

I made a small error in the final version of “Grasping the Scientific Evidence: The Contractualist Peace Supersedes the Democratic Peace”. It has no effect on results: the democratic peace remains insignificant controlling for contractualist economy.

In earlier drafts I centered the variables by subtracting the z-scores from the median. In the final draft the variables were not centered, but I neglected to update the text accordingly. This mishap has no effect on results, but it does lead to a minor change in interpretation of the impacts of the variables: whereas before I reported that the contractualist peace is “more than ten times stronger” than what we had previously-believed was the impact of democracy on peace, the corrected calculations indicate that the contractualist economy is ‘only’ about two times greater what we had previously-believed was the impact of democracy on peace. The democratic peace remains insignificant controlling for contractualist economy.

The text with corrections:

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The analyses in Table 2 draw on the exact base model used by DOR and Mousseau (2013). We can see in Model 1 that without consideration of contractualist economy, democracy appears as a force for peace: odds ratio coefficients < 1 indicate negative effects, so the coefficient for Democracy_L (0.95) indicates that a one-standard deviation increase in democracy reduces the odds of a fatal onset by 28% $1 - 0.95 = 5\%$.

Model 2 advances knowledge by adding the new measure for Contract-intensive Economy_L. As can be seen, Democracy_L (1.02) is now in the positive direction and CIE_L (0.41) is highly significant with a z-score > 8 . The coefficient indicates that a one-standard deviation increase in CIE_L reduces the odds of a fatal onset by 60% $1 - 0.41 = 59\%$. In standard procedure for interpreting multivariate regressions, the difference between Models 1 and 2 informs us that the contractualist peace supersedes the democratic one (Blalock, 1979: 473–474). The difference between the coefficients of Models 1 and 2 informs us that the contractualist peace is more than two ~~10~~ times stronger than what we had previously thought was the power of the democratic peace ($60/28\% = 2.2$ ~~$59/5\% = 11$~~). Model 3 reports identical results using the proxy measure Investment, and Model 4 reports the same results with missing data for CIE multiply imputed as recommended by DOR.

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The implications of this study are far from trivial: the democratic peace, defined as democracy causing peace, lacks the evidentiary core on which it is based; the observation of democratic peace is best explained by contract norms. If our field is to abide by scientific rules of evidence, then our scholars must stop describing democracy as a “known” cause, or correlate, of peace, and we must stop tossing in a variable for democracy, willy-nilly, in quantitative analyses of international conflict. The variable to replace it is contractualist economy, which not only subsumes democracy but is now the most powerful non-trivial factor in the study of international conflict, whose impact is more than ~~10-times~~ twice that which we once thought democracy had.

