

Letter to the Editor

I thank Dawn Brancati for a useful and pertinent article published in this journal [51 (4): 715-43] on the impact of earthquakes on intrastate conflict. I urge caution, however, regarding the way she represents my own small research contribution, termed “disaster diplomacy” (see <http://www.disasterdiplomacy.org>). She indicates that my colleagues and I “argue that natural disasters dampen conflict” (p. 719). In contrast, we presented that notion as a hypothesis which was not confirmed by the original case studies examined. My subsequent publications on this topic are equally critical of disaster diplomacy by being negative about the potential for disasters to mitigate conflicts, including intrastate examples and noting that disaster-related activities have exacerbated conflict in some instances.

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