

The literature on international relations and conflict have identified an extensive list as to the causes of war. One area that has been understudied relates to the effect societal values have on conflict onset and resolution. I hypothesize that societal traits and values would have an impact upon the odds of war initiation. This study combines several social variables – such as Individuality, Nationalism, Religiosity, and Xenophobia – with the Correlates of War (COW) data to investigate the impact these variables have on conflict onset. The main dependent variable is war initiation from the COW MIDS data, but I also estimate models for all types of Militarized Interstate Disputes (MIDs). In addition, several variables are included to control for the democratic peace, the capitalist peace, and military strength. Several logistic regression models were estimated using a dyadic data set. While there were many shown effects from the social variables, they showed mixed results. Some helped support my research hypothesis while others failed to reject the null.