Individuals in a society clearly act in ways to maximize their utility, and when they are confronted with changes in their social environment, they react in ways that maximize their ability to survive.

While Layton's book presents an intriguing argument, I think it could be improved upon in two main ways. First, given the scope of his argument, it seems superficial at times. This is understandable because in order to develop his theory he touches on a number of subjects ranging from civil society to rational choice to civil war. That being said, the engagement with the previous literature and arguments is shallower than would be ideal. Second, while it is admirable that Layton examines a variety of cases, it is not always clear as to how they relate to his larger argument. While many of the cases certainly address his theory, there does not seem to be any definitive tests of his main theoretical contention.

Taking a step back, Layton simply wants to understand why social change occurs in an orderly fashion in some cases and violently in others. One of the most critical factors is the ability of individuals to build mutual trust. When social change undermines trust, then individuals will rationally narrow their socials relations. This can lead to the development of ethnic politics or other relations that amplify instability. This argument is not meant to justify violence but to understand it. In fact Layton (p. 173) explicitly notes that "violence is not inevitable . . . but a response to particular conditions in the ecology of society. . . . Socially disruptive actions are sometimes, from the actor's perspective, rational, and civil war is not treated as an outbreak of irrationality, but as a reasoned response to particular social conditions."

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Davenport, Christian. *State Repression and the Domestic Democratic Peace*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Arguably the most solid empirical finding in international relations is that democracies do not go to war with each other. Scholars working in the so-called democratic peace research program offer many contending explanations, but a consensus has emerged that the likelihood of full-scale war between two democracies is extremely low. This proposition began as a statement about the propensity of democracies to engage in war and has been refined based on improved theoretical explanations and empirical tests.

Like the democratic peace in international relations, the domestic democratic peace, or the notion that democracies are more pacific in their relations

with their populace, has become a conventional wisdom. Christian Davenport warns us not to be too quick to judgment in his new book, *State Repression and the Domestic Democratic Peace*: the evidence may not be as simple as it may seem. He suggests that different contexts, like threats from war, may modify the effects of democracy on the state's treatment of its citizens. Additionally democracy, when disaggregated, may have competing effects on a state's treatment of its people. More specifically Davenport argues that two components of democracy — or *Voice* and *Veto* — have contending impacts on state repression.

Davenport begins his book by outlining the limitations of previous works and setting up the debate in the introduction and chapter one. In chapter two, he discusses why disaggregating democracy into *Voice* and *Veto* allows for different potential expectations. Where states face "costs of accountability" (p. 51), or what he terms *Voice*, they are less likely to violate the rights of citizens. These costs of accountability include mass participation in the political process and representation of diverse groups in politics. Examples from South Africa aptly illustrate the point. *Veto*, or the presence of "countervailing political actors" (p. 56), helps constrain executive decisions. Its effect should also then dampen state repression. Where the arguments come into conflict is over which explanation is superior or which overwhelms the other. Davenport has hypotheses that can account for all potential outcomes (*Voice* is more important than *Veto*, *Veto* is more than *Voice*, they both are important, and each effect is contingent upon whether the state is at war at home or abroad.)

The strongest point of the book is in chapter three where Davenport expands the way that most scholars conceive of and then measure state repression. Conventionally the majority of scholars think about repression solely as violence. Davenport extends repression to include restrictions on civil liberties that helps explain some of the variance in a democracy's response to dissidents. This conception fits better with the realities of running a state: leaders can choose among many options to deal with mass unrest including restricting civil liberties at the low end to the use of brutal state violence at the higher ends. Hopefully this will redirect the work on state repression to examine why states make these choices away from simply examining the correlates of certain types of violence such as civil war or terrorism.

In chapters four and five, Davenport explains the results of the empirical tests. Based on these results Davenport finds that "different aspects of democracy (*Voice* and *Veto*) promote lower level coercive activity while discouraging more lethal forms." (p. 132) *Voice* overwhelms the effects of *Veto* based on several different indicators of each concept. In addition the effects of each are conditional on the presence of conflict within a country. Sifting through the evidence is complex, but the main point is that approaches to democracy that favor mass politics reduce state violence more than elite-based approaches to democracy that focus on checks on executive power.

What criticism might be leveled at this work? First with respect to hypothesis presentation, one can make a case for a clearer specification of the expectations given the author's theoretical position. The approach taken by Davenport, where all hypotheses found in the literature are presented, is common, but I prefer the more focused option of presenting one's own hypotheses and letting the literature review identify alternatives. Second I believe Davenport missed an opportunity to make another contribution. He invests considerable attention to the state's behavior and how the state conditions dissident response. This begs an important question: are certain groups more likely to be targeted in democracies? For example, are minority groups or groups with violent goals the most likely targets? Further attention to the way dissidents groups are composed and organized, and how this affects state-dissident interaction is a logical next step.

These minor concerns aside, Davenport's book represents a leap forward in our understanding of how democracy relates to state repression. It contextualizes our conception of the domestic democratic peace by identifying the limitations of the hypothesis. As such it will be an important entry on graduate syllabi and should generate a good deal of work that will refine, attempt to refute, and extend the notion of a domestic democratic peace.

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Laitin, David D. *Nations, States, and Violence*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2007.

David D. Laitin's latest book is a must-read for scholars interested in a succinct evaluation of the status of ethnicity and nationalism, as well as their connection to civil conflict — or more accurately, the lack of a connection. For those unfamiliar with the literature, *Nations, States, and Violence* provides a useful account of the relationship between national identities and the oft-associated hatred and aggression. Discussions of the complex relationship between nations and states, as well as the liberal democratic approach proposed by Laitin as the solution to problems posed by heterogeneity, provide much for the seasoned scholar to chew on. Theory and evidence are brilliantly intermingled with rich historical examples drawn primarily from the author's invaluable fieldwork.

Laitin packs numerous complex issues into a very small space and as such leaves the reader expecting and wanting more. Though the potential implications of this work are numerous, the author's purpose is primarily three-fold. First Laitin establishes the absence of a relationship between ethnic heterogeneity and civil war. (p. 15) Conventional wisdom and the data conflict: while combatant