

Breaking Up Is Hard to Do:  
Incorporating Democratic Uncertainty into  
Rational Choice Accounts of Democratic Breakdown

by

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Why do democracies break down? Comparative politics literature was fixated on this question in the 1960s, and the late 1970s witnessed the most concerted efforts to address democratic breakdown. Over the past twenty-five years, the democratization literature focused on explaining democratic transitions and more recently, democratic consolidation. A good number of prominent scholars in this field have begun to question the utility of continuing to focus research attention on consolidation. Recently, scholars focused on Latin American politics have turned their attention to a particular form of breakdown: the *autogolpe* or presidential self-coup. My research returns to this important question in an effort to reexamine the issue of democratic breakdown.

As a part of this overall project, this paper is part of focuses on the issues surrounding the idea of democratic uncertainty. Specifically, I argue that problems surrounding our understanding of “democratic uncertainty” arise as a result of conceptual confusion largely due to differences in the understanding of “uncertainty” as a concept. By limiting analysis of “democratic uncertainty” to the results of institutionalizing free and fair elections, we can get to the root of the issue: over a broad time horizon one can never be certain of who will govern a democratic regime. Democratic regimes thus create uncertainty to the extent that elections allow for the possibility of governmental change. Unlike non-democratic regimes, the opportunities for such change are institutionalized and occur at regular intervals. Understood as such, I argue it is necessary to explicitly include the concept of democratic uncertainty into the study of democratic breakdown. By introducing a basic model of democratic breakdown that incorporates the idea of democratic uncertainty, this paper represents an initial step

toward an overall model of breakdown that allows for the incorporation of both process and structural approaches commonly employed in this area of research.

This issue is important; democratic countries do experience transitions to non-democratic forms of government. I argue it is naïve to think that structural factors (socioeconomic performance, civil-military relations, representative nature of political institutions, and engagement in an international system prioritizing democracy) solely determine the survival of democracy. While such an approach reveals a lot about the conditions giving rise to regime change, it cannot account for why different regimes (across time and/or space) can confront similar structural conditions yet experience different (regime survival) results. The problem is that such an approach leaves no room for the role of politics and actors. Likewise, it is naïve to argue process explanations (decentralized decisions, such as bargaining or pact making, by relevant political actors) alone can account for differences in regime survival. While such an approach reveals a lot about the particular context and timing of decisions surrounding regime change, it cannot explain the circumstances that give rise to the problem in the first place. The difficulty is that such an approach fails to account for the context that triggers the necessity of such decision-making. My research is thus focused on unifying these two approaches.

This research project is thus situated in the comparative politics research on democratization, which examines the issues surrounding transitions between from non-democratic and democratic regimes. To address this literature, we must first define democracy. There are two main approaches to this task. The maximalist one sees democracy as an ideal type, laying out a set of objectives all democracies should strive

for but few, if any, have actually completely fulfilled. This approach is of little analytical use as it overburdens the concept to the extent that there are few, if any, empirical referents.<sup>1</sup> In response, a consensus has evolved around the adoption of a minimal definition based procedures rather than substantive outcomes.<sup>2</sup> The root of this approach is identified by Schumpeter, who explains, “the democratic method is that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people’s vote.”<sup>3</sup> The most widely employed conceptualization of this approach can be found in Dahl’s idea of polyarchy, which utilizes the attributes participation and contestation.<sup>4</sup> Polyarchy improves on Schumpeter’s approach because it recognizes that that a certain degree of civil and political rights are necessary for fair, competitive, and inclusive elections. One widely accepted attempt to further increase the precision of the definition excludes instances of “reserved domains” of power over elected governments in recognition that some Latin America militaries retained significant power over democratically elected representatives.<sup>5</sup> Following Schumpeter and Dahl, I define democracy as a political system where the most powerful collective decision makers are selected through fair, honest, and periodic elections in which virtually all the adult population is eligible to vote.<sup>6</sup> This definition incorporates the dimensions of contestation and participation as the crucial factors differentiating democracy from non-democracy, implies the existence of civil and political liberties, and excludes the potential for significant reserve domains.<sup>7</sup>

Since the beginnings of democratization research in the late 1950s, both research questions and analytical frameworks have shifted over time. The issue driving research has moved from democratic preconditions to breakdown to transition to consolidation.

The analytical framework has shifted back and forth between structural and process orientations. One means of identifying these changes is to orient them with Huntington's democratic waves.<sup>8</sup>

Samuel Huntington argues there is an observable historical pattern of global political change that occur in waves. These waves of democratization are groups of transitions from non-democratic to democratic regimes that occur within a specified period of time and that significantly outnumber transitions in the opposite direction.<sup>9</sup> Further, he points out that "history is also not unidirectional. Each of the first two waves of democratization was followed by a reverse wave in which some but not all of the countries that had previously made the transition to democracy reverted to nondemocratic rule."<sup>10</sup> Huntington points to three waves of democratization. The *first wave* lasted from 1828-1926 and was reversed from 1922-1942. The *second wave* lasted from 1943-1962 and was reversed from 1958-1975. The *third wave* began in 1974 (with the end of dictatorship in Portugal) and continues today.<sup>11</sup>

Shifts in the research questions driving the democratization literature have closely tracked Huntington's democratic waves. In response to post-WWII transitions (second wave), research in the 1960s was concerned with a search for preconditions to democracy.<sup>12</sup> Confronted with the second reverse wave, attention in the 1970s turned to explaining the causes of democratic breakdowns.<sup>13</sup> Just as a consensus had been achieved on the undemocratic and statist direction of change in the third world,<sup>14</sup> the rising number of anomalies created by the growing third wave confronted scholars and research attention shifted to the causes of democratic transitions.<sup>15</sup> In the early 1990s,

many researchers recognized the need to distinguish completion of the transition phase from the ongoing struggle for democratic permanence and shifted their attention to the issue of democratic consolidation.<sup>16</sup> During the last five years, a number of academics, mainly interested in Latin American politics, have explored issues surrounding *autogolpes* (presidential self-coups) in Peru and Guatemala.<sup>17</sup>

In addition to the distinct shifts in research foci over the last twenty-five years, there is a fundamental division between structural and process-driven explanations. Structural approaches argue that regime change is a function of resource and institutional constraints. Process approaches see regime change as a function of actor choice driven by perceptions of preferences and relative strengths.<sup>18</sup> The roots of the structural literature can be found in writings from the 1960s and early 1970s concerning the search for preconditions. The four major areas of preconditions research are modernization, political culture, historical, and external factors, all of which relied on the argument that certain preconditions were necessary for the emergence of democracy.<sup>19</sup> Structural explanations also predominated the subsequent study of democratic breakdown.<sup>20</sup> Following the resurgence of democratic regimes during the third wave, the structuralists have attempted to explain the breakdown of authoritarian regimes and their transitions to democracy.<sup>21</sup> Research on consolidation has recently turned its attention to structure, examining political institutions<sup>22</sup> and socioeconomic factors.<sup>23</sup> The common foundation for structuralist is that regime change can be explained in terms of resource and institutional constraints, effectively holding actors' preferences constant.<sup>24</sup>

In contrast, process-driven explanations argue that academic focus should be placed on actor's strength and preferences.<sup>25</sup> For these analysts, democratization is seen

as a process consisting of the breakdown of the old regime, a period of rule-making, and the installation and consolidation of the new democracy.<sup>26</sup> A key element of this approach is the uncertainty of the democratic ‘game.’<sup>27</sup> Democratic uncertainty is important because, as opposed to the (relatively) certain winners and losers of non-democratic regimes, all actors have an opportunity to win (and lose) under a democratic regime. So, as the costs of maintaining the certainty of the old regime increase, process-driven explanations argue, the attractiveness of the uncertainty of democracy increase.<sup>28</sup> Despite recent structuralist efforts, the process approach, focusing on the strength and preferences of the various actors in the game, continues to dominate the transition and consolidation literature.<sup>29</sup>

Given the difficulties with the concept of democratic consolidation and the shortcomings of the literature, the dissertation turns to an examination of democratic breakdown. Schedler argues that research should return to the concept’s original concern with democratic survival and that doing so would allow the problematic aspects of the concept to be replaced by “superior alternative concepts.”<sup>30</sup> By shifting the focus of my research to the concept of breakdown, I attempt to avoid the conceptual confusion and the operational specification difficulties surrounding democratic consolidation.<sup>31</sup>

Recent trends in the third wave also point to the need for research oriented to democratic breakdown. It is widely recognized that democracies, even consolidated one, can experience a breakdown.<sup>32</sup> Diamond, utilizing Freedom House indicators, points out that freedom levels in many *third wave* democracies has actually declined over the last decade.<sup>33</sup> Huntington argues that each of the first two *waves* has been followed by a reverse wave and that there are now “indications that a new reverse wave may be

gathering.”<sup>34</sup> Power and Gasiorowski argue, “it is legitimate to analyze the development of relatively young polyarchies - to study the infant mortality rates of Third World democracy, if you will. Just as pediatrics is far more essential to Third World medicine than is geriatrics, so must students of democratization sometimes adapt their analytic tools to an environment where the odds for successful democracy have frankly not been very favorable.”<sup>35</sup> Recent events in Latin America, ranging from the *autogolpe* cases to presidential resignations in a number of countries, seem to bear out this point.

The most explicit, comprehensive attempt to study breakdown was undertaken in the four-book collection, *The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes*, edited by Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan and published in 1978.<sup>36</sup> To date, this remains the most significant work on democratic breakdown. The theory section of this collection, *The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes: Crisis, Breakdown & Reequilibration*, written by Linz, drives the case study work in the later sections.<sup>37</sup> Linz concentrates on the importance of incumbent democratic leaders maintaining legitimacy in order to prevent semiloyal and disloyal elements in society from undertaking actions to break down democracy. He stresses the importance of the initial policy agendas of new democratic governments as a means of bolstering its legitimacy. However, in the end, he points to the “unsolvable problems” most new regimes face in painting a rather bleak picture of their ability to survive. In hindsight, while extremely important, his approach seems a bit deterministic and the predictions one might draw based on this approach seem overly pessimistic.

More recently, Cohen undertook the most explicit attempt to apply a rational choice approach to the study of democratic breakdown.<sup>38</sup> Making use of a single shot Prisoner’s Dilemma game, Cohen argues actors in Brazil and Chile found themselves in a



situation that prevented cooperation and led to the collapse of democracy. He concludes, these successful tests of the PD game “make a good case for the use of intentional explanations in the study of large-scale political transformations such as the collapse of democracy.”<sup>39</sup> While some formal modeling has been attempted in the recent literature, there are a number of shortcomings with such attempts that need to be addressed. The scope of actors analyzed is usually limited. The most prominent approach is to examine hardliners and softliners in the transition process.<sup>40</sup> When examining the different actors, these studies are further limited by their exclusive reliance on the structure of actor preferences to guide the outcomes under study.<sup>41</sup> Additionally, iteration is rarely introduced; more often, research employs single shot games.<sup>42</sup> These limitations are problematic, because as Karl points out, “a variety of actors with different followings, preferences, calculations, resources and time horizons come to the fore during these successive stages.”<sup>43</sup> There are numerous significant actors in any regime change game and they differ not just on their preferences but also on strength and perception of risk and uncertainty.

One of the most fundamental arguments produced by the process literature is the idea of the uncertainty of democracy.<sup>44</sup> Despite this prominence, Schedler argues “scholars tend to set aside the issues of uncertainty the moment they turn to concrete empirical research.”<sup>45</sup> I argue this is due to conceptual confusion surrounding the idea of democratic uncertainty. When O’Donnell and Schmitter introduced uncertainty into the democratization literature, they were concerned with transitions from authoritarian rule.<sup>46</sup> The point they were making was when authoritarian regimes break down, they do not automatically produce democracies. Rather, they introduce periods of extraordinary

uncertainty that may result in a transition to democracy or a transition to another non-democratic regime. As a result of this argument, scholars examining democratic transitions came to accept the idea that democratic transitions involve an “interval of intense political uncertainty.”<sup>47</sup> To be clear, the uncertainty we are discussing here relates to the lack of knowledge as to the ultimate outcome of regime change. A country could end up undertaking a transition to democracy or a transition to a different non-democratic regime.

As scholars began to study the events following a democratic transition (the initial democratic election), they returned to the idea of uncertainty. Przeworski argued “democratization is an act of subjecting all interests to competition, of institutionalizing uncertainty. The decisive step toward democracy is the devolution of power from a group of people to a set of rules.”<sup>48</sup> The obvious example of uncertainty here is the institutionalization of elections. Actors accept defeat today because future elections allow for the possibility of a win in the future. Beyond this however, Przeworski also argued policy outcomes are uncertain under democracy. While institutional constraints and distribution of resources allow actors to understand both the range of possibilities and how likely they are to win, they cannot be certain as to the ultimate outcome. Hence, democracy is a system of “organized uncertainty.”<sup>49</sup>

Much of the definitional work surrounding democratic consolidation flows from this idea. The most widely accepted conception of consolidation is Linz’ description that a democracy can be considered consolidated when democracy becomes “the only game in town.”<sup>50</sup> This incorporates the notion of uncertainty in that consolidation occurs when all

the major actors in a regime agree to submit themselves to the uncertainty inherent in democratic institutions.

Recently the application of uncertainty to the study of democratization has come under fire. Alexander argues the literature contains two, mutually exclusive views of uncertainty that both mischaracterize the operation of democracy and authoritarian regimes.<sup>51</sup> He argues the ‘rule of law’ approach sees democracy as providing guarantees on substantive outcomes that authoritarian regimes cannot offer. Democracies limit discretionary power through mechanisms such as constitutions and entrenched sets of rights. This results in “a more abbreviated range of possible outcomes and hence lower risks that authoritarian rule.”<sup>52</sup> On the other hand, the ‘institutionalized uncertainty’ holds that democracy creates greater uncertainty than authoritarianism due to contested decision-making. Alexander argues neither approach accurately describes differences in “predictability” found across regime type. Rather, he points to the importance of “country- and time-specific” structural constraints in concluding that we should focus more attention on “within-regime differences.”<sup>53</sup>

This example serves to illustrate the conceptual confusion surrounding democratic uncertainty. I believe much of the difficulty lies in the unfortunate choice to employ the moniker “uncertainty” to the entire discussion. Economists see uncertainty as an information problem. As such, for the most part, it is viewed as an environmental condition that is beyond the control of actors. For example, Alvarez and Franklin see uncertainty as ubiquitous in the political world and conceive of it as a “probability distribution over possible outcomes.” Likewise, Cioffi-Revilla and Starr, draw on the natural science roots of uncertainty claiming it means “all political behavior is always

inherently probabilistic, never deterministic ... because all politics is behavior ultimately grounded on individual decisions made under uncertainty – just as uncertainty is ingrained in the fundamental structure of matter.” From this perspective, Przeworski’s position that democracy is a system of “organized uncertainty” would make little sense.

Over time, the effort to maintain conceptual consistency by continuing to employ the label “uncertainty” to the issues being explored in the democratization literature has led to a disconnect between what this literature understands as uncertainty and the ways in which research outside this literature understand the concept. For example, Alexander is attempting to compare levels of uncertainty across regime type and the evaluate them in light of the “direct consequences for degrees of predictability in substantive policy content.”<sup>54</sup> In fact he is correct in arguing there are many sources of uncertainty and that a number, if not most, are system specific rather than being driven by regime type. Here, he is caught in the conceptual muddle. The focus of “democratic uncertainty” really deals with what Schmitter and Karl refer to as the regularized possibility of change.<sup>55</sup> Alexander argues that authoritarian regimes can be highly unpredictable and risky as well as constrained and stable. Here is correct. The point he is missing is that while authoritarian governments hold the potential to generate this type of uncertainty, the aim of a consolidated democracy is to **institutionalize** this uncertainty – in a sense, make the uncertainty predictable. This paragraph alone should make it clear why we run into so much confusion when we employ the term uncertainty as a proxy for the idea that democratic institutions allow for the possibility of governmental change while maintaining regime stability. The key factor is not that there is more or less information

available in one system or another; rather it is that the rules of democracy institutionalize a regular, understandable possibility for changing government (and hence policy).

Likewise, others confuse democratic uncertainty with stability. For example, Schedler recently argued, “the telos of consolidation is to reduce that uncertainty to a point where all major actors expect the regime to last well into the foreseeable future.

While the task of transition is to push open the window of uncertainty and create opportunities for democratic change, the challenge of consolidation is to close the window of uncertainty and preclude the possibilities of authoritarian regression.”<sup>56</sup>

While this accurately describes the difference between the transition and consolidation phases of democratization, it confuses democratic uncertainty with ideas surrounding “uncertainty of regime change.”<sup>57</sup> Rather, democratic uncertainty is concerned with institutionalizing the potential for governmental change while maintaining a democratic regime.

This is an understanding that, “some institutions under certain conditions offer the relevant political forces a prospect of eventually advancing their interests that is sufficient to incite them to comply with immediately unfavorable outcomes. Political forces comply with present defeats because they believe that the institutional framework that organizes the democratic competition will permit them to advance their interests in the future.”<sup>58</sup> For example, a business community may not like a new tax structure enacted by government but it usually takes more than simple displeasure with such a policy to spur calls for total systemic change. Not only do such calls for systemic change place these actors in a greater state of uncertainty over potential outcomes, in the end, the business community may suffer under an even less desirable tax system in the post-

change order. Although the results of democratic incremental change, effected through actions such as lobbying for different legislation or supporting an opposition party, may not produce optimal outcomes, actors usually satisfice with less than optimal results. While actors can certainly imagine a future with brighter prospects under a non-democratic government (under their control), they also seem to recognize the path to that future contains a great deal of risk and may not produce the ends they desire.

Despite the centrality of the notion of democratic uncertainty, it has not been incorporated in formal accounts of democratization. One could argue it has been subsumed within actor preferences, however most formal models addressing democratization adopt a view of preferences that is static, seemingly based on the current distribution of goods. My position is this misses the point of democratic uncertainty. When evaluating the benefits of a democratic regime, actors account for more than simply the current distribution of good. In-power actors should discount their payoffs (goods received under the current system) to account for the fact that they can (and will) lose future elections, which presumably will have a negative impact on their payoffs. Likewise, out-of-power actors should inflate their current payoffs to account for the possibility of winning future elections.

In addition, existing models seem to ignore both an assessment of the chances for success and of the costs involved in attempting regime change. There is a substantial risk of failure involved in any such attempt. History is replete with failed coups and failed transitions. Surely this is a central concern of any actor involved in such an attempt. Likewise, there are costs associated with both success and failure. Success is rarely achieved by a single actor and, as such, the victor has to pay (in both the short and long

term) for necessary support. Failure can involve things like death, jail or financial ruin.

Surely, both sets of costs considered by actors contemplating regime change. Therefore,

I posit,

**Hypothesis 1:** Actors are likely to support democratic breakdown when the payoff received under the democratic regime discounted by their assessment of democratic uncertainty is less than their perception of the cost of attempting regime change and the payoff received under a non-democratic system discounted by their assessment of the chance of victory.

Developing a model that addresses this hypothesis will allow me to incorporate both a structural and process approach to address the issue of democratic breakdown. Such a model is incomplete without the explicit inclusion of democratic uncertainty. Schedler points out, “studies of democratization have come to live with a state of divorce between the common conceptualization of transition and consolidation and their common operationalization in comparative and statistical research. Conceptually, most scholars seem to accept uncertainty is a defining feature of transition and consolidation processes. But operationally ... uncertainty does not play any role in most empirical treatments of comparative democratization.”<sup>59</sup>

The structural model remains open to the charge of determinism, as it leaves no room for the role of political actors. To account for this problem, my research introduces a process model of breakdown. The model makes a number of assumptions:

- a variety of actors are involved in the process (usually more than two),
- this is an iterated game (not a single shot play),
- actors calculate the benefits they receive under both the democratic regime and a potential non-democratic regime,

- actors account for the uncertainty associated with democracy (elections can produce change),
- actors account for costs involved in a fight over regime change, and,
- actors calculate their chances for victory in a regime change fight.

Given these assumptions, I posit:

**Hypothesis 2:** Player  $i$  should support democratic breakdown when,  
 $(P_i) \delta_i < (R_i - C_i) v_i$

where, for player  $i$ :

$P_i$  is the net present value of goods received under the democratic regime,

$\delta_i$  is the discount/inflation factor of democratic uncertainty,

$R_i$  is the reward expected under the non-democratic system,

$C_i$  is the cost of the fight over regime change, and,

$v_i$  is the assessment of the chance of a successful breakdown.

When an individual actor considers whether she should support democratic breakdown, she first calculates the net present value of goods received. In other words, she arrives at an evaluation of the goods she receives under the present democratic regime.

Recognizing that under democracy, elections determine who governs and that changes in government imply changes in public policy, she then calculates how future changes in government may affect the goods she receives. Policies may change that could result in her receiving a higher or lower level of goods. Next, she calculates the rewards she expects to receive under a non-democratic regime and subtracts the costs associated with the fight for regime change. Finally, she calculates the chances of success in a move to break down the democratic regime.

While I am not arguing that actors actually pull out a calculator in an attempt to arrive at a bottom line number, I am claiming they are capable of arriving at an overall picture of their options and that the elements contained in Hypothesis 2 form the basis of



such a picture. Further, these should not be viewed as unduly onerous calculations. Actors can figure out the goods they receive under the present system of government. While there are intangible goods (how does one calculate freedom), it is not that difficult to pull out a balance sheet, a tax filing or a budget. Actors are capable of understanding how foreseeable changes in government will affect the goods they receive. At minimum, actors have a perception of how governmental change will affect them. Likewise, it would seem difficult take the position that actors considering engaging in a game of democratic breakdown would not calculate or are incapable of understanding the rewards they expect under the new regime, the costs associated with such a fight and the chances for victory.

Such a process model has a number of substantial advantages over anything currently existing in the literature. First, it provides a more accurate evaluation of the number of actors involved in the process. Existing models of democratic breakdown generally rely on two actors. Most commonly, hardliners and softliners (or loyal, semi-loyal and disloyal) are considered in evaluating regime change. This is an unnecessary oversimplification. We should account for at least the current government, political opponents of the government, the military, the business community, the mass public and international actors. We should then account for possible divisions within such groups. Second, the model allows for iteration. Existing models of breakdown are generally single-shot games. Actors are allowed to make only a single move. This obviously does not accurately reflect the process and while it is not feasible to include an infinite number of iterations, the state of game theory certainly allows for more than one move.

Third, the model allows for more complete picture of preference structure. Usually actors are allowed to rank two to four preferences. As such, the nuance of calculations surrounding support or opposition in a breakdown game is lost. The model I am advancing will allow for spatial modeling of actor preferences in different breakdown games. Fourth, the model explicitly accounts for the risk involved in democratic breakdown. Existing models simply ignore risk, preference calculations, where articulated, are simply too rudimentary to account for risk. This is an unnecessary limitation. Actors clearly consider the chances of success and failure when evaluating whether to support a move to overthrow the existing democratic regime.

Finally, the model accounts for the idea of democratic uncertainty. The notion of democratic uncertainty has become central to the democratization literature. It is seen as the main reason supporters of losing parties in a democratic election do not simply defect and act in an undemocratic fashion. While upset about the current results, the notion of democratic uncertainty says they will remember all that separates them from power is the next election. The model introduced here, explicitly includes such a notion. It recognizes that out-of-power actors are likely to inflate their calculation of goods received under the current system to account for the possibility that more favorable governments may be elected in the future. Likewise, actors receiving benefits from the current government are likely to discount their calculation of the net present value of goods they receive in recognition of the potential for governmental change.

This paper represents a first step toward developing a comprehensive model to explain democratic breakdown. Attempts to develop such a model in the existing literature rely mainly on cross-national analysis of structural constraints. While it is

important to understand, for example, economic difficulties a new democracy encounters, I argue this presents only a portion of the picture. Certainly, some democracies face severe economic problem while avoiding regime change. My research aims to address such issues by recognizing the need to incorporate an understanding of the choices actors make under such conditions. This paper presents an argument for the necessity of examining the issue of democratic uncertainty when constructing rational choice accounts of democratic breakdown. The idea of democratic uncertainty has recently come under fire, however I believe this is mainly due to conceptual confusion. Such confusion can be overcome by limiting the application to the idea that democracy institutionalizes the possibility for changing governments. Despite this controversy, there is widespread agreement in the democratization literature that democratic uncertainty is theoretically important. However, little effort is made to incorporate it into our research. At best, this limits us to examining the set of goods actors currently receive when attempting to understand when and why they might support regime change. However, the theoretical arguments behind the idea of democratic uncertainty point to the shortcoming of such a position. Actors are influenced by their views of the potential democratic institutions hold over time to change governments (and their power). This paper introduces a basic first step to address this shortcoming. As a first step, it lays the foundation for the research I am currently undertaking to fully develop the mathematical elements of the model, incorporate it with a basic structural model and then test it against existing cases.

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<sup>1</sup> Gerardo L. Munck and Jay Verkuilen, "Conceptualizing and Measuring Democracy: Evaluating Alternative Indices," *Comparative Political Studies* 35 (February 2002), 9.

<sup>2</sup> David Collier and Steven Levitsky, "Democracy with Adjectives: Conceptual Innovation in Comparative Research," *World Politics* 49 (April 1997), 433. For examples of employment of a minimal definition, see Giuseppe Di Palma, *To Craft Democracies* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1990), 15-16; Samuel Huntington, *The Third wave* (Norman: Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 1990), 5-13; Juan J. Linz, "Crisis, Breakdown, and Reequilibration," in *The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes*, ed. Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), 5-6; Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe Schmitter, *Transitions From Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions About Uncertain Democracies* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), 6-14; Zehra F. Arat, *Democracy and Human Rights in Developing Countries* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1991), 15-29; Andreas Schedler, "What is Democratic Consolidation?" *Journal of Democracy* 9:2 (1998), 91-2.

<sup>3</sup> Joseph A. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy*, (New York: Harper, 1947), 269.

<sup>4</sup> Robert A. Dahl, *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971), 3-8.

<sup>5</sup> J. Samuel Valenzuela, "Democratic Consolidation in Post-Transition Settings: Notion, Process, and Facilitating Conditions," in Scott Mainwaring, Guillermo O'Donnell and J. Samuel Valenzuela, eds., *Issues in Democratic Consolidation: The New South American Democracies in Comparative Perspective* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992), 70.

<sup>6</sup> For examples of others using the same definition, see Huntington (fn. 3), p. 7; Georg Sorensen, *Democracy and Democratization*, Boulder: Westview Press, (1993), p. 13; Mark Gasiorowski and Timothy J. Power, "The Structural Determinants of Democratic Consolidation: Evidence from the Third World," *Comparative Political Studies* 31(December 1998), p. 741.

<sup>7</sup> Huntington (fn. 3), 7, 9-12. See also, Dahl (fn. 5), p. 1-10; Sorensen (fn.7), p. 9-16; Gasiorowski and Power (fn. 7), p. 741; Arat (fn. 3), p. 23-26; Adam Przeworski and Fernando Limongi, "Modernization: Theories and Facts," *World Politics* 49 (January 1997), p. 178.

<sup>8</sup> Huntington (fn. 3), p. 16-26.

<sup>9</sup> Huntington (fn. 3), p15.

<sup>10</sup> Huntington (fn. 3), p15-6.

<sup>11</sup> Huntington (fn. 3), p. 16-26.

<sup>12</sup> See, for example, Seymour Martin Lipset, "Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy," *American Political Science Review* 53 (1959); Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968); Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, *The Civic Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963); Barrington Moore, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966); Dahl (fn. 5); Phillips Cutright, "National Political Development: Measures and Analysis," *American Sociological Review* 28 (1963); Leonard Binder, *Crises and Sequences in Political Development* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971).

<sup>13</sup> See, for example, Linz (fn. 3); Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, eds., *The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes: Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1978); Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, eds., *The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes: Latin America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1978); Arturo Valenzuela, *The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes: Chile* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1978); Jyotirindra Das Gupta, "A Season of Caesars," *Asian Survey* 28 (April 1978); Martin C. Needler, "Military Motivations in the Seizure of Power," *Latin American Research Review* 10 (Fall 1975); Youssef Cohen, "Democracy from Above: The Political Origins of Military Dictatorship in Brazil," *World Politics* 60 (October 1987); Guillermo A. O'Donnell, *Modernization and Bureaucratic-Authoritarianism: Studies in South American Politics* (Berkeley: University of California Press 1973); Karen L. Remmer and Gilbert W. Merkx, "Bureaucratic-Authoritarianism Revisited," *Latin American Research Review* 17 (No. 2 1982).

<sup>14</sup> Karen Remmer, "Theoretical Decay and Theoretical Development: The Resurgence of Institutional Analysis," *World Politics* 50 (October 1997), p. 42-3.

<sup>15</sup> See, for example, Guillermo O'Donnell, Philippe C. Schmitter and Laurence Whitehead, eds., *Transitions From Authoritarian Rule: Comparative Perspectives* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press,

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1986); O'Donnell and Schmitter (fn. 3); Terry Lynn Karl and Philippe C. Schmitter, "Modes of Transition in Latin America, Southern and Eastern Europe," *International Social Science Journal* 143 (May 1991); James Malloy and Mitchell A. Seligson, eds., *Authoritarians and Democrats: Regime Transition in Latin America* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1987); Larry Diamond, Juan J. Linz, and Seymour Martin Lipset, *Democracy in Developing Countries* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1988); Enrique Baloyra, *Comparing New Democracies: Transition and Consolidation in Mediterranean Europe and the Southern Cone* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1987).

<sup>16</sup> See, for example, John Higley and Richard Gunther, eds., *Elites and Democratic Consolidation in Latin American and Southern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Scott Mainwaring, Guillermo O'Donnell and J. Samuel Valenzuela, eds., *Issues in Democratic Consolidation: The New South American Democracies in Comparative Perspective* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992); Linz (fn. 11); Diamond, Plattner, Chu, and Tien (fn. 9).

<sup>17</sup> See, for example, Maxwell A. Cameron, "Self-Coups: Peru, Guatemala, and Russia," *Journal of Democracy* 9.1 (1998), p. 125-139; Maxwell A. Cameron, "Latin American Autogolpes: Dangerous Undertows in the Third Wave of Democratization," *Third World Quarterly* 19.2 (1988), p. 219-239; Philip Mauceri, "State Reform, Coalitions, and the Neoliberal Autogolpe in Peru," *Latin American Research Review* 30.1 (1995), p. 7-37.

<sup>18</sup> Herbert Kitschelt, "Political Regime Change: Structure and Process-Driven Explanations?" *American Political Science Review* 86 (December 1992), p1028.

<sup>19</sup> Terry Lynn Karl, "Dilemmas of Democratization in Latin America," *Comparative Politics* 23 (October 1990), p. 2-4. Also, see fn. 19.

<sup>20</sup> Youssef Cohen, *Radicals, Reformers and Reactionaries: The Prisoner's Dilemma and the Collapse of Democracy in Latin America* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994), 128.

<sup>21</sup> See, for example, Adam Przeworski, "Some Problems in the Study of the Transition to Democracy," in Guillermo O'Donnell, Philippe C. Schmitter and Laurence Whitehead, eds., *Transitions From Authoritarian Rule: Comparative Perspectives* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986); Edward C. Epstein, "Legitimacy, Institutionalization, and Opposition in Exclusionary Bureaucratic-Authoritarian Regimes," *Comparative Politics* 17 (October 1984); John Walton and Charles Ragin, "Austerity and Dissent: Social Bases of Popular Struggle in Latin America," in William L. Canak, ed., *Lost Promises: Debt, Austerity, and Development in Latin America* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1989); Jonathan Hartlyn and Samuel A. Morley, "Bureaucratic-Authoritarian Regimes in Comparative Perspective," in Jonathan Hartlyn and Samuel A. Morley, eds., *Latin American Political Economy* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1986); Mitchell A. Seligson, "Democratization in Latin America: The Current Cycle," in James Malloy and Mitchell A. Seligson, eds., *Authoritarians and Democrats: Regime Transition in Latin America* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1987).

<sup>22</sup> See, for example, Juan J. Linz, "The Perils of Presidentialism," *Journal of Democracy* 1:1 (1990a); Juan J. Linz, "The Virtues of Parliamentarism," *Journal of Democracy* 1:4 (1990b); Juan J. Linz and Arturo Valenzuela, eds., *The Failure of Presidential Democracy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994); Matthew Soberg Shugart and John M. Carey, *Presidents and Assemblies* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Scott Mainwaring, "Presidentialism, Multipartyism and Democracy: The Difficult Combination," *Comparative Political Studies* 26 (1993); Alfred Stepan and Cindy Skach, "Constitutional Frameworks and Democratic Consolidation: Parliamentarism versus Presidentialism," *World Politics* 46 (October 1993); Scott Mainwaring, "Party Systems in the Third Wave," *Journal of Democracy* 9:3 (1998).

<sup>23</sup> See, for example, Yi Feng, "Democracy, Political Stability and Economic Growth," *British Journal of Political Science* 27 (1997), p. 392-4; David A. Leblang, "Political Democracy and Economic Growth: Pooled Cross-Sectional and Time Series Evidence," *British Journal of Political Science* 27 (1997), p. 453. Also see for example, Ross E. Burkhart and Michael S. Lewis-Beck, "Comparative Democracy: The Economic Development Thesis," *American Political Science Review* 88 (December 1994); Stephan Haggard and Robert R. Kaufman, *The Political Economy of Democratic Transitions* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995); Uk Heo and Alexander C. Tan, "Democracy and Economic Growth: A Causal Analysis," paper presented to the Annual Meeting of the Southern Political Science Association, (Norfolk, Virginia, November 5-8, 1997); Przeworski and Limongi (fn. 8); Adam Przeworski, Michael Alvarez, Jose Antonio Cheibub and Fernando Limongi, "What Makes Democracies Endure?" in Larry Diamond, Marc F. Plattner, Yun-Han Chu, and Hung-Mao Tien, eds., *Consolidating The Third wave Democracies* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997); Karen L. Remmer, "Democracy and Economic Crisis: The Latin

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American Experience,” *World Politics* 42 (April 1990), p. 327; Karen L. Remmer, “The Political Economy of Elections in Latin America, 1980-1991,” *American Political Science Review* 87 (June 1993), p. 405.

<sup>24</sup> Kitschelt (fn. 24), p. 1028-1031.

<sup>25</sup> See, for example, Higley and Gunther (fn. 23); Mainwaring, O’Donnell and Valenzuela (fn. 23); David Collier and Deborah Norden, “Strategic Choice Model of Political Change in Latin America,” *Comparative Politics* 24 (January 1992); DiPalma (fn. 3); Karl (fn. 25); Karl and Schmitter (fn. 22); O’Donnell and Schmitter (fn. 3).

<sup>26</sup> Shin (fn. 13), p. 143

<sup>27</sup> Adam Przeworski, *Democracy and the Market: Political and Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 12-14, 40-50; DiPalma (fn. 3), 40-43.

<sup>28</sup> Przeworski (fn. 28), 12-14, 40-50; DiPalma (fn. 3), 40-43.

<sup>29</sup> Remmer (fn. 21), p. 50; Gasiorowski and Power (fn. 7), p. 740.

<sup>30</sup> Schedler (fn. 3), p. 103.

<sup>31</sup> Exact specification of democratic breakdown is discussed in the Data and Measurement section of the proposal.

<sup>32</sup> See footnote 13.

<sup>33</sup> Diamond (fn. 11), p. xvii.

<sup>34</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, “Democracy for the Long Haul,” in Larry Diamond, Marc F. Plattner, Yun-Han Chu, and Hung-Mao Tien, eds., *Consolidating The Third wave Democracies* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), p. 5.

<sup>35</sup> Power and Gasiorowski (fn. 13), p. 135.

<sup>36</sup> See Linz (fn. 3); Linz and Stepan (fn. 19); Valenzuela (fn. 19).

<sup>37</sup> Linz (fn. 3).

<sup>38</sup> Cohen (fn. 26).

<sup>39</sup> Cohen (fn. 26), 124.

<sup>40</sup> See, for example, O’Donnell and Schmitter (fn. 3), 15-17.

<sup>41</sup> Scott Mainwaring, “Transitions to Democracy and Democratic Consolidation: Theoretical and Comparative Issues,” in Scott Mainwaring, Guillermo O’Donnell and J. Samuel Valenzuela, eds., *Issues in Democratic Consolidation: The New South American Democracies in Comparative Perspective* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992), 329-330.

<sup>42</sup> See, for example, Cohen (fn. 26), 69-70.

<sup>43</sup> Karl (fn. 24), 5.

<sup>44</sup> Przeworski (Fn. 25), 58; Schedler 2001, 2.

<sup>45</sup> Schedler 2001, 2.

<sup>46</sup> O’Donnell and Schmitter 1986, 3-5.

<sup>47</sup> Bratton and can de Walle 1997, 10.

<sup>48</sup> Przeworski 1992, 14.

<sup>49</sup> Przeworski 1992, 13.

<sup>50</sup> Linz 1990, 158.

<sup>51</sup> Alexander 2002, 1145.

<sup>52</sup> Alexander 2002, 1147.

<sup>53</sup> Alexander 2002, 1151-2.

<sup>54</sup> Alexander 2002, 1151.

<sup>55</sup> Schmitter and Karl 1991, 82.

<sup>56</sup> Schedler 2001, 4.

<sup>57</sup> Schedler 2001, 5.

<sup>58</sup> Przeworski (Fn. 31), 19.

<sup>59</sup> Schhedler 2001, 5.