Still On The Clock

A democratic peace theory review on the US and Venezuela conflicts between 2001-2007

Christopher James William Gharib

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Supervisor: Edgar Zavala Pelayo
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Abstract

This dissertation, by using the case of tensions between the United States and Venezuela between 2001-2007, examines Rummel’s hypothesis that democratic countries are inherently peaceful, and investigates whether the tensions in US-Venezuela relations under president George W Bush and president Hugo Chavez confirms or rejects Rummel’s hypothesis. A review of relevant documents, reports by non-governmental organizations and previous research in the field of international relations lead us to the conclusion that while the strained relationship between the US and Venezuela did reach a stage of coercive diplomacy, as defined by Jakobsen, the threats between the two countries did not escalate towards military aggression, and therefore Rummel’s hypothesis is confirmed.

Keywords

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1: Introduction
According to Democratic Peace Theory, democratic countries usually hesitate to engage in conflict with other identified democracies. (Rummel 1983) However, the conflicts and tensions between the United States and Venezuela during the Chávez Presidency as well as the American military intervention to overthrow the democratically-elected Chavez government provide a good case for re-examining the Democratic Peace Theory and questioning whether its views on the peacefulness of democratic states towards each other really can be universally applied to all democracies.

In light of the information mentioned above, the research question for this paper is as follows:

_Do the conflicts and tensions between the United States and Venezuela from 2001-2007 confirm or reject Rummel’s hypothesis on the peaceful nature of democratic states?

The reason for choosing this question is to test the hypothesis presented by Rummel, and other democratic peace theorists that democratic countries are hesitant to engage in conflict with other identified democracies when confronted with a situation where it seems that democratic countries are not hesitating to go into conflict with one another. Furthermore, the relationship between the US and Venezuela is particularly interesting to study in the context of democratic peace theory as the special kinds of conflicts and tensions between the two countries have been described by some researchers as “psychological warfare” or, in the case of Jakobsen (2013), a “Coercive Diplomacy”. (Jakobsen 2013:239-255) Based on the findings of this dissertation, it will therefore be determined whether one of the central ideas of democratic peace theory can properly address the conflicts between the United States and Venezuela during the time period of 2001 to 2007 or whether this particular case challenges the inherent peaceful nature of democratic states.

2: Aim
As mentioned in the introduction, the aim of this study is to examine the effectiveness of the democratic peace theory in explaining the phenomena of international relations, especially the relations and conflicts between the United States and Venezuela. Because of this, the research question will seek to answer whether the tensions and conflicts of the United States and Venezuela confirm or reject the hypothesis on inherent peaceful nature of democratic states.
towards each other, as formulated by Rummel and other democratic peace theorists. Since the main hypothesis within democratic peace theory that I seek to test is the idea that democratic countries are reluctant to engage in conflict with other identified democracies, the analysis of the data collected in this dissertation will first seek to determine whether the tensions between the US and Venezuela from 2001 to 2007 can be categorized as being part of a real conflict between the two countries. This will be done by reviewing unclassified US government documents and figures from the World Bank as well as previous research made by authors such as Golinger, using Jakobsen’s theory of coercive diplomacy to determine whether the tensions between the countries were only rhetoric, or whether there could be any instances of direct military confrontation during the Bush and Chavez presidencies. The analysis will then continue by looking at the political structures of the US and Venezuela during the time period mentioned through Budge’s definition of liberal democracy and try to determine whether both of these countries could be categorized as democratic states, which would make them inherently peaceful, or whether one or two of these nations could be seen as non-democratic, which would confirm Rummel’s view that democratic states are more likely to engage in conflict with non-democratic states.

3: Research Question

Main research question:

Do the conflicts and tensions between the United States and Venezuela from 2001-2007 confirm or reject Rummel’s hypothesis on the peaceful nature of democratic states?

Sub-questions:

a) Can the tensions between the US and Venezuela from 2001-2007 be categorized as “real” conflicts, beyond the stage of “coercive diplomacy” as defined by Jakobsen (2013)?

b) Do the political systems in the US and Venezuela during this time meet the requirements necessary to be defined as inherently peaceful, liberal democracies?

3.1: Delimitations

Due to Venezuela’s turbulent history during much of the early 21st century, this dissertation will mainly limit itself to studying US-Venezuela relations between the years of 2001 and 2007 during the presidencies of Hugo Chavez and George W. Bush, with a brief historical background.
of the relationship between the two countries during the late 19th and 20th century to add more context to events that unfolded after Hugo Chavez took power in Venezuela. Since the research question in this paper mainly seeks to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of Democratic Peace Theory in explaining the tensions between the US and Venezuela, democratic peace theory will also serve as the main theoretical approach in this paper, although Jakobsen’s theories on psychological warfare, Budge’s definition of liberal democracy, and the work of previous researchers on US-Venezuela relations will also be featured in certain sections to help answer some of the sub-questions of the essay.

4: Previous research
As far as is concerned, it seems that no scholarly attention has been given to the US and Venezuela relationship through the perspective of democratic peace theory. There are some works on the US-Venezuela relations, but none through the Democratic peace theory. In previous research, the relationship between the United States and Venezuela has mostly been analyzed through the main theories of international relations and can be divided into two main groups. The first group can be characterized by the work of both constructivist and realist researchers, who come to the conclusion that the Chavez presidency did not present a serious threat to US interests in Latin America and that the tensions between the Chavez and Bush Administrations were therefore just in rhetoric and not part of a serious conflict between the two countries. From the perspective of Realism, this view can be seen in the work of researchers such as David Beck and Crandall, who define and justify the relationship between the two countries by focusing on economic principles. For example, Crandall (2014) describes the relationship between the US and Venezuela as being guided mainly by self-interest and explains the ups and downs of relations between the two countries by utilizing the concept of supremacy found in Realist theory. He also emphasizes that the relationship between these two countries, even though they might be strained, still provides both the United States and Venezuela with economic and trade benefits which dissuade them from entering into any serious conflict with one another.

Likewise, David Beck (2014) also considers the question economic interdependence to be the main source of tensions in relations between the two countries. Using the three main theories of
international relations, including realism, liberalism, and constructivism in his dissertation to explain the relationship between the United States and Venezuela, he also shows that realist concepts are the best tools to explain relations between the United States and Venezuela and using the documents of the two countries' trade committees and the statistics of international organizations such as the World Bank to show that the economies of these two countries are linked in a way that does not make it beneficial for either of them to engage in any serious conflicts beyond the level of rhetoric.

The researchers Petras (2013) and Corrales and Romero (2013) reach similar conclusions to the scholars previously mentioned but believe that the relationship between the US and Venezuela is fundamentally unequal and marked by economic exploitation, with the US gaining most of the economic benefits at the expense of Venezuela. By viewing the inequalities generated by global capitalism as the most important factor in international relations, Petras (2013), Corrales and Romero (2013) also set themselves apart from both constructivist and realist theories by seeing the world as governed by a global division of labor where wealthy central nations make a profit from the raw materials exported by peripheral nations, a theoretical approach otherwise known as World Systems Theory. While these researchers would view Hugo Chavez’s rise to power as the result of a growing desire among the population to break Venezuela’s dependency on the United States and create a more equal relationship between the two countries, Petras (2013), Corrales and Romero (2013) also view the economic reforms of Chavismo as being inefficient in practice as Venezuela's economic structure still remained heavily reliant on the financial resources of the United States during the Chavez administration. As evidence of this they point towards the United States as the largest buyer of Venezuela's oil and owner of more than 50 percent of the oil and gas resources of Venezuela, and claim that in such a context it seems that any real tensions or conflicts between the US and Venezuela during this time seem virtually nonexistent. Using the World Systems approach mentioned previously, James Petras (2013), also views Venezuela as a definitive victim of a global capitalist system that divides countries into wealthier central nations and poorer peripheral nations. After examining the power of the United States in Venezuela historically Petras further claims that the economic interests of the United States and its economic needs from its position in the global center are one of the most important reasons for the United States to intervene in Venezuela. In this way, James Petras reaches similar conclusions to David Beck that Venezuela’s economic dependence to the United States is the
most important factor to study when looking at US-Venezuela relations and that the Chavez presidency has done little to change this or added any significant tensions to this relationship.

The researchers Gill (2016) and Abu Asab (2015), use the concept of constructivism to challenge the perceived tension in the relations between the two countries further by considering the US and Venezuela simultaneously as both agents and the deterrents of conflict. They consider the anti-American and imperialist position of Hugo Chavez during his reign as a kind of domestic advertising to gain public opinion and by examining the relationship between the United States and Venezuela, they also believe that both countries need each other by demonstrating that while the US continually put political pressure on Venezuela after Chavez’s arrival, it has still been heavily dependent on Venezuela's energy resources to sustain its industries.

Aside from the researchers mentioned above however, this paper also employs Golinger’s book (2008) named Bush vs Chávez, which comes to different conclusions than other researchers when examining the tensions and interference of the United States in Venezuela. While sharing the same World Systems approach used by researchers such as Petras (2013) in analyzing US-Venezuela relations, in contrast to these researchers, Eva Golinger claims that the arrival of Chávez actually did present a challenge to US economic exploitation. Through her analysis of unclassified government documents and the content of the statements and claims of the governments of George W Bush and Hugo Chávez, Eva Golinger also views Chávez’s massive economic and political reforms in Venezuela as an important factor in the US adopting a more aggressive and interventionist foreign policy towards Venezuela. (Golinger, 2008:21)

According to Golinger, Hugo Chavez and his socialist policies were a huge threat to the interests of the United States in Latin America (Golinger, 2008:5) as they pursued a strategy of redistribution of wealth and state ownership which none of the other Latin American leaders had ever succeeded in doing since the end of the Cold War. Similarly, Chávez's diplomacy was also on a path that was against Western interests by supporting the aspirations of Latin American revolutionaries and tightening relations with Russia. (Golinger, 2008:40) All of this was a source of concern for the US foreign policy device, because these security concerns did not exist a decade earlier, and created a risk in the eyes of US politicians that Venezuela would attempt to directly challenge US hegemony in the Latin American region. (Golinger, 2008:41)
For this reason, as detailed in “declassified documents obtained through the Freedom of Information Act, and a validity of international sources,” (Golinger, 2008:4) that Golinger examines, the United States launched an operation to overthrow Chavez through a military coup coordinated with help from the CIA and Venezuelan allies. (Golinger, 2008:4) However, as Golinger writes, less than 48 hours after the US-sponsored coup against Hugo Chavez, the uprising of the Venezuelan people against the authors of the coup caused the defeat of the coup and Chávez's return. (Golinger, 2008:4) Throughout the book, Golinger also draws parallels to the successful US-sponsored coup in Chile during 1973, which overthrew the elected left-leaning government of Salvador Allende and brought general Pinochet into power, by claiming that the Bush Administration, with help from the CIA and Venezuelan allies, also repeatedly launched the same type of political pressures and sanctions towards the Chavez government that had been used against the Allende government in Chile, but without any success. (Golinger, 2008:48, 103)

In order to fully integrate Democratic Peace Theory into the analysis of US-Venezuela relations despite the subject being absent in previous research, this paper will also be using Liberal Peace: Selected Essays, Doyle (2012), Libertarianism and International Violence, Rummel, (1983), Democracy and International Conflict: An Evaluation of the Democratic Peace Proposition, Ray (1995), as well as Assessing the Dyadic Nature of the Democratic Peace, 1918-88, Rousseau and et al (1996) to explain the main ideas behind Democratic Peace Theory as well as the hypothesis on the inherent non-violence of democratic states that will be assessed in this dissertation. Following on the study of democratic peace theory, this paper points out the differences and similarities between this theory and other theories of international relations such as realism and constructivism. Moreover, this dissertation will also examine the nature of the conflicts between the two countries based on the concept of Coercive Diplomacy, proposed by Peter Jakobsen in his book "Security Studies", in order to determine whether the conflicts between the US and Venezuela can be classified as real conflicts which could challenge Democratic Peace Theory’s hypothesis on the peaceful nature of democratic states.

5: Theory
Since this dissertation aims to test whether the turbulent relationship between the US and Venezuela rejects or confirms democratic peace theory’s hypothesis on the peaceful nature of
democratic states, an overview of the central aspects of the theory and a comparison to other theories of international relations such as realism and liberalism is necessary to fully understand what democratic peace theory stands for and properly apply the theory to our case study. Moreover, the answer to the research question also relies on how we define a serious conflict between nations and how we define a democratic state, which is why this dissertation will also discuss theoretical perspectives on conflict and democracy such as Jakobsen’ “Coercive Diplomacy” and Budge’s definition of democracy.

5.1: Realism
According to realist theorists Dunne and Schmidt, great powers are intrinsically invasive because of the fundamental need for power. (Dunne and Schmidt, 2014:102) Through this view, a national government's intention is just to survive and governments are looking for security beyond anything else. Dunne and Schmidt also believe that governments are defensive in keeping with the balance of power due to the lack of central power and the anarchic structure of the international system. According to them, even the concept of peace can be part of a nation-state’s defense process to maintain its power and interests, but in Dunne and Schmidt’s definition of realism, peace is not considered as a sustainable concept but simply another tool used in nation-state’s competition over power and influence. (Dunne and Schmidt, 2014:105)

Nonetheless, Dunne and Schmidt see governments as rational actors whose use of force is not their first option to maintain security. (Dunne and Schmidt, 2014:109) The governments use different tools, such as propaganda, diplomacy, bargaining, compromise, economic sanctions, and ultimately military action to obtain and maintain security. Realism does not consider peace as the most rational way to protect interests and power, but considers it as one of the tools for maintaining power.

5.2: Liberalism and liberal peace-oriented economics
Liberalism in international relations is influenced by thoughts of liberalism theory in the economy and based on the assumptions of the liberal economy, explains the economic and political effects of the globalization in international relations. (Dunne 2014:116) Economic liberalism has different perspectives such as Classical liberalism, Neoclassical, Keynesian, Rational choice, and etc. The three main assumptions of classical liberalism are, firstly, people are the main actors and the most important units of analysis in political economy; Secondly,
people are wise and their wisdom sign is their tendency to maximize utility; And thirdly, by exchanging goods and services, people maximize the quality and desirability of those goods and services, and in that way increase prosperity and cooperation. (Dunne 2014:118-119)

Using some of the main assumptions of liberal economic theory, liberal theory in internal relations also believe that there is no reason for conflict in the market, and in contrast to Realists believe that as long as free trade is dominant in the international arena, all states will increase their prosperity and cooperation between each other and there would be no reasons for conflict and war. (Dunne 2014:116) Trade and economic exchanges are therefore the main tool to establishing peaceful relations among nations, because while politics and governments tend to create a separation between people, the economy is the source of their links and convergence. In this way, economic cooperation of governments based on "absolute achievements" will lead to the inclusion of all the parties provided that there is a framework for free economic exchanges. (Dunne 2014:119)

5.3: Democratic Peace Theory
Compared to the theories of Liberalism and Realism mentioned above, Democratic peace theory rejects Realism’s claim that peace is not a sustainable concept and follows Liberalism’s beliefs on the possibility for an end to armed conflict while viewing the development of democratic states rather than economic liberalization alone, as the most important way of ensuring peace among states. Originally developed by philosopher Emmanuel Kant as a theory of “eternal peace” and reviewed afterwards by other theorists such as Doyle, Kant argued that if citizens’ consent to the decision to declare war was necessary, there would be no doubt that people would be much more cautious to enter into conflict than their governments, as it is the people themselves who would have to participate in the war. (Doyle, 2012:23) The people themselves are also the ones who would have to endure pain and hardship, and bear the costs of reconstruction after the end of the war.

Therefore, from Kant's perspective, since democracy would lead to peaceful relations, the development of democracy that will inevitably be realized as a result of the growth of human understanding will develop peace. According to Kant, the end of history, then, will see eternal peace among democratic states. (Doyle, 2012:54)
To support the idea of democratic peace, Kant presents two main arguments: the argument based on "democratic ethical values", and the argument based on "economic relations governing the democratic countries." (Doyle, 2012:41) The argument based on democratic ethical values refers to democratic values, such as legitimate rights, mutual respect, and understanding among democratic states. Since, within democratic states, citizens enjoy legitimate citizenship rights, in which each person has the same respect as others in the exercise of these rights, the manifestation of this culture at the state level leads to mutual respect among democratic states and, as a result, will tend to resolve disputes in a peaceful way. (Doyle, 2012:55)

According to the interpretation made by Rousseau and et al, (1996) of Kant’s theories, the transition to a democratic culture based on the citizens' enjoyment of autonomy and freedom, also gives legitimacy to a democratic state, and in the state level leads to the recognition of the independence of every state and its freedom in decision-making as well as the honoring of the freedom of other states in their internal affairs. (Rousseau and et al,1996) According to Van Aura, based on this culture, interference in the internal affairs of other democratic countries to impose a particular ideology would be eliminated, because every state would have a similar ideology. (Rousseau and et al 1996:516)

Similar to Liberalism, Kant’s argument based on the economic relations prevailing in democratic countries also emphasizes free trade as a way of securing peace and relates to the benefits of international trade and a market economy. Kant argues that in a “pacific union”, governments would seek the mutual benefits of international economic cooperation because "the spirit of commerce" would give mutual benefit to all states and therefore prevent them from waging wars to benefit from others. Kant believes that further economic development, which leads to the interdependence of economies between states and boosts self-sufficiency, would also strengthen the culture of trade and mutual benefit. (Rousseau and et al 1996:523)

Overall, Kant and Kantian reasoning, which is a category of prior argumentation based on the calculation of the intellectual resources of the democratic system, predicts that by developing democratic systems that will be realized as a result of the growth of human understanding, the future of human society will witness eternal peace among democratic states. According to Kant, eternal peace will be based on the common culture of freedom, equal reciprocal respect, the
popularization of elected political and popular systems, prosperity, and the widespread trade of goods and services. (Doyle, 2012:69)

Through Rummel's perspective, libertarian states which follow the principles of classical liberalism not only tend to resolve differences between themselves in a peaceful way, but these states are also less violent in their foreign relations. (Rummel, 1983:9) In addition to this, Rummel’s definition of libertarian states includes the following elements: the existence of civil and individual freedoms; the selection of political leaders through open and competitive elections; the existence of incompatible and diverse interests of elites that control one another; the lack of concentration of political power; and the need for political elites to support the public in paying taxes and companies in war and bloodshed. (Rummel, 1983:11) His definition of violence includes: warning and threatening to commit hostile acts, expressing coldness in relationships, imposing economic sanctions, displaying readiness for war, and ultimately fighting. (Rummel, 1983:12)

Rummel also adds that as people are more liberal, their political elites in their foreign relations will be less violent. (Rummel, 1983:15) According to Rummel, in addition to the political structure, the mechanism of the free market economy also prevents states from engaging in conflict with one another, thus leading to his main hypothesis, that the emergence of violence between two liberal states is inconceivable, except in very rare occasions. However, according to Rummel’s research, while on one hand, it can be seen that democratic states have a tendency to resolve peaceful relations in their relations, on the other hand, in their relations with non-democratic states, democratic states are not principally peaceful, but more inclined to use force and acts of violence than non-democratic states. In other words, while non-democratic states are more willing to resolve their differences with democratic states in a peaceful way, democratic states are more likely to resort to force in their relations with non-democratic states. This is a significant addition to democratic peace theory as it means that unless all countries are democratic, a democratic state is not necessarily less likely to engage in wars with other states, as it may become militant and engage in conflicts with non-democratic states. As mentioned in the Aim and Research question, this dissertation will also mainly be focusing on whether Rummel’s hypothesis on the inherently peaceful nature of democratic states can properly explain the tensions between the US and Venezuela, as part of its main research question.
5.4: Budge’s Definition of Liberal Democracy
In order to answer sub-question (b) and determine whether the political systems of the US and Venezuela from 2001-2007 could be categorized as inherently peaceful democracies, Budge’s definition of liberal democracy seems to be an appropriate way to interpret the data from Freedom House and others which will be used in that section of the analysis. Similar to Rummel’s views on the libertarian state, Budge defines liberal democracy as a common form of representative democracy where elections must be free and fair. One of the most important features of a liberal democracy is also the existence of independent political parties and freedom of political competition. However, Budge believes that there is no general definition of liberal democracy. Therefore, he tried to explain the characteristics of liberal democratic systems instead of providing a definition of liberal democracy.

While Budge does not believe that there is a general definition of liberal democracy he nevertheless also states that freedom and citizen's rights are the important characteristics of liberal democratic systems, and he underlines that freedom of speech and the right to a fair trial are the most important rights of citizens under a liberal democratic government. This will be important to keep in mind

5.5: Coercive Diplomacy
Finally, in order to answer sub-question (a) and determine whether the tensions between the US and Venezuela could be viewed as a serious conflict that challenges Rummel’s hypothesis on the peacefulness of democratic states, this dissertation will also be using Jakobsen’s concept of “coercive diplomacy” when discussing the tensions between the two countries, as it is a theory that is able to adapt to different conditions and is starting to be used more and more to analyze contemporary conflicts. In Jakobsen’s view, the concept of war in international relations usually refers to the last stage of a political conflict that could not be resolved in another way. (Jakobsen 2013:241) By choosing war and using military power as the only solution to political disagreements, the two countries or two coalitions that are involved in the conflict hope to intimidate the other side by their tactics and military strategies to be forced to surrender into their political will. (Jakobsen 2013:243) In other words, the aim of a military conflict or "war" is to create a condition that opposite side accepts political demands to end the military conflict. All wars finally come to a stage where the other side cannot afford a military or paramilitary
defense, and inevitably accepts the enemy's conditions and sits down at the negotiating table. (Jakobsen 2013:250-252)

But war, whether in terms of the mobilization of expert manpower and armament, is a very costly choice. Maintaining the excellence of the military after the war, rebuilding a nation from the costs of war (even if the country won the war), providing health care cost to disabled citizens for the rest of their lives, and many other costs require billions of dollars. In addition, the cost that comes to the community's spirit cannot be counted with numbers. (Jakobsen 2013:241) For this reason, choosing a war must be done with precision and scrutiny as the final step in relieving tensions between two opposing countries.

At the same time, according to Jakobsen, there is another step before resorting to military force and officially declaring war, which he calls the “Coercive Diplomacy”. The lifecycle of Coercive Diplomacy can be very short or very long, but however long it takes, it is a very sensitive stage before the start of the war. (Jakobsen 2013:242) Coercive Diplomacy, despite the use of the word "Coercive" as described in the "security studies" book by Peter Jakobsen (2013), is: "the combination of military threats and the limited use of military force (as a stick) next to motivation and confidence (as a carrot), with the aim of influencing the enemy to change its behavior in a sensible way. "(Jakobsen 2013:247)

Coercive Diplomacy does not necessarily resort to full military operations and tries to lead the state party towards the optimal political solution through algebra and intimidation with the aim of avoiding armed conflict. One or both sides of a conflict, which do not have enough military resources or cannot pay for the costs of a war therefore usually prefer to use the Coercive Diplomacy instead of armed conflict. (Jakobsen 2013:248)

6: Methodology
6.1: Case study method
In order to answer whether or not US-Venezuela relations during 2001-2007 confirm or reject the peaceful nature of democratic states, this dissertation uses a qualitative approach, which includes a detailed review of the conflicts between the two countries of the United States and Venezuela. (Bryman, 2012:66) The reason for choosing a qualitative approach to this topic is because of its consistency with the case study method as well as the fact that it is more
appropriate to use when looking at the relationship between two countries which often requires an analysis of secondary sources such as news articles, interviews and speeches. The case of this research is also not a typical case as it’s related to a specific location which is Latin America. (Bryman, 2012:68) The geographical proximity between the two countries and the historical background of US intervention in the internal affairs of Venezuela and other Latin American countries also show the importance of the research, along with the fact that this dissertation also looks at methods of “coercive diplomacy” which are not usually researched. The findings of this study cannot be applied to other cases and are exclusively related to this study. (Bryman, 2012:69) This dissertation will therefore be focusing on a single case which is the US and Venezuela conflict between 2001 and 2007 and examine whether or not it confirms the hypothesis formulated by Rummel and other democratic peace theorists that democratic countries are reluctant to engage in conflict with other identified democracies.

6.2: Empirical data collection
Due to the fact that the historical events that shaped the relationship between Venezuela and the United States during 2001-2007 have usually taken place as a combination of political rhetoric and concrete political measures, this dissertation has used a combination of different qualitative research methodologies when analyzing different aspects of US-Venezuela relations. While this dissertation mainly uses a hermeneutic methodology by assessing how effectively Rummel’s hypothesis can explain real world events between the US and Venezuela, in the case of sub-question (a) for example, a method of discourse analysis was also used to analyze whether the discourses presented in media reports and political rhetoric between the two countries during 2001-2007 can give us an idea about the scale and seriousness of tensions between the Bush and Chavez presidencies. Drawing on previous research made on the topic by Golinger, Jakobsen and others, the discourses presented in the sources above were then compared with unclassified documents published by the US National Security Archive on the political involvement of US government bodies such as the CIA in Venezuela as well as economic data from non-governmental organizations such as the World Bank on the level of trade between the two countries. This was done in order to see if there are any differences between the rhetorical threats made by both countries towards each other, and the concrete actions that these governments have taken to escalate tensions into any sort of serious conflict, as unclassified US documents and reports from international observers may give us a more unbiased perspective on the scale of
tensions between the US and Venezuela during 2001-2007. This section will also use Jakobsen’s concept of “coercive diplomacy” to interpret the data collected and determine whether the nature of the tensions between the two countries could be categorized as a serious conflict, which could challenge Rummel’s hypothesis, or if the conflicts are at a level of “coercive diplomacy”, where all other techniques except for military confrontation are being used by both countries to influence each other.

To answer sub-question (b) and prove whether both countries were under democratic rule between 2001 and 2007, this paper started by collecting data on different aspects of the political structures in each country, such as elections, the judicial system and human rights, from non-governmental organizations such as Freedom House which have examined the political structures of more than 150 countries. However, in light of criticism of the Freedom House as a primarily US-funded, and therefore US-biased organization, the Freedom House reports were also complemented by research made by the BBC, Reuters, and organizations such as the Human Rights Watch. Since Democratic Peace Theory is typically applied to the study of liberal democracies, Budge's definition of democracy was then used to interpret the data collected and determine whether the US and Venezuela during the presidencies of Hugo Chavez and George W Bush met the necessary requirements to be viewed as liberal democracies, which are supposed to be peaceful towards each other according to Rummel’s hypothesis.

7: Background
7.1: The US and Latin America
During the second half of the 20th century alone, the United States designed and led approximately 100 military coups to overthrow national governments, and has either been directly engaged in the military occupations of countries or threatened countries with military intervention. (Gill 2016:25) This was mainly done under the context of the Cold War, where the threat of the Soviet Union as well as the business interests of US transnational corporations prompted the United States government to use both political and military measures to overthrow popular governments whose policies were in conflict with US interests and replace them with pro-Western governments. (Gill 2016:25-26)
Although the United States was mostly involved in domestic issues and lacked any serious influence in the international arena during the first two decades of the 20th century, USA’s involvement in the First and Second World Wars led to the United States slowly becoming a global superpower. (Corrales and Romero 2013:11)

According to Petras, the end of World War II and the beginning of the Cold War also saw poorer countries in the developing world becoming the stage for indirect proxy wars between the US and the Soviet Union over global influence, and with the growth of industry in United States following WWII and a rising demand for raw materials, the colonial interests in the foreign policy of this country became clearer and started to increase over the time. (Petras 2013:7) Thus, one of the first places that the United States paid attention to in order to expand its sphere of influence was the Latin American region, whose proximity to the US and the relative lack of influence placed on it by European powers had made it a “backyard” of the USA since the late 19th century, with a US-sanctioned Monroe Doctrine forbidding any other foreign power from interfering in its internal affairs. (Petras 2013:8-10)

As Golinger writes, the US political and military intervention in the countries of Guatemala (1954), El Salvador (2009), Colombia (2009 and 1999), Costa Rica (2010), Panama (1964 and 1989), Bolivia (1967), Chile (1973), Cuba (1961-2013), Puerto Rico (1950), Argentina (1967-1983), Haiti (2004 and 2010), Dominican Republic (1963 to 1966), Brazil (1964), Uruguay (1976) during the Cold War and onwards can in this way be viewed as part of the United States' efforts to maintain its own strength and interests in the Latin American region as a whole. (Golinger 2008:15-19)

7.2: The US and Venezuela

However, in contrast to much of the rest of the region, the political relations between the US and the Venezuelan Republic, beginning in the 19th century, were initially very good in the field of business and investment, and Venezuela did not suffer the same kind of political instability and military coups that had been common among its neighbors. (Golinger 2008:45) The level of relations between the US and Venezuela reached its peak especially during the conservative governments of Rafael Caldera from 1969-1974 and 1994-1999, with the USA becoming Venezuela’s biggest oil partner and one of the largest investors in the oil and energy sector of the country. (Crandall 2014:8) However, with the arrival of Hugo Chavez in 1999, the honeymoon
of relations between the two countries ended and the tensions between the US and Venezuela began.

Increasing the Venezuelan government’s revenue from oil sales, firing the US managers of the Venezuelan oil company, and strengthening Venezuela’s ties to the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), Chavez also put further strains on US-Venezuela relations by increasing the royalty rate of private companies and trying to nationalize large industries and even the assets of major international companies such as Exxon Mobil in Venezuela.

According to Crandall, Enacting these policies in an effort to reduce Venezuela’s high poverty rate and improve living conditions across the country, Chavez hoped to tackle some of the longstanding inequalities that had been ignored by his predecessors, but while his policies were widely popular among the nation’s poorest, the United States was not pleased with the changing business climate and in 2001, allocated $800,000 to fight against Chavez and his policies, by funding various anti-Chavez groups or groups opposed to Chavez policies. $300,000 was allocated to the Central Business Confederation for example, and the United States also helped the Republican International Foundation to strengthen anti-Chavez opposition groups in the country. (Crandall 2014:9-12)

According to Golinger, in 2002, the US also tried to implement a version of General Pinochet’s 1973 coup in Chile precisely in Venezuela. Although the attempt was initially successful and the Chavez government was overthrown by the coup, mass public protests eventually returned him to the political stage once again. (Golinger 2008:52) However, as Golinger writes, while Chavez returned to power, opposition groups, led by the US, continued its pressures on Chavez’s government, as opponents instead demanded for a referendum on the survival of the Chavez presidency and once again entered Venezuela in a one-year political crisis that ended with an agreement between the opposition and Chavez, brokered by the OAS (Organization of American States). (Golinger 2008:117)

Based on the empirical data and the background information that has just been mentioned, in the next two sections, I will examine what Hugo Chavez’s presidency has meant in escalating tensions between Venezuela and the US and changing the political structure of the Venezuelan state, as well as what impact these changes may have to the prevailing view of the US and Venezuela as two peaceful democratic states.
8: Analysis

8.1: Relationship crisis and conflict intensification

According to Jakobsen, the relationship between the US and Venezuela is a good example of Coercive Diplomacy as both of these countries have in different ways used different tools to attempt to sabotage each other’s ambitions without resorting to direct military warfare. (Jakobsen 2013:250) According to news reports from the CNN (2006) and the New York Times (2005) for example, every day a new friction causes a change in relations between the two countries and calculations on the possibility of military warfare change day by day. As an example, Chavez, during his annual UN speech said: “The devil came here yesterday, and it smells of sulfur still today.” (CNN 2006) He continued that: “The Soviet Union collapsed. The United States empire is on the way down and it will be finished in the near future, for the good of all mankind.” (CNN 2006) Immediately after his speech, US authorities warned Chavez: “Don't bash Bush, since he would fight Venezuela” (CNN 2006), which could be seen as a threat to commit hostile acts and therefore fall into one of Rummel’s categories of violence.

Moreover, Crandall (2014) and the New York Times (2005) also point out that the tensions in relations between the two countries intensified after the 2002 coup and found wider dimensions soon after that, as the changes that emerged within the Venezuelan political-economic system made the country increasingly incompatible with US political and business interests. (Crandall 2014:19) Some examples of this can be found in Venezuela’s increasingly closer ties with enemies of the USA such as Russia and Iran, as well as Hugo Chavez's unilateral action in the nationalization of petroleum and other industries in Venezuela, which international observers believe was the most important factor in stimulating the United States to support the 2002 coup against Chavez’s government as the US used to own a large share of those industries (Council on Foreign Relations 2015)

While the United States has repeatedly denied involvement in the military coup against Hugo Chavez, unclassified CIA documents which were published in the National Security Archive (2011) which proved that the US government knew of a coup plot in Venezuela; "Disgruntled senior officers and a group of radical junior officers are stepping up efforts to organize a coup against President Chávez, possibly as early as this month." (NSA 2011), and a speech from the CIA director Mike Pompeo in the US Congress in 2017 nevertheless confirm that the U.S
government directly contributed to the military coup in 2002. He said: "Trying to help the opposition groups to change the (Venezuelan) government as we tried before in 2002." (Independent 2017) In addition to this, the Washington Post also writes that the U.S government in the form of a U.S interest protection plan abroad had been allocating funds to guide plans to overthrow Venezuela's leftist government, (Washington post 2002) which means that even if the US was not directly involved in the coup, its indirect support for the overthrow of Venezuela through the funding of groups wanting his removal from office could still be seen as an act of aggression against Venezuela’s elected government (Jakobsen 2013:239-255). However, while these acts of hostility could certainly fall into the category of “coercive diplomacy” using Jakobsen’s perspective and even indicate the type of coldness in relations which Rummel defines as one of the categories of violence, since US involvement was mainly through proxies and the US didn’t directly send its troops to aid the coup, the country’s involvement in the coup against Chavez in itself cannot be seen as an example of a serious military confrontation between the two countries that would challenge Rummel’s hypothesis.

In addition to this, while Venezuela and the US during the presidencies of Chavez and George W Bush seemed in conflict with one another due to the reasons previously mentioned, according to World Integrated Trade Solution statistics (2016), between the years of 2001 to 2007, the level of economic relations between the two countries was actually at its highest rate in the past fifty years. Moreover, according to Census reports, except for oil, the value of trade of US with Venezuela increased from annually exports 5.6 and imports 15.25 billion dollars in 2001 to exports 10.2 and imports 39.90 billion dollars in 2007. (Census 2017) In other words, despite the conflict and tension and psychological warfare between themselves, the US and Venezuela not only maintained their economic relations but also increased it at the height of their conflicts. (WITS 2016)

This may support the view of Liberal theory and democratic theorists like Rummel on trade as a way of preventing serious conflict between states as well as David Beck’s (2014) view that economic dependence between the US and Venezuela is the most important thing to consider when analyzing the two states and that any perceived tensions between them are really just in rhetoric. (Beck 2014:31) As reports from the OWD (2005) and WTO (2006) point out, the United States domestic industry's need for Venezuela's energy resources and Venezuela's strong
need of financial resources for its economic development plans during the presidency of Hugo Chavez were some of the main reasons behind the increased economic exchanges between the two countries.
However, while this evidence alone would suggest that US-Venezuela relations fit perfectly into Democratic Peace Theory and that any suggestions of a real conflict between the two countries is far-fetched, an economic report published by the IMF paints a more complex picture of the economic relationship between the US and Venezuela by concluding that the economic exchanges between the United States and Venezuela between the years 2001 to 2007 had not seen a significant increase, but that instead, rising oil prices had dramatically increased the value of their economic exchanges. (IMF 2006) This points to the need for more data to be analyzed on the extent to which US-Venezuela relations under Bush and Chavez have remained at a level of “coercive diplomacy”, and both countries have been dissuaded from taking any further steps towards direct military confrontation, which will be presented below.

8.2: One step to war
According to Jakobsen, psychological warfare or Coercive Diplomacy is a subtler form of warfare where both involved parties try to avoid the costs of a full-scale military conflict by using different political and economic tools in the form of “carrots” and “sticks” to make the other side submit to their political will. (Jakobsen 2013:251) As previously noted, according to the CIA document (NSA 2011), and a speech from the head of the CIA held in the US Congress (Independent 2017), the Bush administration used a combination of political and economic means and finally a military coup against the Chávez government to prevent the birth of another Cuba in the region and try to submit Venezuela to the interests of the United States. (Independent 2017)

Based on the New York Times article (2006) Hugo Chavez was also highly popular across Latin America because of his adoption of anti-imperialist stances, and was therefore supported by many countries in the region, which would have made it hard for the US to formally declare war on Venezuela or engage in any direct form of military occupation. This view is further explained by Gill (2016), who states that because none of the countries in Latin America were in favor of a new war or military occupation in the Americas, including US allies in the region, a military solution to the tensions between the US and Venezuela became increasingly unlikely, therefore
supporting the idea that the two countries were engaged in the Coercive Diplomacy to bend the other side to submit to their political will without suffering the costs of direct military confrontation. (Jakobsen 2013:253)

From the point of view of Coercive Diplomacy, the United States training, and providing financial support to internal opponents of Hugo Chavez, as well as the political activities against Venezuela at international assemblies and the political and economic sanctions against Venezuela that Golinger (2008) mentions could be seen as different “carrots” and “sticks” that the US used to make Venezuela surrender to US interests, with the support for the 2002 coup being the furthest step in the direction of a military confrontation. On the other hand, Hugo Chavez’s unilateral nationalizations of industries, the creation of alternative regional trading blocs such as ALBA and his deepening of economic and political relations with rivals of the United States, such as Iran and Russia, could also similarly be viewed as acts of diplomatic intimidation against the US by trying to force them to abandon its position as the hegemonic force in Latin America and give Venezuela more influence in its political and economic relationship with the United States.

Although, none of these provocations are at a level that can be described as a "declaration of war" between the United States and Venezuela, which would support the view of Democratic Peace Theory that democratic countries are unwilling to go into conflict with each other, at the same time they show that both countries had no will to resolve their problems through compromise and the relations between the two countries entered a level of "Coercive Diplomacy" during the Bush and Chavez Presidencies. The US involvement in the 2002 coup is especially important to this issue, as even if figures on the countries’ increased trade relations from 2001-2007 are correct, the act of one democratically elected government supporting the overthrow of another democratically elected government is a challenge to the idea that democratic governments are inherently peaceful, and suggests that US-Venezuela relations definitely reached a point which could be described as a conflict, at least in the form of psychological warfare or Coercive Diplomacy. (Jakobsen 2013:253) Therefore, an investigation into whether Venezuela and the US can be categorized as liberal democratic is also necessary in order to determine whether US aggression towards Venezuela, in the form of the 2002 coup in particular, can be explained by Rummel’s hypothesis.
8.3: Democratic or non-democratic
As mentioned in the end of the previous section, to determine whether US-Venezuela relations during the governments of Bush and Chavez reject the idea of Democratic Peace Theory, we also have to answer the question of whether the US and Venezuela could be recognized as being democracies between the 2001 and 2007 when these conflicts between them were taking place.

According to Budge's definition (2001), liberal democracy is a common form of representative democracy. Based on the principles of liberal democracy, elections must be free and fair. One of the most important features of a liberal democracy is the existence of independent political parties and freedom of political competition. However, Budge believes that there is no general definition of liberal democracy. (Budge 2001:224) Therefore, he tried to explain the characteristics of liberal democratic systems instead of providing a definition of liberal democracy.

Budge believes that the freedom and the citizen's rights are crucial elements of liberal democracy, and he underlines that freedom of speech and the right to a fair trial are the most important rights of citizens under a liberal democratic government. (Budge 2001:225)

According to the above definitions of liberal democracy and based on the Freedom House Institute, the political structure of the United States is known as a liberal democracy. Since the United States was one of the colonies of Great Britain, it inherited many aspects of the British liberal democracy system. (Rueschemeyer and et al 1992:122) Rueschemeyer, Stephens and Stephens also state that while Great Britain was capturing and harvesting the resources of its own colonies, it nevertheless brought them the liberal democratic model, and certain freedoms such as the right to private property which would later evolve into democratic freedoms. (Rueschemeyer and et al 1992:125) Rueschemeyer, Stephens and Stephens consider it as one of the most prominent reasons for the economic and political progress of British colonies. But in contrast to British colonies, Spain's former colonies such as Venezuela, have had a very long delay in independence and democratic structures. (Rueschemeyer and et al 1992:130)

Venezuela experienced various political structures after independence. According to Petras, Venezuela after independence in 1830 slowly began the process of democratization and became a democratic state by giving citizens the right to freedom and choice. (Petras 2013:4) But according to the Freedom House reports, Venezuela was known as a liberal democracy between
1952 and 1998, when liberal parties came to power. (Freedom House 2017) But after the arrival of Hugo Chavez in 1999, the political structure of the country completely changed. According to Freedom House reports (2017), immediately after the election in 1999 in Venezuela in which Chavez was elected as the president of the country, Venezuela became increasingly authoritarian.

According to Crandall (2014), when Hugo Chavez came to power in 1999, his moves to reform landownership and major changes to the constitution of Venezuela practically turned Venezuela into a non-democratic country by strongly limiting the other political parties' activities and suppressing opposition movements and protest against his populist policies. (Crandall 2014:15) In this way Crandall claims that with the arrival of Hugo Chavez Venezuela became a non-democratic country by switching from liberal to illiberal form of government. (Crandall 2014:15)

Based on Freedom House reports, between 2001 and 2007 in the US there were 2 main and 46 active political parties include 763283 (0.26% of populations) political and civil activists, 83439 active NGOs, and the rights of the fair justice system for all the US citizens. (Freedom House 2017) In contrast to the US, between 2001 and 2007 in Venezuela were 2 mains and 17 active political parties include about 12000 (0.03% of populations) political and civil activists, 265 active NGOs, and no equal rights of the fair justice system for all Venezuelan citizens. (Freedom House 2017) This view is also shared by the Human Rights Watch, who in a World Report on Venezuela also views the right to fair trial as something that became increasingly under threat after Chavez took power. (Human Rights Watch 2012)

However, according to reports from the BBC and Reuters, while Hugo Chavez’s popularity slowly decreased from the time he entered office in 1999 to his death in 2013, he still enjoyed support from the majority of the population throughout his presidency, being democratically elected under new constitutional laws for a 6-year term 2002, and winning the recall referendum pushed by the Venezuelan opposition after the unsuccessful 2002 coup on whether he should serve out the rest of his term in 2004. In addition, Hugo Chavez was also re-elected in 2006 for a 6-year term with 63% of the vote. Moreover, while Chavez was able to pass big constitutional reforms after assuming power in 1999 that gave the president a 6-year term, he wasn’t able to win a public referendum in 2007 which would have given the president an unlimited amount of terms in office, indicating some democratic limits to the amount of influence that he was able to
have in changing the structure of Venezuela’s political system. (BBC, Reuters, and Human Rights Watch)

With this in mind, while broadly speaking, the US between 2001 and 2007, still was known as a democratic country with high-level civil liberties, Venezuela’s status as a democracy during that time is harder to categorize. (Freedom House 2017) Despite there being free and fair elections and certain democratic limits to what Hugo Chavez could achieve, which would fit with Rummel’s definition of a liberal state, the increased concentration of power to the presidency and the control of the government over the judicial system that started during Chavez’s government, as well as restrictions on private property and dissent do not fit into Budge’s definition of liberal democracy or Rummel’s definition of a libertarian state, which would mean that Venezuela was known as an illiberal democratic or non-democratic country between 2001 and 2007. Since Rummel also claims in his hypothesis on the inherently peaceful nature of democracies that democratic countries are nevertheless more willing to engage in conflicts with non-democracies, US intervention in Venezuela and its support for the 2002 coup against Chavez in this way also be explained through Rummel’s view, as the US, being a democratic country, was more willing to escalate tensions and resort to conflict with a country such as Venezuela when its democratic institutions were weakening under Chavez.

9: Conclusion

With the data collected throughout this research and the different theoretical approaches through which it was analyzed, this dissertation tried to test the hypothesis presented by democratic peace theorist Rummel that democratic countries are inherently peaceful towards each other, using the tense relationship between United States and Venezuela under the leadership of Hugo Chavez and George W. Bush as a case study.

Since there is a possibility that the old ideas of democratic peace theory may not match with the current conditions of the world, as noted in the theoretical section of this paper, an important reason for choosing the conflicts between the United States and Venezuela was to attempt to challenge the main idea of democratic peace theory with an example of a contemporary conflict between two nations where psychological warfare and the Coercive Diplomacy have been used
to bend the other country to submit to their will. However, according to the results, while the
dissertation has pointed to certain limitations in fully explaining new forms of psychological
warfare between countries, US-Venezuela relations during the time period that was mentioned
do not seem to present any major challenge to Rummel’s hypothesis, as tensions between the two
countries were certainly at a stage of “coercive diplomacy” but did not escalate beyond this to
the level of direct military confrontation, which is the most important category of violence for
Rummel.

After first attempting to properly define the boundaries of democratic peace theory using the
views of Rummel and comparing the theory to other theories in international relations, a
common definition of democratic peace theory was reached which states that democratic
governments in their relations, have a tendency to settle peacefully their disputes, and on the
other hand, in their relations with non-democratic governments, not only are not peaceful, but
more than non-democratic governments tend to use force and violence. In the other words, while
the non-democratic Governments are more willing to settle their differences with the democratic
Government through peaceful ways, democratic governments are more likely to resort to force in
their relations with non-democratic governments. According to the definition provided by
Rummel and other democratic peace theorists, this dissertation therefore concluded not only that
being a democratic country does not prevent conflict and war with non-democratic countries, but
being democratic can also lead to an increased level of conflict with non-democratic countries.

In the second part of this research, by using the different concepts of war and its variants, we
looked at the conflict between the United States and Venezuela between 2001 and 2007. Using
the perspectives offered by Jakobsen (2013), Daugherty and Janowitz (1958), the results showed
that the kind of conflict between these two countries cannot be considered to be a direct military
conflict or a formal declaration of war, but that the conflicts between the United States and
Venezuela during this time period and the role of the US in the military coup against Hugo
Chavez in 2002 as well as the financial and political support of the opposition parties of
Venezuela are another stage of war that usually occurs before a formal military confrontation and
can be defined as psychological warfare or Coercive Diplomacy. Assuming that both of these
countries are democratic states, while the 2002 coup against Chavez would be the closest
example to a serious military conflict, the absence of direct military combat between the United
States and Venezuela also confirms Rummel’s hypothesis on the peaceful nature of democratic states as close economic relations and pressure from other democratic countries in the region served to dissuade the countries from engaging in any direct military conflict.

Moreover, as mentioned in the final phase of this research, if one assumes that Venezuela is not a democratic country, the United States’ aggression towards Venezuela in acts such as the 2002 coup could also make sense through the perspective of Democratic Peace Theory and Rummel’s view, as democratic countries are usually peaceful towards other democracies but more likely to be militant and engage in conflict with non-democracies. After applying Budge’s definition of a liberal democracy to the US and Venezuela, in the final section, this view was further strengthened as the United States was able to meet the category of a liberal democracy while Venezuela’s lack of judicial autonomy, restrictions on private property and political dissent fell short of Budge’s definition of a liberal democratic state, making it an illiberal democracy or a non-democracy from the perspective of liberal theories like the Democratic Peace Theory and Rummel’s hypothesis.

However, while this dissertation has shown that the conflicts between the US and Venezuela seem to confirm Rummel’s hypothesis that democratic countries are inherently peaceful, and that this view is consistent with the facts about US-Venezuela relations between 2001-2007, at the same time, these results also raise questions about whether conflicts against a state such as the US-led coup against Venezuela under Chavez can be justified, especially when its government, although not liberal democratic, still enjoyed wide popular support and was elected through democratic means. Similarly, in an era where the indirect support for military coups and the use of proxy forces is becoming increasingly common, future studies on the relationship between countries such as the US and Venezuela during the time period investigated may also have to question in what ways the indirect support for troops which may not exist without the financial support given to them by donor countries can be seen as an act of military confrontation from donor countries and Rummel’s hypothesis should be updated in order to address these issues.
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CNN 2006. Democrats warn Chavez: Don't bash Bush. Washington:  
Appendix:

Figure 1.1

Figure 1.2
2001: U.S. trade in goods with Venezuela

NOTE: All figures are in millions of U.S. dollars on a nominal basis, not seasonally adjusted unless otherwise specified. Details may not equal totals due to rounding. Table reflects only those months for which there was trade.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Exports</th>
<th>Imports</th>
<th>Balance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 2001</td>
<td>461.3</td>
<td>1,678.3</td>
<td>-1,217.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2001</td>
<td>410.8</td>
<td>1,323.8</td>
<td>-913.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2001</td>
<td>516.6</td>
<td>1,475.3</td>
<td>-958.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2001</td>
<td>451.0</td>
<td>1,410.4</td>
<td>-959.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2001</td>
<td>493.6</td>
<td>1,338.7</td>
<td>-845.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2001</td>
<td>524.0</td>
<td>1,409.9</td>
<td>-876.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2001</td>
<td>477.4</td>
<td>1,328.9</td>
<td>-851.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 2001</td>
<td>511.0</td>
<td>1,259.7</td>
<td>-748.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2001</td>
<td>416.3</td>
<td>991.8</td>
<td>-575.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2001</td>
<td>498.1</td>
<td>1,160.2</td>
<td>-661.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2001</td>
<td>481.0</td>
<td>964.5</td>
<td>-483.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2001</td>
<td>400.1</td>
<td>877.9</td>
<td>-477.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL 2001</td>
<td>5,642.2</td>
<td>15,259.4</td>
<td>-9,608.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 2007: U.S. trade in goods with Venezuela

**NOTE:** All figures are in millions of U.S. dollars on a nominal basis, not seasonally adjusted unless otherwise specified. Details may not equal totals due to rounding. Table reflects only those months for which there was trade.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Exports</th>
<th>Imports</th>
<th>Balance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 2007</td>
<td>696.4</td>
<td>2,453.3</td>
<td>-1,766.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2007</td>
<td>678.6</td>
<td>2,237.8</td>
<td>-1,559.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2007</td>
<td>854.0</td>
<td>2,787.4</td>
<td>-1,933.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 2007</td>
<td>620.8</td>
<td>3,125.7</td>
<td>-2,504.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 2007</td>
<td>697.9</td>
<td>3,428.7</td>
<td>-2,530.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2007</td>
<td>1,017.3</td>
<td>3,641.2</td>
<td>-2,623.9</td>
</tr>
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<td>July 2007</td>
<td>907.4</td>
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<td>August 2007</td>
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<td>-2,628.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 2007</td>
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<td>3,454.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 2007</td>
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<td>3,934.9</td>
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<td>November 2007</td>
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<td>December 2007</td>
<td>741.0</td>
<td>4,386.4</td>
<td>-3,645.4</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL 2007</strong></td>
<td><strong>10,200.5</strong></td>
<td><strong>39,009.6</strong></td>
<td><strong>-28,809.1</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 2.2**