Civil-Military Relations in a Neo-Kantian World, 1886-1992

SEUNG-WHAN CHOI AND PATRICK JAMES

“The role of military advice in influencing presidential decisions, therefore, remains of crucial significance.”

Richard K. Betts

International conflict, crisis and war, along with civil-military relations, stand together as sustained interests among scholars and policy-makers. But how often are these important subjects considered in relation to
each other? It would seem that the nexus of international conflict and civil-military relations is in need of sustained and systematic research, if events such as militarized interstate disputes (MIDs) are to be more fully explained and understood. In a word, current models of international conflict are underspecified. The inclusion of civil-military relations is both necessary and imperative, which means looking into the interaction between civilian and military leaders in the realm of international security.

Among students of international conflict, the neo-Kantian peace has emerged in the last decade as the most prominent research agenda, with fascinating foreign policy implications. The hypothesis that democracies are less likely to go to war with each other, but may be disposed to act against those that threaten the increasingly democratic foundation of the international system—thanks to cultural as well as structural reasons—continues to attract attention from both scholars and policy-makers in North America and beyond. Furthermore, the program of neo-Kantian peace research establishes the importance of regime type, economic interdependence, and joint membership in international organizations in explaining MIDs. Intellectual excitement continues to build at the prospect of a democratic and peaceful world.

Limited attention to state-society relations surrounding the neo-Kantian peace, however, causes a potentially crucial factor to be absent from the program of empirical testing. Despite its theoretical significance and importance on the basis of governmental interactions alone, civil-military relations remains without a role in the story at the international level so far. Civilian control over the military—or, perhaps instead, the overall military propensity to war—has been neglected by both the particular enterprise that started with the democratic peace and the discipline of international relations for too long. In this article, we attempt to fill the gap by introducing civil-military relations, from the perspective granted by comparative politics, into the neo-Kantian world of international relations. More specifically, we define civil-military relations as the degree of influence between civilian versus military leaders in a specific context: when presidents, prime ministers, or even nonelected leaders seek advice from civilian and military advisors as to whether to use force in response to international crises. Thus, civil-military relations amount, in practice, to decision-making about when and how to deploy forces in Clausewitz’s sense, meaning war as the time-honored pursuit of diplomacy by other means. As a result, civil-military relations emerges as a priority subject when it comes to relating democracy to interstate disputes in the new millennium. Based on a statistical analysis, which relies upon a logistic regression of a crossnational, time-series data during the period from
1886 to 1992, we find that military influence in civil-military relations significantly increases international conflict, especially MID involvement. This result indicates that building a bridge between the fields of civil-military relations and international relations is essential to account for MIDs and other commonly studied forms of conflict.

This article continues with four additional sections. The second section introduces civil-military relations as related to the propensity toward interstate dispute involvement. Third, the research design, consisting of hypotheses, measurement, data and model-building, is presented. The fourth section reports the empirical results—in effect, an answer to whether the neglect of civil-military relations is significant to neo-Kantianism. The fifth and final section summarizes the implications of our empirical findings and suggests directions for future research.

**Civil-Military Relations and Interstate Disputes**

Students of civil-military relations have paid considerable attention to designing institutional apparatus to thwart or minimize the destructive effects of military coup d’état. Although civilian control over the military (i.e., civilian supremacy) may be guaranteed in a state’s constitution, the words of a statutory clause frequently will be drowned out by louder voices from the military, especially in nascent and newborn states. That is, civilian supremacy is institutionally fragile in new regimes. With the third wave of democratization, students of civil-military relations became more interested in the role of the military in general. In the United States, when William Jefferson Clinton became President, various controversies emerged in academic and policy circles, especially as to how to justify the presence as commander-in-chief of a civilian leader with a clear disposition against the military.

More important, the role of professional soldiers’ advice in influencing foreign policy decision-makers such as presidents or prime ministers has sustained crucial interest. Some argue that an unstable relationship between civilian and military leaders suggests the propensity to pursue aggressive foreign policy, possibly including military attacks. When military influence in civil-military relations increases, civilian supremacy is brought into question, which in turn increases the propensity toward interstate dispute initiation and involvement. Conventional wisdom about bureaucratic politics holds that “where you stand depends on where you sit.” Since military leaders are what Lasswell called “specialists on violence,” they have a lower average level of aversion to interstate war than do civilian leaders. In this sense, while civilian leaders are antici-
pated to be dovish, military leaders are expected to be hawkish, at least in a relative sense.\textsuperscript{15}

Through an examination of civil-military relations in Germany, France, and Russia before World War I, Van Evera and Snyder uncover “the cult of the offensive,” with military leaders being more inclined than civilian ones to use force.\textsuperscript{16} Snyder argues that the cult of offensive also was played out in Japan after World War I.\textsuperscript{17} In this regard, Rousseau sides with Snyder in asserting that, during the era of imperial Japan, the weak power of the civilian elites versus that of the military frequently facilitated international disputes.\textsuperscript{18} Some studies that focus on the United States as the leading power over the last century reach similar conclusions about the tendencies in military leadership with respect to strategy and tactics. Vietnam is a case in point: Donovan argues that the military “participated in what may not have been exactly a conspiracy but was at least a well-organized readiness—indeed, an inclination—to get into the [Vietnam] war.”\textsuperscript{19} In the same vein, Allison’s bureaucratic politics paradigm explains the military leaders’ hawkish position during the Cuban Missile Crisis as follows: “To the Joint Chiefs of Staff the issue was clear. \textit{Now} was the time to do the job for which they had prepared contingency plans. . . . As the President recalled on the day the crisis ended, ‘An invasion would have been a mistake—a wrong use of our power. But \textit{the military are mad. They wanted to do this.}’”\textsuperscript{20} Thus, the bottom line is that military influence in civil-military relations should bring with it an inclination to emphasize the importance of military strength to deter war. In sum, the military are ready to use force, which creates a greater likelihood of lethal disputes.

However, not all students of civil-military relations agree with the preceding arguments about “hawkish” military leaders and “dovish” civilian leaders in decision-making processes. Modernization of military technology, information, organization, and gender balance make military decision-makers increasingly similar to civilian leaders, so that they tend to advise caution rather than adventurism.\textsuperscript{21} Several studies of U.S. foreign policy go as far as to suggest the opposite relationship, i.e., civilian hawks and military doves.\textsuperscript{22} Huntington argues that “the tendency of the civilian politician is to court popular favor by curbing the arms budget and simultaneously pursuing an adventurous foreign policy. The military man opposed both tendencies…. Believing in the ultimate inevitability of war, [the professional military man] raises the strongest voice against immediate involvement in war.”\textsuperscript{23} Betts’ classic work, \textit{Soldiers, Statesmen, and Cold War Crises}, maintains that military professionals are less likely than civilians to advocate the use of force because (1) they have a better
appreciation for how “chancy” it is; and (2) if things go bad, their lives are on the line.\textsuperscript{24} Along similar lines, Andreski argues that “military dictators (at least in modern times) have been notably pacific in external relations, while all the most aggressive and successfully imperialist poli-
ties have been ruled by civilians.”\textsuperscript{25} Recently, Feaver and Gelpi report empirical findings that American military leaders were more dovish than civilian ones during the period from 1816 to 1992.\textsuperscript{26}

Furthermore, in some countries, civilian leaders sometimes come from the military, usually after extensive careers; President Dwight D. Eisenhower, U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell, and Israeli Prime Min-
ister Ariel Sharon are good examples. The important question then be-
comes this one: Are they military leaders or civilian leaders? Perhaps one
way to reconcile the two different arguments would be to unpack the
basic logic of the “Powell Doctrine,” which in various respects is compat-
ible with both views. Powell, speaking for most U.S. military profes-
sionals, advocated using force only in very restrictive circumstances, which is
in line with the arguments of hawkish civilian and dovish military. How-
ever, if it did become necessary to go to war, Powell would want to do so
without restrictions on its scope and intensity, which is compatible with
Van Evera and Snyder’s cult of the offensive.\textsuperscript{27}

We are aware not only that civil-military relations in some advanced
industrial countries (including the United States) may show only an at-
tenuated connection at present, but also that a gray area exists in drawing
the line between military and civilian leaders. While most research projects
address either the United States or some other great power’s foreign
policy, our paper, in a sense, attempts to broaden the temporal and spatial
domain of those studies across borders. It should be noted that an effec-
tive answer to the questions about role disposition would require in-depth,
case-oriented research that is beyond scope of the current exposition. For
present purposes, our main interest is in civil-military relations in a cross-
sectional, time-series research design. Thus we emphasize the overall
tendency toward “hawkish” military leaders and “dovish” civilian leaders
as a collectivity.

\textbf{Research Design:}

\textbf{Civil-Military Relations and the Neo-Kantian Peace}

\textit{A General Hypothesis}

As discussed above, we side with the idea that, as military leaders
increase their influence in decision-making processes, the state becomes
more likely to be aggressive and belligerent, which in turn may result in war. Morgan argues that military decision-makers who participate in decision-making "are likely to urge or endorse the use of force and regard it as a proper and feasible step." Brecher asserts that "[the military] in power are likely to employ violence or more severe violence, even if alternative techniques of crisis management are available." In the same vein, Geller contends that "nations in which the military has substantial influence on the policy process exhibit foreign behaviors that are more conflictual and less cooperative than nations in which the military lacks this input." Using crossnational, time-series data, Choi (and Choi and James) shows a potential casual relationship: interstate disputes are more likely to take place when there is an unbalanced and unstable relationship between civilian and military leaders. Thus the general hypothesis about civil-military relations is as follows:

\[ H_1: \text{As the relative influence of the military increases for the states in a dyad, the likelihood of involvement in militarized interstate disputes also increases for that dyad.} \]

In order to test the general hypothesis about civil-military relations, this paper follows the two steps of model building depicted in Figure 1. In the first step, the civil-military relations model is built, incorporating societal militarism (i.e., Militarism in Year t), previous military influence in civil-military relations (i.e., CMR in Years t–1, t–2, and t–3), conscription (i.e., Conscription in Year t) and severity of threats to national security (i.e., Threats in Year t) on the far left hand side in Figure 1. The first step of model building depicts the impact of those six factors on civil-military relations (i.e., CMR in Year t). This first step will produce predicted values for civil-military relations that are used in the second step.

In the second step in Figure 1, the neo-Kantian peace model is combined with the civil-military relations model by incorporating a year-lagged term of the predicted values for civil-military relations (i.e., PVCMR in Year t–1). As indicated by the direction of the arrows, step two puts forward nine factors (i.e., PVCMR, Democraticness, Interdependence, Joint Membership in International Organizations, Capability Ratio, Alliance, Non-Contiguity, Distance, Only Minor Powers in Year t–1) as responsible for international conflict at the dyadic level (i.e., MID Involvement in Year t). (Each of these factors is presented in detail below.) The combined model attempts to answer the question as to what factors account for dyads with MIDs, and more specifically, whether civil-military relations matter. The arrows indicate the causal direction of each variable
Figure 1

Two-Step Model Building Procedure for Civil-Military Relations and Neo-Kantian Peace

1st Step

- Militarism in Year t
- CMR in Year t-1
- CMR in Year t-2
- CMR in Year t-3
- Conscription in Year t
- Threats in Year t

2nd Step

- Democraticness in Year t-1
- Interdependence in Year t-1
- Joint Membership in Year t-1
- Capability Ratio in Year t-1
- Alliance in Year t-1
- Non-Contiguity in Year t-1

Notes:

- a Civil-Military Relations
- b Predicted Values for Civil-Military Relations
- : Causal Direction
- : Taking One Year-Lagged Term
and, in particular, the arrow with a dot at the left end means taking a year-lagged term of predicted values of civil-military relations (i.e., from CMR in year t to PVMR in year t-1). More detailed discussion follows below.

The First Step: Measuring Military Influence in Civil-Military Relations

In the first step, we develop an indicator of civil-military relations. The emphasis is on the role of military leaders as a collectivity. As discussed earlier, comparativists (i.e., scholars of domestic politics within political science) would argue, with justification, that a study of international disputes should incorporate the civil-military context into its research design. Accordingly, this research project attempts to do that in the two steps just described. The first of the two steps is to obtain predicted values for civil-military relations in numerical terms by taking into account societal militarism, past influence of military leaders, the military conscription system, and severity of threats to national security.

Thus the first step elaborates our definitions of civil-military relations by introducing such multidimensional factors as societal militarism, past influence of military leaders, military manpower system, and international threats. Sarkesian’s classic model of civil-military relations provides the background for our theoretical elaboration; a brief exegesis of it, along with our modifications, appears in the Appendix.

The three elements in the domestic political-social system and the one element in international relations serve as important determinants of military influence in civil-military relations for each state. Thus the equation for the first step in Figure 1 is as follows:

\[
CMR_1 = \alpha + \alpha_1 \text{Militarism}_t + \alpha_2 CMR_{t-1} + \alpha_3 CMR_{t-2} + \alpha_4 CMR_{t-3} + \alpha_5 \text{Conscription}_t + \alpha_6 \text{Threats}_t - \varepsilon_1
\]

Here, \(CMR_t\): military influence in civil-military relations in year t; \(\text{Militarism}_t\): societal militarism in year t; \(CMR_{t-1}\): past military influence in civil-military relations in year t-1; \(CMR_{t-2}\): past military influence in civil-military relations in year t-2; \(CMR_{t-3}\): past military influence civil-military relations in year t-3; \(\text{Conscription}_t\): military conscription system in year t; \(\text{Threats}_t\): severity of international threats in year t; \(\varepsilon_1\): error term

Military influence in civil-military relations in year t (\(CMR_t\)), as the dependent variable in Equation 1, measures military relative to civilian influence in decision-making. To our knowledge, there is no quantitative indicator available as a bottom line for civil-military relations on a crossnational, time-series basis. According to Desch, in a recent and au-
Authoritative study, “civil-military relations is a very complicated issue. Analysts disagree about how to define and measure civil-military relations as the [in]dependent variable.” Thus we utilize military expenditure to measure the degree of military influence in each state. The operationalization is based on the inference that rising military power vis-à-vis civilian power is likely to result in increased military expenditures. Niskanen’s model of the size-maximizing bureaucrat provides the intuition here—the relative influence of military bureaucrats should determine shifts in the total budget of their sector within the government. Goertz and Diehl sum up this line of reasoning: “High [military] allocations could indicate the influence that military officials have in government decision making.” In a word, military influence is assumed to be a function of change in military expenditure.

Current military leaders’ influence \((CMR_t)\), therefore, is calculated as follows: First, an annual growth rate for military expenditure is calculated for each state in a dyad for a given year. Second, the \(\text{smaller} \) value of the percentage expenditure between the two states in each dyad-year becomes the recorded value. It should be noted that, although the civil-military relations variable utilizes military expenditure as the degree of influence, the operationalization does not rely on the number of dollars of military expenditure, but instead uses its increase or decrease in annual growth rate to identify the direction of change for military leaders’ relative influence. The data come from Bennett and Stam’s data set, *Expected Utility Generation and Data Management Program (EUGene, version 2.10).* Bennett and Stam’s military expenditure data originally come from the 1993 update to the Correlates of War (COW) National Capabilities data file, which is the standard among studies of MIDs. Since military expenditure is recorded as a nominal value (i.e., not inflation-adjusted), it is converted into a real value using Sahr’s Inflation Conversion Factors for 1700 to Estimated 2010. Consumer Price Index (CPI) for 2000 is the base year.

As shown on the left-hand side of the dotted vertical line in Figure 1 (i.e., under the first step), we postulate that current military influence in civil-military relations in year \(t \ (CMR_t)\) in Equation 1 is a function of the four elements, expressed as independent variables: (1) current societal militarism; (2) military leaders’ previous activities (i.e., directed toward policy influence) for the last three years; (3) current military service system (i.e., conscripted or voluntary); and (4) current severity of international threats (i.e., level of hostility). Societal militarism is an important element in determining military influence in civil-military relations in that it governs or embraces its militaristic characteristics. The basic inference is that, when states maintain more soldiers at the ready, military leaders
have more of an opportunity to exercise power over civilians and have the potential to become more militaristic as a by-product.\textsuperscript{43} In particular, Rosecrance contends that some states are poised for military action, while others are directed toward wealth accumulation.\textsuperscript{44} In other words, more soldiers translate into a greater likelihood of military preferences being realized in policy outcomes.

Societal militarism is calculated as follows: First, the number of soldiers as a percentage of population is determined for each state. Second, the weak link assumption is used to derive a score for the dyad-year. Like the military expenditure data, the data for this variable are obtained from Bennett and Stam’s data set, \textit{EUGene}, which includes military personnel and total population in the form of the National Capabilities data file.

Military budgets are allocated, pretty much in general, according to long-term plans. In other words, current military influence in civil-military relations can be attributed to previous influence exerted by military leaders in decision-making for a given state. To account for these past effects, we take three lagged terms of current military influence in civilian versus military interactions (i.e., \(CMR_{t-1}\), \(CMR_{t-2}\), and \(CMR_{t-3}\)).\textsuperscript{45} Past values of military expenditure (i.e., influence) for the previous three years are used to predict the present values of military expenditure (i.e., relative influence). Once again, the predicted values are not numerical dollars, but the annual percentage change.

Two basic kinds of military manpower systems exist: conscripted and voluntary. Since a conscription system effectively expands military society more than would a voluntary system of service, all other things being equal, it can be expected to reinforce military influence.\textsuperscript{46} This argument, as noted above, derives from the standard references regarding bureaucratic politics and in-fighting (i.e., “where you stand depends upon where you sit”), which emphasize budget maximization. Influence correlates almost directly with spending, i.e., “size does matter.” In that context, conscription serves as a catalyst to military spending that rivals or exceeds even the most extravagant expenditures on hardware. Moreover, nothing makes the case for expansion of the military more effectively than the use of force itself.

Conscripted forces also provide quicker and higher military readiness or preparedness than all-volunteer forces.\textsuperscript{47} In this regard, Duindam also contends that, “if the members of the democratic community differ in their preferences for a war, a decision in favour of a war will be more probable in the case of a conscription force than in the case of an all-volunteer force.”\textsuperscript{48} Thus military leaders can claim that options involving deployment or use of force in a foreign policy situation are relatively
more available under conscription, which in turn contributes to military influence. It is worth noting that the danger of conscripted soldiers is latent within the theoretical discussion from Russett and Oneal, perhaps the most prominent advocates of neo-Kantianism:

Napoleon Bonaparte, drawing on popular enthusiasm, created a large nationalist army drawn from the mass of the French citizenry, rather than from professional soldiers and mercenaries. This nationalist army, combined with Napoleon’s military genius, had the potential to overwhelm the old, more aristocracy-based armies of other states. Consequently, France threatened to become the dominant state, a hegemon, that could reduce all others on the continent to a more or less subservient status.

In Russett and Oneal’s sense, conscripted soldiers run against the logic of the democratic peace in that they seem to lead to international conflict.

Evidence favors the preceding line of argument concerning conscription. On the basis of cross-sectional data for 1980, Anderson and his colleagues ascertain as well that “warlike” states are more likely to employ conscription. From data on a sample of 143 countries for 1984, White finds that “countries that use conscription may be more likely to become involved in wars because they maintain larger armed forces and the cost to the government of getting additional soldiers is reduced by conscription.” In other words, conscription reduces the relative costs entailed by pursuit of military tactics—the most basic means already are available. Recently, Choi and James’ cross-sectional and time-series data analysis for the period from 1886 to 1992 reports that a military manpower system with conscripted soldiers is associated positively with international conflict.

Conscription is a dichotomous variable. The variable is coded as “1” if both states in a dyad adopt a conscription system for the active-duty military personnel; it is coded “0” otherwise. To the best of our knowledge, no conscription data have been collected over an extended spatial and temporal domain. Our data are based mainly on the two most prominent sources: Horeman and Stolwijk, Refusing to Bear Arms: A World Survey of Conscription and Conscientious Objection to Military Service (London: War Resisters’ International, 1998), and Prasad and Smythe, eds. Conscription: A World Survey: Compulsory Military Service and Resistance to It (London: War Resisters’ International, 1968).

It can be argued that the military leaders’ influence (CMRt), measured via the annual growth rate of military expenditure, is at least to some degree an indicator of the severity of threats to security as perceived by
national leaders. In other words, the more serious the threats, the more the military expenditure to be expected. If so, it becomes plausible that, due to international tension and/or perceived security threats, states with high military expenditures are more likely to get into international disputes. Salient examples are Britain and France during the period from 1938 to 1939 and the United States during the period from 1940 to 1941, with escalated expenditures in reaction to monitoring external threats from the Axis powers. For this reason, we choose to control for the possible severity of international threats (i.e., states do, or do not, spend more in the face of threats) in the model. We utilize Maoz’s standard five categories for the level of hostility in each dyad-year: 1 for no militarized action, 2 for threat to use force, 3 for display of force, 4 for use of force, and 5 for war.\textsuperscript{54} The ordinality of the level of hostility indicates from least (i.e., level 1) to most severe threats (i.e., level 5) to national security. The control variable for threats (i.e., Threats\textsubscript{t}) is measured as the highest level of hostility reached by either member of a dyad in a year in the five categories.

After the military leaders’ influence (CMR\textsubscript{t}) is regressed on societal militarism (i.e.,), military leaders’ activities to exert influence for the last three years (i.e., CMR\textsubscript{t-1}, CMR\textsubscript{t-2}, and CMR\textsubscript{t-3}), military manpower system (i.e., Conscription\textsubscript{t}), and the severity of international threats (i.e.,), the generalized estimating equation (GEE) Gaussian regression produces the following results for Equation 1, along with predicted values for relative military influence in civil-military relations:\textsuperscript{55}

\begin{equation}
CMR\textsubscript{t} = -0.0774 - 0.0006 \text{Militarism} + 0.0251 \text{CMR}_{t-1} + 0.0347 \text{CMR}_{t-2} + 0.0633 \text{CMR}_{t-3} + 0.0064 \text{Conscription} + 0.0044 \text{Threats} + \epsilon
\end{equation}

(1*)

\[
\begin{array}{ll}
(0.0041) & (0.0026) & (0.0035) & (0.0041) \\
(0.0035) & (0.0017) & (0.0038) & \end{array}
\]

The coefficient for Militarism\textsubscript{t} shows that, contrary to expectations, societal militarism—operationalized as the total percentage of soldiers in a population—has a negative relationship with military influence in civil-military relations, but turns out to have a near zero coefficient. As expected, however, military activities during the previous three years and the presence of conscripted soldiers are associated with greater military influence in civil-military relations, measured in terms of military expenditure in the annual growth rate. All of the coefficients for previous military activities (i.e., CMR\textsubscript{t-1}, CMR\textsubscript{t-2}, and CMR\textsubscript{t-3}) and conscription (i.e., Conscription\textsubscript{t}) are statistically significant at the 0.001 level. Our control variable for international threats (i.e., Threats\textsubscript{t}) is not statistically significant, indicating that military leaders’ decision to increase military expen-
diature (CMR) is not influenced by the severity of current threats to national security. Thus we conclude that our operationalization, which uses the annual growth rate of military expenditure, properly captures our intuition about “hawkish” military leaders and “dovish” civilian leaders rather than international threats. Predicted values for military influence in civilian versus military interactions are used, in the next section, for the second step.

The Second Step: Building a Combined Model of Civil-Military Relations and the Neo-Kantian Peace

As discussed above, the predicted values from Equation 1* for military influence in civil-military relations are incorporated into Oneal and Russett’s neo-Kantian peace model to aim for a better explanation for the likelihood of MIDs. Use of Oneal and Russett’s data and model should reduce bias that might inadvertently appear, not only because their research design provides us with the frame of reference for a comparison, but also because it has emerged as one of the most frequently replicated in the field of international relations. As discussed earlier, the anticipated causal mechanism for military influence in civil-military relations is as follows: Rising military power vis-à-vis civilian power is likely to increase military expenditure, which in turn may cause more militarized interstate disputes.

With Oneal and Russett’s approach as a representative example, the research design associated with the democratic peace is familiar to students of international conflict. Thus we summarize only the dependent variable and the three neo-Kantian factors: MIDs, democraticness, economic interdependence, and international organizations. Interstate disputes are those that are serious enough to become militarized. More specifically, when one or both states in a dyad-year threatened to use military force, displayed military force, or actually used military force against the other, we define a dyad-year as being involved in a dispute. This definition is confined to (1) members of the interstate system; (2) disputes directly related to military force; (3) explicit, overt, and nonaccidental acts; and (4) government-sanctioned disputes. The dependent variable, MIDs, is a dichotomous variable, coded as “1” if a dispute in a dyad-year was ongoing and “0” otherwise. The data for MIDs originally come from the COW Project. Democraticness is once again based on the weak-link assumption: the score for the less democratic state in a dyad is taken to be the stronger determinant of how interactions will proceed. Hence, the more democratic that state is, the more constrained it will be from engag-
ing in a dispute and therefore the more peaceful the dyad. Economic interdependence also assumes the weak link: the score for the less interdependent state in a dyad is taken to be the stronger determinant of the likelihood of interstate disputes. Hence, the more interdependent the state, the more constrained it will be from engaging in a dispute and therefore the more peaceful the dyad in an overall sense. The international organization variable is measured by the number of joint memberships. Hence, the more joint memberships in intergovernmental organizations, the more constrained two states will be from engaging in a dispute and therefore the more peaceful the dyad.

Table 1 presents both the nine hypotheses related to MIDs that will be tested and six auxiliary hypotheses related to the current military influence in civil-military relations in year \( t \), which produced the predicted value of military influence in civil-military relations used in Equation 2. It also describes how to operationalize each variable and its data sources. While the top part of Table 1 shows seven new hypotheses and operationalization and data sources (the first hypothesis is the general one, the next six are auxiliary for the ‘indirect’ relationship), the bottom part presents eight replicating hypotheses plus operationalization and data sources from Oneal and Russett.

Equation 2 completes the research design that is shown on the right-hand side of the dotted vertical line in Figure 1. Since Oneal and Russett present MID involvement rather than initiation as their dependent variable, we choose MID involvement for purposes of comparison. Due to the fact that the dependent variable, \( Dispute_t \), is dichotomous, a logistic regression model is used. As is the usual practice in the neo-Kantian research program, all independent variables are lagged by one year. Thus they are not affected by the degree of conflict present in the dyad-year to be explained.

\[
\text{Dispute}_t = \beta + \beta_1 \text{PVCMR}_{t-1} + \beta_2 \text{Demo}_{t-1} + \beta_3 \text{EcoInt}_{t-1} + \beta_4 \text{JMIO}_{t-1} \\
+ \beta_5 \text{CapRatio}_{t-1} + \beta_6 \text{Alliance}_{t-1} + \beta_7 \text{NonContig}_{t-1} \\
+ \beta_8 \text{Distance}_{t-1} + \beta_9 \text{MinPower}_{t-1} + \epsilon_2
\]

Here, \( \text{Dispute}_t \): militarized interstate dispute involvement; \( \text{PVCMR}_{t-1} \): predicted value of military influence in civil-military relations; \( \text{Demo}_{t-1} \): democraticness; \( \text{EcoInt}_{t-1} \): economic interdependence; \( \text{JMIO}_{t-1} \): joint membership in international organizations; \( \text{CapRatio}_{t-1} \): capability ratio; \( \text{Alliance}_{t-1} \): allied states; \( \text{NonContig}_{t-1} \): non-contiguous states; \( \text{Distance}_{t-1} \): geographical distance; \( \text{MinPower}_{t-1} \): only minor powers.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Operationalization (and Data Sources)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>New Hypotheses</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil-military relations ($H_{1}$)</td>
<td>As the relative influence of the military increases for the states in a dyad, the likelihood of involvement in militarized interstate disputes also increases for that dyad.</td>
<td>The smaller value of the annual growth rates for military expenditure in dyad-year t (data from the EUGene, version 2.10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Societal militarism ($H_{1-1}$)</td>
<td>As the relative influence of the societal militarism increases for the states in a dyad, the likelihood of military influence increases for that dyad.</td>
<td>The smaller value of the number of soldiers as a percentage of population in dyad-year t (data from the EUGene, version 2.10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil-military relations1 ($H_{1-2}$)</td>
<td>As the relative influence of the military in civil-military relations increases for the states in a dyad at time t-1, the likelihood of military influence increases for that dyad.</td>
<td>The smaller value of the annual growth rates for military expenditure in dyad-year t-1 (data from the EUGene, version 2.10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil-military relations2 ($H_{1-3}$)</td>
<td>As the relative influence of the military in civil-military relations increases for the states in a dyad at time t-2, the likelihood of military influence increases for that dyad.</td>
<td>The smaller value of the annual growth rates for military expenditure in dyad-year t-2 (data from the EUGene, version 2.10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil-military relations3 ($H_{1-4}$)</td>
<td>As the relative influence of the military in civil-military relations increases for the states in a dyad at time t-3, the likelihood of military influence increases for that dyad.</td>
<td>The smaller value of the annual growth rates for military expenditure in dyad-year t-3 (data from the EUGene, version 2.10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conscription ($H_{1-5}$)</td>
<td>Dyads composed of states with (without) a conscription system are more (less) likely to increase military influence.</td>
<td>1 if both states adopted conscripted soldiers in dyad-year t, 0 otherwise (data from various surveys and statistical books)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International threats ($H_{1-6}$)</td>
<td>As international threats are perceived to be more serious, the likelihood of military influence increases for that dyad (i.e., the more the military expenditure).</td>
<td>The higher value of the level of hostility in dyad-year t (data from Maoz’s dyadic MIDs dataset, version 1.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replicating Hypotheses from Oneal and Russett (1999)</td>
<td>Democraticness</td>
<td>Economic interdependence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The more democratic the less democratic state, the more constrained it will be from engaging in a dispute and the more peaceful the dyad.</td>
<td>The smaller value of the democracy scores (data from Oneal and Russett's (1999) collection)</td>
<td>The more interdependent the less economically dependent state, the more constrained it will be from engaging in a dispute and the more peaceful the dyad.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Empirical Results for MIDs:
Do Civil-Military Relations Matter?

Table 2 presents the empirical results based on the logistic regression model during the period from 1886 to 1992, as in Oneal and Russett. It includes predicted military influence in civil-military relations and the eight variables from Oneal and Russett. The main focus is on estimating the impact of the degree of influence for civilian versus military leaders on the likelihood of MID involvement. Table 2 consists of both replications and empirical results and includes several statistical specifications that parallel those that predominate in the neo-Kantian literature.

All of the replications in each unshaded column show very similar results to Oneal and Russett with respect to both direction and statistical significance. The first column lists the nine independent variables. Based on the GEE logistic regression, the second, unshaded column shows the replications of Oneal and Russett’s model and the third, shaded column reports the results from Equation 2 for the simplest run—all dyads from 1886 to 1992. The fourth, unshaded column, which is based on Beck, Katz, and Tucker’s peace years correction method, shows the replications of Oneal and Russett’s model. The fifth, shaded column reports the results from Equation 2 for all dyads during the period from 1886 to 1992. Based on GEE logistic regression, the sixth, unshaded column shows the replications of Oneal and Russett’s model and the seventh, shaded column reports the results from Equation 2 for all dyads during the multipolar period after 1886 and before the Cold War (i.e., from 1886 to 1939). Finally, based on GEE logistic regression, the eighth, unshaded column shows the replications of Oneal and Russett’s model and the ninth, shaded column reports the results from Equation 2 for politically relevant dyads only during the period from 1886 to 1992.

As will become apparent, the bottom line to be derived from the table is this: It reveals statistical significance for military influence in civil-military relations in accounting for MID involvement. In other words, when military influence in civilian versus military dynamics increases, the likelihood of MID involvement becomes greater.

As shown for GEE in the third column of the table, the civil-military relations variable is statistically significant at the 0.001 level, indicating that, with greater overall military influence, MID involvement increases in likelihood. While statistically significant at the 0.001 level, the coefficient (-0.0626) of the democraticness variable turns out to be about the same as the replicated one (-0.0643). These results, which preserve the significance of democracy, also show that civil-military relations matter.
## Table 2

### Civil-Military Dynamics and Predicting MID Involvement, 1886–1992

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Civil-military relations</td>
<td>10.0493***</td>
<td>14.5357***</td>
<td>23.6575***</td>
<td>5.4456**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(PSAGRME)</td>
<td>2.3469</td>
<td>2.4017</td>
<td>4.4275</td>
<td>2.0727</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower democracy</td>
<td>-0.0643***</td>
<td>-0.0626***</td>
<td>-0.0429***</td>
<td>-0.0664***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(DEM)</td>
<td>0.0119</td>
<td>0.0118</td>
<td>0.0097</td>
<td>0.0120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade/GDP</td>
<td>2.3469</td>
<td>2.4017</td>
<td>4.4275</td>
<td>2.0727</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(DEPEND,)</td>
<td>20.5816</td>
<td>21.3162</td>
<td>12.9179</td>
<td>13.1892</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International organizations</td>
<td>-0.0037</td>
<td>-0.0045</td>
<td>0.0122**</td>
<td>0.0099**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(IGO)</td>
<td>0.0043</td>
<td>0.0043</td>
<td>0.0041</td>
<td>0.0042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capability ratio</td>
<td>-0.2380***</td>
<td>-0.2376***</td>
<td>-0.1966***</td>
<td>-0.4042***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(CAPRATIO)</td>
<td>0.0587</td>
<td>0.0594</td>
<td>0.0469</td>
<td>0.0474</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliances</td>
<td>-0.2933</td>
<td>-0.2867</td>
<td>-0.4256**</td>
<td>-0.4213**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ALLIANCES)</td>
<td>0.1838</td>
<td>0.1830</td>
<td>0.1592</td>
<td>0.1582</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noncontiguity</td>
<td>-2.0626***</td>
<td>-2.0548***</td>
<td>-1.4701***</td>
<td>-1.4586***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(NONCONTIG)</td>
<td>0.1985</td>
<td>0.1982</td>
<td>0.1593</td>
<td>0.1590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Log distance</td>
<td>-0.4679**</td>
<td>-0.4661**</td>
<td>-0.3633***</td>
<td>-0.3709***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(DISTANCE)</td>
<td>0.0631</td>
<td>0.0639</td>
<td>0.0559</td>
<td>0.0543</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only minor powers</td>
<td>-1.8531***</td>
<td>-1.8317***</td>
<td>-1.6812***</td>
<td>-1.6605***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(MINORPWRS)</td>
<td>0.1807</td>
<td>0.1797</td>
<td>0.1316</td>
<td>0.1305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-1.7432***</td>
<td>-0.9522</td>
<td>-0.9914*</td>
<td>0.2440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Chi)</td>
<td>1189.96</td>
<td>1193.57</td>
<td>1725.86</td>
<td>1747.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P of Chi²</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Log Likelihood</td>
<td>-4381.839</td>
<td>-4347.414</td>
<td>-2693.937</td>
<td>-9237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pseudo R²</td>
<td>0.298</td>
<td>0.303</td>
<td>0.2866</td>
<td>0.2866</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>111,389</td>
<td>111,389</td>
<td>111,475</td>
<td>111,475</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001, one-tailed tests.

^p<.05; ^^p<.01, one-tailed tests but wrong sign.
Consistent with what classical liberals argued long ago, the coefficient of the economic interdependence variable (−73.9270 versus −71.1420) appears somewhat stronger as the research design becomes more complete. The coefficient of the international organizations variable is not statistically significant.

While the alliance hypothesis is not supported by the GEE-based results, the propositions about national capabilities, noncontiguity, distance, and minor power presence are confirmed. As students of power preponderance argue, it seems that an asymmetry in national capabilities is less likely to produce MID involvement. Allied status seems to have no effect on the likelihood of MID involvement for a dyad. As expected, non-neighboring dyads are relatively less likely to engage in MIDs. A geographic obstacle (i.e., long distance) between members of a dyad appears to decrease the likelihood of MID involvement. And minor power dyads are less likely to become involved in MIDs than those that include at least one major power.

Columns four and five from Table 2 shows the results based on Beck, Katz, and Tucker’s peace years correction model. The purpose of this analysis is to see whether a different statistical method produces consistent results. To wit, it does. The civil-military relations hypothesis once again is supported strongly at the 0.001 level. The three neo-Kantian peace variables show statistical significance at the 0.001, 0.001, and 0.01 levels, respectively. However, among the latter, the connection involving international organizations and MIDs turns out to be counterintuitive. Joint membership in international organizations seems to increase the likelihood of MIDs. As expected, the other control variables retain statistical significance. The peace years correction model reports a pseudo-R$^2$ that tells how well the model performs in an overall sense—30.3 percent for MID involvement, which is similar to, but slightly better than, the replicated version, at 29.8 percent.

The sixth and seventh columns of the table present the results for the multipolar period after 1886 and before the Cold War, which are similar to those of the GEE model. These columns test realist criticisms that Cold War tensions are the actual forces behind the democratic peace. Civil-military relations still shows a strong statistical significance at the 0.001 level. While the democraticness and economic interdependence hypotheses are supported, the international organizations hypothesis, once again, is not. The control variables also are supported, except for alliances.

The results in the eighth and ninth columns of the table are for politically relevant dyads only, that is, for cases when either major powers become involved in dyadic disputes, or members of the dyad are geo-
graphically contiguous. Politically relevant dyads make up most of the dispute-prone pairs, to which students of security relations denote importance for the stability of the international system. It is interesting that all of the hypotheses are supported. The civil-military relations variable, once again, is statistically significant at the 0.01 level. The three neo-Kantian peace variables—this time including international organizations—pass the statistical significance test, as do the control variables.

Overall, the empirical results suggest that, regardless of different statistical methods, sampling, and time periods, military influence in civil-military relations is worth including in an explanation for MIDs. In a more general sense, it therefore seems like a good candidate for inclusion in models that hope to account for international conflict, crisis, and war.

Conclusions and Policy Implications

Civil-military relations emerges from the data analysis as another important factor to better explain and understand international disputes across borders. This new factor in the neo-Kantian “data wars” has passed various statistical tests with different methods, sampling, and time periods. It should be noted that this paper goes beyond a single case study. While case studies that focus mainly on U.S. foreign policy could apply to a few particular countries, our findings are generalizable across borders. We find that “the role of military advice in influencing presidential decisions…remains of crucial significance” at the international level and that military influence in civil-military relations increases the likelihood of interstate disputes. Thus, the bottom line is that, without incorporating civil-military relations, the neo-Kantian peace in particular and International Relations as a discipline in general will remain incomplete.

This study has not addressed at least one related and important question: Democracies, to throw in another salient idea, might be better in maintaining civilian control than non-democracies (such as military regimes). Thus an interaction term between civil-military relations and ‘dichotomous’ democraticness that could detect the impact of civilian supremacy in democracies might be considered. Mutual casual relationships between civil-military relations and international disputes also might be inferred with an improved method; a simultaneous equation model should be utilized for this purpose in a future research design. It also would be interesting to test the conceptualization of civil-military relations in connection to other kinds of events, such as international crises.

Important policy implications may be derived from the empirical find-
ings. Most notably, democratization, especially in isolation from other kinds of changes, may not be the best public (or foreign) policy for the United States—as the system leader—to emphasize. Instead, the United States should redirect its public (or foreign) policy toward other internal characteristics of states, such as civil-military relations and military manpower systems, in the quest for world peace. It seems that, as civilian supremacy obtains, MID involvement becomes less likely. Therefore, the newly introduced factor from the present study—*civil-military relations*—is a good candidate for policy-relevant research in the quest for a more peaceful world at the millennium and beyond.

**Appendix**

A decade ago, Sarkesian presented a conceptual model about a political and social system of civil-military relations. Based on an ideal, Weberian type of civilian control over the military in a liberal society, most notably the United States, his model consists of three key elements: (1) a political-social system, (2) interactions between civilian and military elites, and (3) military society. Figure 2 shows relationships for the domestic political-social system adapted from Sarkesian’s system-oriented model. The diagram on the left-hand side, corresponding to the state as a whole, portrays Sakesian’s three elements of civil-military relations in regular font style. Using arrows (i.e., →), our interpretations are added in *italics* into his model; the four arrows that appear, along with the italicized components, do not imply any causal hierarchy. As shown in Figure 2, our extension of Sarkesian’s system of relationships is that (1) the political-social system can be reified as *societal militarism*; (2) interactions between civilian and military elites produce, as a resultant, a relative degree of military influence in *civil-military relations*; and (3) military society can be conceived of, at least to some degree, in terms of the *military manpower system*.

Figure 2 also includes an extension of Sarkesian’s model to the inter-state level that embraces aspects of the international environment such as international tension and/or perceived security threat. It is inferred that, in the end, foreign policy in each state is affected significantly by the interaction of the three conceptual factors as well as international threats. This combination, in turn, will lead to either international cooperation or conflict in the international arena. The large arrow (i.e., ⇒) between the left- and right-hand boxes indicates the causal direction between the domestic attributes and foreign policy outcomes in the realm of international relations. In sum, the figure represents a projection of Sarkesian’s model into
**Figure 2**

**Relationships for the Domestic Political-Social System:**
Societal Militarism, Civil-Military Relations and Military Manpower System

the international domain and provides the theoretical foundation for our model building.

Notes

Authors’ Note: We are grateful to Peter D. Feaver, Benjamin Fordham, Ryan C. Hendrickson, Norris M. Ripsman, Glen Segell, Mark Souva, and two anonymous referees for their helpful comments.

1. As will become apparent, MIDs are the near-standard choice of data on interstate conflict within the field of international relations. An MID is defined as “a set of interactions between or among states involving threats to use military force, displays of military force, or actual uses of military force” (Charles S. Gochman and Zeev Maoz, “Military Interstate Disputes, 1816–1976: Procedures, Patterns, and Insights,” Journal of Conflict Resolution 28, 4 (1984): 587).


4. It also should be noted that, as Diamond points out, civilian supremacy in civil-military relations is one of the most important attributes of democracy; see Larry Diamond, Developing Democracy Toward Consolidation (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999): 11. So it is necessary to delve into civil-military relations in the context of the democratic peace as well as the discipline of international relations.

5. Although there exist more sophisticated and complex definitions for civil-military relations, we employ the degree of influence for reasons of parsimony. For a more compelling treatment of concept formation, see Glen Segell, “The Nation-State, Nationalism, and Civil-Military Relations Theory,” in Constantine P. Danopoulos,


7. It should be noted that several studies of American foreign policy suggest the opposite direction for this linkage, i.e., civilian hawks and military doves. Good examples in that domain are as follows: Richard K. Betts, Soldiers, Statesmen, and Cold War Crises (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1977); Peter D. Feaver and Christopher Gelpi, “Civilian Hawks and Military Doves: The Civil-Military Gap and the Use of Force, 1816–1992,” paper presented to the Triangle Institute for Security Studies Conference on the Gap between the Military and Civilian Society (1999); and Peter D. Feaver and Christopher Gelpi, Civilian-Military Relations and the Use of Force (forthcoming). While these works address American foreign policy alone, our paper, in a sense, attempts to broaden the temporal and spatial domain of those studies by including all states.


15. Allison, Carnesale, and Nye, Hawks, Doves, and Owls.


22. For example, Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*; Betts, *Soldiers, Statesmen, and Cold War Crises*; and Janowitz, *Civil-Military Relations*.


31. Seung-Whan Choi and Patrick James, “Quandrangulating the Peace: Civil-Military Dynamics, Political Communications and Militarized Interstate Disputes,” unpub-

32. The independent variable is lagged by one year, so it is not affected by the degree of international conflict present in the dyad-year to be explained in the second step.

33. For example, Diamond, Developing Democracy.


39. Dixon standardized this operationalization by calling it the “weak link” approach when applied to democraticness in a dyad. The likelihood of an international dispute within a dyad should be a function primarily of the degree of constraint experienced by the less constrained state (i.e., the smaller value) in each dyad, that is, the less democratic of the two. In the present context, the lower value of military expenditure by percentage in a dyad establishes the “lowest common denominator.” See William J. Dixon, “Democracy and the Peaceful Settlement of International Conflict,” American Political Science Review 88, 1 (1994): 14–32.

40. It should be noted that students of arms races “assume that military spending is an important measure of a nation’s future military capabilities and therefore also intentions and commitment” (Thomas Hartley and Bruce Russett, “Public Opinion and the Common Defense: Who Governs Military Spending in the United States,” American Political Science Review 86, 4 (1992): 909). It also is assumed that, in a situation of conflict, civilians will support military spending to defend the state and its people. Our two-step method does not distinguish different roles and responsibility between civilian and military leaders, and we leave more refinement of the measurement issue to the reader for future study.


42. See http://www.orst.edu/dept/pol_sci/fac/sahr/sahr.htm for an explanation of this method.


45. After four years, the lagged term for civil-military relations becomes statistically insignificant. With no theoretical reason to include a different number of terms, the choice of three is justified on statistical grounds.


54. Zeev Maoz, Dyadic Militarized Interstate Disputes (DYMID1.1) Dataset—Version 1.1. Dyadic MID Codebook (1999): 1–9, downloaded from ftp://spirit.tau.ac.il/ zeevmaoz/dyadmid.html. It should be noted that the level of hostility is originally based on MIDs data assembled from the Correlates of War project (see Gochman and Maoz, “Military Interstate Disputes”).

55. The GEE is one of the most commonly employed statistical methods among students of international conflict, crisis and war. *Stata Statistical Software* (version 7.0) is used

56. The numbers in parentheses are standard errors.

57. Oneal and Russett, “The Kantian Peace.”

58. Another advantage of the use of Oneal and Russett’s model is that diagnostic tests become less necessary because their model already is verified. In fact, our combined model will demonstrate an improved explanatory power in the section on Empirical Results.

59. The other five variables in the democratic peace model from Oneal and Russett are (1) national capability ratio (i.e., to control for power preponderance); (2) whether the members of each dyad are allied; (3) non-contiguity; (4) geographical distance; and (5) whether each member of the dyad is a minor power. These five variables are expected to decrease the likelihood of interstate disputes.


61. According to Oneal and Russett, after testing both MID involvement and initiation, they find that both dependent variable measurements have “produced nearly identical results.” Oneal and Russett report only the MID involvement results in their article. See Oneal and Russett, “The Kantian Peace,” 23.

62. See Table 1 in Oneal and Russett, “The Kantian Peace,” 22.


64. Oneal and Russett, “The Classical Liberals.”


66. Russett and Oneal, Triangulating Peace.


68. We acknowledge that our exploration into the relationship between civil-military relations and MIDs is still early in the process of discovery. So our empirical findings may open doors to inquiry rather than provide some kind of definitive answer.

69. Since Oneal and Russett use a continuous measure for democraticness, the present study is not able to address this important issue for the time being.
