

APPENDIX:
WHO'S CAREFUL: REGIME TYPE AND TARGET SELECTION

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INTRODUCTION TO THE APPENDIX

This document contains the results from additional robustness tests conducted for the manuscript “Who’s Careful: Regime Type and Target Selection.” The primary text makes references to several models that are discussed in greater detail here. All codes, data, and documentation for the tests conducted herein will be made publicly available prior to publication.

THE EFFECT OF RELATIVE CAPABILITIES ON CONFLICT INITIATION

In the main text, we report the *difference* in the effect of relative capabilities between democracies and various types of non-democracies. This is because the Democratic Selection Hypothesis makes predictions about democracies being more cautious than other regime types. Because it is relative in nature, neither the hypothesis, nor the theory from which it is derived makes a direct prediction about the direct effect of relative capabilities on dispute initiation. Thus, while we might expect that increases in the target's relative capabilities always have a negative effect on a democracy's likelihood of dispute initiation, this is not a necessary or sufficient condition for the Democratic Selection Hypothesis to hold.

We nevertheless explore this issue further in Figure A1, which displays the effect of an increase in relative capabilities across each regime type.¹ When using Polity, we find that increasing the target's relative capabilities reduces the odds a challenger will initiate a dispute for democracies and non-democracies alike. Relative capabilities also have a negative and statistically significant effect for democracies, civilian regimes, and monarchies in CGV, but have no significant effect for military regimes. Among regimes in the GWF typology, we find that increasing the target's relative capabilities only reduces the odds of dispute initiation for Personalist regimes. A similar negative relationship is uncovered for democracies, but this effect is statistically insignificant. Finally, using the Weeks typology, we find that the effect of relative capabilities is only negative and significant for democracies. While this is the case, as we report in the main text, we do not find that this effect size is significantly different between democracies and any non-military autocracy, so we cannot infer that democracies are more cautious than these regimes. It is also worth noting that Juntas are actually *more* likely to initiate

¹ Effects are calculated with respect to the parameter estimates obtained from the models reported in the main text.

a dispute against a target when the latter's share of relative capabilities increases. This is clearly demonstrative of reckless target selection behavior. Moreover, the fact that this effect is strongest for non-personalist military regimes indicates that collegial military rule in particular is linked with reckless foreign policy behavior.

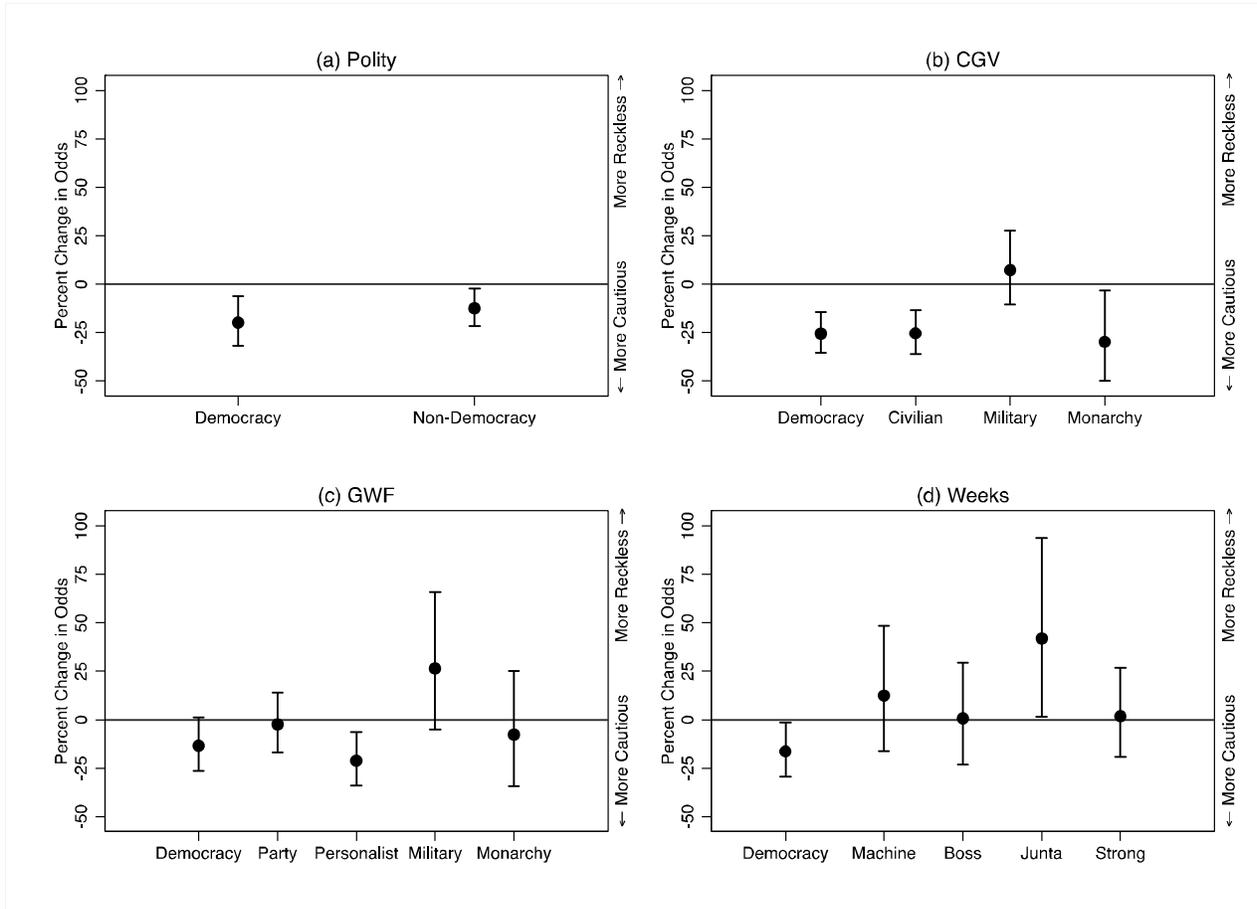


Figure A1. The effect of target's relative capabilities on dispute initiation

Note: Effects are calculated as percentage changes in the odds of initiating a militarized interstate dispute associated with one standard deviation increase in the target's relative capabilities from the mean. The solid lines indicate 95% confidence intervals.

USING DIFFERENT DICHOTOMOUS INDICATORS OF DEMOCRACY

The results reported in the text fully disaggregate non-democracies when utilizing the CGV, GWF, and Weeks typologies. This is done in order to more fully examine variation among autocratic regimes. Here, we also estimate models that use each of these typologies to examine the variation between the more highly aggregated categories of democracy and non-democracy. The results from these models are displayed in Table A1. Model 1 again uses the dichotomous measure of democracy from polity, while models 2, 3, and 4 identify democracies using the CGV, GWF, and Weeks typologies respectively. Non-democracies function as the baseline category in each case. Across the four models, the interaction between the democracy and relative capabilities indicators is statistically insignificant, and the simulation results indicate that relative capabilities have no greater bearing on MID initiation for democracies than it does for states within the reference category.

This finding is displayed graphically in Figure A2, which reports the difference in the effect of relative capabilities between democracies and non-democracies. Consistent with our primary findings, each of these estimates is statistically insignificant, indicating that democracies are indeed no more or less cautious than non-democracies.

Table A1. Effects of Challenger’s Relative Capabilities and Regime Type on Conflict Initiation, 1946-2001: Democracy vs. Non-democracy

	(1) Polity	(2) CGV	(3) GWF	(4) Weeks
Relative Capabilities	-0.381** (0.158)	-0.526*** (0.161)	-0.167 (0.167)	-0.344** (0.165)
Democracy	-0.101 (0.160)	-0.124 (0.158)	-0.135 (0.159)	-0.188 (0.165)
Relative Cap. * Democracy	-0.250 (0.245)	-0.272 (0.231)	-0.296 (0.259)	-0.328 (0.246)
Capabilities (Side A)	7.802*** (1.412)	7.607*** (1.425)	7.869*** (1.378)	7.906*** (1.451)
Capabilities (Side B)	9.306*** (1.373)	9.825*** (1.383)	8.557*** (1.371)	9.275*** (1.391)
Alliance Similarity	-0.780*** (0.159)	-0.799*** (0.164)	-0.790*** (0.161)	-0.796*** (0.162)
Contiguity	3.680*** (0.127)	3.755*** (0.128)	3.593*** (0.130)	3.697*** (0.131)
Trade Dependency	-4.915 (4.829)	-4.201 (4.472)	-4.430 (4.338)	-3.523 (4.346)
Peace Years	-0.176*** (0.016)	-0.175*** (0.016)	-0.185*** (0.016)	-0.182*** (0.018)
Peace Years Squared	0.003*** (0.000)	0.003*** (0.000)	0.003*** (0.001)	0.003*** (0.001)
Peace Years Cubed	-0.000*** (0.000)	-0.000*** (0.000)	-0.000*** (0.000)	-0.000*** (0.000)
Constant	-5.357*** (0.177)	-5.367*** (0.186)	-5.244*** (0.180)	-5.345*** (0.184)
Observations	918,421	1,012,769	845,868	873,847

Note: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Robust standard errors, clustered by dyad are given in parentheses. The unit of analysis is the directed dyad year across all models. The coding of democracy is determined by CGV in Model 2, GWF in Model 3, and Weeks in Model 4. Non-democracies are the reference category in each model.

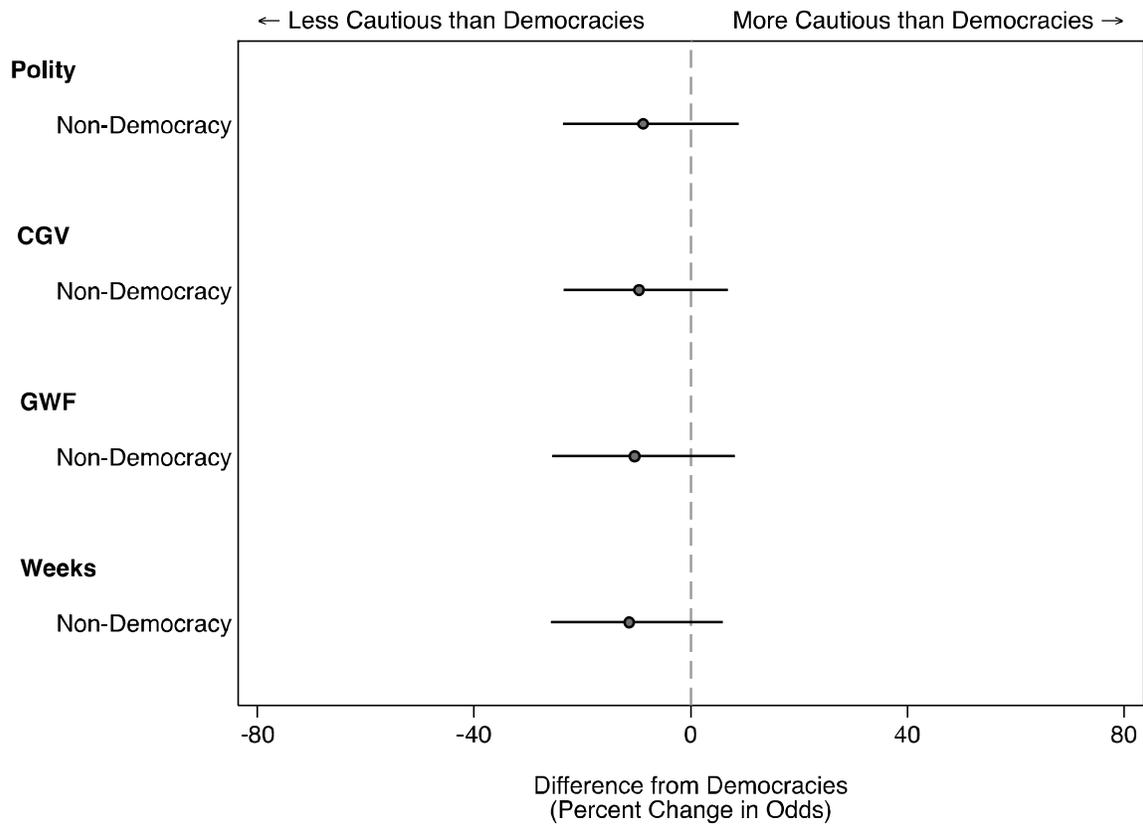


Figure A2. Comparing the effect of target's relative capabilities across regime type (democracy vs. non-democracy)

Note: This figure reports the difference in the effects of target's relative capabilities for democracies and each type of autocracy reported above. Effects are calculated with respect to the change in the odds of dispute initiation following a standard deviation increase in target relative capabilities. The solid line indicates 95 percent confidence intervals.

MODIFYING THE DEPENDENT VARIABLE

In our primary analysis, we use MID initiation as the dependent variable. While we believe this choice of dependent variable is appropriate, we are careful to note that the first state to take militarized action is not necessarily the *instigator* of a particular dispute, nor the state attempting to revise the status quo (see Ghosn, Bremer, Palmer, 2003; Bennett and Stam, 2000). For this reason, one may also want to examine whether the patterns of target selection uncovered here also apply to a subset of cases where the state initiating a MID is doing so in an attempt to change the status quo in some capacity. As a result, 314 MIDs (22%) were recoded as zeros. We therefore estimate each of the models presented in Table 1 using a modified version of our dependent variable that only records cases where the state initiating the MID was also revisionist.

The coefficient estimates obtained from these models are reported in Table A2. The results pertaining to the differential effect of relative capabilities across regime types are reported in Figure A3. As before, only military autocracies are significantly more reckless than democracies. Moreover, the difference between democracies and military autocracies appears to be slightly larger than it is when using the models employed in the primary text. Additional inspection of the results from these models indicates that military regimes are also more reckless than civilian regimes in the CGV typology, single party and personalist regimes in the GWF typology, and machine and boss regimes in the Weeks typology.

Table A2. Effects of relative capabilities and regime type on initiation of militarized interstate disputes (only revisionist initiators), 1946-2001

	(1) Polity	(2) CGV	(3) GWF	(4) Weeks
Relative Capabilities	-0.465*** (0.172)	-0.299 (0.557)	0.597 (0.585)	-1.207*** (0.236)
Democracy	-0.192 (0.174)	0.813** (0.402)	0.852** (0.425)	-0.802*** (0.218)
Relative Capabilities X Democracy	-0.186 (0.263)	-0.486 (0.582)	-0.990 (0.625)	0.622* (0.333)
Military		0.869** (0.400)	0.683 (0.465)	
Relative Capabilities X Military		0.611 (0.598)	0.335 (0.707)	
Civilian		1.147*** (0.390)		
Relative Capabilities X Civilian		-0.833 (0.575)		
Single-Party			1.076*** (0.411)	
Relative Capabilities X Single-Party			-0.958 (0.613)	
Personalist Autocracy			1.801*** (0.425)	
Relative Capabilities X Personalist			-1.408** (0.628)	
Machine				-1.000*** (0.266)
Relative Capabilities X Machine				0.949** (0.461)
Boss				-0.179 (0.252)
Relative Capabilities X Boss				0.886* (0.464)
Junta				-0.992*** (0.294)
Relative Capabilities X Junta				2.361*** (0.468)
Strongman				-0.336 (0.243)
Relative Capabilities X Strongman				1.329*** (0.408)
Capabilities (Side A)	7.398*** (1.527)	6.839*** (1.572)	7.738*** (1.511)	9.042*** (1.504)
Capabilities (Side B)	9.033*** (1.507)	9.929*** (1.429)	8.349*** (1.484)	9.130*** (1.602)
Alliance Similarity	-0.689*** (0.175)	-0.663*** (0.179)	-0.729*** (0.180)	-0.768*** (0.178)
Contiguity	3.577*** (0.142)	3.610*** (0.143)	3.494*** (0.145)	3.636*** (0.147)
Trade Dependency	-1.185 (3.839)	-0.432 (3.407)	-0.416 (3.324)	1.276 (3.175)
Observations	918,421	1,012,769	845,868	873,847

Note: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Robust standard errors, clustered by dyad are given in parentheses.

Regime coefficients should be interpreted relative to the reference category, which is non-democracy in Model 1, monarchy in models 2 and 3, and “other” non-democracies in Model 4. The peace-year polynomials and constants are not reported in this table.

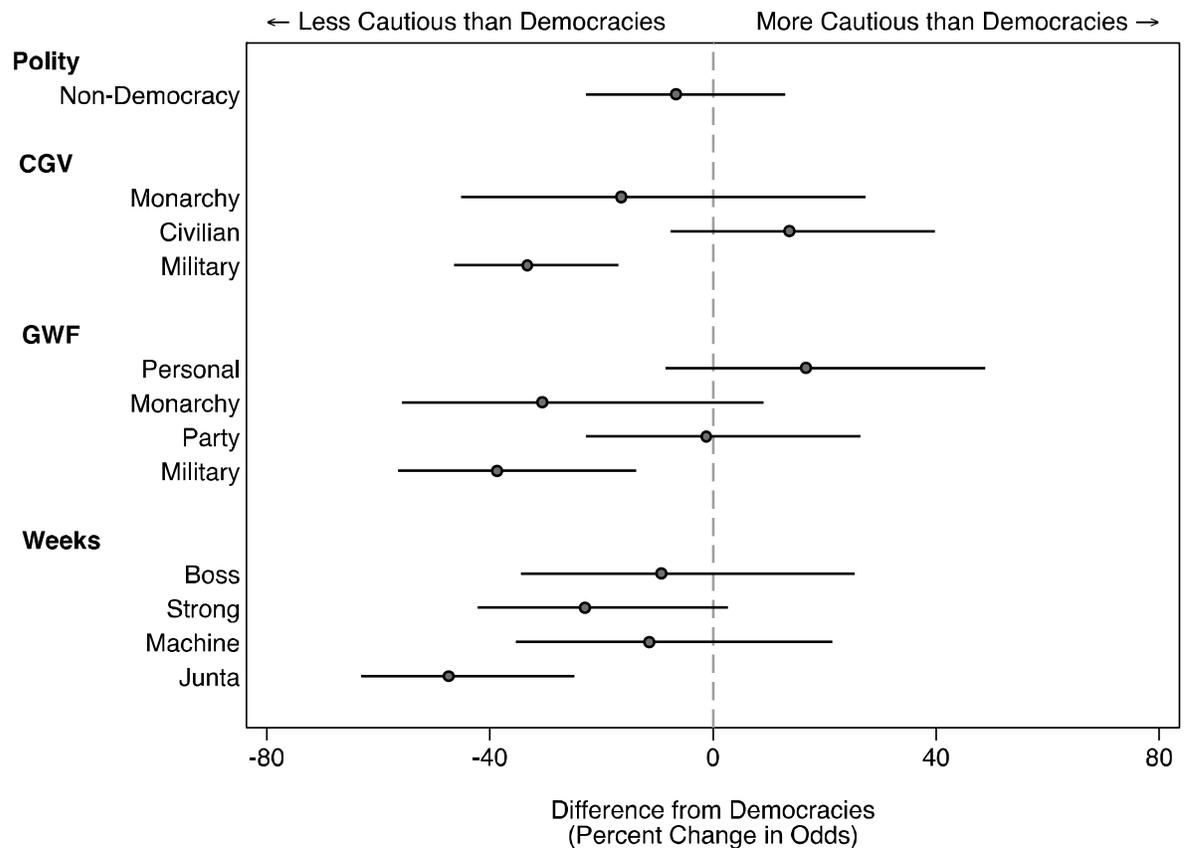


Figure A3. Comparing the effect of target’s relative capabilities across regime type (only revisionist initiators included)

Note: This figure reports the difference in the effects of target’s relative capabilities for democracies and each type of autocracy reported above. Effects are calculated with respect to the change in the odds of dispute initiation following a standard deviation increase in target relative capabilities. The solid line indicates 95 percent confidence intervals.

Figure A4 displays the effect of regime type on conflict initiation across the range of target’s relative capabilities. Once again, these results closely mirror those presented within the text. Democracies tend to share similar conflict initiation patterns relative to most forms of non-military autocracies, save for cases where power is concentrated within the military or a small group of individuals, as in the case among regimes classified as personalist or boss. Furthermore, the difference between democracies and military regimes is again highly contingent on the level of the target’s relative capabilities, with the significant difference appearing at high levels of relative capabilities.

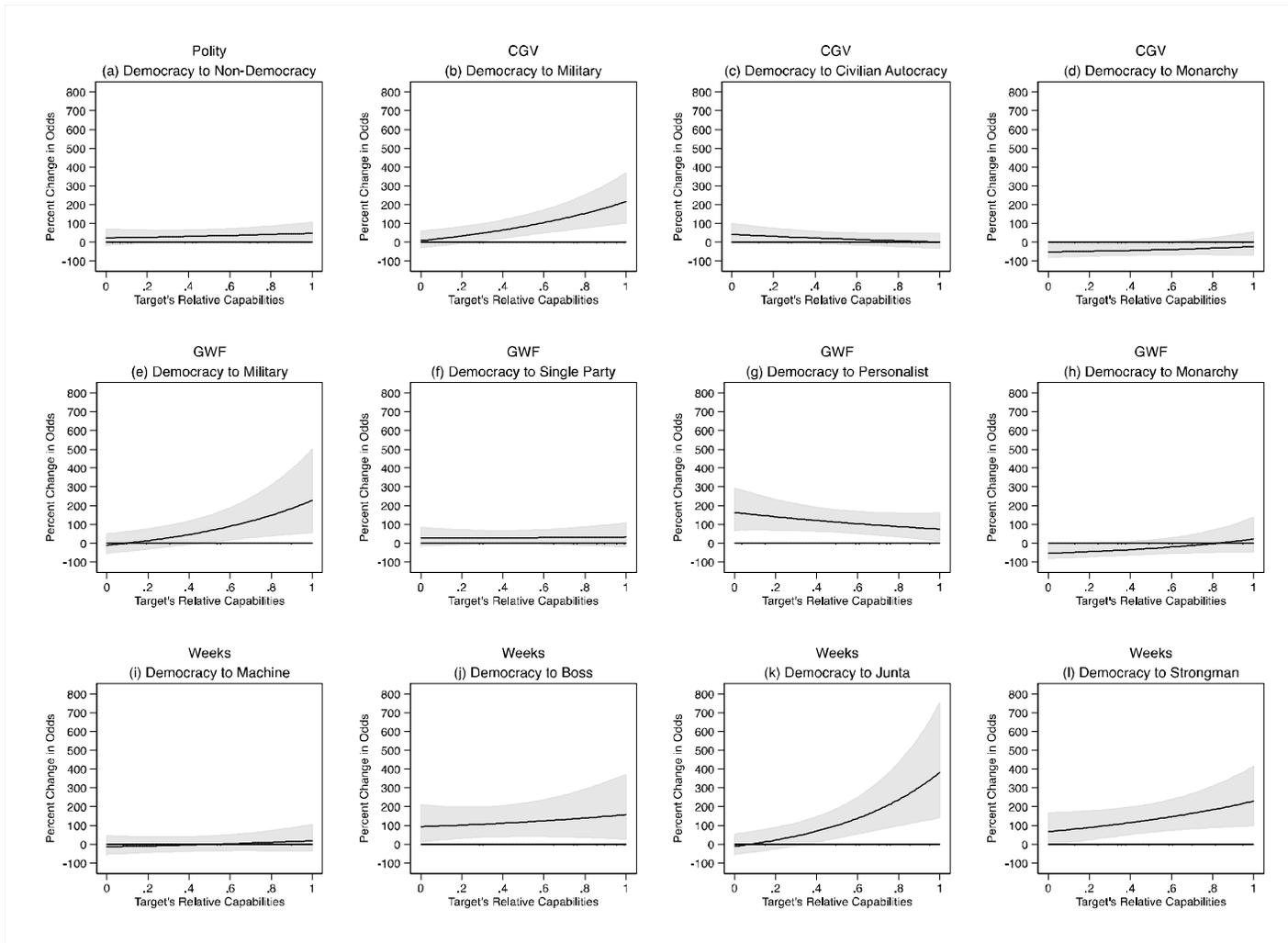


Figure A4. The effect of regime type on dispute initiation (only revisionist initiators included)

Note: Effects are calculated as percentage changes in the odds of experiencing a militarized interstate dispute initiation associated with changes in regime type across the range of values for the target's relative capability score. The dashed lines indicate 95% confidence intervals. This figure was produced using the results of Model 1-4 in Table

Taken together, this modification of the dependent variable changes our results very little, and, if anything, strengthens the relationships reported within the main text. Once again, the evidence suggests that democracies are no more or less cautious than most forms of non-democracies, while military regimes are particularly reckless. The fact that our findings are robust to this change in the dependent variable offers additional assurance that they are not driven by peculiarities in the way we chose to measure our dependent variable.

Further, we checked the robustness of our results using only use of force MIDs as our dependent variable: i.e., those MIDs with the hostility level less than four are recoded as zeros. By this recoding, 35% of MIDs (501 cases) are recoded as zeros.² The results in Figure A5 again show that democracies are not significantly more selective than various types of autocracy except military regimes, indicating that our primary findings are not driven by potentially irrelevant MIDs. In this particular model specification, we also find that strongman regimes (regimes with a personalist ruler from the military) are now significantly less cautious than democracies.

We find similar results even when we restrict further the scope of our dependent variable into only such MIDs that the challenger is a revisionist state and the hostility level is greater than three. By doing so, 47% of MIDs (676 cases) are recoded as zeros. Again, the results in Figure A6 show almost identical patterns of target selection across different regime types.

² We do not present additional tables for these models in order to remain parsimonious in our presentation of results. The output from these models is, however, contained in our replication materials.

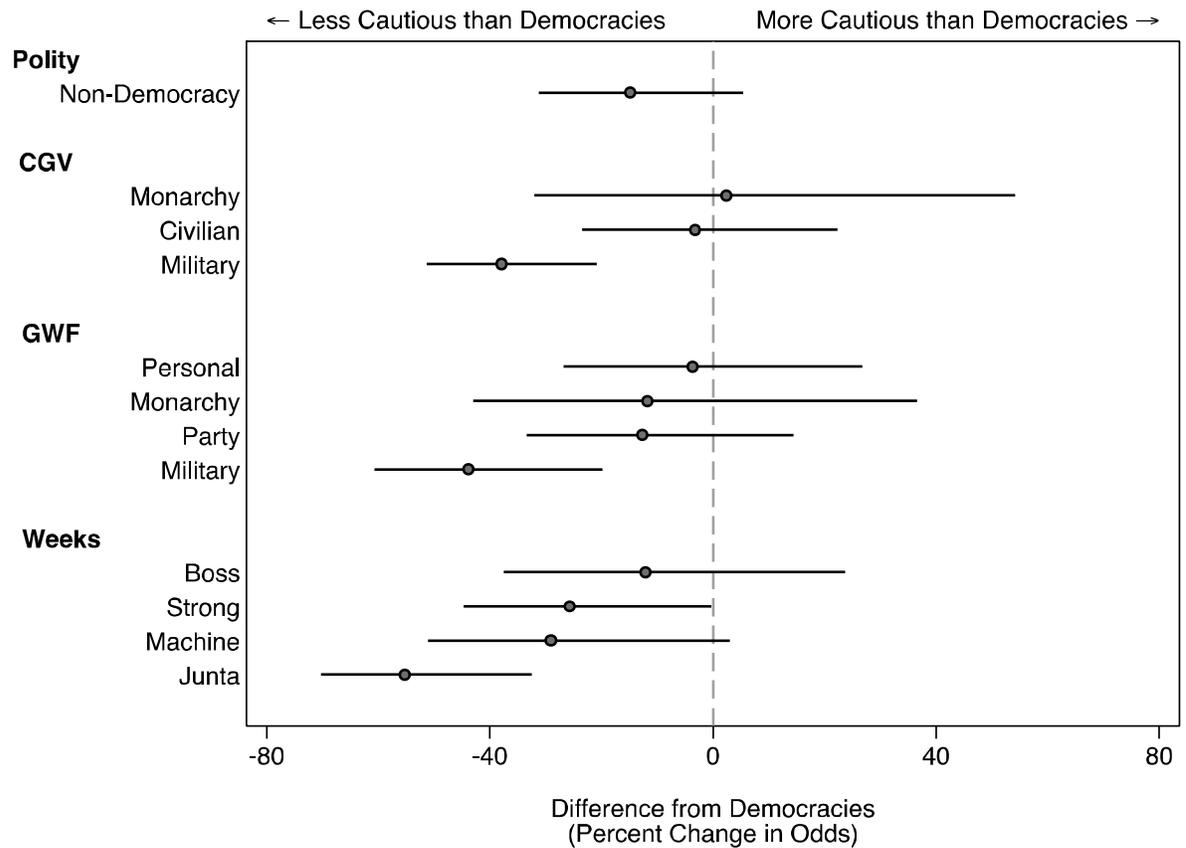


Figure A5. Comparing the effect of target's relative capabilities across regime type (high-level MIDs)

Note: This figure reports the difference in the effects of target's relative capabilities for democracies and each type of autocracy reported above. Effects are calculated with respect to the change in the odds of dispute initiation following a standard deviation increase in target relative capabilities. The solid line indicates 95 percent confidence intervals.

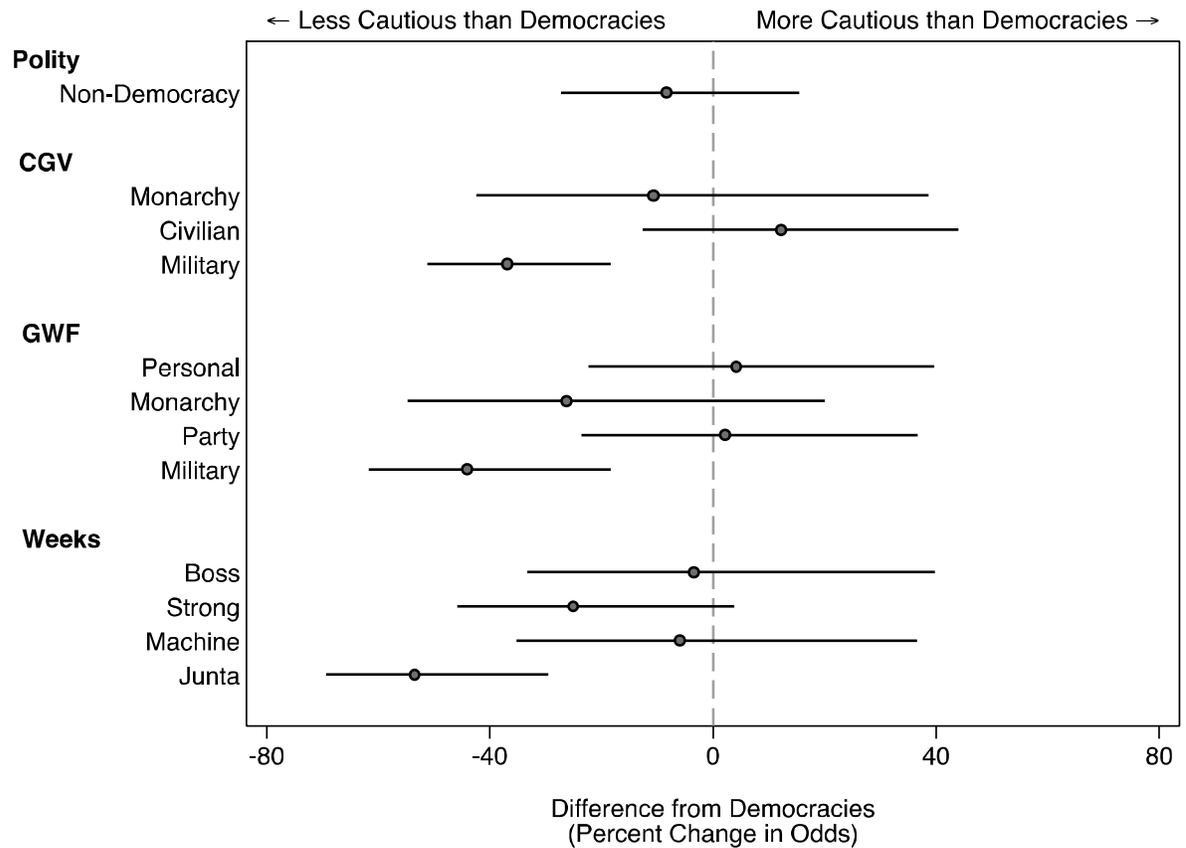


Figure A6. Comparing the effect of target's relative capabilities across regime type (high-level and revisionist MIDs)

Note: This figure reports the difference in the effects of target's relative capabilities for democracies and each type of autocracy reported above. Effects are calculated with respect to the change in the odds of dispute initiation following a standard deviation increase in target relative capabilities. The solid line indicates 95 percent confidence intervals.

USING DIFFERENT SAMPLES

Our sample is limited to the post-World War II period largely due to the unavailability of data on authoritarian regime types. However, the Polity data are available in the pre-World War II period. We reran our models using the pre-1946 data (i.e., 1816-1945) to examine whether our results are driven by the particular temporal dimension of our initial analysis. Figure A7 shows that both democratic and nondemocratic challengers tend to be less likely to initiate a MID as target's relative capabilities increase, and that the differences in the effects of relative capabilities are not significant between democracies and non-democracies. We also tested whether our results hold using the pre-Cold war period data (i.e., 1946-1990), and found similar results reported in Figure A8. These findings provide additional evidence against the conventional wisdom on democratic selectivity.

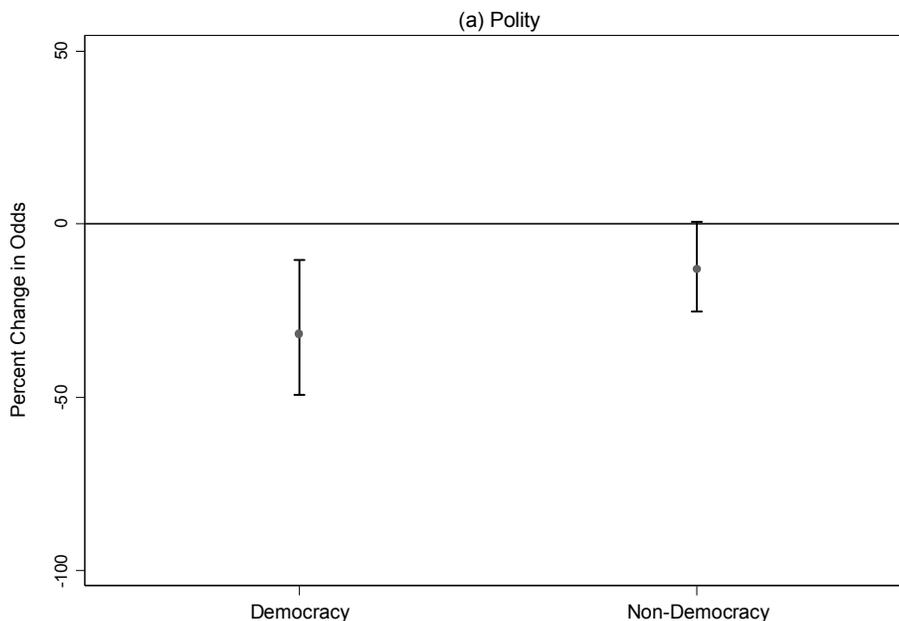


Figure A7. The effect of target's relative capabilities on dispute initiation, 1816-1945

Note: This figure reports the effects of target's relative capabilities for democracies and autocracies, as defined using the dichotomous Polity Measure. Effects are calculated with respect to the change in the odds of dispute initiation following a standard deviation increase in target relative capabilities. We find that the difference between these two effect sizes is not statistically significant, suggesting that democracies are not more cautious than autocracies, even in this earlier period of international relations.

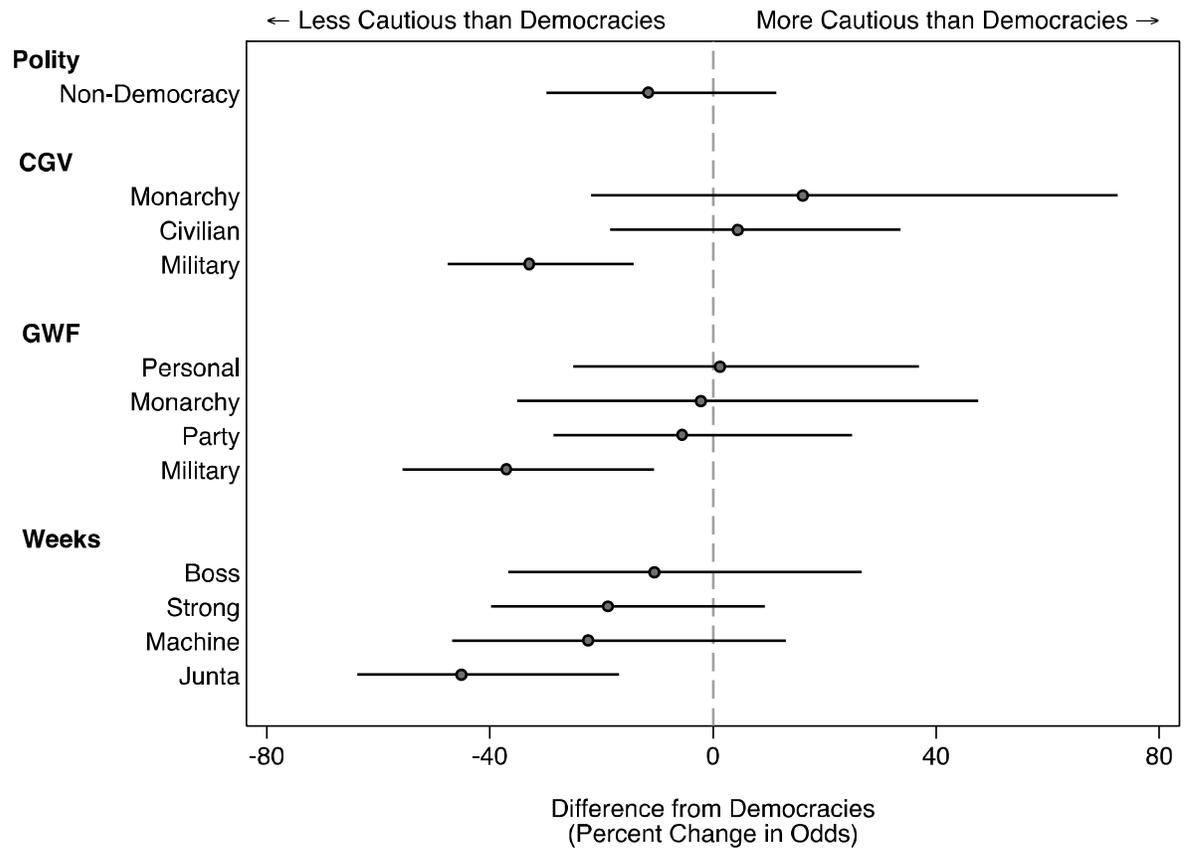


Figure A8. Comparing the effect of target's relative capabilities across regime type, 1946-1990
 Note: This figure reports the difference in the effects of target's relative capabilities for democracies and each type of autocracy reported above. Effects are calculated with respect to the change in the odds of dispute initiation following a standard deviation increase in target relative capabilities. The solid line indicates 95 percent confidence intervals.

USING A RARE EVENTS MODEL

A large number of zero observations might unintentionally deflate the standard error estimates. Thus we check the robustness of our results using the rare events logit procedure introduced by King and Zeng (2001). We randomly took a sample of 10% of zero observations while keeping the ones (MID events), and then ran rare events logit models using the same model specifications. The plots in Figure A8 indicate that our main results largely hold, implying that our findings are not driven by the size of our sample with a relatively large number of nonevents.

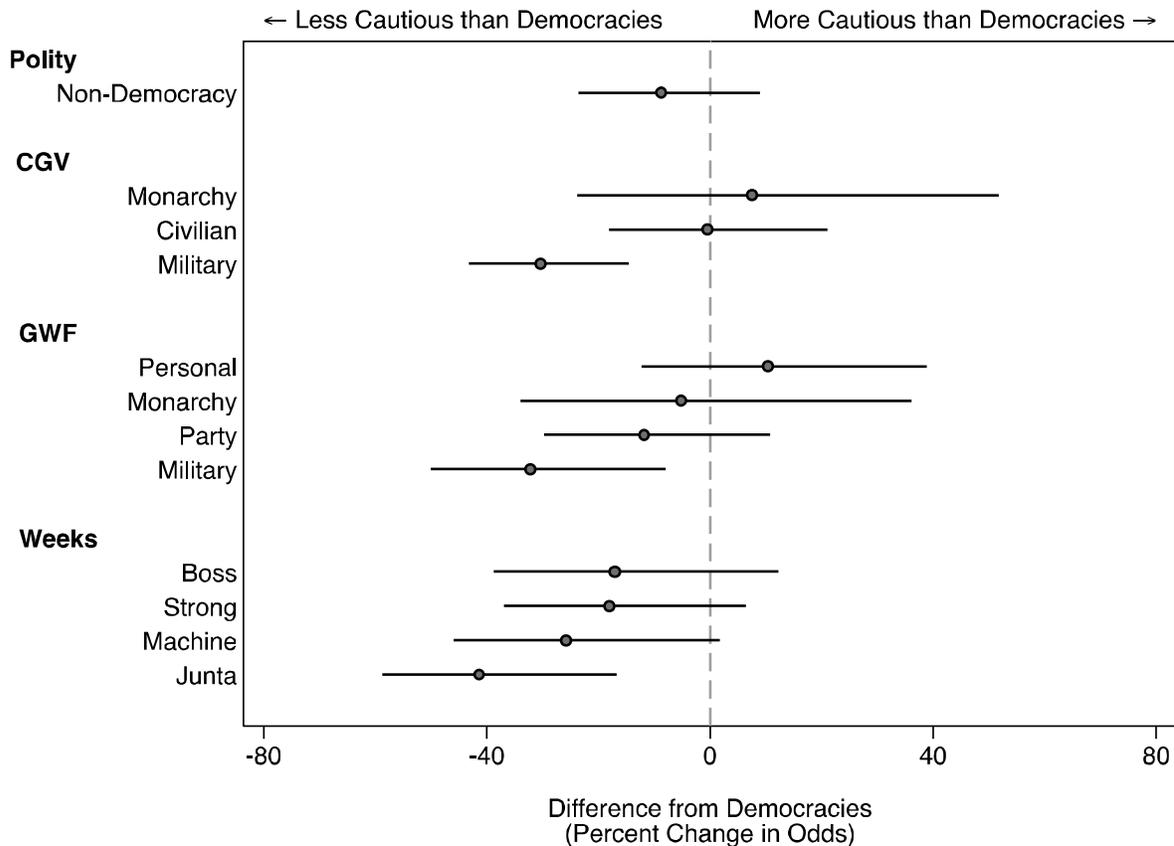


Figure A9. Comparing the effect of target's relative capabilities across regime type (rare events logit)

Note: This figure reports the difference in the effects of target's relative capabilities for democracies and each type of autocracy reported above. Effects are calculated with respect to the change in the odds of dispute initiation following a standard deviation increase in target relative capabilities. The solid line indicates 95 percent confidence intervals.

USING DIFFERENT MODEL SPECIFICATIONS

Here, we report the regression results using different model specifications to test the robustness of our initial results. First, we run the baseline models that include only the primary explanatory variables (i.e., regime type, relative capabilities, and their interaction terms) and the peace-year polynomials. The results shown in Figure A10 indicate that our findings generally hold. Across all typologies, military regimes are less cautious than democracies. In fact, the disparity between these two groups tends to be larger in these models, when compared to those featuring controls. We do, however, find, that democracies are now also more cautious than Machines in the Weeks typology. Overall, the results from these models should be interpreted with caution, since the exclusion of controls is likely to bias the estimates. Nevertheless, evaluating these models lends our primary findings additional support, as it demonstrates that our results are not an artifact of the particular constellation of control variables we chose.

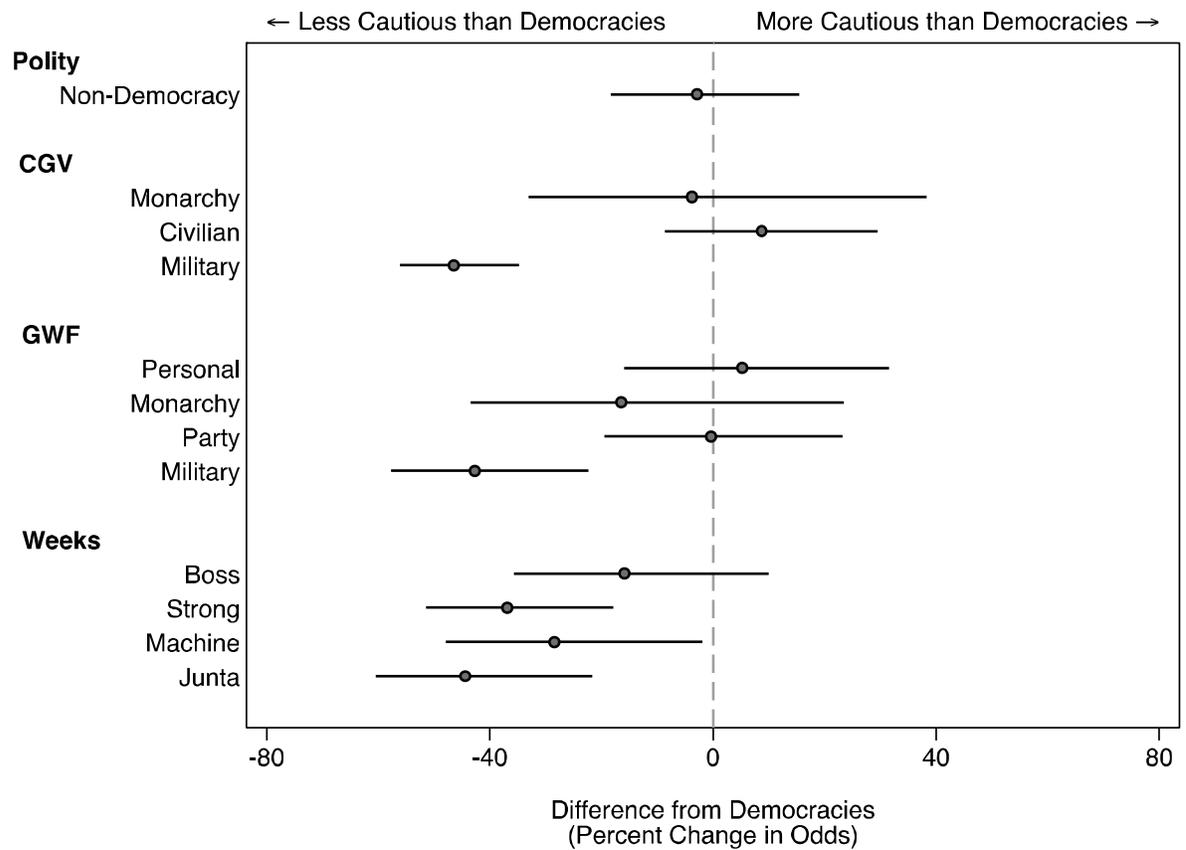


Figure A10. Comparing the effect of target's relative capabilities across regime type (baseline models)

Note: This figure reports the difference in the effects of target's relative capabilities for democracies and each type of autocracy reported above. Effects are calculated with respect to the change in the odds of dispute initiation following a standard deviation increase in target relative capabilities. The solid line indicates 95 percent confidence intervals.

Next, we run the models including control variables except absolute-capability variables to these baseline models. In the main text, these variables were included due to a concern that absolute capabilities is likely to correlate with dispute initiation and (by construction) our measure of relative capabilities at the same time. Yet the relatively high correlation between relative capabilities and absolute capabilities (about 0.31 with the challenger's capabilities and about -0.31 with the target's) might have some non-negligible effects on the coefficient estimate of relative capabilities and the interactions with regime type. Nevertheless, we find that the exclusion of the absolute capabilities scores does not substantively alter our core findings. The results from these models are reported in Figure A11.

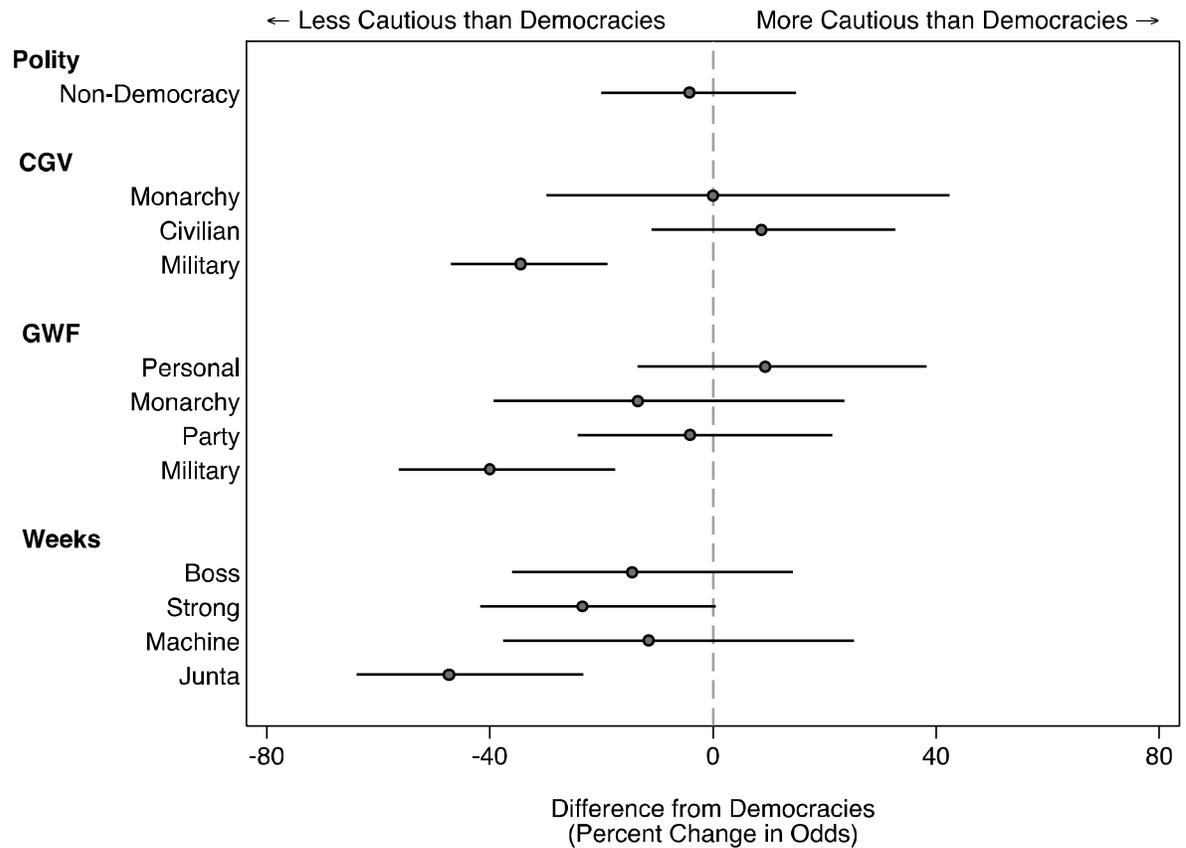


Figure A11. Comparing the effect of target's relative capabilities across regime type (excluding absolute capabilities variables)

Note: This figure reports the difference in the effects of target's relative capabilities for democracies and each type of autocracy reported above. Effects are calculated with respect to the change in the odds of dispute initiation following a standard deviation increase in target relative capabilities. The solid line indicates 95 percent confidence intervals.

TARGET SELECTION IN WARS

While we believe target selection is best tested utilizing the dyad-year as the unit of analysis with militarized disputes as the dependent variable, we also assess patterns of target selection in wars as it pertains to the decision to initiate a dispute that leads to war. Table A3 contains the results from censored bivariate probit models featuring the Polity classifications of regime type, with MID initiation serving as the dependent variable in the selection stage, and war initiation function as the dependent variable in the outcome stage.³ Because the number of wars that occurred in each of the disaggregated autocratic regime types is extremely small, we begin by focusing on the comparison between democracies and non-democracies regarding their selection behavior in wars.⁴

The results in Table A3 indicate that democracies are no more cautious than autocracies when initiating disputes or entering into wars. This is evidenced by the fact that the interaction between democracy and relative capabilities is insignificant across both the selection (dispute initiation) and outcome (war onset) stages of the model. We examine this issue further in Table A4, which reports the results from selection models using the CGV, GWF, and Weeks typologies, respectively. These results are very much the same as those obtained with polity; the interaction between democracy and relative capabilities is statistically insignificant. This provides additional evidence in support of our primary finding that democracies are *not* more cautious than autocratic regimes.

³ We also show the results in Table A5 from naïve probit models run with war initiation as the dependent variable. The results do not differ meaningfully from those using censored probit models. As was the case at the dispute-level, little evidence is found in support of democratic selection.

⁴ In our data, there are only 26 observations of war onset, 16 of which are wars that arise from disputes initiated by autocracies. We were therefore hesitant to reduce this sample further by subdividing autocracies into more refined categories. As a practical matter, doing so also introduces near separation in the data, which causes difficulties in model estimation.

Table A3. Selection model of war initiation between democracies and nondemocracies (regime data: polity)

	Polity	
	Selection	Outcome
Relative Capabilities	-0.167*** (0.052)	0.238 (0.356)
Democracy	-0.070 (0.052)	0.269 (0.341)
Relative Cap. * Democracy	-0.017 (0.081)	-0.181 (0.638)
Capabilities (Side A)	3.443*** (0.458)	
Capabilities (Side B)	4.081*** (0.436)	
Alliance Similarity	-0.303*** (0.055)	0.721** (0.319)
Contiguity	1.385*** (0.044)	0.245 (0.425)
Trade Dependency	-1.064 (1.945)	
Peace Years	-0.052*** (0.003)	
Peace Years Squared	0.001*** (0.000)	
Peace Years Cubed	-0.000*** (0.000)	
Constant	-0.167*** (0.052)	-2.157*** (0.809)
Rho Estimates		-0.375 (0.235)
Censored N		917,114
Uncensored N		1,307

Note: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Robust standard errors, clustered by dyad are given in parentheses.

Table A4. Effects of Relative Capabilities and Regime Type on War Initiation, 1946-2001
(Censored Bivariate Probit)

	(1) CGV		(2) GWF		(3) Weeks	
	Selection	Outcome	Selection	Outcome	Selection	Outcome
Relative Capabilities	-0.218*** (0.052)	0.264 (0.350)	-0.095* (0.055)	0.249 (0.354)	-0.159*** (0.054)	0.293 (0.448)
Democracy	-0.087* (0.051)	0.195 (0.333)	-0.091* (0.052)	0.230 (0.337)	-0.111** (0.054)	0.358 (0.393)
Relative Cap. * Democracy	-0.035 (0.077)	-0.347 (0.616)	-0.044 (0.087)	-0.299 (0.641)	-0.044 (0.082)	-0.250 (0.752)
Capabilities (Side A)	3.395*** (0.455)		3.476*** (0.449)		3.493*** (0.464)	
Capabilities (Side B)	4.256*** (0.434)		3.888*** (0.434)		4.086*** (0.436)	
Alliance Similarity	-0.310*** (0.056)	0.723* (0.434)	-0.301*** (0.055)	0.728** (0.324)	-0.315*** (0.056)	0.730* (0.423)
Contiguity	1.404*** (0.044)	0.204 (0.906)	1.363*** (0.045)	0.249 (0.312)	1.394*** (0.045)	0.325 (0.309)
Trade Dependency	-0.714 (1.835)		-0.810 (1.802)		-0.478 (1.838)	
Peace Years	-0.052*** (0.003)		-0.055*** (0.003)		-0.053*** (0.003)	
Peace Years Squared	0.001*** (0.000)		0.001*** (0.000)		0.001*** (0.000)	
Peace Years Cubed	-0.000*** (0.000)		-0.000*** (0.000)		-0.000*** (0.000)	
Constant	-2.585*** (0.057)	-2.027 (2.064)	-2.558*** (0.055)	-2.143*** (0.403)	-2.581*** (0.056)	-2.693*** (0.325)
Rho Estimates	-0.401 (0.613)		-0.378*** (0.141)		-0.233** (0.095)	
Censored N	1,011,466	844,580	872,622	1,011,466	844,580	872,622
Uncensored N	1,303	1,288	1,225	1,303	1,288	1,225

Notes: All three models are estimated using censored bivariate probit. Robust standard errors clustered by dyads are presented in parentheses. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

As an aside, we also display the direct effect of increasing the target's relative capabilities for democracies and non-democracies in Figure A12. Across each model, we find that this effect is statistically insignificant. This is consistent with Fearon's (1994) claim that relative capabilities do not have a strong bearing on the onset of war after a crisis has begun.

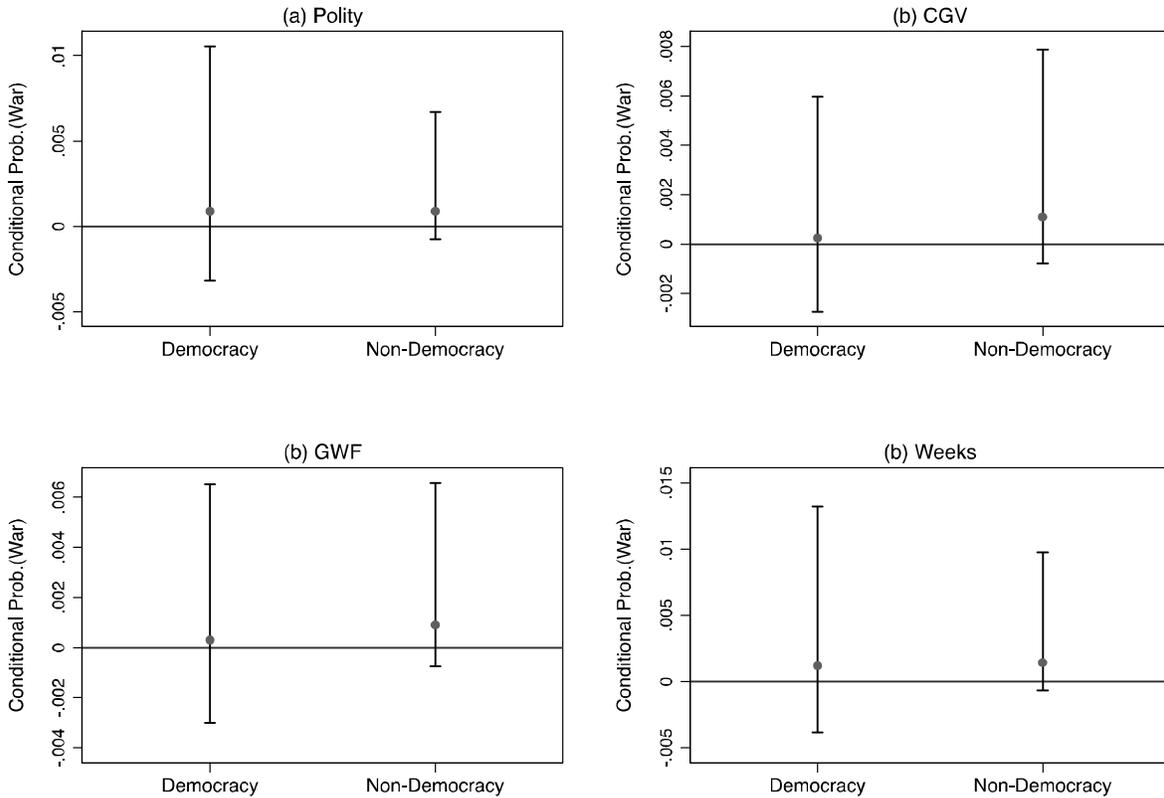


Figure A12. Effect of target's relative capabilities on the conditional probability of war
 Note: Marginal effects are calculated as changes in the conditional probabilities of war initiation (given MID initiation) associated with a one standard deviation increase in the target's relative capabilities from the mean. The solid lines indicate 95% confidence intervals. This figure was produced using the results of Table A6.

In sum, our findings with respect to war initiation square with our findings on dispute onset. At each level, democracies are not found to be any more or less likely to select relatively weak targets than autocracies. Thus, we find little support for the notion that democracies are particularly cautious in selecting themselves into winnable conflicts against relatively weak targets.

Table A5. Naïve probit models of war initiation, 1946-2001

	(1) Polity	(2) CGV	(3) GWF	(4) Weeks
Relative Capabilities	0.402 (0.332)	0.324 (0.336)	0.300 (0.350)	0.479 (0.366)
Democracy	0.171 (0.356)	0.160 (0.317)	0.074 (0.343)	0.262 (0.370)
Relative Cap. * Democracy	-0.307 (0.674)	-0.311 (0.587)	0.081 (0.606)	-0.421 (0.728)
Alliance Similarity	0.646** (0.284)	0.632** (0.276)	0.633** (0.283)	0.752** (0.320)
Contiguity	0.628** (0.278)	0.651** (0.274)	0.635** (0.275)	0.510* (0.280)
Constant	-3.294*** (0.333)	-3.243*** (0.315)	-3.252*** (0.325)	-3.362*** (0.379)
Observations	1388	1389	1365	1271

Note: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Robust standard errors, clustered by dyad are given in parentheses.

LOSS OF STRENGTH GRADIENT

The logic of a loss of strength gradient suggests that state strength should diminish as the distance from one's own borders increases (Boulding 1962). That is, distance inherently hampers a state's ability to effectively project force, meaning that even very capable states may struggle in conflicts fought at distant locations. Without taking distance into account, our measures of relative capabilities might therefore convey insufficient and imprecise information. More importantly, our models might overestimate the potential challenger's power advantage and its positive effects on the likelihood of conflict initiation because distance might counterbalance the incentives to select weaker targets. Thus, we ran additional models that contained measures of distance and their interaction with relative capabilities in order to see if the extent to which the challenger selects a weaker target systematically varies by distance. In addition, Gartzke (n.d.) shows that the loss of strength gradient may only apply to weak states, and that distance might be less consequential for strong states when initiating conflicts. We therefore also include interaction terms between the two states' individual CINC scores and distance.⁵

Inter-capital distance tends to distort and undermine the geographical proximity between two states that share a border. Instead, we use the minimum metric distance between two states in kilo meters using a new distance data set by Pickering (2012). We take a natural logarithm of this measure to capture the tendency of diminishing influence of distance.⁶

The results from these models are reported in Table A6. Incorporating distance into our model does not alter our primary findings. Across all models, the interaction between

⁵ Dropping these interactions between raw CINC scores and distance does not substantively alter our results.

⁶ Using inter-capital distance or unlogged minimum distance does not alter our primary findings either: i.e., democracies are not significantly more selective than non-military autocracies, but military regimes are uniquely more reckless than democracies.

geographic distance and relative capabilities is statistically insignificant. We therefore cannot conclude that the effect of relative capabilities meaningfully varies with distance. Moreover, we continue to find that democracies are no more cautious than non-military autocracies. Figure A13 displays the difference in the effect of relative capabilities between democracies and autocracies. As before, democracies are significantly less likely to initiate a dispute than military regimes when the target's relative capabilities score increases. The difference between democracies and all forms of non-military autocracies, however, remains statistically insignificant. In short, our results are robust to the incorporation of spatial information into our model.

While we find little evidence suggesting the effect of relative capabilities varies with distance, we do find that an interactive relationship between absolute capabilities and minimum distance. Panels a and b in Figure A14 report the effect of distance as mitigated by the capabilities score of side A and side B respectively. We find that the negative impact of distance is significantly lessened as the capabilities of both the potential challenger and target increase. Panels c and d in Figure 14 report the effect of absolute capabilities for side A and B respectively. Here, we find that the impact of capabilities is insignificant for states that are in very close proximity to one another, but that this effect becomes positive and significant as distance increases. Note that powerful states are likely to be both challengers in and targets of militarized disputes. The former relationship is intuitive; powerful states have the ability to project force and successfully engage in militarized conflict even against distant targets. The fact that these states are also more often targeted is likely a result of the fact that major powers are more able to extend their military influence across the globe, and in doing so, become accessible to a broader range of potential challengers and disputes.

In some respects, these findings are consistent with the logic underpinning the loss of strength gradients, at least as it applies to weak states. These states are particularly unlikely to initiate disputes against distant targets, perhaps because of their inability to project force. Contrary to the general logic of the loss of strength gradient, however, we find that the effect of distance is mitigated for powerful states, which are particularly likely to initiate disputes against distant targets. While this result is somewhat counterintuitive, it is consistent with Gartzke (n.d.), who argues that distance functions as a source of uncertainty for strong states, which then results in bargaining breakdowns. More precisely, conflict is more likely to occur between strong states and distant targets because there is uncertainty over whether the former will be willing to risk conflict at distant locales. In this way, our findings with respect to absolute capabilities and distance are consistent with previous research. Overall, however, these results confirm that our findings with respect to selection are not substantively affected by modeling adjustments made to address the interaction between capabilities (both absolute and relative) and distance.

An alternative, perhaps an ideal way to capture the loss of strength gradient would be to incorporate distance to conflict location into the measurement of relative capabilities. We elect not to take this approach due to inferential problems caused by incorporating conflict location, which is only revealed post-hoc, into a model of conflict onset. There are also practical and computational difficulties when attempting to assign distances to dyads that are at peace. We nevertheless note that addressing this issue is the subject of ongoing research efforts (Braithwaite and Gartzke n.d.)

Table A6. Modeling the loss of strength gradient, 1946-2001

	(1) Polity	(2) CGV	(3) GWF	(4) Weeks
Target Relative Capabilities	-0.650*** (0.227)	-1.170** (0.519)	-0.638 (0.509)	-1.373*** (0.262)
Democracy	-0.217 (0.150)	0.166 (0.317)	0.219 (0.315)	-0.728*** (0.195)
Target Relative Capabilities X Democracy	-0.073 (0.234)	0.431 (0.521)	-0.065 (0.515)	0.795*** (0.304)
Military		0.241 (0.320)	0.283 (0.371)	
Target Relative Capabilities X Military		1.326** (0.539)	0.998* (0.604)	
Civilian		0.471 (0.306)		
Target Relative Capabilities X Civilian		0.239 (0.513)		
Dominant-Party			0.281 (0.300)	
Target Relative Capabilities X Dominant-Party			0.249 (0.499)	
Personalist Autocracy			1.113*** (0.327)	
Target Relative Capabilities X Personalist			-0.521 (0.538)	
Machine				-0.989*** (0.224)
Target Relative Capabilities X Machine				1.350*** (0.409)
Boss				-0.154 (0.233)
Target Relative Capabilities X Boss				1.116*** (0.397)
Junta				-0.904*** (0.333)
Target Relative Capabilities X Junta				2.235*** (0.486)
Strongman				-0.196 (0.217)
Target Relative Capabilities X Strongman				1.191*** (0.378)
Capabilities (Side A)	-0.411 (1.576)	-0.762 (1.583)	0.497 (1.580)	2.019 (1.696)
Capabilities (Side B)	1.447 (1.691)	1.705 (1.757)	0.909 (1.790)	0.918 (1.760)
Distance	-0.696*** (0.040)	-0.727*** (0.040)	-0.682*** (0.041)	-0.702*** (0.043)
Capabilities (Side A) X Distance	1.532*** (0.201)	1.542*** (0.198)	1.439*** (0.200)	1.380*** (0.208)
Capabilities (Side B) X Distance	1.547*** (0.217)	1.589*** (0.228)	1.472*** (0.230)	1.574*** (0.229)
Target Relative Capabilities X Distance	-0.023 (0.034)	0.003 (0.034)	-0.043 (0.035)	-0.012 (0.037)

Table A6 Continued...

Alliance Similarity	-0.947*** (0.129)	-0.939*** (0.129)	-1.007*** (0.130)	-1.020*** (0.137)
Contiguity	-1.279*** (0.287)	-1.364*** (0.288)	-1.358*** (0.288)	-1.251*** (0.299)
Trade Dependency	-11.973 (8.718)	-9.976 (8.078)	-9.389 (8.102)	-6.627 (8.058)
Observations	917391	1011789	845190	872837

Note: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Coefficient estimates are reported from logit models. Robust standard errors, clustered by dyad are given in parentheses. Regime coefficients should be interpreted relative to the reference category, which is non-democracy in Model 1, monarchy in models 2 and 3, and “other” non-democracies in Model 4. The peace-year polynomials and constants are not reported in this table.

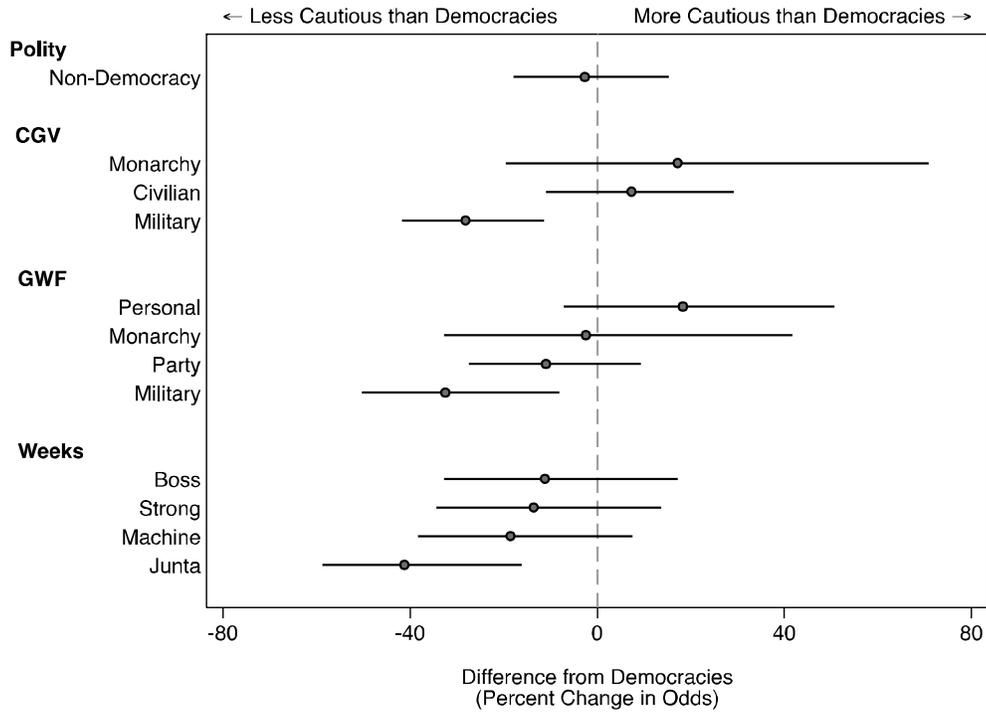


Figure A13. Comparing the effect of relative capabilities across regime types (interactions with distance included)

Note: This figure reports the difference in the effects of target's relative capabilities for democracies and each type of autocracy reported above. Effects are calculated with respect to the change in the odds of dispute initiation following a standard deviation increase in target relative capabilities. The solid line indicates 95 percent confidence intervals.

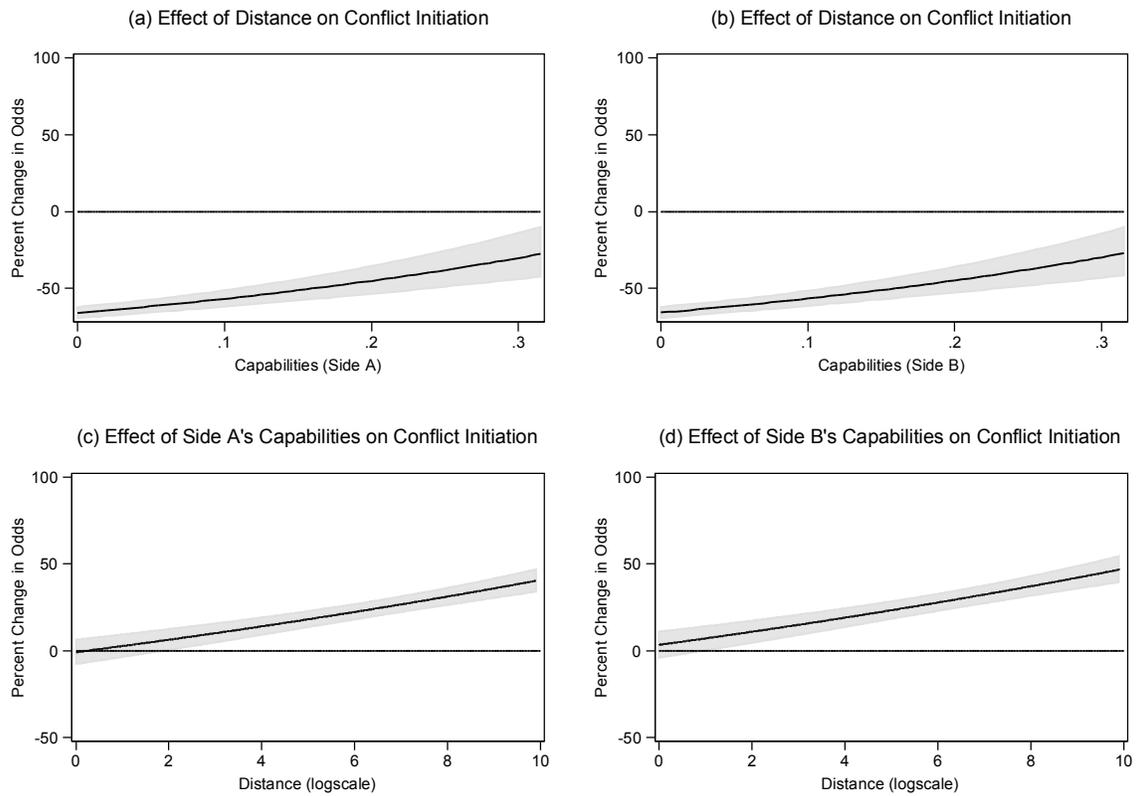


Figure A14. Assessing the loss of strength gradient

Note: Effects are calculated as percentage change in the odds of experiencing a militarized interstate dispute associated with a standard deviation increase in the variable of interest. The shaded area indicates the space between 95% confidence intervals.

DISAGGREGATING DEMOCRACIES

A recent study by Henderson and Bayer (2013) reveals that the democratic-victory phenomenon is not universal. More specifically, they found that Western democracies are more likely win their wars than non-Western democracies. While we do not necessarily attribute this finding to Western democracies' greater level of selectiveness on their targets, our research design allows us to test whether Western democracies are uniquely more careful in selecting their targets compared to non-Western democracies and non-democracies.

We first disaggregated the democracy sample for each regime data set into Western vs. Non-western democracies using the regional typology of Hadenius and Teorell (2005). Western democracies include democratic countries (defined by each regime data set) in Western Europe and North America, including Australia and New Zealand.⁷ We include these two dichotomous variables along with interaction terms with target's relative capabilities. The non-democracy sample remains the same. We report the estimates from these models in Table A7.

Figure A15 reports the effect of an increase in target relative capabilities across each regime.⁸ These results show that Western democracies are not more selective than non-Western democracies, nor than non-democracies. Across all regime typologies, we find that the effect of relative capabilities is not significantly different between Western and non-Western democracies, so we cannot conclude that either category is more cautious or reckless than the other. We do, however, find that both types of democracy are more cautious than Military regimes in the CGV

⁷ Note that Israel is classified as a non-Western Democracy. Recall that Henderson and Bayer's (2013) finding that differences between Western and non-Western democracies are most observable when the data are classified in this manner. With this in mind, we are generating a conservative test of whether there is indeed variation among democracies.

⁸ Note that this differs in presentation from our previous figures, which displayed whether the effect of relative capabilities was significantly different from democracies, which served as the reference category. We do this because we no longer have a single reference category, having disaggregated democracies into two separate groups of interest.

and GWF typologies, and Juntas in the Weeks Typology. Interestingly, we also find that non-Western democracies are also more cautious than Machines, or non-personalist party-based regimes. While this finding is interesting, it appears to be less robust than those pertaining to military regimes, as it does not hold across regime typologies. More specifically, the GWF typology also codes non-personalist party-based regimes in its “dominant-party” category. There is, however, no significant difference between this category and either type of democracy. We must therefore interpret the finding that non-Western democracies are more cautious than Machines with some caution. The core implication, then, is that there does not appear to be significant differences in cautious behavior when comparing Western and non-Western democracies, and that neither of these groups is consistently more cautious than non-military autocracies. This is consistent with the findings reported in the main text.

Table A7. Disaggregating democracies, 1946-2001

	(1) Polity	(2) CGV	(3) GWF	(4) Weeks
Relative Capabilities	-0.386** (0.157)	-1.018** (0.454)	-0.281 (0.464)	-1.214*** (0.210)
Western Democracy	-0.142 (0.220)	0.248 (0.325)	0.104 (0.334)	-0.874*** (0.257)
Relative Capabilities X Western Democracy	-0.403 (0.381)	-0.030 (0.547)	-0.239 (0.569)	0.782* (0.437)
Non-Western Democracy	-0.069 (0.180)	0.280 (0.305)	0.351 (0.310)	-0.585*** (0.208)
Relative Capabilities X Non-Western Democracy	-0.198 (0.277)	0.287 (0.497)	-0.154 (0.532)	0.618* (0.321)
Military		0.393 (0.292)	0.334 (0.343)	
Relative Capabilities X Military		1.176** (0.494)	0.909 (0.585)	
Civilian		0.412 (0.286)		
Relative Capabilities X Civilian		0.209 (0.475)		
Single-Party			0.195 (0.289)	
Relative Capabilities X Single-Party			0.215 (0.489)	
Personalist Autocracy			1.020*** (0.304)	
Relative Capabilities X Personalist			-0.414 (0.513)	
Machine				-1.245*** (0.254)
Relative Capabilities X Machine				1.574*** (0.449)
Boss				-0.364 (0.242)
Relative Capabilities X Boss				1.245*** (0.424)
Junta				-0.793** (0.328)
Relative Capabilities X Junta				2.156*** (0.471)
Strongman				-0.156 (0.215)
Relative Capabilities X Strongman				1.244*** (0.367)
Table A7 Continued...				
Capabilities (Side A)	7.824***	7.655***	8.822***	10.411***

	(1.490)	(1.511)	(1.457)	(1.454)
Capabilities (Side B)	9.380***	10.224***	8.667***	8.998***
	(1.380)	(1.325)	(1.380)	(1.457)
Alliance Similarity	-0.795***	-0.796***	-0.860***	-0.876***
	(0.160)	(0.164)	(0.166)	(0.159)
Contiguity	3.679***	3.729***	3.599***	3.710***
	(0.129)	(0.128)	(0.130)	(0.132)
Trade Dependency	-3.858	-2.291	-2.258	-1.114
	(4.699)	(3.900)	(3.924)	(3.878)
Observations	918421	1012769	845868	873847

Note: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Coefficient estimates are reported from logit models. Robust standard errors, clustered by dyad are given in parentheses. Regime coefficients should be interpreted relative to the reference category, which is non-democracy in Model 1, monarchy in models 2 and 3, and “other” non-democracies in Model 4. The peace-year polynomials and constants are not reported in this table.

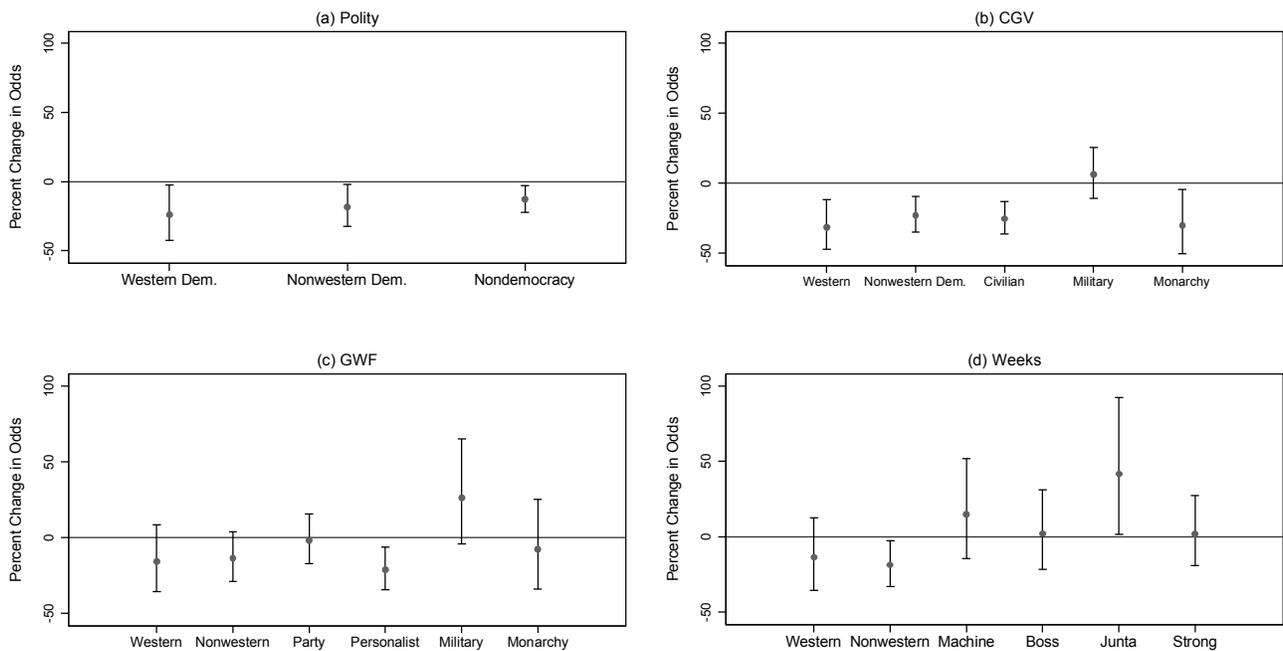


Figure A15. The effect of target’s relative capabilities on dispute initiation (disaggregating democracies into western and nonwestern democracies)

Note: Effects are calculated as percentage changes in the odds of experiencing a militarized interstate dispute initiation associated with a one standard deviation increase in the target’s (weighted) relative capabilities from the mean. The solid lines indicate 95% confidence intervals.

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