognized the above problems, weight IGOs by their democratic members and find that highly democratic IGOs contribute to peace, which more directly supports the claims of Russett and Oneal (2001).

Theory Cumulation and Comparative Testing

Scholars of international conflict have long criticized themselves collectively for a lack of progress in the area of “what we know” (Bremer 1995; Cusack 1995; Diehl 1995).

Theories have proliferated in number, but there have been few attempts to weed-out dead ends. In other words, there has been an accumulation of scholarship but little comparative testing to discover which theories possess the most explanatory power (Bennett and Stam 2004). This is no simple task and we should not expect a general theory of international conflict to emerge. Some hope instead that theories possess explanatory power that pertains to certain contexts and are probabilistic, as opposed to deterministic (Most and Starr 1989; Bremer and Cusack 1995).

Bremer and Cusack (1995) and Most and Starr (1989) adopt the differentiation between *additive* cumulation and *integrative* cumulation discussed by Dina Zinnes (1976). Additive cumulation results when new studies add information to existing knowledge, whereas integrative cumulation occurs when new studies are built upon past studies in a manner that focuses a field of inquiry. This is one way to evaluate whether a body of knowledge is progressing, as opposed to simply growing (Most and Starr 1989).

Comparative theory testing has become more feasible with the methodological advances discussed below, although it is still unclear which methods are superior to others. Bennett and Stam (2004) provide a broad test of an array of theories but do not present one of their own. Using block likelihood ratio tests of logit and multinomial logit models to compare whether including or excluding certain variables increases or decreases model fit, or explanatory power, Bennett and Stam (2004) are able to gauge which theories are stronger predictors than others. The methods of Pollins (1996) and Clarke (2001) also propose methods to assess model fit. Essentially, Pollins estimates a base model, a “supermodel” in Clarke’s parlance, and then assesses individual nested subsets. Clarke’s (2001) treatise is primarily an admonition of non-nest model

comparisons, or at least artificially contrived “nestedness.” We believe we can make a reasonable claim that our “supermodel”, presented below, is theoretically justifiable. If the base model is theoretically justified, all models being compared can be constructed as vectors of that base model, and the number of cases is held constant, the type of comparisons Pollins makes hold up. Finally, Gartzke (2000) used an analysis of the residuals from regression models to show that democracy was not driving affinity but instead that affinity was having an independent and stronger effect than democracy on reductions in the onset of militarized conflicts between states.

Leveraging a Theory of Political Interstate Community

Here we present a truncated version of our theory, which we lay out in more detail in Boehmer and Sacko (2007). Our theory of Political Interstate Community resurrects the Pluralistic Security Community concept of Deutsch et al. (1957). We agree with Deutsch that the fundamental goal of political community is to remove war as a foreign policy tool, which requires the elimination of security dilemmas and the formation of interstate trust and mutual responsiveness. This translates into a multilateral formation of international institutions to overcome myopic state-centric foreign policies.

Unlike recent reformulations of political community (Addler and Barnett, 1998), our approach is rationalist. War fundamentally results from miscalculation (Fearon 1995; Gartzke 1999). With perfect information, states have an incentive to resolve differences nonviolently. We agree with neo-liberal institutionalists that IGOs serve many purposes, including the information provision that can reduce the threat of miscalculation that can lead to misperception or even militarized conflicts. The key is to orchestrate mutually

beneficial long-term relationships between states and minimize defections from agreements (Keohane 1984; Axelrod and Keohane 1985; Keohane and Martin 1995). A political community founded upon multilateral institutions may reduce unilateralist actions, or even selfish, nationalistic tones, which should decrease security dilemmas.

However, the number of IGOs in the international system has proliferated and most countries are members to numerous organizations. Hence, we do not argue that simply joining IGOs results in political community with other states, or that even joining numerous IGOs is what particularly matters. We define a political interstate community by degree to the extent that states are more or less members of the very same IGOs. This is most necessary and desirable, in our opinion, if the dependent variable is interstate conflict, relative to more discrete conceptions of community. The latter conception is most useful in the study of specific exclusive treaty commitments, such as if countries are formal allies, share a common currency, participants in a regional trade agreement, etc. However, is the risk of war between the United Kingdom and the United States higher because the latter is not a member of the European Union? No single IGO should be used to gauge whether two states share political community in relation to the risk of interstate conflict and peace.

The degree of community between states in their direct interstate relations is key to building trust and hence peace. We neither conceptualize Political Interstate Community as a single IGO membership, nor as geographic regionalism, but instead by the degree to which states have more broadly aligned their relations through IGOs. We see the choice to join not only a single IGO as one derived at rationally to further state interests, but a state's whole portfolio of IGO memberships as a reflection of a broader

course of foreign policy. Since we are seeking to explain why political community leads to peace, we focus on dyads of states since most conflicts at least start as bilateral episodes. Our conception of political community is hence a combination of the number of joint IGO memberships and the similarity of two states' broader IGO portfolios. In other words, do two states share the same IGOs? This is similar to modeling whether people interact in the same niches or groups. Political community involves some cohesiveness, or even exclusiveness, that relates to similar IGO membership portfolios, although as states deepen their cooperation and trust in each other, this also allows them to expand the number of IGOs in which community members participate.

Political Interstate Community and Militarized Conflict Escalation

In Boehmer and Sacko (2007), we show that political interstate community reduces the risk of militarized interstate conflict. Here we expand our theory to explain a lower risk of military escalations. It is important to point out though that our conception of political community is not dichotomous and static, where states are members or not. Instead, by conceptualizing community as a matter of degree with the expectation that it fluctuates over time, it is conceivable that states may still resort to militarized threats or even displays of force. While we expect the number of interstate crises to reduce as states formulate higher degrees of political community, conflicts may still escalate.

In our earlier work, we showed that states with higher similarity of security or economic IGO portfolios were less likely to become involved in militarized conflicts, although these substantive predictions were weaker relative to the effects of the broader political community. In other words, the conflict resolution mechanisms of particular IGOs may play a role in preventing interstate violence amongst community members but

are not the sole source of peace. Instead, the greater community trust, good will, informal mediators, etc., appear to explain peace better. For this reason, we expect that states sharing higher levels of political community will be less likely to use military force and go to war against each other. This stands in stark contrast to the findings of Gartzke et al (2006) who found that some IGOs might encounter a selection effect where overall conflict onsets are fewer, but that those that do occur may escalate despite the individual efforts of certain IGOs. This should not occur between states sharing high community.

Subsuming Liberalism and Affinity

Beyond providing an explanation of political community and peace, our objective here is to show how our theory subsumes extant theories. By this, we are attempting to integrate theory through comparative testing. Our predictions are not directed to certain groups of states, such as democracies. Our theory provides a means for all types of states to enjoy peace. In doing so, we can account for peace that liberalism or Gartzke's measure of Affinity cannot do so individually.

In Boehmer and Sacko (2007), we explained why democracy is not a necessary condition for community, although it appears to be a contributing factor between some states. Our results to date support our theory. As long as states seek to eliminate the specter of war and are willing to work in a multilateral manner that fosters common interests in multiple IGOs directed towards this purpose, states can build trust and diminish the threat of security dilemmas. This idea was previously voiced by Acharya (1996) and Solingen (1997). Notwithstanding that democracy is a pillar of the European Union, and IGOs have taken an active role in promoting democracy (Pevehouse 2005), and that IGOs with largely democratic members appear associated with peace (Pevehouse

and Russett 2006), we agree that democracy is not a necessary condition for political community and thus peace. The lack of a stronger relationship between the United States and India (the latter a bulwark nonaligned state) is an important illustration of how the broader array of IGO affiliations can help build political community. Despite the fact that both states are democratic, they have not enjoyed high congruence in their foreign policy preferences.

We have argued that the depth and similarity of IGO portfolios between states brings national preferences into congruence. This idea would seem to conflict with Gartzke's conception of state preferences, which operationalizes Affinity by similarity of UN voting. Deutsch et al. (1957) often used the term "affinity". It is unclear however, what drives UN voting. Gartzke (1998, 2000) has not provided a distinct definition of Affinity or Preference. Based on our research, where we specifically examined economic and security issues, we expect that his Affinity measure is likely capturing factors such as similar culture, ideology, and history. We have examined variables along side Affinity such as democracy, trade, alliances, geography, number of IGOs, similarity of IGOs, economic IGOs, etc., and in the end Affinity provides an independent and statistically significant conflict reducing effect. It is almost as if Affinity serves as a miscellaneous cooperation variable, similar to an *error term*, if you will. It is thus important to not only show that political interstate community is broader than liberalism, where liberalism may be simply sufficient for some states but not a necessary condition, but also to show that our theory explains more than Gartzke's theory as well. Even though the cases used by Deutsch et al. (1957) to focus in on the concept of political community were democratic, they listed early in their book mixed or autocratic dyads that too could form community.

Examples are Austria-Germany after 1871 and autocratic Spain or Portugal within NATO or other western-European alignments.

In summary, our theory provides a more general explanation of peace than liberalism or Gartzke's state preferences. It is our goal here to expand further our analysis to show that we hence subsume the findings of these contending explanations. Whereas Russett and Oneal (2001) or other authors explain why liberal states enjoy peace, or Gartzke can show that nonliberal states can likewise enjoy peace (but not necessarily the liberal states), our theory can explain why any two states can enjoy peace. Hence, we strive to gain theoretical leverage over these other theories, meaning we can account for their findings and then something more (King, Keohane, and Verba 1994).

Research Design

Imre Lakatos' criterion of excess empirical content (1978) has been employed in the comparative theory testing of Pollins (1996) and Bennett and Stam (2004), and will be utilized here as well. The focus on empirical content, but not deductive rigor nor internal validity, turns our attention to how well each operationalized theory explains a hypothesized relationship. Our common benchmark dependent variable is the ubiquitous *Militarized Interstate Dispute* (Jones, Bremer, Singer 1996). In our analyses, we use the cases of all dyad-year interactions and the incidence or escalation of militarized interstate disputes. As our focus is on empirical explanatory power and prominent scholarship has used both incidence and escalation, we use these first two nodes of the conflict process (Bremer and Cusack 1995). In addition, as these three theories do not make any specific prediction about the direction of the initiation, non-directed dyads are used. Our study

ranges from 1816 to 2001, although the inclusion of a variable from Gartzke (1998) on similarity of United Nations voting patterns typically truncates our models to 1950-2001.

Variable Construction and Estimation

We obtained the MID non-directional dyadic data matrix from EUGENE (Bennett and Stam 2000), using the Correlates of war MID 3.0 data set (Ghosn, Palmer, Bremer 2003).

We use all dyads from 1816-2001 (675,015 dyad-years). The operationalization employed for the onset of a militarized interstate dispute is whether there was a new MID onset (threat, display or use of force) in a given year. Thus, we analyze only the first year of a dispute using logit. The escalation analysis utilized five levels of conflict based on the Correlates of War hostility scale and the dispute fatality level. The status quo is indicated by zero, an initiation without force is recorded as one, force without battle-deaths is two, force involving death but short of war is three while war is four. Following Bennett and Stam (2004), we estimate dispute escalation using multinomial logit. For all the analyses, we constructed spline variables based on Beck, Katz and Tucker (1998) measuring for serial correlation between old and new disputes. As previous work has indicated, this effectively mediates any bias created by previous conflict behavior. We also employed robust standard errors to mitigate any heteroskedasticity.

Intergovernmental organizations form the basis for our measure of political interstate community. We argue that there are two necessary components for the construction of an indicator of political community: the simple aggregate number of IGO ties and the similarity of IGO portfolios. The first part of our indicator for IGO ties mirrors Russett and Oneal (2001) and is a count of the number of IGOs to which two states are both members. The number of IGOs may indicate the magnitude of the

relationship, particularly functional ties; however, by itself the count of joint IGO memberships does not address the quality of the community, and hence trust. Signorino and Ritter's (1999) S score is the metric used to assess the similarity of the IGO portfolios and is a superior alternative measure of similarity to the τ_b . We computed the IGO similarity scores according to the formula in Signorino and Ritter (1999:127). We measure political interstate community as the product of the aggregate number of joint IGO memberships with the overall similarity of the IGO membership portfolios between two states in a dyad.¹

The effect of political community on the process of conflict is methodologically and theoretically complex. Therefore, we are hesitant to introduce variables that are not a clear theoretical control. Geographic distance is included as a necessary control variable since we expect to observe a relationship between contiguity and conflict, and contiguity and shared IGO membership. We use actual distance rather than simple contiguity since distance captures both the contiguity effect of conflict (distance equals zero when two states are contiguous) and best reflects the propensity of states to engage in joint IGO membership. Theoretically, three explanations could covary with political community from Russett and Oneal (2001) and Gartzke (1998). We thus also include UN voting similarity, regime type and economic interdependence. The bilateral measure of

¹ The similarity index was created exclusively with the Correlates of War (COW) IGO dataset (Pevehouse and Nordstrom, 2003). The created index indicates joint membership similarity for all Intergovernmental Organizations between the states of a dyad in the system that year. This indicator (SIGO) is theoretically bound from -1 to 1, but as Table 1 indicates, only ranges in our data from .3 to 1. This is an artifact of the IGO data, where many state pairs do not belong jointly to the same organizations. Signorino and Ritter mention that the S statistic will be affected by the inclusion of irrelevant choices and show more similarity than might be expected. Sweeney and Keshk (2005) find that all similarity scores are severely skewed left. Fortunately, this will affect the entire data set equally and not bias any particular dyad having the cumulative effect of decreasing the range while keeping meaningful variation in the score. Thus, .3 of IGO Similarity indicates a great deal of dissimilarity while 1.0 indicates total similarity.

economic interdependence is measured as country i's exports to country j and i's imports from j, all relative to national income. Taken dyadically, we insert the lower of the two values into the model (weak-link assumption applied) expecting that economic interdependence to have a constraining, negative, influence on conflict.²

We include a variable for the democratic peace and an alternative measure for state preferences. The likelihood of conflict is a function of the degree of political constraint experienced by the less constrained of the two states in a dyad. We expect a negative coefficient for this variable when both states in a dyad are democratic. We use a regime type variable that we measure as the difference between a state's Polity III (Jagers and Gurr 1995) democracy and autocracy scores. Thus, we measure democracy by the lower democracy score in the dyad and expect it to have a negative relationship with interstate conflict. This indicator varies from 10 (most liberal) to -10 (most illiberal). We also control for alternative measures of preference similarity based on United Nations voting using the Affinity measure (Gartzke 1998).

The other control variables used in the specification for Oneal and Russett's model (1999) that we think could confound political community include alliance partners, major power status and capability ratio. We include a dichotomous indicator equaling one if there is an alliance within the dyad. *Capability Ratio* is a measure of the dyadic balance of power reflecting the Realist view that a preponderance of power inhibits conflict (Lemke and Reed 1998; Singer and Small 1982). Thus, a negative relationship is expected. In addition, major power dyads are portioned out in a similar fashion except that we expect these dyads to be more bellicose. Finally, *alliance* is a dichotomous

² Gleditsch (2002) made these data available.

indicator equaling one if a formal alliance exists; this is expected to constrain violent state behavior (Gibler and Sarkees 2002; Reiter 2000; Small and Singer 1969).

Modeling Comparative Theory Testing and Results

This section presents the battery of tests employed one sub-section at a time along with the results for each specific test. We have employed five approaches to assessing the relative explanatory power of the three theories. The results here overall support our claim that our theory of Political Interstate Community partially subsumes the other two theories, meaning that we can account for peace in the dyads predicted by those two theories but then other additional dyads that each of the other theories cannot predict.

1. Predictive Power on Dispute Onset

We begin with the most basic approach. If we are interested in the empirical power of the rationalist, Kantian or Deutschian approach, we first include them in a straightforward conventional “head-to-head” assessment. In essence, we employ a logit estimator and include the three sets of variables all as control variables and then assess the predictive power of the particular coefficients. This is a first step and primarily serves to demonstrate that all three sets of variables significantly reduce the probability of a dispute onset. Table 1 reports these estimate and demonstrates that a one standard deviation increase in the level of the lowest democracy score in the dyad, the lowest level of economic interdependence, the affinity, and the degree of political interstate community leads respectively to a 25.6%, 6.4%, 34.0%, and 91.6% reduction in the probability of a dispute. Clearing aside the brush indicates first that the power of the

political community effect is strongest. The power of the political interstate community coefficient clearly is greater than any combination of the other variables.

2. Splitting the Sample

Next, in Table 2 we trifurcate the sample to all democratic dyads, all autocratic dyads and all dyads composed of mixed regime types, be they autocratic, democratic or “anocratic” and replicate the procedure above. The coefficients reported above are averages for many different dynamics that are rolled together. This analysis seeks to pull apart different layers to the process and assess which variable is most robust. Given that it is less sensible to think about the democratic peace effect in autocracies, this primarily pits Gartzke’s Affinity measure against our Political Interstate Community index.

Theoretically, regime type should have no bearing on a state’s affinity or its ability to construct a political community. Rather than controlling for regime type, we assess the explanatory capacity of the variables in this theoretically relevant sub-sample.

The results indicate that Political Interstate Community is the only variable that is significant and negative across all three sub-samples. In fact, the Political Interstate Community effect once again exhibits the most powerful magnitude of all three sets of coefficients. Not surprisingly, the Kantian variables (save total common IGOs) have the most profound effect in the sample of all democracies and affinity was most powerful in mixed-dyads. When we split the sample, however, affinity had no discernible effect in democratic dyads and the Kantian variables had no effect in autocratic dyads and little effect in mixed dyads.

3. Residual Analysis

The next analysis takes a cue from the debate Gartzke (2000) had with Oneal and Russett (1999). Regression models assume that any unexplained variation resides in the error term, the residual effect. This residual term has a wealth of information that usually harvested for a-theoretical econometric fixes. Gartzke, however, used the residual effect of democracy to demonstrate that democracy was not a prior condition necessary for affinity as Oneal and Russett claimed.

We estimate the residual effect for affinity, democracy and political interstate community and then re-estimate the main model used thus far and find that political interstate community remains robust and still the most powerful effect. In fact, Table 3 reports that in this estimation, after the residual effect of the prediction of democracy, affinity and political interstate community are taken into effect, political interstate community remains as the only statistically significant variable. Much can be said about endogeneity and causality at this point. Rather than pushing the econometrics in that particular direction, we mean to say that these results are merely suggestive. It is reasonable that political interstate community would be a logical prior to both joint democracy and affinity. Before we can state that this indicator has subsumed the other, we should continue in the direction we started and first answer the question concerning which indicator has the most explanatory power.

4. Nested Logit Effects

Another approach based on model fit rather than individual coefficient power is to standardize the number of cases, conduct a log-likelihood ratio test and then compare log-likelihood values, as done by Pollins (1996). Kevin Clarke (2001) gives proper guidance for comparing the log likelihood values of properly nested models. Our models are

indeed nested. This approach does not take into account any specific variable coefficient but rather assesses overall model fit. Taking this approach does not change any findings thus far but the results are definitely non-trivial. Table 4 reports estimates that indicate that all three models individually make a statistically significant contribution. When all three models are restricted to the same cases, a comparison of the log-likelihood values indicates that our Political Interstate Community model explains more variation than either the Kantian or Preference-Based model.

5. Nested Multinomial Logit Effects

Bennett and Stam (2004) represent the most comprehensive effort thus far to assess the relative explanatory effect of many interstate conflict models. In essence, they do not deviate very far from the approach of maximum likelihood nested models. For each theory, they take one or more independent variables and assess: 1) if the IVs are significant and 2) the relative explanatory power on a comparative scale rather than results based on individual significance tests. They draw on two techniques. First using Lakotosian logic, they employ a series of block likelihood ratio tests to assess the multiple outcomes found in multinomial logit. They then drop a variable, re-estimate a second nested model and then examine log likelihood ratio test. A significant difference suggests that including the variable dropped improves the model as a whole. Substantive explanatory power is evidenced by probabilities produced from each outcome using the complete set of coefficients and independent variable values from actual values in the data set by converting the probabilities to relative risk factors.

Table 5 reports the two sets of estimates prescribed by Bennett and Stam. We derive estimates for all four phases of the conflict process, and as Bennett and Stam warn,

these estimates should not be taken too far. What is most important are the predicted values and then ultimately the block log-likelihood ratio tests. Once again the Political Interstate Community estimates are quite striking. The predicted probabilities for our measure rank higher than any other estimate for any conflict stage. Finally, not reported are the block log-likelihood tests that indicate that all models are individually significant.

Conclusion

This paper attempts to discriminate between the relative power of an ubiquitous set of variables representing the Kantian peace, the primary empirical challenge to the democratic peace, Gartzke's Affinity, and a theoretical and empirical finding that is only now being established, our Deutschian inspired Political Interstate Community. We employed every comparative theory test we could summon and the results consistently indicate that *Political Interstate Community* trumps both the Kantian Peace and the Rational Preference findings. Table 6, below, shows what place each theory came in between the five comparative contests, based on the five methods employed. Political Interstate Community placed first in each comparative test. Gartzke's Rational Affinity placed or tied for second, with the Kantian Tripod overall trailing behind overall. The results here are of course not the end conclusion.

There is always more work to be done. For example, we did not go very far down the endogeneity and simultaneity rabbit hole in this paper, hoping to establish first which model has the greatest empirical bite before assessing the pattern of causality. However, the results are at least suggestive that democracy is not the sole factor motivating political community. Each of the three variables has an independent effect, although democracy is absent in many of the cases of nondemocratic dyads, as evident in the split sample tests.

This leaves open the possibility that our measure of political community, which we have argued relates to the common formation of preferences is similar to Gartzke's measure, although a more thorough investigation in the future will need to confront the conceptual definition of Affinity and what it is capturing. Still, even if democracy is a shared norm and institution in which some states construct political interstate community, it is not the only path to peace. As we demonstrated, nondemocratic states can build political community as long as they find some basis on which to cooperate through IGOs. Democracy may prove important to many states seeking peace, but it does not appear to be a necessary or sufficient condition to the formation of political community.

TABLE 1: THE EFFECT OF POLITICAL COMMUNITY ON THE ONSET OF MILITARIZED INTERSTATE DISPUTES		
	Competing Model	Percent Change in Odds for SD Increase in X
Political Interstate Community	-0.2480	-91.6
	(0.0588)***	
IGO Similarity	3.3298	
	(1.8926)*	
Total IGOs in Common	0.2708	
	(0.0534)***	
Low Democracy	-0.0498	-25.6
	(0.0091)***	
Affinity	-1.5495	-34.0
	(0.2730)***	
Low Economic Interdependence	-25,164.4282	-6.4
	(12,498.5495)**	
Country Distance (logged)	-0.4189	
	(0.0207)***	
Time since last MID	-0.3353	
	(0.0256)***	
(peaceyrm-k1) cubed	-0.0011	
	(0.0002)***	
(peaceyrm-k2) cubed	0.0004	
	(0.0001)***	
(peaceyrm-k3) cubed	0.0000	
	(0.0000)	
Constant	-4.3754	
	(1.6982)***	
Observations	319320	
Log Likelihood	-4338.31	
Robust standard errors in parentheses * significant at 10%; ** significant at 5%; *** significant at 1%		

TABLE 2: SPLIT EFFECTS OF THE EFFECT OF POLITICAL COMMUNITY ON THE ONSET OF MILITARIZED INTERSTATE DISPUTES						
	(1) Autocracies		(2) Democracies		(3) Mixed	
Political Community	-0.3910	-95.1	-0.2231	-95.4	-0.2646	-89.1
	(0.1898)**		(0.1236)*		(0.0729)***	
IGO Similarity-ALL IGOs	0.9903		5.0250		4.7117	
	(4.5594)		(4.2096)		(2.4394)*	
Total IGOs in Common	0.4088		0.2432		0.2894	
	(0.1795)**		(0.1113)**		(0.0645)***	
Low Democracy Score for the Dyad	-0.0157	-1.7	-0.1686	-24.7	-0.0415	-13.2
	(0.0853)		(0.0786)**		(0.0164)**	
Affinity	-0.9324	-16.7	0.4206	11.6	-1.8979	-41.6
	(0.5013)*		(0.7772)		(0.3025)***	
Low Economic Interdependence	9,938.1600	1.4	-35,418.7558	-16.2	-1,671.5390	-0.3
	(22,747.3769)		(25,176.8626)		(4,067.3395)	
Country Distance (logged)	-0.4318		-0.3815		-0.4048	
	(0.0348)***		(0.0451)***		(0.0267)***	
Time since last cwmid	-0.3364		-0.1489		-0.3752	
	(0.0415)***		(0.0575)***		(0.0330)***	
(peaceyrm-k1) cubed	-0.0009		-0.0000		-0.0014	
	(0.0003)***		(0.0005)		(0.0002)***	
(peaceyrm-k2) cubed	0.0002		-0.0001		0.0006	
	(0.0002)		(0.0003)		(0.0001)***	
(peaceyrm-k3) cubed	0.0001		0.0001		-0.0000	
	(0.0000)**		(0.0001)		(0.0000)	
Constant	-2.5481		-6.7679		-5.4764	
	(4.4179)		(3.6654)*		(2.1705)**	
Observations	75425		49794		194101	
Log Likelihood	-1034.10		-671.29		-2581.87	
Robust standard errors in parentheses * significant at 10%; ** significant at 5%; *** significant at 1%						

TABLE 3: RESIDUALS OF POLITICAL COMMUNITY, DEMOCRACY AND AFFINITY				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Democracy	Affinity	Political Community	MID Onset
Political Community-All IGOs		0.0030 (0.0002)***		-0.2297 (0.0633)***
IGO Similarity-ALL IGOs				1.8208 (2.1084)
Total IGOs in Common				0.2218 (0.0571)***
Low Democracy		0.0012 (0.0004)***	0.3772 (0.0114)***	-0.0354 (0.0433)
High Democracy		-0.0137 (0.0003)***	0.1257 (0.0074)***	0.0509 (0.0314)
Low Economic Growth		-0.1738 (0.0106)***		
Affinity			3.8591 (0.1929)***	1.4827 (2.1869)
Country Distance (logged)			-1.1945 (0.0596)***	-0.4316 (0.0301)***
Alliance	1.9178 (0.1946)***	0.0373 (0.0088)***	11.5044 (0.3491)***	
Capability Ratio	0.2078 (0.0282)***	-0.0163 (0.0015)***		
Contiguity	-0.2421 (0.2511)	0.0148 (0.0106)		
Low Economic Interdependence	91,646.5348 (24,032.0476)***	-3,366.2793 (1,407.0474)**	365,727.7712 (103,327.0175)***	1,239.9245 (14,326.5715)
Low Economic Development	0.0008 (0.0000)***		0.0011 (0.0000)***	
Democracy Residuals				-2.9273 (2.1861)
Affinity Residuals				0.0228 (0.0202)
Political Community Residuals				-0.0044 (0.0392)
Time since last cwmid				-0.3860 (0.0299)***
(peaceyrm-k1) cubed				-0.0014 (0.0002)***
(peaceyrm-k2) cubed				0.0006 (0.0001)***
(peaceyrm-k3) cubed				0.0000 (0.0000)
Constant	-6.3721 (0.0688)***	0.7291 (0.0058)***	26.1652 (0.5231)***	-4.1137 (2.1103)*
Observations	406559	312579	319145	312492
R-squared	0.14	0.14	0.46	
Log Likelihood				-4241.95
Robust standard errors in parentheses * significant at 10%; ** significant at 5%; *** significant at 1%				

TABLE 4: MODEL COMPARISONS POLITICAL COMMUNITY, DEMOCRACY AND AFFINITY					
	NESTED	NESTED	NESTED	NESTED	NULL
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
	Full	Deutsch	Preferences	Kant	Null Model
Political Community-All IGOs	-0.2480 (0.0474)***	-0.3121 (0.0448)***			
IGO Similarity-ALL IGOs	3.3298 (1.5707)**	0.3136 (1.4810)			
Total IGOs in Common	0.2708 (0.0429)***	0.3147 (0.0406)***		0.0430 (0.0031)***	
Country Distance (logged)	-0.4189 (0.0119)***	-0.4353 (0.0115)***	-0.4724 (0.0091)***	-0.3634 (0.0108)***	-0.4372 (0.0087)***
Time since last cwmid	-0.3353 (0.0183)***	-0.3307 (0.0183)***	-0.3235 (0.0180)***	-0.3448 (0.0184)***	-0.3260 (0.0181)***
(peaceyrm-k1) cubed	-0.0011 (0.0002)***	-0.0011 (0.0002)***	-0.0013 (0.0002)***	-0.0011 (0.0002)***	-0.0012 (0.0002)***
(peaceyrm-k2) cubed	0.0004 (0.0001)***	0.0004 (0.0001)***	0.0006 (0.0001)***	0.0004 (0.0001)***	0.0005 (0.0001)***
(peaceyrm-k3) cubed	0.0000 (0.0000)	0.0000 (0.0000)	-0.0000 (0.0000)	0.0000 (0.0000)*	0.0000 (0.0000)
Low Democracy Score for the Dyad	-0.0498 (0.0071)***			-0.0490 (0.0071)***	
Low Economic Interdependence	-25,164.4282 (8,288.1845)***			-24,488.8687 (7,407.4348)***	
Constant	-4.3754 (1.4098)***	-2.1143 (1.3399)	0.3598 (0.0980)***	-2.5249 (0.1338)***	-1.0143 (0.0611)***
AFFINITY - s3un, with 1964 values interpolated	-1.5495 (0.1204)***		-1.8277 (0.1047)***		
Observations	319320	319320	319320	319320	319320
Log Likelihood	-4338.31	-4453.15	-4465.39	-4494.72	-4595.05
Log Ratio	4447.97	4218.30	4193.82	4135.16	3934.49
Statistical Significant Log Likelihood Test Difference From Base Case		***	***	***	
Explains the Most		1	2	3	
Standard errors in parentheses * significant at 10%; ** significant at 5%; *** significant at 1%					

TABLE 5: FULL MODEL COMPARISONS POLITICAL COMMUNITY, DEMOCRACY AND AFFINITY MULTINOMIAL LOGIT ESTIMATES				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Full Model	Full Model	Full Model	Full Model
Escalation	Threat or Use	Force	Force with Death	War
Political Community-All IGOs	-0.3227 (0.0691)***	-0.2888 (0.0560)***	-0.2217 (0.1004)**	-0.1593 (0.0804)**
Political Interstate Community Predicted Probabilities From the Status Quo	-96.0	-94.4	-89.1	-79.7
IGO Similarity-ALL IGOs	4.1857 (2.4226)*	0.5123 (1.8710)	1.3446 (3.1325)	-1.1404 (2.4858)
Total IGOs in Common	0.3476 (0.0621)***	0.3304 (0.0502)***	0.2444 (0.0919)***	0.2017 (0.0728)***
Low Democracy Score for the Dyad	-0.0364 (0.0101)***	-0.0997 (0.0100)***	-0.0716 (0.0143)***	-0.1646 (0.0178)***
Democracy Predicted Probabilities From the Status Quo	-19.4	-44.6	-34.6	-62.3
AFFINITY - s3un, with 1964 values interpolated	-1.4576 (0.1768)***	-1.0431 (0.1576)***	-0.8671 (0.2419)***	-1.2305 (0.1971)***
Affinity Predicted Probabilities From the Status Quo	-32.3	-24.4	-20.7	-28.1
Low Economic Interdependence	-54,765.9184 (15,604.2269)***	-5,709.9774 (7,834.9098)	-230948.2966 (53,270.0757)***	-242429.4374 (53,331.1386)***
Interdependence Predicted Probabilities From the Base Case (Status Quo)	-13.4	-1.5	-45.5	-7.1
Country Distance (logged)	-0.3863 (0.0183)***	-0.3168 (0.0163)***	-0.5009 (0.0219)***	-0.4201 (0.0196)***
Time since last cwmid	-0.2926 (0.0284)***	-0.4897 (0.0261)***	-0.3373 (0.0321)***	-0.3695 (0.0311)***
(peaceyrm-k1) cubed	-0.0009 (0.0002)***	-0.0018 (0.0002)***	-0.0012 (0.0003)***	-0.0010 (0.0003)***
(peaceyrm-k2) cubed	0.0003 (0.0001)**	0.0008 (0.0001)***	0.0005 (0.0002)**	0.0002 (0.0002)
(peaceyrm-k3) cubed	0.0000 (0.0000)	0.0000 (0.0000)	0.0000 (0.0000)	0.0002 (0.0001)***
Constant	-6.5835 (2.1609)***	-3.6518 (1.6596)**	-3.7707 (2.8292)	-2.3151 (2.2237)
Observations	319320	319320	319320	319320
Log Likelihood	-8344.69			
Log Ratio	6753.32			
Standard errors in parentheses * significant at 10%; ** significant at 5%; *** significant at 1%				

TABLE 7: SUMMARY STATISTICS

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
New MID Onset	675015	0.003637	0.060198	0	1
Political Community (All IGOs)	498085	18.43226	10.46688	0	100.5152
Political Community Economic IGOs)	489615	18.96056	10.54504	0	107
Political Community Security IGOs)	489651	18.55214	10.25111	0	101.5128
IGO Similiarity (All)	498092	0.862059	0.063211	0.300412	1
IGO Similiarity (Security)	489622	0.874003	0.087808	0.333333	1
IGO Similiarity (Economic)	489658	0.855331	0.072799	0.283951	1
IGO Count	498085	21.27633	11.80062	0	107
Low Democracy Score	531428	-4.27244	5.817884	-10	10
UN Affinity	516487	0.698472	0.276958	-0.71429	1
Low Interdependence	528888	3.79E-07	2.35E-06	0	0.000214
Distance (Logged)	693351	8.004479	1.57976	0	9.421168
Major Power Dyad	693351	0.004004	0.063148	0	1
Capability Ratio	672528	2.417257	1.894135	9.38E-05	11.96214
Alliance	656870	0.05697	0.231786	0	1
Democracy Dummy	693351	0.110158	0.313087	0	1
Autocracy Dummy	693351	0.161573	0.368059	0	1
Peace Years	675015	27.33528	28.54741	0	185
Spline 1	675015	-26898	58959.62	-512592	0
Spline 2	675015	-51394.2	123825.6	1107054	0
Spline 3	675015	-69973.2	187927.1	1758750	0

Table 6 Ranking the Explanatory Power of Theories from the Five Comparative Tests

	Deutschian Political Interstate Community	Kantian Tripod	Gartzke's Rational Affinity
Predictive Power on Dispute Onset	1 st	3 rd	2 nd
Splitting the Sample	1 st	Tie for 2 nd	Tie for 2 nd
Residual Analysis	1 st	Tie for 2 nd	Tie for 2 nd
Nested Logit Model Effects	1 st	3 rd	2 nd
Nested Multinomial Logit Effects	1 st	3 rd	2 nd

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