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# Moments of Opportunity

## RECOGNIZING CONDITIONS OF RIPENESS FOR INTERNATIONAL MEDIATION BETWEEN ENDURING RIVALS

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Some points in time are more favorable for mediation success than others and result from the concatenation of contextual factors that encourage movement toward more cooperative behavior by disputants. Ripeness for mediation between enduring rivals is examined by focusing on mediation success in the short and extended term. Results suggest that the factors conducive to the achievement of short-term mediation success differ significantly from those that promote extended-term improvement in the rivalry relationship. These results help to reconcile some of the diversity of expectations in the ripeness literature by demonstrating that short-term and extended-term mediation success follow distinct dynamics.

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The best time to hit a serve is when the ball is suspended in the air, neither rising nor falling. We felt that this equilibrium had arrived, or was about to, on the battlefield. On the trip from Sofia to Sarajevo, after an intense discussion we decided to shift from “exploration” of a ceasefire to advocacy.

—Richard Holbrooke (1998, 193)

Holbrooke’s comment suggests that conflict management in Bosnia became possible not when the underlying issues were resolved; rather, it was when sufficiently traumatic losses forced both sides to change their perception of the dispute that a ripe moment was created for conflict management. Such ripe periods of time create opportunities for conflict management. In essence, the costs of continued conflict in Bosnia had reached a sufficiently painful level for both sides that the status quo could no longer be maintained. In this respect, the context under which mediation was conducted was decisive to the outcome of the mediation process.

An extension of the notion of ripeness to the relations between enduring rivals offers significant intuitive appeal. Enduring rivalries are among the most dangerous and conflict-prone dyads in the international system. As a result, developing means to

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aid conflict management between long-term rivals is a critical goal. The very nature of enduring rivalries, with their legacy of mutual distrust and pain, makes conflict management more difficult to achieve than in other types of disputes.

Understanding the conditions associated with mediation ripeness is important from both a theoretical and a policy standpoint to determine under what conditions mediation between enduring rivals is most likely to produce conflict management. First, a better understanding of ripe conditions for mediation would aid policy makers in deciding when international mediation would be most likely to improve relations between disputing states. Such an understanding would result in fewer wasted mediation attempts and encourage more concerted efforts when favorable mediation conditions prevail. Second, a better understanding of ripeness for international mediation may actually prevent the deterioration of relations between rivals. The idea that mediation might cause a deterioration of relations between rivals at first seems counterintuitive. Yet, this expectation is consistent with a learning model of disputant behavior within a rivalry. If states continually update their beliefs about their opponents and the likelihood of improvement or deterioration of relations based on their prior experience, then unsuccessful mediations may teach rivals that management of their conflict is unlikely, forcing the adoption of more coercive, aggressive strategies by both sides. A better understanding of the conditions under which mediation is most likely to be successful would aid in preventing the deleterious effect of unsuccessful mediation.

Within the scholarly literature, ripe moments of conflicts are commonly conceived of as periods of time under which conflict management is most likely to be achieved. Although ripeness is typically treated as a discrete variable, in actuality, ripeness is better thought of as part of a continuum. Less ripe periods are less likely to result in successful mediation; more ripe periods are more likely to result in successful mediation. Indeed, only on rare occasions is a period sufficiently ripe that mediation success is virtually guaranteed or sufficiently unripe that mediation failure is virtually certain (Kriesberg 1992). The conceptions of ripeness in the literature have tended to fall into two broad groups. The first group tends to view ripeness in terms of temporal factors related to when within the lifecycle of a dispute mediation is attempted. The second group conceives of ripeness in terms of contextual factors related to the dispute and the relationship between the disputants. Disputes persist within the literature, however, regarding how factors such as the costs and pain of conflict and the distribution of power between disputants impact mediation success.

One underexamined area within the literature on ripeness in international mediation is the relationship between ripeness and extended-term mediation success. The small amount of empirical work about the nature of ripeness largely views mediation outcomes in terms of short-term achievements. As a result, I seek in this study to determine under what specific circumstances international mediation is most likely to achieve extended-term conflict management and short-term mediation success between enduring rivals. I focus on mediation success across two timeframes: short-term—the immediate result of the mediation attempt—and extended-term—the change in the rivalry relationship beyond the immediate mediation outcome.

One noticeable exception to the tendency of the ripeness literature to focus on short-term mediation outcomes is Regan and Stam's (2000) analysis of the impact of the timing of mediation efforts on the duration of interstate disputes. Because Regan and Stam's results provide a useful basis for comparison with the results obtained in this study, I discuss the parallels between our findings at the conclusion of this article. The results of this study emphasize that simply applying the lessons learned about ripeness and short-term mediation outcomes is not sufficient to understand ripeness and extended-term mediation outcomes.

### RIPENESS AMONG ENDURING RIVALS

In this study, I argue that five sets of contextual factors influence the prospects for mediation success. First, the costs and pain that develop throughout the lifetime of a rivalry carry important consequences for the ability of mediation efforts to improve the rivalry relationship. Second, the perception among rivals that they are unlikely to unilaterally alter the rivalry status quo in their favor is likely to encourage them to begin to pursue more cooperative strategies toward one another. Third, the level of threat, both inside and outside the rivalry, perceived by the rivals is likely to have a powerful influence on the degree to which rivals are open to international mediation efforts. Fourth, internal political changes within rivals themselves can foster the reevaluation of policies and increase the likelihood that mediation efforts will translate into an improvement in the rivalry relationship. Finally, the belief among rivals that a basis for settlement, a way out, exists improves the prospects for mediation success. It is important to emphasize that I regard the impact of each set of factors as largely independent of the others, and none of them are fully determinative of mediation success. Instead, each set of contextual factors carries an independent influence on the likelihood of mediation success. When conditions are fully ripe, the features of each set of contextual factors will be such that the likelihood of mediation success will be significantly improved.

The powerful effect of the past on the relationship between enduring rivals is a fundamental feature of enduring rivalries. As a result, the specific timing of mediation attempts within the lifecycle of an enduring rivalry is likely to have a strong effect on the likelihood of mediation success. The mediation literature, however, is divided regarding the direction of the effect that the timing of mediation exerts on the prospects for mediation success. One logic suggests that mediation attempted early in the lifetime of a dispute is more likely to be successful because the disputants have not yet begun to experience the increased hostility that is typically the product of a prolonged dispute (Edmead 1971). This argument suggests that early mediation permits the mediator to intervene before the dispute gets out of hand, and the willingness of the disputants to compromise with one another becomes sharply limited. As such, mediation becomes an effort to seize the moment before the conflict boils over and becomes unmanageable. This logic suggests the following hypothesis:

*Hypothesis 1a:* Mediation conducted early in the lifetime of an enduring rivalry is more likely to be successful.

A second logic suggests that a longer duration between the onset of the dispute and the mediation attempt can permit the disputants to continually engage in costly conflicts with one another, permitting them to eventually arrive at the realization that compromise is a more desirable outcome than recurring conflict. In this view, mediation that occurs too early is less likely to be successful because the disputants have yet to have sufficient opportunity to conclude that conflictual strategies are costly and unlikely to be successful. Instead, mediation is more likely to be successful later in the lifetime of a rivalry. This expectation is consistent with the arguments of Wickboldt, Bercovitch, and Piramuthu (1999); Bercovitch, Anagnoson, and Wille (1991); and Pruitt (1981) and suggests the following hypothesis:

*Hypothesis 1b:* Mediation conducted later in the lifetime of an enduring rivalry, after the rivals have experienced the costs of conflict, is more likely to be successful.

Another logic, however, suggests that it is the nature of the experiences gained by the rivals in relation to one another, rather than the duration of rivalry per se, that influences the prospects for mediation success. This view emphasizes the role of the characteristics and outcomes of past disputes between disputants in determining the likelihood of mediation success. In this sense, mediation success is most likely when a hurting stalemate develops between the disputants in which each pays the high costs of conflict without achieving any appreciable gain.

Implicitly, an enduring rivalry is a reflection of strategies chosen by states to achieve their goals with respect to the other side. In this sense, enduring rivalries are not exogenously defined but are, instead, dyads in which two sides tend to rely on conflictual strategies in dealing with one another. Zartman (2000, 1985) has suggested that the buildup of costs and pain during a dispute can encourage disputants to change their strategies toward one another. In these ripe moments, the disputants are locked in a mutual hurting stalemate in which unilateral solutions become blocked and joint solutions become more possible. Zartman argued that when a hurting stalemate prevails, and the parties begin to believe that there is a way out of the conflict, then a conflict is ripe for resolution. Fundamental to Zartman's conception of the hurting stalemate is the idea that when disputants find themselves following a pain-producing strategy with little gain, they will seek alternative strategies. Intuitively, ripeness occurs when both states increasingly become willing to move toward less conflictual strategies to achieve a mutually satisfactory outcome.

Similarly, Mor (1997) argued that a key time point during a rivalry occurs as the leadership and/or the general publics within the rivals realize that a transition to a more cooperative strategy would better serve state interests than a continued reliance on conflictual strategies. Recognition of the viability of cooperative strategies is likely to increase as the costs of continued conflict become more apparent. As military conflicts between rivals continually result in stalemate and generate high economic and human costs for the rivals, leaders are more likely to seek alternatives to the current conflictual strategy. Indeed, Richter (1992) suggested that repeated international crises may function to demonstrate to leaders that the existing foreign policy is likely to continue to result in heavy losses.

In this respect, the high costs of conflict within a rivalry may serve to encourage movement toward less conflictual strategies. Because more severe conflicts involve higher expressions of hostility by the rivals and larger conflict casualties, these conflicts impose higher economic and human costs on the rivals. As a result, when mediation is conducted after rivals have been forced to pay the high costs of conflict, it is more likely to facilitate movement by the rivals toward less conflictual policies toward one another. This logic suggests the following relationship:

*Hypothesis 2:* As the average severity level of previous disputes increases, the likelihood of mediation success will increase.

The second key element of the hurting stalemate is the failure of either rival to impose its preferred solution to the issues under dispute—the stalemate itself. Enduring rivals that are locked in patterns of repeated conflict may continue to follow conflictual policies toward one another as long as they expect that such policies are likely to yield a favorable shift in the rivalry status quo. Yet, reliance on conflictual policies carries high costs for the rivals themselves in terms of materiel, casualties, and resource allocation. Such costs may be borne by a rival so long as they provide a favorable return on their investment by either allowing or increasing the likelihood of a favorable alteration of the status quo.

The pattern of repeated disputes between rivals, however, may not be sufficient to suggest to them that conflictual policies toward one another are unlikely to achieve their desired goals. Frequently, stalemated rivalry disputes result in costs for the rivals without any appreciable benefit in the status quo to either side. As such, when mediation is conducted when rivals have had a high ratio of their disputes end in stalemate, the rivals should be more likely to move away from conflictual rivalry strategies toward more cooperative rivalry strategies, increasing the likelihood that mediation will successfully improve the rivalry relationship. As a result, I expect that

*Hypothesis 3:* As the percentage of disputes ending in stalemates increases, the likelihood of mediation success will increase.

The decision making of Egyptian president Anwar Sadat provides a clear example of how the high costs of conflict and the inability to favorably alter the rivalry status quo can create opportunities for mediation success. Following years of continued conflict with Israel, Egypt was in considerable economic and domestic turmoil. In 1977, these circumstances encouraged Sadat to conclude that maintenance of the continued pattern of conflict with Israel would only further damage Egypt. Indeed, Sadat argued that peace with Israel would provide a large peace dividend that would aid in solving many of Egypt's internal problems. Thus, Sadat recast Egyptian policy and announced that he was willing to go anywhere to discuss peace with Israel. This action created the impetus for the United States to seize a perceived moment of ripeness, launching the Camp David process. This momentum culminated in the 1978 Camp David Accords and the 1979 peace treaty with Israel.

Sadat's actions provide a good example of the manner in which a pattern of continued conflict within a rivalry can foster movement away from conflictual strategies. It was Sadat's perception of the costs and stalemate of past Egyptian-Israeli conflicts and his conclusion that they were likely to continue without a change in policy that functioned to encourage a reevaluation of the relationship with Israel and created the environment under which broader improvement in the rivalry relationship could occur.

Similarly, even without repeatedly stalemated dispute outcomes, a transition toward more cooperative strategies can also occur as both sides realize that their ability to impose a settlement on the other is small. Bercovitch (1997b) and Young (1967) each suggested that such a realization is particularly likely to occur when rivals are approximately equal in power. Although substantially weaker parties might be more likely to acquiesce to the demands of the other party in any international negotiations, it is important to emphasize the pattern of repeated conflict between enduring rivals that makes them unique. Even in cases in which the disparity of power is great among enduring rivals, we still often witness an unwillingness by the weaker power to yield to the demands of the stronger power. When power is roughly evenly distributed among enduring rivals, however, the ability of each side to unilaterally impose its preferred solution to rivalry issues through force should decline as each rival becomes more capable of resisting hostile actions by the other. This logic suggests that

*Hypothesis 4:* When rivals have roughly equal levels of power, the likelihood of mediation success will increase.

Rivals may be motivated to adopt more cooperative strategies toward one another not only as a result of what has happened in the past but also out of fear of what may happen in the rivalry relationship in the future. Zartman (2000) suggested that the perception by disputants of a precipice, the sense of an impending or recently avoided catastrophe, can be a source of ripeness encouraging disputants to move toward more cooperative relations, improving the prospects for mediation success. For enduring rivals, such a precipice may occur when rivals step across the line that divides militarized actions that simply involve threats, shows of force, and limited uses of force to actions that result in actual military deaths. Such an action essentially raises the ante in the rivalry relationship, increasing both the level of hostility and danger within the rivalry. As a result, the occurrence of a dispute between rivals that results in fatalities may provide the rivals with a sense that relations are on the verge of becoming significantly worse, suggesting to them that mediation may be their last chance to improve the rivalry relationship before circumstances spiral out of control. In this respect, the occurrence of fatalities in the last dispute before a mediation effort is conducted may function to encourage rivals to become more open to negotiation and compromise because they fear stepping off the ledge toward more significant levels of conflict. This logic suggests the following hypothesis:

*Hypothesis 5:* When the most recent dispute before a mediation attempt involved fatalities between the disputants, the likelihood of mediation success will increase.

Rivalry policies, however, are not easy to change. In general, conflict tends to beget conflict. Repeated conflicts between rivals, particularly those that involve significant numbers of fatalities, are likely to engender considerable hostility toward the adversary among the general population. Mor (1997), for example, argued that public support is particularly important within enduring rivalries because regimes must continually mobilize the public to sustain the effort against the rival. Yet, to continually mobilize the public against the rival, regimes must convince their constituents of the immediate threat of the rival. Typically, the danger of the rival is expressed to the population by creating images of an evil or threatening state. Such images, once in place, are quite difficult to change. Richter (1992), for example, suggested that external pressures serve to create a foreign policy; and the policy and its associated images of the adversary, in turn, create autonomous roots within the domestic environment.

In cases like enduring rivals in which conflictual strategies become institutionalized and deeply ingrained in the foreign policies of the states, substantial change in the strategies toward the other rival are likely to require the emergence of new thinking among decision makers. Typically, however, status quo policies toward the other rival are difficult to change without new decision makers in the rivals who can question the current policy. Mitchell (1995), for example, suggested that normal decision making is typically incremental in nature, leaving major goals and assumptions about policies unquestioned. In this respect, the simple installation of a new leader is not likely to be sufficient for reevaluation of policy toward the rival. A new leader entering office may be more dovish or hawkish toward the other rival depending on his or her own assumptions about the rivalry.

The reevaluation of rivalry policy is more likely to occur in the wake of broader political changes in the governmental structure of one of the rivals. As these political changes occur, a wide range of policy beliefs and assumptions begin to be reevaluated and replaced. In effect, polity changes provide the "jolt" that Mitchell (1995) argued is necessary for the reevaluation of goals and strategies by policy makers. Particularly in cases like enduring rivalries in which patterns of repeated conflict exist, policies toward the other rival are likely to be included among those that are reevaluated and altered following major domestic political changes. In this respect, structural changes within one of the rivals should provide an opening for changing rivalry relations and create a greater opportunity for mediation success. The political direction of the structural changes, however, may also have an important effect on the prospects for mediation success. The norms of compromise and negotiation inherent in democratic systems suggest that polity changes toward greater levels of democracy may be more conducive to mediation success than other types of political changes. This logic suggests the following hypotheses:

*Hypothesis 6a:* A recent polity change within one of the enduring rivals increases the likelihood of mediation success.

*Hypothesis 6b:* Only recent democratic polity changes within one of the enduring rivals increases the likelihood of mediation success.



Opportunities for the reevaluation of rivalry strategies, however, need not be confined only to political restructuring within enduring rivals. Instead, an increase in the level of threat directed toward the rivals, either internal or external, can also promote a movement toward less conflictual policies, increasing the prospects for mediation success. A civil war within a rival, for example, may encourage it to improve the rivalry relationship so that it may focus its attention on dealing with the internal conflict. Because states have only a finite amount of attention and resources they can devote to all potential threats, an increase in the number of other threats that a state faces external to the rivalry should make that state more amenable to conflict management, making it more likely to seek to reduce conflict with its rival to devote attention to the more pressing domestic conflict. This logic suggests the following hypothesis:

*Hypothesis 7a:* The occurrence of a civil war within one of the rivals at the time of mediation increases the likelihood of mediation success.

Another possibility, however, is that a civil war will diminish the likelihood of successful mediation. Internal conflict may weaken the leadership within the rival state sufficiently to make compromise with the other rival no longer possible. A leader weakened by internal conflict may be unable to grant sufficient concessions because of the domestic constraints that he or she faces, or he or she may lack sufficient credibility to bargain with the other adversary. Haas (1990) and Bercovitch (1997b), for example, both emphasized the importance of leadership strength to mediation success. Domestic conflict may encourage a rivalry leader to externalize his or her problems by encouraging conflict within the rivalry to garner support domestically. In addition, the opposing side may view internal conflict within the other rival as an opportunity to be exploited, encouraging it to adopt a more conflictual policy toward the rivalry. This argument suggests that

*Hypothesis 7b:* The occurrence of a civil war within one of the rivals at the time of mediation reduces the likelihood of mediation success.

Because enduring rivalries do not exist in isolation from the broader international system, an increase in the level of threat the rivals feel from the international system is also likely to increase the prospects for mediation success. As with internal threats, the limited amount of resources available to states compels them to address the most pressing threats first. As a result, rivals embroiled in multiple rivalries may seize upon a mediation effort and improve their relationship to deal with other threats outside of the rivalry. This argument suggests the following hypothesis:

*Hypothesis 8:* As the number of other rivalries in which rivals participate increases, the likelihood of mediation success will increase.

Beyond the impact of the costs and pain of previous conflict, the level of threats to the rivals, and the stimulation of new thinking brought about by internal political changes within the rivals, the ability of mediation to achieve any form of success is likely to be tied to the perception among the rivals' leadership that it is possible for a

deal to be reached. Zartman (2000) and Mitchell (1995) each suggested that the perception by the parties of a way out is an important component of a ripe moment. In this sense, the perception of a way out develops when the rivals anticipate that the possibility for reconciling their goals exists and concession making becomes possible.

One means of recognizing the perception of a way out among rivals is to focus on who initiates a mediation effort. A rival calling for mediation of disputes within the rivalry may recognize that some basis for agreement exists between the disputants. This expectation may develop when previously incongruent positions now permit compromise. Similarly, the sense of a way out can develop when the willingness of the rivals to hold to their positions wanes as the costs and pain of conflict mount. Under these circumstances, rivals may call for third-party involvement to assist them in fostering improvement in the rivalry relationship by seizing on the perceived possibility of agreement. Even if this expectation develops within only one rival, the perception of a way out may foster greater flexibility in negotiations—improving the prospects for mediation success. This logic suggests the following hypothesis:

*Hypothesis 9:* Mediation is more likely to be successful when it is initiated by at least one of the rivals.

Although I expect that the initiation of mediation by the rivals will increase the prospects for mediation success, disputants may also seek to initiate mediation for reasons unrelated to the achievement of an agreement or broader conflict management within the rivalry relationship. Richmond (1998), for example, suggested that disputants often initiate mediation with “devious objectives.” Rather than using mediation as a vehicle with which to reduce the level of conflict within the rivalry relationship, Richmond suggests that disputants may become involved in mediation efforts to gain breathing space and regroup resources, internationalize the dispute to improve its bargaining position, gain legitimacy for its bargaining position, or even to avoid making significant concessions by prolonging the dispute. The inclusion of a third party into negotiations may function to improve the power position of the weaker party in the dispute. This observation may explain the relative infrequency with which major powers permit mediation of their disputes, particularly those involving minor powers. Because of the possibility of mediation with devious objectives, I am open to the possibility that mediation efforts initiated by the rivals may not be more likely to result in either short-term or extended-term mediation success and may, in fact, actually reduce the likelihood of successful mediation.

I expect that the context under which mediation occurs will have a strong effect on the willingness of enduring rivals to move away from conflictual strategies toward more cooperative strategies. Patterns of repeated stalemated outcomes, high dispute costs, increases in the level of perceived threats to the rivals, power parity, and internal political changes are each expected to influence the degree to which enduring rivals are willing to adopt less conflictual strategies toward one another. When these conditions prevail, I expect that both short-term and extended-term mediation success are more likely to be achieved.

It is important, however, to note the extent to which short-term and extended-term mediation success involve different levels of change in strategy. Short-term mediation success, the immediate outcome of a mediation effort, is typically less difficult to achieve, requiring a lower level of commitment by the parties and less of a change in strategies than extended-term mediation. Mediation agreements can be achieved on peripheral issues without improving the broader rivalry relationship. Similarly, mediation agreements may be entered into without necessarily changing the behavior of the rivals toward one another. In addition, mediation agreements may be broken, fostering a deterioration of the rivalry relationship in the long term.

By contrast, extended-term mediation success, such as the reduction of dispute severity or conflict frequency, implies a more fundamental improvement in the rivalry relationship. Extended-term mediation success involves a higher degree of strategy change among enduring rivals because it requires the rivals to alter their actual behavior toward one another. This more fundamental shift in the strategies of rivals toward one another suggests that extended-term mediation success is more difficult to achieve and more strongly related to the context under which mediation occurs. Although context is important to short-term mediation success, I expect that under poor contextual conditions it will be easier for a mediator to encourage a short-term agreement than an extended-term improvement in the rivalry relationship. In this respect, I anticipate that contextual factors will have a stronger impact on the prospects for extended-term mediation success than the features of the mediation effort itself.

## RESEARCH DESIGN

This study covers the temporal domain from 1946 to 1992 and examines the population of enduring rivalries that began after 1945 and experienced at least one third-party mediation attempt. Enduring rivalries are dispute dyads that persist at least 20 years and experience at least six disputes during this timeframe (Diehl and Goertz 2000). Thirty-five rivalries meet these criteria. Operationally, there are 19 enduring rivalries that experienced mediation attempts during the timeframe of the study. These rivalries are listed in the appendix. The number of individual mediation attempts experienced by these rivalries ranges from a low of 1 to a high of 48 (with a median number of 6).<sup>1</sup> Examining ripeness in enduring rivalries is important because these dyads are both particularly conflict prone (accounting for nearly half of all militarized disputes) and also particularly likely to experience third-party conflict management attempts (Bercovitch, Diehl, and Goertz 1997). In addition, because enduring rivalries exhibit repeated patterns of conflict, they provide a useful population for examining ripeness from an extended-term perspective.

The unit of analysis for the study is the mediation attempt. I use Bercovitch's (1997a) International Conflict Management (ICM) data set to identify mediation attempts. At each mediation attempt, I take a cross-section of the rivalry relationship, the features of the mediation attempt, and the domestic political characteristics of the

1. The range of mediation attempts for the severity analysis is 1 to 11 with a median of 3.

rivals. In examining conditions of ripeness for mediation, I seek to determine those factors that are associated with higher probabilities of mediation success. Operationally, these factors may be those features associated with the most recent dispute prior to the current mediation attempt or factors endemic to the rivals that prevail at the time of the mediation attempt.

Although much of the mediation literature has focused on short-term mediation outcomes, it is possible that full settlements or partial settlements achieved through mediation may not translate into improvements in the overall rivalry relationship. In this respect, although mediation may appear successful in the short run, any longer term impact may be absent. Regan and Stam (2000), for example, suggested that third-party interventions can have a cumulative effect in which repeated short-term failures yield long-term success. I therefore use two extended-term measures of mediation success.

Bercovitch and Diehl (1997, 300) described conflict management as a process in which the conflicting parties "take steps to transform, de-escalate, or terminate a conflict in an acceptable way." Following this lead, I examine the extended-term success of mediation in terms of the reduction in the severity of future disputes and increased waiting times until the next use of force. Improvement in each of these extended-term measures signals that mediation has successfully improved the broader rivalry relationship beyond simply achieving an agreement.

Ideally, mediation will function to increase the waiting time between uses of force, delaying the onset of the next use of force following mediation. I examine the duration until the next use of force rather than the duration until the next dispute to focus the analysis on the ability of mediation to reduce the most serious types of militarized disputes. Lower level disputes that involve alerts, token shows of force, or threats may simply represent saber rattling between rivals that is substantively different from an actual use of force. I measure the waiting time until the next use of force as the number of months between the last mediation attempt and the onset of the next militarized dispute that involves the use of force. Uses of force are determined using the Correlates of War (COW) Militarized Interstate Dispute (MID) 2.1 (Jones, Bremer, and Singer 1996) dispute hostility variable. Disputes with hostility scores of 4 or 5 (uses of force or war) are counted as uses of force.

There are 238 mediation attempts among 19 enduring rivalries during the period from 1946 to 1992. The duration until the next usage of force is calculated in months. Because multiple mediation attempts sometimes occur between uses of force, the durations for these mediations are censored by the occurrence of an intervening mediation attempt. In addition, several censored mediation efforts occur in the same month. In this respect, the duration between these mediations and the next mediation attempt is 0 months. Because event history models cannot estimate observations with 0 durations, it is necessary to aggregate these multiple mediation efforts that occur temporally proximate to one another. As a result, I aggregate all mediations that occur in the same month into a single mediation observation. However, I include the count of the aggregated mediations into the total mediations-attempted variable. This process results in a database of 202 mediations. The contextual features of the mediation effort most temporally proximate to the next usage of force are coded in the database.

Because some mediation attempts are censored by the occurrence of a subsequent mediation attempt before the next dispute, it is impossible to determine the true time between that censored mediation attempt and the next use of force. To account for this censoring effect, I use a conditional Cox model for the analysis.<sup>2</sup> The Cox model is an event history approach that permits the estimation of models for censored data without introducing the bias into the analysis that simply dropping censored cases or arbitrarily ending durations between spells would interject. In addition, the Cox model carries fewer assumptions about the shape of the hazard rate.

International mediation efforts within a rivalry, however, are not independent events. As Regan and Stam (2000) demonstrated, mediation can have a cumulative effect on international conflict. Ordinary event history models, however, fail to adequately account for this nonindependence of events. In these models, the 3rd mediation attempt in a rivalry would be treated the same as the 10th mediation in a rivalry. Repeated events models, such as the conditional Cox model, however, explicitly model the nonindependence of events. The nonindependence of the mediation efforts is modeled by clustering the model by rivalry. The data are then stratified by the number of mediation efforts to date—the failure order. As a result, the model restricts the coefficients to be the same across strata but permits each stratum to have a unique baseline hazard rate (Box-Steffensmeier and Jones 1999).

I gauge short-term mediation success in terms of the immediate outcomes of individual mediation attempts. Using Bercovitch's (1997a) ICM data set, I create a trichotomous mediation outcome variable. I differentiate mediation outcomes as full successes (full settlements of the issue under mediation), partial successes (ceasefires, partial agreements), and failures. I use an ordered logit model to examine the factors associated with successful immediate mediation outcomes. For greater comparability, I use the same 202 mediation cases in the short-term analysis that are used in the waiting-time analysis.

Another important measurement of extended-term mediation success is the ability of mediation to improve the level of conflict within the rivalry relationship. I examine changes in the severity level of rivalry disputes immediately following the last mediation attempt in reference to a baseline rivalry severity average. Because individual rivalries may demonstrate distinctly different patterns of conflict, it is important to reference changes in severity with respect to a unique baseline for the rivalry. This methodology is consistent with Diehl and Goertz's (2000) finding that individual rivalries each have a unique basic rivalry level (BRL), an average hostility level around which dispute severity fluctuates.

In examining the impact of mediation on the severity of the next militarized dispute, I derive the dispute severity scores directly from Diehl and Goertz (2000). Dispute severity is measured on a 0 to 200 scale that reflects the general level of hostility and the number of battle deaths resulting from the dispute.<sup>3</sup> I calculate the difference in the severity level between the first dispute following a mediation attempt and the average

2. I tested for the suitability of a Weibull model for the analysis. The Weibull model's shape parameter was not significantly different from 1, suggesting the use of a Weibull model was not necessary. Therefore, I estimate the more general Cox model, which carries fewer distributional assumptions.

3. Diehl and Goertz (2000) provided a detailed discussion of the calculation of the severity score.

of the last three disputes before a mediation attempt.<sup>4</sup> I use the average of the last three disputes as the reference point so that the baseline for comparison is sufficiently long for a reasonable comparison but sufficiently recent that it reflects the state of the rivalry at the time of the mediation attempt. Simply using the severity of the last dispute as the baseline for comparison might arbitrarily find a reduction in severity following a dispute with a randomly high severity level, regardless of the impact that mediation has on the rivalry. In such cases, the tendency would be for the severity of subsequent disputes to return closer to the BRL, even without the influence of mediation. By contrast, comparing the severity of the next dispute to the severity average for the life of the rivalry would find a successful impact of mediation on cases in which early disputes were very severe but were followed by disputes with declining severity levels (perhaps as a result of earlier mediation attempts). Such cases would effectively have an improvement in rivalry severity built into the analysis.<sup>5</sup> Because of these concerns, I focus on the average of the last three disputes as the baseline for dispute severity comparison.

Because multiple mediation attempts occur between disputes, it is not possible to independently gauge the impact of mediations that are followed by a subsequent mediation attempt rather than a dispute. As a result, the data for the analysis consist of the 73 mediation attempts among enduring rivals that are followed by a dispute without an intervening mediation attempt. I create a 3-point scale that describes the level of reduction in the severity level of the next dispute following mediation. Mediations in which there is *no severity reduction or an increase in severity* in the next dispute are coded as a 0—these cases represent the failure of mediation to improve the rivalry relationship. Moderate improvement in the severity level of the next dispute—*severity reduction between 1 and 80 units*—is coded as a 1. Large improvement in the severity level of the next dispute—*severity reduction greater than 80 points*—is coded as a 2.<sup>6</sup> I use an ordered logit model to estimate the factors associated with improvement in the severity level of rivalry disputes after mediation.

I measure the impact of the timing of the mediation attempt on the likelihood of mediation of success by including a variable describing the elapsed time in months between the first rivalry dispute and the current mediation attempt. In addition, to control for the impact that the features of the mediation attempt itself have on the prospects for mediation success, I include several control variables describing the features of the mediation attempt. The data for each of these variables and the mediation date information are taken from the Bercovitch (1997a) ICM data set. The ICM data set provides rich data on the date, parties, and characteristics of conflict management efforts for the post–World War II period. The data set includes information on the type of conflict

4. For mediation efforts that occur very early in the rivalry, before three disputes have occurred, I use the average severity level of all previous disputes as the baseline. As a result, the baseline for a few of the cases is the severity level of only one or two disputes. I use this methodology to avoid the bias that would be caused by excluding mediation attempts that occurred early in a rivalry.

5. I do, however, estimate this model as a basis for comparison with a model using the last three disputes as the basis for comparison. The results are substantively similar. I report the results of the three-dispute model for the reasons described above.

6. For robustness, I also estimated the model using several variations of the severity reduction scale, including several in which the scale of the lowest level of severity improvement is narrowed. The results across scales were substantively similar. I use the 3-point scale because it best reflects the underlying distribution of the severity change after mediation.

management activity (negotiation, mediation, arbitration, etc.), characteristics of the mediator, and the outcome of the conflict management activity.

Because mediation is more likely to be successful as the parties build a relationship between themselves and the mediator, I include a variable describing the number of previous mediations with the same mediator. In addition, because a mediation attempt can have a cumulative impact as part of a broader process, I include a variable counting the total number of previous mediation attempts that have occurred between the rivals. Similarly, the cumulative effect of multiple mediation efforts within the same dispute can provide progress toward a mediated agreement. I therefore incorporate into the analysis the ICM variable describing the total number of mediation attempts conducted in this dispute.

The characteristics of the mediator can also have an important impact on the prospects for successful mediation. Mediations conducted by state leaders themselves signal a greater commitment by a third party to assist the rivals in improving their relationship and may increase the prospects for mediation success. Major power mediators are often able to bring considerable resources to bear on the mediation attempt that may greatly increase its chances of success. An examination of the combinations of carrots and sticks available to American mediators during the Egyptian-Israeli or the current Israeli-Palestinian mediations suggests an important role that the resources available to the mediator have on the prospects for mediation success. As a result, I include dummy variables in the model describing whether the mediation attempt was conducted by a state leader and if it was conducted by a major power. Operationally, I define major power status as permanent membership in the UN Security Council.

The nature of the issue under mediation may impact the prospects for reaching an agreement. The war literature suggests that territorial issues tend to have the highest severity levels, suggesting that disputes involving territory may be less amenable to mediation efforts. I therefore include a control variable describing whether one of the primary issues under dispute involves territory. This variable is derived from the primary issue variable within the Bercovitch (1997a) ICM data set. In addition, as a proxy for the perception by the rivals that a way out exists for mediation, I include a variable that describes whether mediation was initiated by at least one of the rivals. Data for this variable are taken from the mediation initiation variable in the Bercovitch ICM data set.

I measure the impact of domestic political factors on mediation success by including dichotomous variables describing polity changes and the existence of internal conflicts within either rival. Data for polity changes are taken from the Polity 98D data set (Gleditsch 2000). The Polity 98D data set includes both the date of polity changes and information regarding the direction of polity changes. Because the data set focuses on changes in the political structure of states, these data are ideally suited for identifying points in time when political changes are most likely to promote a reevaluation of rivalry strategies. A polity change is coded if a polity change occurred within at least one of the rivals no more than 24 months prior to the mediation attempt. I code two polity change variables, one indicating shifts toward democracy and one indicating shifts toward autocracy.<sup>7</sup> The 2-year cutoff was selected to coincide with the expectation that

7. I am grateful to Glenn Palmer for this suggestion.

relatively recent reorientations of the political system would most strongly influence the success of mediation. Civil war data were derived from the COW file (Singer and Small 1993). A civil war was coded if an internal conflict was occurring within either rival at the time of the mediation attempt.

I also include a term that measures the power distribution between the rivals. Using the COW composite index of national capabilities data set (Singer, Bremer, and Stuckey 1972), I create a power ratio variable by dividing the percentage of system capabilities held by the more powerful rival by the percentage of system capabilities held by the less powerful rival. The COW capabilities measure is determined as a percentage of system capabilities across six dimensions: total military personnel, total military expenditures, total energy consumption, iron and steel production, urban population, and total population. The dyadic capability data were generated using the EUGene software program (Bennett and Stam 2000).

To measure the impact that participation in other rivalries has on the likelihood of mediation success, I include an interaction term describing the total number of enduring rivalries of which each rival is a member at the time of the mediation attempt. Because this variable includes the rivalry that is under mediation, the smallest possible value for this variable is 1. To measure the impact of past conflict costs and stalemated outcomes on the likelihood of mediation success, I also include variables describing the percentage of past rivalry disputes that have ended in stalemate at the time of the mediation attempt and the average severity level of all previous rivalry disputes.

Data on dispute stalemates are derived from the COW MID 2.1 date set (Jones, Bremer, and Singer 1996). I use the percentage of disputes ending in stalemates rather than the total number of stalemates as a measure for two key reasons. First, measuring stalemates this way removes time, which I consider in the timing variable, from the variable and significantly reduces the problem of multicollinearity in the model. Second, using the percentage of disputes ending in stalemates allows the analysis to differentiate between rivalries that experience stalemates quickly from those that do not. If we compare two hypothetical cases, one in which the rivals experience 4 stalemated outcomes in the first 4 disputes and one in which the rivals experience 4 stalemated outcomes distributed over 12 disputes, the basis for this decision becomes more obvious. If the accumulation of evidence of the failure of conflictual strategies is driving the likelihood of mediation success, we would expect the first case to be more prone to mediation success than the last rivalry because all of the previous disputes in the first case ended in stalemate. By contrast, in the latter case, only a fraction of the disputes ended in stalemates, offering little suggestion to the rivals that conflictual strategies are unlikely to be successful. Only looking at the total number of stalemated outcomes would code each case exactly the same. Calculating the variable as a ratio compares more favorably with the theoretical expectations that I have described.

The average severity measure provides a good means for evaluating the costs of past conflict in the rivalry. Data for this variable are derived from Diehl and Goertz (2000). Because Diehl and Goertz calculated the severity score as an interaction term between each state's MID hostility score and the total dispute fatalities, this variable does a reasonably good job of capturing how costly previous disputes have tended to be for the rivals. As disputes move to higher levels of severity, they entail higher costs



for the rivals in both economic and human terms. The addition of the fatality term to the measure serves to further underscore the overall pain previous disputes have inflicted on the rivals. As these measures increase, the willingness of the rivals to abandon these policies should also begin to increase.

Zartman (2000) suggested that the perception that the disputants have reached a precipice in which events are likely to further deteriorate can be a powerful force to encourage successful mediation. When a rivalry dispute is sufficiently severe that it involves military fatalities for the participants, it may suggest to the rivals that subsequent disputes present a considerable danger of escalation to higher levels of conflict. To capture this effect in my examination of enduring rivalries, I code a dichotomous variable that describes whether the last dispute involved fatalities. To count, this last dispute must have occurred no more than 12 months before the current mediation attempt. I include this requirement to adequately control for cases in which the last dispute occurred several years before the current mediation attempt. In these cases, even if fatalities occurred, it is unlikely that they would provide a sense of impending disaster by the time mediation actually occurs.

## EMPIRICAL RESULTS

### SHORT-TERM RIPENESS

The short-term mediation outcome analysis suggests that the context under which mediation occurs, rather than the features of the mediation attempt, has the strongest impact on the prospects for a mediated agreement. The results of the ordered logit analysis are summarized in Table 1.

Mediations attempted early in the lifetime of a rivalry were more likely to result in an agreement than those attempted later in the rivalry. Deriving the estimated probabilities of mediation success from the ordered logit model offers some insight into the factors associated with mediation success. For example, there was more than a 60% probability of achieving a partial or full mediation agreement on the issues under dispute for mediations attempted 6 months after the first rivalry dispute. By contrast, mediation efforts conducted very late in the rivalry relationship were significantly less likely to achieve any type of agreement. The probability of a partial or full agreement was slightly less than 40% for mediations conducted 240 months after the first rivalry dispute. The likelihood of achieving a mediation agreement that resulted in a full settlement of the issues under dispute for mediations conducted 6 months after the first rivalry dispute was more than double that of mediations conducted 240 months into the rivalry (9.2% and 4.2%, respectively).

This finding suggests that short-term mediation success is more closely associated with the limitation of conflict rather than the pain and costs of conflict. Mediations conducted early in a rivalry, before the rivals have had the opportunity to experience significant levels of hostility and pain, are most likely to be successful. The findings for the percentage stalemate and average severity variables bear this expectation out. Although neither variable is statistically significant, both coefficients are negative,

TABLE 1  
Ordered Logit of Short-Term Mediation Outcomes

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Coefficient</i>	<i>Robust SE</i>
<b>Mediation features</b>		
Number of mediations by same mediator	.102	.098
Mediation conducted by state leader	-.405	.548
Elapsed time since first rivalry dispute	-.004*	.002
Number of previous mediation attempts	.009	.010
Number of mediation attempts this dispute	-.224**	.053
Mediation conducted by a major power	-.140	.286
Issue under dispute involves territory	.953*	.530
Mediation initiated by at least one rival	.730**	.393
<b>Rivalry features</b>		
Percentage of rivalry disputes ending in stalemate	-.006	.011
Average severity of previous disputes	-.009	.011
Fatalities in last dispute within 12 months	.212	.374
Power ratio	.0002	.016
<b>Other threats</b>		
Other rivalry involvement	.060	.065
Civil war	-.697	.543
<b>Polity change</b>		
Authoritarian polity change in last 24 months	.072	.401
Democratic polity change in last 24 months	.091	.374
<i>N</i> = 202		
Wald $\chi^2(16) = 774.13$		
Prob > $\chi^2 = .0000$		

\*Significant at .10. \*\*Significant at .05.

suggesting that if the intensity and outcomes of previous disputes have any effect on short-term mediation success, it is to reduce the likelihood of agreement.

Consistent with theoretical expectations, mediation efforts that were initiated by at least one of the rivals were significantly more likely to yield a mediated agreement. This suggests that when at least one of the parties believes that the possibility for agreement exists to a sufficient extent to actually initiate a mediation effort, the likelihood of an agreement was significantly higher than when mediation was initiated by a third party. Indeed, the likelihood of a full agreement on the issues under dispute was nearly double for mediation efforts initiated by at least one of the parties than for those initiated by a third party. The baseline likelihood of any type of mediated agreement, holding continuous variables at their means and dichotomous variables at their modal values, was .418. When mediation was initiated by the parties, the likelihood of any type of mediated agreement increased markedly to .598.

The nature of the issue under dispute was also significantly related to the likelihood of mediation success. Interestingly, the territorial control variable was statistically significant but opposite theoretical expectations. Territorial issues were significantly more likely to result in a mediation agreement than nonterritorial issues. In general, the

key issues between enduring rivals, because they tend to be highly salient for both parties, are resistant to mediation. As a result, territorial issues between enduring rivals may not be any more salient than other types of issues between enduring rivals. Territorial issues, however, can be more divisible than other types of issues between enduring rivals. Brams and Taylor (1996, 240) defined a divisible good as "one that can be divided at any point along a continuum (infinite divisibility), or in discrete units (finite divisibility), without destroying its value." Because divisible issues offer the ability to provide benefits to both disputants instead of a winner-take-all solution, they increase the likelihood of agreement between disputants. As such, because of their greater divisibility, some territorial disputes between enduring rivals may be more open to mediation agreements than disputes over ideology, regime, or ethnic issues. This higher level of divisibility makes territorial issues more prone to mediation agreements than other types of issues between enduring rivals.

Contrary to expectations, short-term mediation success was not significantly related to the distribution of power between the rivals. Threats to the rivals outside the rivalry, either external or internal, were not significantly related to the likelihood of mediation success because neither the level of participation in other rivalries nor the civil war variables were significant. Surprisingly, a recent dispute involving fatalities did not increase the likelihood of a mediated agreement. It may be possible that even dispute fatalities are insufficient to provide a sense of impending disaster sufficient to encourage enduring rivals to achieve a mediated agreement.

Domestic political changes within the rivals were also not significantly related to the likelihood of short-term mediation success. Neither authoritarian nor democratic polity changes significantly influenced the likelihood of mediation success. The directions of both the democratic and authoritarian polity change variables, however, were in the expected direction. This result may suggest that, because short-term mediated agreements require less of a fundamental shift in rivalry relations, they do not require the reevaluation of rivalry policies that are fostered by polity changes.

Surprisingly, however, multiple mediation attempts during a particular dispute reduced the likelihood of a mediated agreement. This finding is likely a selection effect in which the most difficult disputes to resolve are also the most likely to attract third-party conflict management efforts. The fact that none of the mediation control variables was significant was also surprising. Neither previous experiences with the same mediator, mediations conducted by state leaders, nor mediations conducted by major powers significantly increased the likelihood of a mediation agreement. This suggests that the ability of a mediator to foster an agreement between enduring rivals under poor contextual conditions may be limited.

#### **EXTENDED-TERM RIPENESS**

The results of the use of force waiting-time analysis suggest that the factors associated with extended-term mediation success follow a different dynamic from those associated with short-term mediation success. In contrast with the short-term results, evidence of the failure of previous conflictual strategies had a strong effect on the ability of mediation to postpone future uses of force. In general, the context under which

TABLE 2  
Conditional Cox Model for Waiting Time until the Next Use of Force

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Hazard Ratio</i>	<i>Coefficient</i>	<i>Robust SE</i>
<b>Mediation features</b>			
Number of mediations by same mediator	1.136	.127	.141
Mediation conducted by state leader	0.704	-.351	.630
Elapsed time since first rivalry dispute	0.994	-.006**	.003
Number of mediation attempts this dispute	0.957	-.044	.145
Mediation conducted by a major power	0.934	-.069	.610
Issue under mediation involves territory	1.426	.355	.414
Mediation initiated by at least one rival	.751	-.286	.689
<b>Rivalry features</b>			
Percentage of disputes ending in stalemate	0.992	-.008*	.006
Average severity of previous disputes	0.983	-.017**	.006
Fatalities in last dispute within 12 months	3.065	1.120	.748
Power ratio	0.911	-.093**	.038
<b>Other threats</b>			
Other rivalry involvement	1.070	.066*	.035
Civil war	0.351	-1.047	.745
<b>Polity change</b>			
Authoritarian polity change in last 24 months	0.371	-.991	.872
Democratic polity change in last 24 months	0.252	-1.380**	.809
<i>N</i> = 202			
Wald $\chi^2(15) = 151.44$			
Prob > $\chi^2 = .0000$			

\*Significant at .10. \*\*Significant at .05.

mediation occurs was more important to extended-term success than the features of the mediation effort itself. The results of the waiting-time analysis are summarized in Table 2.

Rivalries with a high percentage of previous disputes ending in stalemate had significantly longer durations until the next use of force than those with low levels of stalemated outcomes. A one standard deviation increase in the percentage of disputes ending in stalemate decreased by nearly 20% the likelihood of observing a usage of force at any given point in time following a mediation attempt. Similarly, as the average dispute severity level for the rivalry increased, the likelihood of a use of force at any time point after mediation decreased significantly. A one standard deviation increase in previous rivalry dispute severity reduced by nearly 47% the likelihood of a use of force. These results demonstrate that as rivals experience high dispute costs coupled with repeated dispute stalemates, they are more likely to reduce their level of conflict toward one another following mediation.

The timing of the mediation effort in the lifetime of the rivalry was also significantly related to the likelihood of a usage of force after mediation. Unlike the results in the short-term mediation agreement analysis, mediation efforts conducted later in the lifetime of a rivalry significantly improved the prospects for a reduction in the fre-

quency of uses of force. This finding, coupled with the results regarding the effect of dispute stalemates and dispute severity levels, suggests that mediation efforts are best able to facilitate improvement in the rivalry relationship and reduce the frequency of the most conflictual types of activities after enduring rivals have had sufficient opportunity to experience an extended pattern of high-cost disputes that fail to yield a change in the rivalry status quo.

Domestic political factors within the rivals also significantly influenced the waiting time until the next use of force after mediation. Democratic polity changes had the strongest statistically significant impact among the variables on the waiting time until the next use of force. A democratic polity change within 24 months of a mediation attempt reduced the likelihood of a usage of force at any point in time following the mediation by nearly 75%.<sup>8</sup> The direction of the effect of authoritarian polity changes was also positive but was not statistically significant. This finding fits the expectation that fundamental changes in the structure of the regimes of enduring rivals encourages the reevaluation of policy toward the enduring rivalry, increasing the prospects for improvement in the rivalry relationship. The fact that only democratic polity shifts were significantly related to improvement in the waiting time until the use of force compares favorably with the work within the democratic peace literature. Significant political liberalization at home appears to support efforts to improve the level of conflict within the rivalry relationship after mediation.

The existence of threats to the rivals outside the rivalry had a mixed effect on the waiting time until the next use of force following mediation. The civil war variable was not significant at the .10 level using a two-tailed test. By contrast, increased international threats to the rivals reduced the delay until the next use of force. As the number of rivalries in which both rivals are participants at the time of mediation increased, the likelihood of a use of force following mediation significantly increased. This finding was contrary to theoretical expectations. Each additional rivalry in which members of a mediated rivalry participate increases by almost 7% the likelihood of a use of force following mediation. This finding suggests a selection effect in which states that tend to be more conflict prone in the international system also tend to be more conflict prone within the rivalries in which they are involved.

The effect of the rivalry power distribution was also contrary to theoretical expectations. A use of force at any time following mediation was more than 17% less likely for rivalries in which there was a three to one distribution of power than for rivalries with an even distribution of power. This suggests that power parity at the time of mediation can suggest to rivals that, under the right circumstances, they may have sufficient power to impose through force their preferred settlement to rivalry issues. In this respect, power parity may make rivals more willing to accept the risks of a use of force, reducing the waiting time between mediation and the next use of force.

Consistent with the results in the short-term analysis, none of the control variables that describe the characteristics of the mediation attempt were significantly related to

8. Shorter durations between polity changes and mediation attempts were also attempted. The effect of polity changes within 12 and 6 months was similar to the reported findings across all of the models in both magnitude and direction. The level of statistical significance, however, declined due to the small number of polity changes that occurred as the timeframe declined.

TABLE 3  
Ordered Logit of Rivalry Severity Change

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Coefficient</i>	<i>Robust SE</i>
<b>Mediation features</b>		
Number of mediations by same mediator	.486*	.305
Mediation conducted by state leader	1.128**	.611
Elapsed time since first rivalry dispute	.004	.003
Number of previous mediation attempts	.012	.020
Number of mediation attempts this dispute	-.556**	.130
Mediation conducted by a major power	.782**	.436
Issue under dispute involves territory	-1.810**	.953
Mediation initiated by at least one rival	-.251	.746
<b>Rivalry features</b>		
Percentage of rivalry disputes ending in stalemate	.024**	.012
Average severity of previous disputes	.044**	.012
Fatalities in last dispute within 12 months	-.494	.665
Power ratio	.015	.020
<b>Other threats</b>		
Other rivalry involvement	-.027	.051
Civil war	-.209	.947
<b>Polity change</b>		
Authoritarian polity change in last 24 months	-.366	1.313
Democratic polity change in last 24 months	1.520**	.722

*N* = 73  
Wald  $\chi^2(16) = 933.54$   
Prob >  $\chi^2 = .0000$

\*Significant at .10. \*\*Significant at .05.

the duration until the use of force following mediation. Similarly, the occurrence of fatalities in the last rivalry dispute before mediation did not reduce the likelihood of a use of force following mediation. Indeed, although the fatalities in the last dispute variable do not meet the .10 significance level, the direction of the coefficient suggests that fatalities in the last dispute before mediation may increase the occurrence of a use of force after mediation. In this respect, recent dispute fatalities do not appear to suggest a precipice for enduring rivals and do not foster any form of mediation success.

The results of the severity-change analysis are quite similar to the results obtained in the waiting-time analysis. This further suggests that the forces that foster improvement in the prospects for a mediated agreement follow a very different pattern from those that encourage broader improvement in the rivalry relationship. The results of the severity-change analysis are summarized in Table 3.

The costs imposed by previous conflicts significantly influenced the likelihood of observing a reduction in dispute severity following international mediation. As the average severity level of previous rivalry disputes increased, the likelihood of a reduction of severity in the next dispute following mediation also increased. Similarly, as the percentage of disputes ending in stalemate increased, the likelihood of improvement in

the severity of the next dispute increased. At the baseline, when dichotomous variables were held at their modes and all other variables were held at the mean, the probability of observing any type of improvement in the severity level of the next dispute following mediation was slightly more than 47%. By contrast, when the average dispute severity and the percentage of disputes ending in stalemate variables were each increased by one standard deviation, there was more than an 84% probability of observing any type of dispute severity reduction. The effect of the costs and stalemates of previous disputes on the likelihood of severity reduction is most striking at the highest level of the dispute severity change scale, when dispute severity is reduced by more than 80 points. The probability of a major improvement of more than 80 points in the severity level of the next dispute when the model is held at the baseline was only slightly less than 3%. By contrast, when a hurting stalemate prevails and the average severity and percentage stalemate variables were each increased by one standard deviation, the probability of a severity reduction more than quadrupled to almost 14%.

These findings underscore the powerful effect that the pattern of costs and failure experienced by rivals has on the ability of mediation to reduce the intensity of conflict within a rivalry. The results of the waiting-time and severity-change analyses suggest that the idea of a hurting stalemate provides a useful way of examining the manner in which mediation can improve the broader rivalry relationship. Enduring rivals appear to change their behavior toward one another following mediation as the costs of previous conflict mount without yielding any change in the status quo of the issues under dispute. As with the findings in the short-term and event-history analyses, however, the occurrence of fatalities in the last dispute was not significantly related to the reduction of subsequent dispute severity following mediation.

Domestic political changes within the rivals themselves also positively influenced the propensity for dispute severity reduction following mediation. The direction of the political changes, as was found in the waiting-time analysis, had a significant impact on the prospects for dispute severity reduction. Polity shifts toward greater levels of autocracy did not significantly influence the likelihood of observing a reduction in dispute severity following mediation. By contrast, polity shifts toward greater levels of democracy strongly increased the likelihood of observing a reduction in dispute severity. Indeed, there was more than an 80% probability of any type of dispute severity reduction following mediations that occurred within 24 months of a democratic polity shift within one of the rivals when all other variables were held at the baseline. Similarly, there was more than an 11% likelihood of observing a severity reduction of more than 80 points when mediation occurs within 24 months of a democratic polity change, an increase of more than 2.5 times the probability of a significant severity reduction when all variables are held at their means. In this respect, political changes within rivals that fostered greater competitiveness of elections, political openness, or freedom of discourse also encouraged the reduction of severity in subsequent rivalry disputes. Thus, although democratic polity shifts do not appear to influence the prospects for short-term mediation success, they do encourage improvement in the broader rivalry relationship.

There were several differences between the results obtained in the event-history analysis and the severity-change analysis. First, the timing of the mediation attempt in

the life of the rivalry, unlike in the waiting-time analysis, was not significantly related to the reduction of dispute severity following mediation. The direction of the variable, however, was in the posited direction. The lack of significant findings in the severity analysis may be due to the reduced sample size in the severity analysis. Second, neither the level of involvement in other rivalries nor the distribution of power between the rivals was significantly related to the reduction of dispute severity following mediation. Finally, unlike in the short-term and event-history analyses, the characteristics of the mediation attempt itself were significantly related to the ability of mediation to reduce subsequent dispute severity.

For example, as the level of previous experience with the same mediator increased for enduring rivals, the likelihood of a reduction in dispute severity after mediation increased. In this respect, the development of a rapport and a sense of commitment between the mediator and the disputants functions to improve the broader rivalry relationship by reducing the intensity of future disputes after mediation. The standing of the mediator also significantly increased the likelihood of a reduction in subsequent dispute severity. Mediations conducted by state leaders and mediations conducted by representatives of major powers were both significantly more likely to achieve a reduction in subsequent dispute severity. Indeed, a mediation conducted by a state leader had nearly as large an effect on the likelihood of severity reduction as a democratic polity change. The probability of a reduction in dispute severity following mediation conducted by a state leader was more than 73%. When mediation was conducted by a state leader from a major power, there was nearly an 86% probability of a reduction in dispute severity.

As in the short-term analysis, the selection effect between the number of mediation attempts during a dispute and the likelihood of mediation success was also observed in the severity-change analysis. As the number of mediation attempts during a dispute increased, the likelihood of a reduction in future dispute severity decreased. This finding suggests that mediators tend to be drawn to the most difficult types of conflicts, an effect noted in Diehl and Goertz (2000).

Examining the combined effect of the outcomes and costs of previous disputes coupled with the development of new thinking through a democratic polity change demonstrates a dramatic effect on the likelihood of severity reduction following mediation. When each of these three conditions prevailed, there was only slightly less than a 4% probability that the next dispute after mediation would have either an increase in dispute severity or no improvement. When these conditions occurred simultaneously, there was more than a 42% probability of observing a reduction of more than 80 points in the next dispute following mediation.

## DISCUSSION

In this study, I sought to identify and compare the contextual factors that were associated with ripeness for short-term and extended-term mediation success. This study underscores the importance of the context under which international mediation occurs. Despite the highly conflict-prone nature of enduring rivalries and their resis-



TABLE 4  
Summary Results Table

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Short-Term Outcome</i>	<i>Use of Force Waiting Time</i>	<i>Severity Change</i>
<b>Mediation features</b>			
Number of mediations by same mediator			+
Mediation conducted by state leader			+
Elapsed time since first rivalry dispute	-	+	
Number of previous mediation attempts			
Number of mediation attempts this dispute	-		-
Mediation conducted by a major power			+
Issue under dispute involves territory	+		-
Mediation initiated by at least one rival	+		
<b>Rivalry features</b>			
Percentage of rivalry disputes ending in stalemate		+	+
Average severity of previous disputes		+	+
Fatalities in last dispute within 12 months			
Power ratio		+	
<b>Other threats</b>			
Other rivalry involvement		-	
Civil war			
<b>Polity change</b>			
Authoritarian polity change in last 24 months			
Democratic polity change in last 24 months		+	+

NOTE: += significant positive effect on mediation success; -= significant negative effect on mediation success.

tance to mediation success, the prospects for achieving mediated agreements and extended-term improvements in the rivalry relationship are strongly influenced by the conditions under which the mediation attempts occur. Because the factors conducive to the achievement of mediated agreements differ greatly from those that increase the prospects for more extended-term improvement in the rivalry relationship, this study emphasizes the importance of mediators selecting the context for mediation that is most opportune for the type of mediation result that is desired. Three dominant patterns in the factors associated with ripeness for short-term and extended-term mediation success emerged from this study. These patterns are summarized in Table 4.

The first key pattern suggests that the characteristics of previous disputes in the life of a rivalry provide a powerful influence on the prospects for both short-term and extended-term mediation success. The difference in the direction of the effect of the characteristics of previous rivalry disputes on short-term and extended-term mediation success, however, demonstrates that each follows a separate causal logic. Short-term mediation success is most likely early in the life of a rivalry, suggesting that mediation is most likely to result in an agreement before rivals develop significant levels of hostility toward one another. In such cases, the level of trust between the rivals and the degree to which they are flexible to make concessions and achieve compromise is likely to be higher.

Extended-term mediation success, however, follows an opposite causal pattern that fits the arguments of Zartman (2000, 1985), Mor (1997), and Young (1967). Although high dispute severity levels and a high percentage of stalemated disputes can promote hostility between enduring rivals, they also demonstrate the inability of conflictual strategies to achieve the goals of the enduring rivals. Mediation attempts that occur late in the lifetime of enduring rivalries, after they have experienced high levels of dispute severity and a high proportion of stalemated dispute outcomes, are significantly more likely to result in reductions of dispute severity and increases in the waiting time until the next use of force.

Interestingly, the finding that the timing of mediation in the lifetime of the rivalry follows two conflict management patterns roughly parallels Regan and Stam's (2000) finding of a curvilinear relationship between the timing of mediation during a dispute and the dispute duration. Regan and Stam found that mediations attempted either early or late in a dispute serve to reduce dispute duration. By contrast, mediations attempted after the initial opening but before the latter stages of a dispute actually contribute to an increase in the duration of disputes. In this respect, mediation is most successful at two distinct points in time. Mediation can be successful early in a conflict, before the disputants have built up high levels of hostility that make compromise difficult. Yet, mediation can also become successful late in a conflict, after disputants have expended significant resources in conflict with one another and become more willing to improve their relationship.

The differential effects of previous rivalry relations on the prospects for short-term and extended-term mediation success suggest that a key cause of the diversity of expectations regarding the impact of both timing and previous dispute characteristics on mediation success is a consequence of a lack of agreement on how to define mediation success. In this respect, the results of this study suggest the happy conclusion that both those who suggest that mediation success is more likely early in the relationship (Edmead 1971) and those who argue that success is more likely later in the relationship (Wickboldt, Bercovitch, and Piramuthu 1999; Bercovitch, Anagnoson, and Wille 1991; and Pruitt 1981) are partially correct. If mediation success is defined in terms of short-term mediation agreements, then early intervention is most likely to be successful. If, however, mediation success is defined in terms of an improvement in the broader rivalry relationship, then later intervention, after the rivals have experienced the costs and failure of conflictual strategies, is more likely to be successful. These results underscore the need for greater specificity in the definitions of mediation success within the theoretical ripeness literature.

The second pattern that emerges from the analysis highlights the difference in the degree to which both short-term and extended-term mediation success depend on the emergence of new thinking within the regimes of enduring rivals. Mediation agreements, although they may address difficult issues in the rivalry relationship, require lower levels of change in the conflictual strategies that enduring rivals pursue toward one another. Indeed, mediation agreements need not translate into noticeable changes in the interactions of enduring rivals with one another. As such, it is not surprising that polity changes were not significantly related to the likelihood of achieving a mediated agreement. Extended-term mediation success, by contrast, entails more fundamental

changes in the manner in which enduring rivals relate to one another. Reductions in the frequency of the use of force and declines in dispute severity levels following mediation both involve more basic changes in the strategies that enduring rivals follow in relating to one another. Yet, because the conflictual strategies that emerge within enduring rivalries tend to become deeply ingrained into the foreign policies of the rivals, these strategies are resistant to change. As a result, change in the behavior of enduring rivals following mediation is more likely following structural changes within their regimes because they foster the reanalysis and change of existing policies.

The third general pattern that emerged in the analysis was the difference in the influence on the prospects for short-term and extended-term mediation success of mediations initiated by enduring rivals themselves. When mediation was initiated by at least one of the rivals, the likelihood of achieving a mediated agreement significantly increased. Indeed, this factor had one of the strongest effects on the likelihood of short-term mediation success of all of the independent variables in the model. By contrast, mediations initiated by the rivals were not significantly related to either the reduction of the frequency of uses of force or the reduction of dispute severity following the mediation attempt. These results suggest two possible interpretations.

One possible interpretation of this effect is that enduring rivals are only able to successfully recognize and take advantage of circumstances when a mediated agreement is likely. Under these circumstances, rivals initiate the mediation effort themselves and often achieve a mediated agreement. By contrast, recognition of the possibility for broader improvement in the rivalry relationship may be more difficult for enduring rivals, making them unlikely to call for third-party intervention when conditions are most conducive to extended-term mediation success. Instead, an outside party may be necessary to recognize the possibility for broader improvement in the rivalry relationship that occurs as the rivals exhaust themselves in repeated disputes without achieving any favorable improvement in the status quo.

The results, however, also suggest a more ominous interpretation. Short-term mediation success may be significantly related to the initiation of mediation by disputants because enduring rivals often initiate mediation with the "devious objectives" that Richmond (1998) described. The null results obtained in the analysis of both forms of extended-term mediation success may reflect the influence of cases in which enduring rivals initiate mediation without any intention of improving their broader relationship. Instead, a rival may call for mediation to gain breathing space, shore up its power position, or gain legitimacy for its demands within the international community. In this respect, enduring rivals may call for international mediation efforts when such an effort is least likely to result in any form of broader improvement in the rivalry relationship, even if a brokered agreement is achieved. This possibility underscores the need for mediators to recognize the importance of the broader context under which a mediation attempt might occur, even when the disputants call for third-party intervention. As the results of this study suggest, mediation efforts can improve the relationship within even the most conflict-prone dyads in the international system. The careful selection of the conditions under which mediation attempts occur, however, is a critical factor in the ability of mediation efforts to reduce the level of conflict between enduring rivals.

## APPENDIX

### Enduring Rivalries Beginning after 1945

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#### MEDIATED RIVALRIES

United States–Soviet Union	Iran–Iraq
United States–China	Iraq–Kuwait
Chile–Argentina	Egypt–Israel
Spain–Morocco	Syria–Israel
Greece–Turkey	Jordan–Israel
Cyprus–Turkey	Afghanistan–Pakistan
Uganda–Kenya	China–India
Somalia–Ethiopia	North Korea–South Korea
Morocco–Algeria	India–Pakistan
	Thailand–Cambodia

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#### UNMEDIATED RIVALRIES

United States–Cuba	Iraq–Israel
United States–Ecuador	Syria–Jordan
United States–Peru	Israel–Saudi Arabia
United States–North Korea	Saudi Arabia–North Yemen
United Kingdom–Iraq	China–South Korea
Soviet Union–Norway	South Korea–Japan
Congo Brazzaville–Zaire	Thailand–Laos
Ethiopia–Sudan	Thailand–North Vietnam

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