ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE AND SURVIVAL IN NEW DEMOCRACIES
Is There a Honeymoon Effect?

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In the literature on democratic survival, theories of democratic consolidation assume that new democracies are more vulnerable to breakdown. Theories of democratic honeymoons, however, claim that new democracies are less vulnerable to breakdown. This article addresses this seeming contradiction. Using an original data set that includes all democracies from the period 1951 to 1995, the authors use discrete-time duration analysis to determine if there is evidence for a period of enhanced survivability in new democracies. Using both continuous and discrete specifications of a honeymoon period, they test whether new democracies experience an absolute honeymoon (whether newness in itself makes them less prone to breakdown) or a relative honeymoon (where newness insulates them from the effect of poor economic performance). The results suggest that there is a short-lived absolute honeymoon, but that new democracies are actually more vulnerable to effects of poor economic performance prior to their third legislative election.

Keywords: *honeymoon, democratization, political economy, breakdown, economic growth*

In recent years much of the literature in comparative politics has assumed that the survival of democratic regimes is somehow contingent on time. Concepts developed to understand the recent wave of democratization contain the implicit, but less than fully articulated or examined, notion that there

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are times in the life of a democracy when it is more or less prone to break down. On one hand, there is a widespread belief that newness means vulnerability. For instance, in a major speech just prior to the opening of the international conference "Toward a Democratic Community" in Warsaw, then secretary of state Madeline Albright argued that "while democracy in the long run is the most stable form of government, in the short run, it is among the most fragile" (Perlez, 2000). Curiously, she uttered these words in a country that soon after its transition to democracy overcame hyperinflation and a severe 3-year recession to become the textbook case of democratic and capitalist transformation in Eastern Europe.

Albright's statement is consistent with the substantial literature on democratic consolidation that argues that once democracies have become institutionalized they are less prone to break down. In contrast to the belief in the durability of established democracies, there is a more modest literature that argues that new democracies experience a honeymoon period. These theories have, until this point, coexisted nicely in the literature without anyone pointing out that they potentially contradict each other. Nobody has explained how new democracies could be somehow more and less vulnerable to breakdown.

Does the existing literature provide any insights that could help resolve this? To start, there is a growing body of evidence that consolidation (in the sense of lesser vulnerability to breakdown) may be an elusive concept.[1] Recent large-n studies have not found evidence of democratic consolidation, leaving doubts about its existence despite its widespread acceptance by the discipline. Three studies, using different geographic and temporal samples, investigating the question of what promotes the survival of democracies (Bernhard, Nordstrom, & Reenock, 2001; Gasiorowski, 1995; Przeworski et al., 1996), did not detect duration dependence when they controlled for levels of socioeconomic development.

In this study we will determine if there is broad-based, empirical evidence for the other hypothesized period of enhanced survivability, a honeymoon for new democracies. If we are able to do so, this will explain why large-n studies of survival have not found evidence of duration dependence. Failure to find evidence of enhanced survivability for new democracies would indicate that honeymoons are not a ubiquitous feature of democratization but are, at best, a phenomenon produced by conjunctions of conditions in specific cases. It would also be cause to reconsider widespread notions of the time contingency of democratic survival.

1. Another stream in the literature on democratic consolidation conceptualizes it in terms of improvements in quality (so-called deepening). The duration analyses discussed above do not get at this aspect of the question.

WHAT ARE HONEYMOONS? DO THEY EXIST?

Honeymoons are commonly understood as periods directly following the foundation of democracies when they are less likely to break down. There are a number of possible explanations for why this is so. It could be because citizens are prepared to give a new political system a period to establish and prove itself before evaluating its performance critically. Or it may be because democracy has replaced a form of highly unpopular authoritarianism. If the outgoing regime has severely mismanaged the economy or persecuted its opponents, real or imagined, in a particularly cruel fashion, democracy may accrue what Valenzuela (1992, pp. 78-79) has referred to as "inverse legitimacy." If this is the case, poor performance by new democracies will be judged less harshly than that of already established democracies.

Only certain kinds of transitions should produce a honeymoon effect. Among the countries included in our data set we distinguish between three different paths to polyarchy. By their nature, honeymoons occur only when change is disjunctive. One path, the evolution of competitive oligarchies[2] into polyarchies through expansion of the franchise (as in many of the early West European or North American democracies) is not disjunctive. Along the other two paths, transition breaks radically with the previous regime. The first, postcolonial transition, is produced by the successful termination of external rule and by its replacement by an indigenous polyarchic regime. The second, postauthoritarian transition, occurs when indigenous authoritarianism is replaced by polyarchy.

Earlier studies provide little evidence for the existence of what we call an absolute honeymoon—that new democracies in the aggregate break down less frequently than established ones. Both Przeworski et al. (1996) and Gasiorowski and Power (1998) show that new democracies break down with greater frequency. We will attempt to replicate their findings.

Still, this does not exhaust the ways that one can think about honeymoons. The concept also figures prominently in the literature on the political economy of democratic transitions. Here "honeymoon" means that democracies are less prone to break down when they experience poor economic performance. We think of this as a honeymoon in a relative sense; that is, in comparison to established democracies, new democracies may be less susceptible to the negative effects of poor economic performance.

Although this concept itself is seemingly straightforward, the literature on the survival of new democracies hardly speaks with one voice. Not only do

2. Dahl's (1971) terminology for discussing these sorts of transitions remains the most effective.

authors disagree over whether honeymoons exist, but some authors seem to take positions on both sides of the issue. The state of that debate is summarized below.

One of the earliest authors to discuss a honeymoon-like effect in new democracies is Albert Hirschman (1987). In discussing the economic policies of the new democratic governments of Argentina and Brazil, he noted that despite the economic demands of previously excluded groups in civil society (especially trade unions), both governments were able to successfully implement heterodox anti-inflationary measures. Hirschman explained this in terms of "a special reserve of trust and goodwill" that both governments enjoyed because they restored "civil liberties and human rights" in the aftermath of "detested authoritarian regimes" (pp. 28-29).

The authors who speak most precisely about the existence of a honeymoon period for new democracies are Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan (1996). In discussing the political economy of legitimation and coercion, they argue that new democracies experience a honeymoon period. Whereas they acknowledge that sustained poor economic performance will be destabilizing to both democratic and authoritarian regimes, they argue that the nature of democracy provides greater insulation from economic difficulties. Specifically, they believe that elections give democracies the opportunity to remove governments responsible for economic difficulties and thus deflect blame for poor performance from the regime. On this basis they argue that new democracies have an 8-year breathing space (4 years for an initial government and 4 for its replacement) before poor economic performance begins to threaten regime survival (pp. 78-79).

Stephan Haggard and Robert Kaufman (1997) also discuss honeymoons in new democracies, particularly those that follow authoritarian regimes that leave power with the economy in shambles. They argue that such new democracies may be able to utilize a wellspring of political goodwill to facilitate the task of implementing much-needed stabilization measures and structural reforms (p. 277). They point to a number of cases in which democracy has survived in moderately developed countries even when reforms provoked further economic difficulties. Despite their dubiousness about the long-term prospects for democracies that perform poorly in the economic sphere, they note that in the 1980s and 1990s a large number of democracies with poorly performing economies survived. They cite two factors in this regard: the unwillingness of the West to support authoritarian regimes in the name of anticommunism since the end of the cold war and the extremely negative legacy of many of the antecedent authoritarian regimes. Haggard and Kaufman are pessimistic about the long-term prospects for regimes that are held in place by international pressures and short-term contingencies versus those

that rest on widespread support (p. 279). Yet this would seem to be the essence of a relative honeymoon; new democracies survive despite economic performance that in other contexts would threaten democracy.

There are also a number of authors who argue that new democracies are more, rather than less, vulnerable to breakdown. Linz (1978) in his earlier work makes such an argument. He explains the stability of democracy as a product of its legitimacy, as well as the effectiveness and efficacy with which it copes with the challenges facing it. He argues that new democracies almost automatically confront problems with efficacy, defined as the capacity of a regime to find solutions to the basic problems facing any political system. Efficacy problems are corrosive of legitimacy and can lead to political instability and even breakdown. Ordinarily, political efficacy is judged on the basis of the actions of government over the medium to long term. New democracies are at a disadvantage because they have no track record of past achievements, and thus short-term policy failures are more damaging to the perception of their efficacy. In this regard, the initial performance of new democratic regimes would seem to be critical to their ability to claim legitimacy, and thus failure increases their vulnerability to breakdown (p. 21).

Linz (1978) also argues that new regimes tend to overburden themselves by "plac[ing] all unsolved problems . . . on their agenda simultaneously, presumably to maximize support, without realizing that in doing so they also maximize the number of persons likely to be affected negatively by their reforms" (p. 41). Such overburdening can often lead to effectiveness problems, defined as the capacity to implement policies formulated with the desired results. When such comprehensive reform agendas work to the detriment of a large number of groups within society, they rapidly create strong opposition to reform. They also raise the expectations of regime supporters, who will become disenchanted if opposition is effective in blocking implementation. Thus newness is associated with effectiveness problems that also have a negative impact on legitimacy (p. 41).

Haggard and Kaufman (1995), who explicitly present both sides of the case for honeymoons, update Linz's argument concerning the overloading of new democracies. When authoritarian prohibitions are removed, old distributional conflicts reemerge, leading to an upsurge in demands on the government from groups previously excluded from the polity. Often such demands are accompanied by those of established groups seeking reassurance about their interests. Given the many difficulties associated with the establishment of a new regime, an overabundance of demands is the last thing a new democracy needs to confront (pp. 151-152, 159; also see Haggard & Kaufman, 1989).

In reviewing the literature on new democracies, Haggard and Kaufman (1995) cite examples of individual countries that buttress the arguments both for and against the existence of a honeymoon effect. They cite no conclusive evidence from extant large-n studies (p. 152). However, in this regard, they cite the body of literature on the comparative economic performance of democracies versus dictatorships. This literature does not test whether there is a honeymoon effect, if by honeymoon we mean that new democracies face less stringent conditions for survival compared to older ones. To substantiate this, new democracies need to be compared to other democracies, something the literature they cite does not do. Other aspects of Haggard and Kaufman's (1989) work, such as the finding that new democracies are not as successful in implementing macroeconomic stabilization policies as established democracies (p. 60), would seem to lead to the conclusion that there is no honeymoon effect.

Ultimately, Haggard and Kaufman (1995) do not take a definitive position on this issue. They argue that governments that emerge from transitions in the midst of economic crisis have both opportunities for reform and serious political dilemmas (p. 150). Economic crisis conditions left over from authoritarian regimes create urgency on both the elite and mass level to take rapid action. Haggard and Kaufman claim that for this reason, executives will have great leeway in formulating reform programs. However, the degree to which society will tolerate austerity is a function of the depth of the crisis and the extent to which it is attributed to the policy failures of the previous government (pp. 159-160). At the same time, though, they see crisis as creating more demands on the government. The ability to manage these demands will be a product of the government's initial mandate and how well society is organized (p. 160).

A final observer who seems to feel that new democracies, especially those in need of economic reform, are particularly vulnerable is Adam Przeworski (1991). In his discussion of the political ramifications of economic reform in new democracies, he discusses how the durability of new democracies is dependent to a substantial degree on their economic performance (the antithesis of the idea of a relative honeymoon). In countries that require economic reform as they make the transition to democracy he sees a kind of a Hobson's choice. Those governments that are responsive to the public will have to dilute programs of economic reform due to popular protest, only to attempt to reintroduce them later on the basis of diminished popular confidence. In the long term this may enfeeble democratic governance. Alternatively, the problems of popular resistance to the economic austerity that accompanies reform may lead to the temptation for governments to resort to authoritarianism (pp. 189-190).

Przeworski's (1991) theory leaves no room for a honeymoon when democratization proceeds in tandem with economic reform. Even if levels of support for far-reaching economic reform are high, it creates conditions that almost immediately bring an erosion of support for reformist governments and their policies (p. 167). In a case study of the reform process in Poland, he notes how reform rapidly created political problems for those who introduced it. Public support for the Balcerowicz Plan dropped precipitously within a year of its introduction despite high initial levels of support for radical reform (Przeworski, 1993, pp. 159-161).

HYPOTHESES

There are compelling reasons to test whether the honeymoon effect exists and how powerful it is. First, the literature argues that there are two periods when democracy has a lesser propensity to break down. Nobody seems to have recognized this potential contradiction.[3] Second, there is strong dissensus within the literature on the nature of new democracies. A number of prominent scholars think that new democracies are more vulnerable to breaking down, whereas others see them as having a period of insulation. Finally, whether there is evidence of democratic honeymoons has important ramifications for the idea of democratic consolidation and the whole conceptualization of democratic survival as time contingent. Should we find no evidence of a democratic honeymoon, this, in combination with the findings noted above on consolidation, should lead us to question whether democratic survival is linked to time at all.

To test whether there is a honeymoon effect, we will utilize an original data set of all democracies from the period 1951-1995. Our intention is to provide the sort of large-n comparison of new democracies to established democracies that was missing from Haggard and Kaufman's (1989) discussion of the subject.

To address the issues discussed above, we have formulated several hypotheses. If there is an absolute honeymoon, we expect to find that

Hypothesis 1: New democracies should be more likely to survive than established democracies.

3. Of course this is only a contradiction if the two periods are exhaustive (e.g., most and least at the same time). It is possible that there could be multiple periods in the life of democracies when they have greater or lesser propensity to break down.

If there is a relative honeymoon, we expect to find that negative economic performance will be less deleterious for new democracies. We look at two alternative specifications of this based on Linz and Stepan's (1996) political economy of legitimation and coercion.[4] In the first variant, we investigate whether there is a honeymoon within the first 8 years of a democracy's existence. If this is the case, we expect that negative economic performance somewhere within this period will have less of an effect on democratic survival than the same level of poor economic performance in later periods in the life of a democracy. If there is a relative honeymoon of this type, we expect that

Hypothesis 2: Negative growth in the first *X* years will have an effect on democratic survival that is less deleterious than similar economic contractions after the first *X* years (where *X* ranges from 1 to 8).

In the second variant, we look at the period prior to the third legislative election as the benchmark that ends the second posttransition government. If the honeymoon period lasts as long as the first two governments, we expect to find that

Hypothesis 3: Negative economic performance prior to the third election in a democracy's existence will have an effect on democratic survival that is less deleterious than the same level of economic performance in later periods in the life of a democracy.

DATA AND MEASUREMENT[5]

Our unit of analysis is the country-year. Our sample covers all democracies in the period 1951-1995. Coding of each individual case begins with either a transition to democracy or left censorship for those countries that attained minimal levels of democracy prior to 1951 and ends with either a democratic breakdown or right censorship in 1995.[6]

4. It is important to note that Linz and Stepan (1996) discuss a democratic honeymoon in relation to the performance of authoritarian regimes. Although they cite evidence on the greater durability of democracies as compared to authoritarian regimes in the face of economic difficulties, they present no evidence on newness. We see no reason why the electoral mechanism that they specify should not hold in the context of new democracies. For that reason, we use it as the point of departure for our tests.

5. Several parts of this discussion are drawn from Bernhard, Nordstrom, & Reenock (2001).

6. For older democracies we began coding their count variable at the relevant number of democracy years they had experienced prior to 1951 to correct for left censorship.

We define as a democracy any regime that meets Dahl's (1971) minimum criteria for polyarchy, specifically, those with a high level of contestation and a high degree of participation. We also paid careful attention to questions of sovereignty, excluding cases, in which despite competitive elections, full sovereignty was not yet present (e.g., many colonies in the run up to independence). We excluded from our set many countries where extensive political violence occurred during elections. Several sources were used to determine case selection including case histories, *Polity III* (Jaggers & Gurr, 1995), the *Political Regime Change Dataset* (Gasiorowski, 1996), *Freedom in the World* (Freedom House, various years), the *Political Handbook of the World* (various years), and *Classifying Political Regimes* (Alvarez, Cheibub, Limongi, & Przeworski, 1997). The data set contains 2,098 country-year cases, with 137 episodes of democracy and 40 cases of breakdown. Twenty-seven episodes were left-censored. The cases we used are listed in the appendix. For a detailed specification of our operationalization of democracy in this data set, see Bernhard, Nordstrom, and Reenock (2001).

DEPENDENT VARIABLE

The dependent variable is dichotomous and signifies the occurrence of a democratic breakdown. Our data were collected in yearly increments, and for that reason we paid special attention to coding the beginning and end of episodes. We used a first-quarter-cutoff rule regarding the coding of an initiation: If a nation initiated democracy in the first 3 months of a year t, the initiation was coded as having occurred in year t–1. If the initiation occurred after the first 3 months of year t we coded the initiation as having occurred in year t. We used the same procedure for coding breakdowns. If an episode did not experience a breakdown by 1995, we right-censored the case. We used the first-quarter cutoff because economic performance is the main explanatory factor in our models, and we believe that the effects of a bad economy lag political responses on the order of months rather than years. Thus we expect fairly immediate economic conditions to affect political relations within a state. Although this does not justify a lag of a year, we do believe it is reasonable to incorporate a 3-month lag in coding the beginning or end of a democratic episode.

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

Our main independent variables measure economic performance. We include several variables to control for other factors associated with demo-

cratic breakdown. These include presidentialism, party fractionalization, ethnic and religious fractionalization, regional levels of democracy, past experience with democracy, and level of development.

Economic performance. We used the annual change in real GDP per capita for each case, measured as the proportion of change from the previous year in constant 1985 units. These data come from Easterly and Yu (2001). This variable allowed us to investigate the presence of a honeymoon by considering the impact of economic growth or contraction on the occurrence of democratic breakdown. Therefore, this variable appears in several specifications in the article.

Economic performance appears initially as a continuous variable that jointly captures both negative and positive performance. However, to test the theoretical expectations that positive growth and negative growth may differentially affect survival, we coded two dummy variables: one for positive economic performance, including zero growth, and another for negative economic performance or contraction. We then interacted each of these variables with the continuous economic performance variables, thereby allowing us to estimate two separate coefficients for economic growth and contraction.

To assess the presence of a relative honeymoon, we needed to test the hypotheses that the effect of negative growth within a designated number of years after the inauguration of a democratic regime is different than other types of economic performance, including negative growth *after* these honeymoon years. To assess the possibility of an additional impact of economic contraction occurring within a given honeymoon period, we specified several dummy variables representing different honeymoon lengths. In our discussion above, we speculated that honeymoons might be as long as 8 years in duration and that the shortest possible honeymoon would be 1 year long. We coded honeymoon dummy variables for this range of possible durations. The honeymoon dummies designate two time periods for each case of democracy. As Figure 1 shows, these two time periods consist of the D_x honeymoon period and the posthoneymoon period, where x is the duration of the honeymoon in years.

We then interacted these time variables with the economic performance variable to distinguish between negative growth occurring within the honeymoon period D_x and negative growth occurring outside of the honeymoon period. This construction allowed us to assess the independent impact of negative performance in the specified honeymoon period to test for a *relative honeymoon effect*.

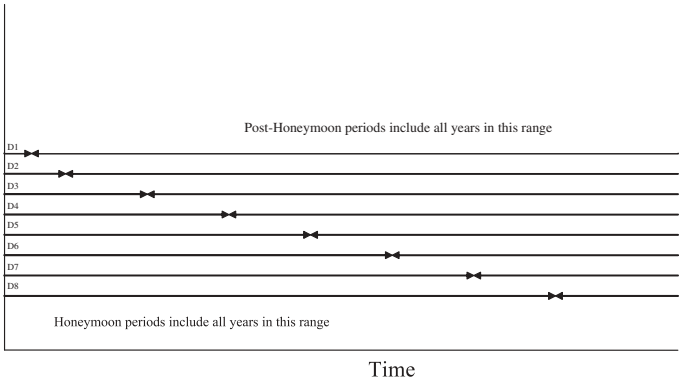

Figure 1. **Honeymoon periods for different specifications of D_x (where x is the number of years making up a honeymoon).**

In addition to these time periods, we also coded a dummy variable for the two-election honeymoon period.[7] In this case, the honeymoon period consists of all years at the beginning of a democratic episode prior to the country's third national legislative election.[8]

Presidentialism. We coded this variable with two possible values (presidential = 1, and other = 0) to control for the possibility that presidentialism promotes breakdown (Linz, 1994; Przeworski et al., 1996; Stepan & Skatch, 1994). We operationalized this variable according to Sartori's (1994) definition of presidentialism:

> if and only if, the head of state i) results from popular election, ii) during his or her pre-established tenure cannot be discharged by a parliamentary vote, and iii) heads or otherwise directs the governments that he or she appoints. (p. 84)

7. In the case of presidential systems we also coded the honeymoon period prior to the third legislative election. In most countries, presidential and legislative elections are held simultaneously. In cases where there are midterm elections, this provides the opportunity to send a sitting president a "message" about his or her policies. Although this does not allow for the replacement of a sitting government, it does provide for a reassessment of a government's policies, and an adverse result often leads to corrections.

8. This two-election specification of the honeymoon period meant that the length of the potential episode varied greatly in the number of years from episode to episode. The shortest length for this is 1 year, where democratic episodes only lasted that long, and the lengthiest was for Mauritius, which endured for 14 years prior to a third election. The average length of this two-election period was approximately 4.4 years.

Party fractionalization. A number of studies have associated fractionalized legislatures with democratic breakdown due to their propensity to deadlock on controversial issues or to complicate the task of maintaining stable parliamentary governments (Haggard & Kaufman, 1995, pp. 170-171; Przeworski et al., 1996; Sartori, 1976, p. 26). We measured this by using the Laakso-Taagepera (1979) index to calculate the effective number of parties existing in the lower house. We treated any "other" categories as Taagepera (1997) recommends.[9] Data on party distributions within the legislature were collected from various sources including *The Political Handbook of the World* (various years), The CIA's *World Fact Book* (various years), *The Journal of Democracy*, *The International Almanac of Electoral History* (Mackie & Rose, 1982), *Electoral Studies*, the *Enciclopedia Electoral Latinoamericano y del Caribe* (Nohlen, 1993), secondary historical sources, various national statistical annuals, and consultation with area specialists.

Religious and ethnic fractionalization. Ever since Lijphart (1977), it has been acknowledged that divided societies pose special problems for the effective long-term functioning of democracy. To control for this we measure religious and ethnic fractionalization within a country using Rae and Taylor's (1970) Fractionalization index. This index, which we calculated for both religion and ethnicity, is the probability that two randomly selected individuals from one country do not belong to the same social group.[10] We calculated this index for both religion and ethnicity in each country. These data were, however, only available by decade and, therefore, are constant throughout each 10-year period. Data on religious and ethnic population were taken from the *Cultural Composition of Interstate System Members*, Correlates of War Project data (Singer, 1997).

Number of democratic countries in the region. We measure the "demonstration effect" (Gasiorowski, 1995) of democracy on other countries as the total proportion of countries in a region that are democratic. The regions used to construct the "populations," are, in part, based on Gasiorowski (1995). We

9. Where the effective number of parties is $EP = 1/\sum_{i=1}^{n} P_i^2$, where P*i* is the share of seats won by the *i*th party. For the justification of our choice of Laakso-Taagepera, see Bernhard, Nordstrom, and Reenock (2001). For each case that had a value in the "other" category, we calculated the number of parties' score for independents as both a single block of seats and as singular party seats. We then averaged these two fractionalization scores to produce the final number of parties.

10. Rae and Taylor's (1970) measure of fractionalization is $F = 1 - \sum_{i=1}^{n} \left(\frac{n_i}{N}\right)\left(\frac{n_i - 1}{N - 1}\right)$, where F ranges from 0 to 1.

coded Latin America, Europe, sub-Saharan Africa, Oceania, the Middle East, South Asia (which runs from Pakistan and Afghanistan through Myanmar), and East Asia.

Number of past democratic experiences. Huntington (1991, p. 42) has argued that prior experience with democracy may improve a country's prospects for successful democratization in subsequent attempts. To control for a country's experience with democracy and the possible effects of "democratic learning," we coded, for each episode, the total number of prior experiences with democracy that a country had prior to the current episode.

GDP per capita (level). To control for level of development, we include a measure of GDP per capita in constant 1985 units. We took these data from Easterly and Yu (2001).

METHOD

To consider the presence of an absolute honeymoon, we first present a descriptive analysis of our data. Specifically, we calculate the survival probabilities of democratic regimes over the first 20 country-years in each time series to determine whether new democracies have broken down with greater or lesser frequency. By dividing the total number of democratic breakdowns in a given interval by the total number of democratic episodes that were "at risk" in the interval, we produce the conditional transition probability for that interval. By then subtracting this probability from 1, we produce the *conditional survival probability*, or the probability of a given democratic episode surviving to time t+1, given that it has already survived to time t.[11] This simple descriptive information allows us to begin our consideration of an absolute honeymoon's existence.

To test for the presence of both absolute and relative honeymoons, we also use multivariate analysis. Given that the dependent variable captures the occurrence of an event, a democratic breakdown, and that we are interested in the factors that explain a regime's survivability over a period of time, we model the occurrence of a breakdown using event history techniques.[12] We use a discrete-time event history model for our investigation.[13]

11. Due to the exceptionally small size of each interval's conditional transition probabilities, we chose to report the conditional survival probabilities instead.

12. Event history techniques have become increasingly used in political science to study the factors that influence the survival of dependent variables of interest. For a review of these tech-

We estimate our models with a logit analysis.[14] The logit specification allows us to estimate the effects of variables on the log odds of a democratic breakdown occurring. This then allows us to calculate the predicated probabilities for having an event, given a certain set of the independent variables.

Recent statistical work has focused on the use of logit models to produce estimates in samples with rare events. King and Zeng (2001) have argued that data sets with a small percentage of events (and subsequently, a large percentage of nonevents) may seriously underestimate the effects of independent variables. According to King and Zeng's criterion, ours qualifies as a small-sample and a rare-events data set. Therefore, we checked all of our models using Tomz, King, and Zeng's rare events logit software (1999).[15]

Our multivariate test for the absolute honeymoon takes two forms. First, we investigated the presence of a continuous absolute honeymoon by including a variable that is the log of each episode's duration. We log the duration because we believe the effect is not linear but will decline over time. In addition to the continuous specification, we also tested the absolute hypothesis by modeling discrete honeymoon periods from 1 year up to 8 years, dummying the periods within and outside of the honeymoon. Again, if the coefficients for the dummy variables for the honeymoon periods are negative and significant, this would suggest that there is an absolute honeymoon period for the given specification that grants new democracies within that period an extra benefit regarding their survival. If neither the continuous nor the discrete tests of the honeymoon period are significant, then we may reject the notion of an absolute honeymoon and conclude that after the model has been specified, time spent in an episode does not contribute to democratic survival.[16]

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niques see Allison (1984), Blossfeld and Rowher (1995), and Box-Steffensmeier and Jones (1997).

13. For an explanation of the differences between discrete and continuous event history frameworks, see Box-Steffensmeier and Jones (1997). There are tradeoffs in choosing discrete rather than continuous methods. The primary reason for our choice of discrete time rather than continuous time is that we gain the ability to model the influence of time interacted with our economic variables—a practice not appropriate in a continuous-time framework. Given that the time-interactive component is the main purpose of this research, this was the most appropriate choice.

14. The specification for these models takes the form:

$$Pr(Y_j \neq 0 | x_j) = \frac{\exp(x_j \beta)}{1 + \exp(x_j \beta)}$$

where x is a vector of j independent variables.

15. These models produced estimates that were slightly different from our original estimates and did not appreciably change the substantive conclusions of the article.

16. We also followed Beck, Katz, and Tucker's (1998) suggestion of running separate time dummy variables to test for temporal dependence. The likelihood ratio tests of the time-dummy

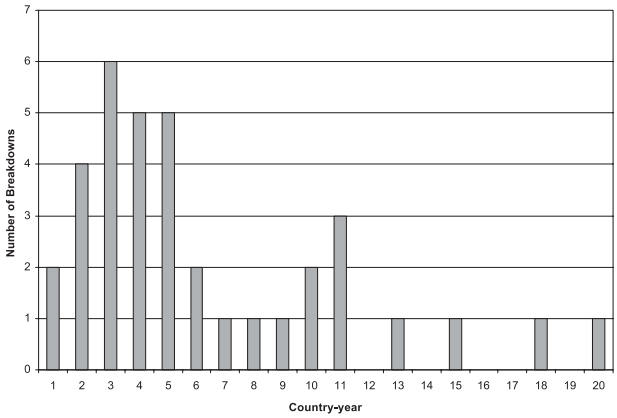

Figure 2. **Number of breakdowns per country-year (Years 1 to 20).**

To test for the relative honeymoon, we first estimate coefficients for both positive and negative growth separately by interacting our continuous measure of economic performance with a dummy variable for positive and negative growth. This allows us to consider whether economic contraction has a separate effect from economic growth. We then interact the negative growth variable with our discrete specifications of the honeymoon periods discussed in the Variables section above. For each of these tests, if the interaction term is significant and negative, this would suggest that contractions within the honeymoon period increase the likelihood of a breakdown compared to negative performance elsewhere. On the other hand, if the interaction term is significant and positive, then democracies within the honeymoon period are better insulated from the deleterious effects of negative performance on survival than they are against the same type of contractions outside of the honeymoon period. We report the results for all of our analyses in the following section.

RESULTS

We begin this section with a descriptive discussion of the data to give readers a greater sense of the data on which our results are based. Figure 2 presents the number of breakdowns per country-year in the first 20 years of each time series. Among the country-years in our data set, Years 3, 4, and 5 have

models and the null model with no time dummies did not allow us to reject the null hypothesis of temporal independence.

Table 1
The Conditional Survival Probabilities for Each of the First 20 Country-Years

Year	No. of Cases	No. of Cases Surviving[a]	Conditional Survival Probability	No. of Breakdowns
1	111	109	.9820	2
2	108	104	.9630	4
3	101	95	.9406	6
4	93	88	.9462	5
5	81	76	.9383	5
6	65	63	.9692	2
7	55	54	.9818	1
8	54	53	.9815	1
9	52	51	.9808	1
10	50	48	.9600	2
11	47	44	.9362	3
12	43	43	1.0000	0
13	41	40	.9756	1
14	38	38	1.0000	0
15	37	36	.9730	1
16	34	34	1.0000	0
17	33	33	1.0000	0
18	31	30	.9677	1
19	26	26	1.0000	0
20	24	23	.9583	1

a. Discrepancies between total survivors at time *t* and the number of cases at time *t*+1 is a product of both right-and left-censoring.

the largest number of breakdowns. Individually, Year 3 has the most with six breakdowns, and Years 4 and 5 each have five. A number of other years also exceed the average of 1.8 breakdowns per year for the first 20 years. Inside of the 8-year potential honeymoon period, Year 2 contains four breakdowns and Years 1 and 6 both register two breakdowns. Outside of the potential honeymoon period, only Years 10 and 11 exceed the average with two and three breakdowns, respectively. This figure may give readers the impression that new democracies are highly vulnerable, but raw numbers of breakdowns are less definitive than breakdown rates.

Indeed, this impression changes somewhat when one considers Table 1, which reports the conditional survival probabilities for the same period. If one looks at the first 8 years, Years 1, 7, and 8 exceed .9727, the average conditional probability of survival for the first 20 years. Years 2 and 6 are close to the average, whereas Years 3, 4, and 5 are considerably below it. The only other year in the first 20 that is substantially below the average is Year 11. The pattern here is not suggestive of a solid 8-year honeymoon. In fact, the condi-

Table 2
Logit Coefficients for Occurrence of Democratic Breakdowns, Base Model

Variable	Coefficient	*SE*
Economic performance	–7.8478***	3.0428
Economic development	–0.0005***	0.0002
Presidential regime	0.1339	0.3468
Party fractionalization	0.0464	0.1204
Ethnic fractionalization	1.1499	0.9539
Religious fractionalization	1.3726	0.8954
Previous attempts at democracy	–0.0269	0.3622
Regional democracy	–1.0728	1.0034
Constant	–3.1161***	1.0978
Log-likelihood	–136.90	
$\chi^2(8)$	63.13***	
N	2,008	

*$p < .10$. **$p < .05$. ***$p < .01$. All are two-tailed tests.

tional probabilities start high, drop, and then rise again. If anything, this hints at a very short absolute honeymoon in the earliest stages of a democracy's life. Still, in the absence of statistical controls, consideration of raw conditional survival probabilities may be misleading. Thus we now turn to our multivariate analyses to assess the evidence for Hypothesis 1 along with our other expectations.

We begin our multivariate analyses by examining the overall effect of economic performance on the probability of democratic breakdown. Table 2 shows the results of our model.[17] Two of the variables in the model are significant and have interesting substantive implications, all of which are consistent with extant studies. The coefficient for economic performance has a negative coefficient, suggesting that the probability of a regime's breakdown decreases with better economic performance. In addition, our results show that higher levels of economic development also work to retard breakdown, confirming the findings of Przeworski et al. (1996) and Gasiorowski and Power (1998).

In Table 3 we explore the relative importance between the economic growth and contraction in the relationship between economic performance and breakdown. When we disaggregate the economic performance variable we observe that higher levels of economic contraction drive the impact of the

17. Applying Beck et al.'s (1998) cubic splines does not reveal any indication of an absolute honeymoon. A test of the log-likelihoods shows that the model with the cubic splines does not perform significantly differently from the models without the splines, suggesting that there is no violation of the econometric assumption that individual observations within each episode are independent.

Table 3
Logit Coefficients for Occurrence of Democratic Breakdowns, With Positive and Negative Economic Performance Disaggregated

Variable	Coefficient	*SE*
Economic growth	–1.1092	4.4503
Economic contraction	–11.5837***	3.5156
Economic development	–0.0005***	0.0001
Presidential regime	0.1554	0.3503
Party fractionalization	0.6003	0.1204
Ethnic fractionalization	1.1528	0.9502
Religious fractionalization	1.3429	0.9019
Previous attempts at democracy	–0.0453	0.3670
Regional democracy	–0.9644	0.9782
Constant	–3.3845***	1.0760
Log-likelihood		–136.34
$\chi^2(9)$	66.37***	
N	2,008	

*$p < .10$. **$p < .05$. ***$p < .01$. All are two-tailed tests.

economic performance variable, reported above in Table 2. Positive growth has no independent significant effect on the likelihood of democratic survival. This confirms our expectation on the distinct impact of negative versus positive performance and highlights an important finding that is suppressed in models that simply use economic growth in a manner that does not distinguish between the different effects of negative and positive growth.

Table 4 presents a model that incorporates a continuous measure of absolute honeymoons. This model contains all of the independent variables from the previous model but includes a variable that is the log of each episode's duration. A positive sign on this coefficient would be indicative of a honeymoon, suggesting that newer democracies are more insulated from democratic breakdowns. The results for this model do not provide any evidence of this, as the estimate for the log of duration variable is insignificant. Adding this variable results in no change in the signs or significance levels of the other key variables. As a further test of this variable's contribution to the model, we ran a log-likelihood test on models with and without this variable. The results of this test were also insignificant, suggesting that including this variable did not significantly improve the performance of the model.

The last series of tests explore both the discrete specifications of the absolute honeymoon as well as whether the harmful effects of negative growth on survival are conditioned by their appearance within a specified honeymoon period. To further explore the discrete specifications of both relative and absolute honeymoons, we test both of these expectations in the same model

Table 4
Logit Coefficients for Occurrence of Democratic Breakdown, With a Continuous Specification of the Absolute Honeymoon

Variable	Coefficient	*SE*
Economic growth	–0.8549	4.3165
Economic contraction	–11.6139***	3.9333
Economic development	–0.0006***	0.0002
Presidential regime	0.1595	0.3887
Party fractionalization	0.0755	0.1233
Ethnic fractionalization	1.3021	1.0992
Religious fractionalization	1.7170	1.0673
Previous attempts at democracy	0.0317	0.4024
Regional democracy	–0.6973	1.0048
ln(duration)	0.2753	0.2098
Constant	–4.1674***	1.4706
Log-likelihood		135.23
$\chi^2(10)$	63.42***	
N	2,008	

*$p < .10$. **$p < .05$. ***$p < .01$. All are two-tailed tests.

by considering time dummy variables and the interaction of honeymoon periods with negative economic performance.

First, we examine the possibility that negative growth within a specified honeymoon period has a different effect relative to economic contractions generally. Table 5 shows the relative and absolute test results for honeymoon specifications of 2-, 3-, and 4-year durations. Evidence of a relative honeymoon in these models would be indicated by a significant and positive coefficient on the interaction term. However, the interaction terms in the models are far from achieving even the most lenient significance levels. The results show no difference between the effect of economic contractions inside the honeymoon period from economic contractions at any other time. Therefore, we do not find evidence for the existence of a relative honeymoon for any of the honeymoon specification years. We also ran several honeymoon specifications ranging from 5 to 8 years, none of which provided any indication of a modifying impact of a honeymoon period on negative economic performance.[18] Overall, we do not find any evidence for Hypothesis 2 and conclude that there is no relative honeymoon for new democracies.

18. For the models of 5 years and higher, the main economic performance coefficient loses its significance. This is not surprising given that by dummying out the first 5 years against the remaining data set we forced many cases of breakdown into the former period of the data set. The latter period contains very few cases of breakdown, and this leaves little variation to explain the effects of negative performance.

Table 5
Logit Coefficients for Occurrence of Democratic Breakdowns, With 2-, 3-, and 4-Year Discrete Specifications of the Absolute and Relative Honeymoon

	2-Year Model		3-Year Model		4-Year Model	
	Coefficient	*SE*	Coefficient	*SE*	Coefficient	*SE*
Positive growth	–0.7188	4.4022	–1.0785	4.4265	–1.0845	4.4122
Economic contraction	–10.9084***	4.2575	–10.3509**	4.3866	–9.8477*	5.1805
Economic contraction in honeymoon period	–6.7872	7.9009	–5.4444	7.1974	–5.0184	6.6302
Honeymoon period	–1.0689	0.6748	–0.8252	0.6125	–0.6222	0.4576
Economic development	–0.0006***	0.0002	–0.0006***	0.0002	–0.0006***	0.0001
Presidential regime	0.1894	0.3787	0.1862	0.3820	0.1665	0.3805
Party fractionalization	0.0657	0.1205	0.0678	0.1212	0.0692	0.1214
Ethnic fractionalization	1.3111	1.0439	1.3249	1.0648	1.2944	1.0645
Religious fractionalization	1.6856*	0.9852	1.7311*	1.0298	1.6679	1.0177
Previous attempts at democracy	–0.0117	0.4026	0.0052	0.4177	–0.0197	0.4319
Regional democracy	–0.7931	0.9573	–0.8109	0.9614	–0.8458	0.9756
Constant	–3.4813***	1.1219	–3.4431***	1.1466	–3.3684***	1.1371
Log-likelihood	–134.13		–134.62		–135.29	
$\chi^2(11)$	61.83***		62.10***		75.81***	
N	2,008		2,008		2,008	

*$p < .10$. **$p < .05$. ***$p < .01$. All are two-tailed tests.

Table 6
Logit Coefficients for Occurrence of Democratic Breakdowns With Two-Election Period Specifications

	Two-Election Honeymoon		Two-Election Honeymoon With Control for 2-Year Absolute Honeymoon	
	Coefficient	*SE*	Coefficient	*SE*
Positive growth	–1.6284	4.6537	–1.1636	4.5349
Economic contraction	–0.5651	7.0905	–0.2231	7.1254
Economic contraction in honeymoon period	–15.5407*	8.2258	–17.0700**	8.5997
Honeymoon period (two elections)	–0.4391	0.3611	–0.2434	0.3574
Honeymoon period (2 years)	—	—	–1.0268*	0.5409
Economic development	–0.0006***	0.0002	–0.0006***	0.0002
Presidential regime	0.1832	0.3464	0.2112	0.3602
Party fractionalization	0.0646	0.1233	0.0805	0.1223
Ethnic fractionalization	1.1357	0.9584	1.2465	1.0354
Religious fractionalization	1.4632	0.9613	1.7360*	1.0229
Previous attempts at democracy	–0.1771	0.4270	–0.1520	0.4656
Regional democracy	–1.0172	0.9650	–0.8339	0.9501
Constant	–3.0138***	1.0255	–3.2439***	1.0994
Log-likelihood	–134.46		–131.49	
$\chi^2(11, 12)$	71.41***		72.08***	
N	2,008			

*$p < .10$. **$p < .05$. ***$p < .01$. All are two-tailed tests.

With regard to the tests for absolute honeymoon, the coefficient for the 2-year discrete specification falls just outside the $p < .10$ level of significance. The sign on this coefficient is negative, suggesting that democracies within the first 2 years of their democratic episode may be *less* likely to break down. However, on the basis of this result alone, we cannot be confident that this result is not due to error.[19] This coefficient also does not appear to be significant in the 3- and 4-year models, either. The evidence of a discrete absolute honeymoon suggests that there may be, at most, a short-lived 2-year effect.

Last, we consider the two-election hypothesis. Table 6 reports the results from our tests of the relative and absolute effects with the two-election period. The results suggest an interesting relationship between a country's economic performance and the time period prior to a third election. First, we

19. We also disaggregated the 2-year honeymoon period into dummies that captured separate first- and second-year effects. Neither of these dummies was significant. From this we conclude that if there is indeed a short, 2-year honeymoon, it does not seem to be driven by either of the independent components, but rather it is a product of some attribute of both the first and second year of a regime's existence.

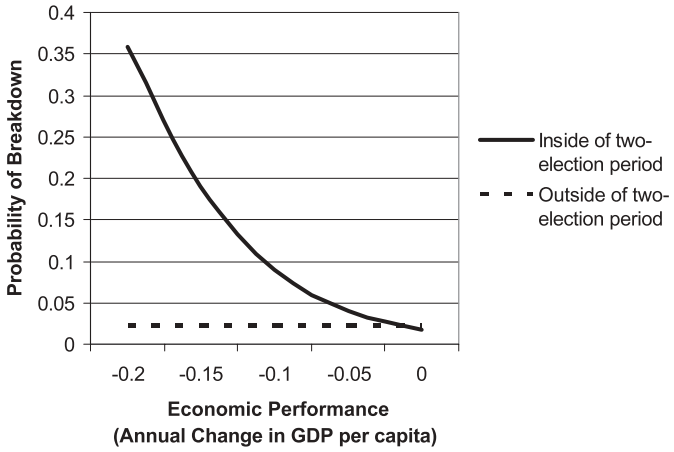

Figure 3. **The predicted probability of breakdown inside and outside the two-election period.**

see that the coefficient of economic contraction's main effect is no longer significant and that the relative honeymoon interaction term (economic contraction in honeymoon period) is negative and significant. This suggests that the negative impact of economic contraction is concentrated within the time period of the first two elections of a newly inaugurated regime. Also, as shown in column two, this effect holds even in the face of controlling for the possible absolute effect of a regime's first 2 years. Moreover, the 2-year effect is significant in this model. This result, combined with results on the test of the discrete 2-year absolute honeymoon in Table 5 strengthens the evidence in favor of the existence of a 2-year absolute honeymoon. The mixed nature of this result provides evidence for both theories on the nature of new democracies—that in two distinct senses they are both more and less vulnerable to breakdown than established democracies.

The impact of negative economic performance inside of the two-election honeymoon period is best displayed by considering the predicted probabilities of breakdown. Figure 3 shows the predicted probabilities of democratic breakdown for the period within and outside of the two-election honeymoon period across a range of negative economic performance values.

As the figure shows, the likelihood of breakdown begins to rise as economic difficulties are encountered by a regime inside of the two-election period. Specifically, a 20% contraction occurring inside of the two-election period, holding all other variables constant, produces a .25 predicted probability of breakdown. However, the same level of economic performance has

little to no impact on a regime that has survived through the first two elections. Under the same conditions, a regime outside of the two-election period has a probability of .02 of breaking down.

CONCLUSIONS

The original question that motivated our investigation into honeymoons was an apparent paradox. Part of the literature on democratic survival argues that new democracies are less vulnerable to breakdown, whereas a large portion of the literature on the political economy of democratization suggests that they are more vulnerable. Curiously, we have isolated two separate effects that show that neither argument is without merit.

First, there is strong but not fully conclusive evidence that there is a short time in the life of democracies in which they experience an absolute honeymoon. When we controlled for other factors that we identified as critical to democratic survival, newness in itself has a positive effect on survival. Thus we have reason to believe that an absolute honeymoon exists, but that it is at maximum 2 years in length. This finding is consistent with arguments about the "inverse legitimacy" that new democracies accrue for bringing about the termination of authoritarian regimes.

Second, we have a negative finding on the existence of a relative honeymoon, that new democracies are somehow better insulated from the negative effects of poor economic performance. In fact, we show the opposite; there is a period in which new democracies are more vulnerable to breakdown if they experience economic contraction. This relative antihoneymoon exists in the period prior to the third legislative election in a new democracy. Our findings add a new wrinkle to the argument on the vulnerability of new democracies. This enhanced vulnerability to economic shocks is not just a function of time. There is no fixed period of years consistent across cases in which new democracies are more vulnerable. This effect is in itself conditioned on the political processes of each new democracy. This finding is consistent with the part of the political economy of democratization literature that discusses the intensified difficulties that new democracies face in managing economic crises.

Third, our tests show that these effects coexist. New democracies experience immediate absolute honeymoons and then enter into a period of enhanced vulnerability to breakdown when their economies perform poorly. No theory has ever suggested that two such effects could both be at work in new democracies. Elements from the literature can be combined to provide a plausible explanation for why this is so. Proponents of the honeymoon effect

argued that there is a period in which the newness of a democracy leads the population to grant it a period of greater trust because of the termination of dictatorship. This inverse-legitimacy effect seemed to be stronger the more unpopular a dictatorship became in its final stages. We believe that this is what we are observing when we see evidence of a 2-year absolute honeymoon.

At the same time, many new democracies face daunting challenges of economic adjustment, coming to terms with the past, and a huge backlog of unfulfilled demands. Additionally, they have no long-term track record that would insulate them from the perception that short-term policy setbacks are more major efficacy and/or effectiveness problems. Thus an inability to quickly resolve the difficult legacies of dictatorship works to undermine confidence in them. New democracies are thus harshly judged for their failures to overcome legacies of dictatorship. This explains why early on (the period of the first two governments) they are more vulnerable to breakdown when their economies perform poorly.

The combination of these two effects presents a picture of new democracies coming to power with very high initial levels of trust, higher than many established democracies, but with this subject to rapid attrition because of their lack of a track record. This more stringent performance criterion has the power to quickly erode the initial higher levels of support that new democracies enjoy when they take power. This is how it is possible for the two effects that we have identified, the 2-year absolute honeymoon and increased relative susceptibility to breakdown in response to economic contraction within the period of the first two elections, to coexist in new democracies.

Fourth, our findings concerning economic performance and the existence of a relative antihoneymoon make a new contribution to the literature on democratic survival generally. Our findings on economic performance showed that this effect is driven by contraction, not growth. We also show that economic contraction within the two-election period is highly dangerous for democracies, but considerably less so after that period. Thus the performance variable we isolate as significant in our general model is driven by economic contraction within the period of the first two elections. This suggests that if democracies successfully manage the economy early in their existence, their chances for survival are much improved by a diminished susceptibility to the effects of economic downturns. This finding seems to stand in sharp contrast to the failure of earlier cross-national, large-n studies to detect duration dependence. Our findings taken as a whole suggest that the early period of absolute honeymoon may make it difficult to detect enhanced survivability (conceptualized as duration dependence) for established democracies but that older democracies are more resistant to the effects of economic contraction.

APPENDIX
Democratic Episodes in the Data Set

Andorra 93-95
Antigua and Barbuda 81-95
Argentina 84-95
Australia 51-95
Austria 55-95
Bahamas 73-95
Bangladesh 91-95
Barbados 66-95
Belgium 51-95
Belize 81-95
Benin 60-62, 91-95
Bolivia 82-95
Botswana 66-95
Brazil 51-64, 86-95
Bulgaria 90-95
Burkina Faso 78-80
Canada 51-95
Cape Verde 91-95
Chad 60-62
Chile 51-73, 90-95
Columbia 74-95
Congo 61-63, 92-93
Costa Rica 51-95
Czech Republic 92-95
Czechoslovakia 90-91
Denmark 51-95
Dominica 78-95
Dominican Republic 63, 78-95
Ecuador 51-52, 79-95
El Salvador 91-95
Estonia 92-95
Finland 51-95
France 51-95
Gambia 66-94
Germany 51-95
Ghana 57-60, 69-72, 79-82
Greece 75-95
Grenada 74-79, 84-95
Guatemala 51-54
Guyana 92-95
Haiti 95
Honduras 90-95
Hungary 90-95
Iceland 51-95
India 53-75, 77-95
Indonesia 55-57
Ireland 51-95
Israel 51-95
Italy 51-95
Jamaica 63-95
Japan 52-95
Kenya 63-66
Latvia 93-95
Lithuania 91-95
Luxemburg 51-95
Macedonia 91-95
Madagascar 61-71, 93-95
Malawi 94-95
Malaysia 59-69
Mali 92-95
Malta 64-95
Mauritius 67-95
Moldova 94-95
Mongolia 92-95
Mozambique 94-95
Myanmar 51-62
Namibia 90-95
Nepal 91-95
Netherlands 51-95
New Zealand 51-95
Nicaragua 90-95
Niger 93-95
Nigeria 60-66, 79-83
Norway 51-95
Papua New Guinea 77-95
Panama 94-95
Paraguay 91-95
Peru 80-92
Philippines 53-72, 87-95
Poland 89-95
Portugal 76-95
Romania 92-95
Russia 93-95
St. Kitts and Nevis 83-95
St. Lucia 79-95
St. Vincent 79-95
Sao Tome 91-95
Seychelles 93-95
Sierra Leone 62-67
Slovakia 92-95
Slovenia 90-95
Solomon Islands 78-95
Somalia 60-69
South Africa 94-95
South Korea 61, 88-95
Spain 78-95
Sri Lanka 48-83
Sudan 56-58, 65-69, 86-89
Suriname 75-79, 88-89, 91-95
Sweden 51-95
Switzerland 71-95
Taiwan 92-95
Tanzania 61-62, 95
Thailand 75-76
Trinidad 62-95
Turkey 61-71, 73-80, 83-95
Uganda 62-66
Ukraine 91-95
United Kingdom 51-95
United States 51-95
Uruguay 51-73, 85-95
Vanuatu 80-95
Venezuela 58-95
Zambia 91-95
Zimbabwe 90-95

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