# REPRESSING PROTEST: THREAT AND WEAKNESS IN THE EUROPEAN CONTEXT, 1975-1989*

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*Research on state repression of protest focuses on two key factors: threat and weakness. States repress protest events when they threaten state authorities and social norms (threat), when they lack organizational strength and political voice (weakness), or when they do both. I test these competing explanations in the context of Western European protests from 1975 to 1989. This analysis goes beyond previous research by exploring the effect of threat and weakness in multiple domestic contexts. The findings suggest that threat is the most powerful explanation of repression, whereas weakness only occasionally predicts repression and depends on country-specific contexts. The importance of the findings lie in their ability to emphasize (1) the universality of situational threat to police "on-the-ground" over theories that view a calculating state "up-above," and (2) the seemingly unified perception (in advanced democracies) of protest as an increasingly legitimate form of political participation that does not beget repression.*

For affluent democracies, the dawn of the 1960s witnessed a marked expansion in the forms of political participation engaged in by citizens. The proliferation of protest events as a means of gaining political voice, and the incidents of state repression in response to those protests, culminated in a popular sentiment of heightened antagonism towards state authorities. Sentiments lamenting the frequency of police brutality were conveyed in both the songs of artists like John Lennon and in the militant activism of movement leaders like Huey Newton. In Europe, an extreme example of these sentiments came from the German punk band, *Slime*. This musical group produced a series of state-censored songs, including "Bullenschweine" (Police Swine) and "Polizei SS/SA," which called for violence against police officers—state forces who they likened to fascist elements of Nazi Germany. Understandably, this onset of state repression of protest events within consolidated democracies also raised important questions for scholars of social movements: When do state authorities find it advantageous or necessary to repress a protest event? Why do they repress some protests and not others? Do the same conditions for repression hold in various states? The answers to these questions are theoretically and practically important for the study of politics and society. Understanding how state authorities respond to protest events illuminates the state's incentives. If patterns of repression exist, it may suggest that protest organizers can and do plan their tactics accordingly. Most importantly, understanding how state authorities respond to protest events offers important insight into whether societies and states view protest as a legitimate mechanism for political participation.

This study is fundamentally concerned with why state authorities take overt police action in response to protest. It builds upon new sociological research on state repression that addresses the above questions using quantitative analysis. Following the pioneering efforts of

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Jennifer Earl, Sarah Soule, and John McCarthy (2003), I seek to explain the policing of protest events using their carefully conceptualized measures of threat and weakness. I address their call for further research by moving the study of protest and state repression to (1) a new time period—the less contentious period (for the countries in this study) that followed the end of the Vietnam war—and to (2) a context outside of the United States—Western Europe. Whereas Earl et al. (2003) analyze a highly contentious cycle of protest in New York State between 1968 and 1973, this study evaluates a large sample of protest events that occurred in four affluent and stable democracies (France, West Germany, the Netherlands, and Switzerland) between 1975 and 1989. I also depart from the Earl et al. model on some measures that require reconceptualization for the European context and answer slightly different questions. Instead of questioning what explains the difference between police presence and degrees of action, I ask (1) why repression occurs in some cases and not in others, and (2) when repression does happen, what explains its severity? Reevaluating the Earl et al. (2003) findings in a new setting and time period is useful for understanding the generalizability of their findings across industrial democracies as well as across various cycles of contention. This follows Christian Davenport's call for the study of protest repression in unexceptional times, places, and contexts, "within democracies and during periods with no behavioral challenges," analyzing one form of repression while connecting it to a broader literature on state repression (2007: 20).

To answer the aforementioned questions, I test three leading theories offered in the existing literature that attribute state repression of protest to (1) threat, (2) weakness, or (3) a combination of both. Respectively, these theories posit that states repress protest events when they threaten state authorities and social norms (threat), when they lack organizational strength and political voice (weakness), or when they are both threatening and weak (for example, the gay and lesbian uprising against police during the 1969 Stonewall riots). I elaborate on the arguments behind these theories in the following section. The theoretical assumption that similar phenomena (threat and/or weakness) explain police action in a variety of distinct time periods and domestic contexts needs to be tested. I posit that changed norms regarding the legitimacy of protest participation may lessen the ability of state authorities to tactically target weak groups in some contexts.

This paper does not develop a new theoretical approach, but promotes theoretical and empirical progress by integrating various theories and testing them in new contexts. Logistic and OLS regression analyses of protest events in France, Germany, the Netherlands, and Switzerland between 1975 and 1989 reveal that both the probability and severity of arrest are primarily instigated by *threat*. By probability of repression, I mean the likelihood that at least one arrest will happen—which explains why arrest takes place at all. By severity of repression, I mean the total number of arrests that take place when arrest happens—which reflects the extent to which police choose to repress an event. The results lend cross-regional reinforcement to some of the findings on the sources of state repression in the United States but also suggest that the weakness approach is less universal and that it is dependent on country-specific conditions. State authorities rarely strategically target protest groups for being *weak,* and arrests are more likely to derive from situational threats faced by the police.

## EXPLAINING THE REPRESSION OF PROTEST

State repression is "the actual or threatened use of physical sanctions against an individual or organization, within the territorial jurisdiction of the state, for the purpose of imposing a cost on the target as well as deterring specific activities and/or beliefs perceived to be challenging to government personnel, practices or institutions" (Davenport 2007: 2). Political scientists view state repression as a tool for stability and political power. For Samuel Huntington (1968), the survival of the state depends upon maintaining domestic order and the con-

tainment of destabilizing political mobilization. Other scholars link state repression to careful decision making by elite political actors (Walter 1969; Karstedt-Heinke 1980; Lichbach 1984; Moore 2000). From this rational perspective, political leaders weigh the costs and benefits of repressive action. For democratic elites, the costs of repression are lost votes, either from the protesters themselves or from a wider audience of voters if resulting media coverage is negative. On the other hand, the benefits of repression include dismantling a movement that threatens political power or a political platform. Thus, "when benefits exceed costs . . . and there is a high probability of success, repressive action is anticipated. When costs exceed benefits . . . and the probability of success is low, no or little repression is expected" (Davenport 2007: 4). If the state (leaders or government) has strategic interest in repression—and previous studies suggest it does—when can the state afford to employ it?

I approach this question by looking at a single type of repression. Especially in the democratic context, one way to think about state repression is the state's use of police forces to monitor and arrest citizens who protest (Earl and Soule 2006). I focus on arrests because they arguably constitute the most reliable and valid measure of repression in that they are easy to observe, they are clearly reported in the data, and they occur in all of the cases at hand.[1] In this regard, previous scholarship has predominately fallen into three camps in explaining the repression of protest: threat, weakness, and a combination of both. In what follows, I discuss each camp in turn.

### *Camp 1: The Threat Approach*

The most supported theory of protest repression posits the necessity of threat (Davenport 2007: 4). This approach links the occurrence and severity of repression to the degree of threat exerted by the protest event. To the extent that political elites and police forces perceive themselves to be threatened, scholars argue that the chances that police will repress protestors will increase. Charles Tilly (1978), in particular, has argued that the size of a protest event is a threat to authorities. Large events can signal legitimacy of the protestors' goals and pose a threat to government platforms or government power. Similarly, police officers will be more likely to take repressive action if they feel that the size of an event can become uncontrollable. Doug McAdam (1982) logically argues that groups using confrontational tactics, such as damaging property, also face greater repression. Finally, groups pursuing revolutionary or radical goals will face more repression than groups with moderate goals. Studies have found that "accepted groups" with moderate goals are less likely to be repressed (Tilly 1978) and that countercultural or radical groups are repressed more frequently (Kriesi, Koopmans, Duyvendak, and Giugni 1995: 125; Davenport 1995; Wisler and Giugni 1999).

### *Camp 2: The Weakness Approach*

A second line of research argues that states repress weak protest events. The concept of weakness refers to the (in)ability of individuals engaged in the protest to punish the state for bad behavior after the fact. This school of thought is largely associated with William Gamson's work on social movements (1975). He posits that political elites face a public backlash if repression efforts fail. Failure can also signal legitimacy and power for the protesters who defy the state. Fearing such an outcome, political elites will tread lightly unless a successful dismantling of a protest event is likely. Thus, weakness can be understood as "the relative (in)ability of protesters to react to undue or severe uses of repressive force" (Earl et al. 2003: 584). In particular, protests comprised of subordinate groups who lack political and social capital are weaker (Piven and Cloward 1977; Lacey, Wells, and Meure 1990). Subordinate groups (such as ethnic and sexual minorities, noncitizens, and the poor) are less endowed with the resources (social capital, financial capital, and voting capital) to punish the state, and the state faces fewer costs in repressing them (Jenkins 1983; see also Norris 2002:

83-103 for a discussion of who votes). Furthermore, organizational support (such as social movement organizations or political parties) increases the protest event's resource endowment. Protest events with the support of social movement organizations (SMOs), for example, should be more capable of retaliating if the event faces repressive action (Earl et al. 2003: 584).[2] Resources and organizational capacity equip protesters with the ability to discourage and retaliate against repression—they signal strength. On the other hand, groups that lack resources and organizational capacity are inherently weak (Earl et al. 2003: 584).

*Camp 3: Interaction*

Still other scholars have argued that threat and weakness are not always competing explanations and that the combination of both provides a better predictor of repression (Stockdill 2003; Gamson 1975). For example, in Germany, a protest event that is large, confrontational (threatening), and predominately comprised of Turkish immigrants—many of whom lack citizenship rights and organizational support (weak)—might constitute an ideal scenario for repression. Brett Stockdill's (2003) study of the socially threatening HIV/AIDS movement in the United States found that the events composed of predominately black protesters (weak) were more likely to experience repression than similar events with large numbers of white protesters.

*Theory*

In the more routine period of contention after the turbulent protest cycle of the 1960s, I expect that state authorities and police officers were forced to become accustomed to alternative participation as an avenue for residents to channel their grievances. Changed norms regarding legitimate forms of participation make the incentives to strategically repress groups from "up above" based on their weakness less convincing. Why have norms changed, and why are police unlikely to use repression based on weakness in the period studied here? First, I posit that the preceding cycle of intense contention expanded the repertoire of forms of participation and fostered a more liberal understanding of demonstration rights in advanced democracies, legitimizing protest and making it less likely to be targeted unless participants physically threaten the police force on the ground.[3] Second, the expansion of media technology and the media's role as watchdog have raised the costs of repression, which produce negative external responses and decrease the legitimacy of the state if they lack justifiable grounds for arrest. If protest participation is a more accepted form of participation and the media watchdog is more established (as was the case after 1975 in the cases described here), then the overt repression of protest events based on a movement's perceived weakness should be less likely. Indeed, authorities may do the opposite and shun weak protestors based on the concern of larger public audience costs.

In opposition to the weakness approach, in most cases I expect that state authorities are more constrained in their ability to repress weak protest events. Proponents of the weakness approach originally responded to the blatant racism of the early 1960s protests, where several qualitative case studies found that weak protest events strongly correlate with excessive police repression. In this later period, I expect to find that the explanatory power of this argument is diminished. Police should rarely react to protest with arrest, unless they feel directly threatened with the loss of control over the event. Thus, I predict that situational threat to the police "on the ground" will explain more than tactical considerations by the state "up above." This also means that situational threat variables, like protest size and confrontational tactics, may be more likely to trigger a response than more diffuse threats like radical goals.

In the pooled analysis, I explore the effect of weakness and threat on two levels of police action. While my data do not conform to the data used by Earl et al. (2003)—which found that different approaches explain police presence versus a variety of levels of police action (such

as arrest, riots, and violence)—in the spirit of that research I opt to look at both presence of arrests and severity of arrests. This is because police strategy might change once arrests begin. For example, some scholars have suggested that media and social watchdogs overlook moderate repression that is based on weakness and that only severe repression will fuel external critique (Barkan 1984; della Porta and Reiter 1998: 18). This means that the police might get away with some arrests that target weak groups, but their strategy becomes more attuned to the protest's weakness as the number of arrests increases. It is only when groups are excessively targeted and arrested solely for their lack of organizational capability or because of their subordinate status that the watchful eye of the media and a more responsive public will hold the state accountable.[4] Earl et al. (2003: 586) posit that weakness increases the probability of repression but also that "there is an important cap to the amount of force that can be directed toward weaker protesters." Thus, it is reasonable to assume that factors influencing police strategy differ for the shift from 0 to 1 arrests and the shift from 25 to 26 arrests. I consider this assertion, making a distinction between the likelihood of at least one arrest and the number of arrests made when arrests do indeed occur. Further justification for the split analysis is methodological since arrest is rare within the data and positive cases should be distinguished from negative ones.

A further contribution of this analysis is that it tests the theoretical approaches across domestic contexts. While situational threats to police should elicit a universally repressive response, I expect that the weakness argument would be highly vulnerable to country-specific historical and political contexts (for example, the African American experience in the southern United States), making it more difficult to generalize across countries or regions. Organizational strength may have dissimilar effects in corporatist and central states, where subsidiary levels of the state have varying degrees of access to the state apparatus. More generally, I expect that if weakness variables play a role, they will only do so in weak states, such as Germany and Switzerland. This is because strength matters more in weak states, as weak states tend to exacerbate the leverage points held by challengers (Kriesi 1996: 160). The four cases analyzed here make useful points for comparison because they vary along the dimensions of formal institutional structure and prevailing strategies (inclusive versus exclusive) toward challengers (see Kriesi 1996: 161).[5] By looking across four cases, we can make inferences about when and where organizational resources and subordinate group status matter for repression.

The following analysis explores the puzzle of why states repress some protest events and not others. First, the study tests the three dominant theoretical approaches of threat and weakness—on their own terms using various statistical models—in the European context and during less exceptional times. Second, it tests theories of repression across four advanced democracies. When protest threatens state authorities (especially situational threat to the police), I predict that they will make arrests. For the reasons mentioned above—changed norms regarding the legitimacy of political protest and a more watchful media—I expect this later period to undermine the weakness explanation. Because police forces can legitimize severe repression on weaker groups when they use threatening tactics, I expect weakness to matter only when it is in interaction with threat. Finally, I expect that the weakness approach will not hold across domestic contexts, since perception of weakness depends on distinct institutional structures and histories, as well as varying roles of organizational involvement and capacity.

## DATA AND METHODS

This project utilizes the new social movements protest-event data collected by Kriesi et al. (1995). The collection includes protest events that occurred within France, West Germany, the Netherlands, and Switzerland between 1975 and 1989. The researchers sampled four respected

newspapers, one in each country, drawing their information from every Monday issue during the designated time period. Protest-event data collection based on newspaper reporting has a long history in social movement research (Koopmans and Rucht 2002). While the merits of this method are unrivaled in the quantitative analysis of protest development, its limitations include newspaper bias (political or otherwise), location bias (national newspapers may not report on smaller regional protests), and the "news-hole" effect (coverage is limited to the amount of available space within the pages of a newspaper). Kriesi et al.'s research team was attentive to these concerns.[6]

Consistent with the propositions of this research and the study by Earl et al., I limit my analysis to certain protest events. In order to be included in my analysis, protest events must meet the following criteria: (1) more than one person had to be present, since my concern is collective action; (2) protesters had to be making a claim, whether it be a grievance or an expression of support; (3) the event had to happen in the public sphere; and (4) the event had to involve unconventional political participation—letter writing campaigns, lawsuits, referenda, and petitions are not considered unconventional in this analysis.[7] My analysis is limited to 6,490 observations, of which 560 resulted in at least one arrest. Table 1 provides the descriptive statistics for the variables used in this study.

### *Dependent Variable*

Governments select from a full repertoire of repressive activities (including counter-terrorism, detention, counter-insurgency, and protest policing). This study focuses on one form of state repression, police arrests, as it is the most reliable and valid measure of such a sticky concept. A concern behind this measure is the difficulty in ascertaining the distinction between state and police repression, as it assumes that the actions of police forces conflate with the interests of the state. While others have argued that in most cases they do, it is difficult to gauge whether the police are responding to physical threat directed toward them or toward the state's interest. Previous research has established a connection between police action and government interests. For example, Oliver Fillieule (1997: 335) finds that mortal incidents resulting from policing increased each time the Right was in power in France during the 1980s and 1990s. Donatella della Porta also finds correlations between governing party and the style of policing in Europe (della Porta and Fillieule 2004: 228; see also della Porta 1996; Goldstein 1978; Busch, Funk, Kauss, Narr, and Werkentin 1985). Nevertheless, I am aware of the concern—the distinction between police repression and state repression—and address it further in the discussion, considering that some predictors, like confrontational tactics and protest size, may be more directly threatening to the police forces than to state interests.

The occurrence and the amount of arrest are the most operational measures of the concept of state repression. As Earl et al. (2003: 582) note, "Overt repression of protest by police has the virtues of being systematically observable and well-studied, as well as serving as a useful indicator of authorities' general program of social control toward particular dissident groups" (see also della Porta 1995). Thus, following in the footsteps of previous scholars, I "focus on the overt policing of protest with the aim of understanding broader processes of social control by authorities" (Earl et al. 2003: 582). The occurrence and severity of arrests at protest events is indeed a form of *state* repression, as police forces represent the state.

The dependent variable is measured in two different ways based on the questions: (1) What explains the likelihood of at least one arrest at a protest event? and (2) When at least one person is arrested, what explains the number or severity of arrests? To answer these questions, I use logistic and OLS regression, respectively. The dependent variable in the logistic regression is the occurrence or absence of an arrest. If the protest event resulted in arrest (one or more), the variable is coded as "1" and if the protest resulted in no arrests, the variable is coded as "0." The dependent variable in OLS regression is the number of arrests (logged to obtain a more normal distribution and to alleviate heteroskedasticity[8]) at each

**Table 1.** Dependent, Independent, and Control Variables Summarized

| *Concept* | *Measure* | *Notes or Examples* |
|---|---|---|
| *Dependent Variable* | | |
| Arrested > 0 | Logged number of arrests greater than 0 | Dependent Variable for OLS, logged to address heteroskedasticity |
| Arrested | Dummy turned on when one or more arrests occur | Dependent Variable for Logit |
| *Independent Variables* | | |
| Threat | | |
| Protest Size | Logged number of participants | Logged to address heteroskedasticity |
| Confrontational Tactics | Dummy turned on for confrontational tactics used | For example, illegal occupation of buildings, disruption of assemblies, property damage; see appendix B for a full listing of confrontational tactics |
| Radical Goals | Dummy turned on for advocating radical goals | For example, pro-gay rights claims, extreme right-wing claims, etc.; see appendix B for full listing of radical goals |
| Weakness | | |
| No Union | Dummy turned on when no union organizations were present | |
| No SMOs | Dummy turned on when no SMOs are present | |
| No Church | Dummy turned on when no church organizations were present | |
| No Party | Dummy turned on when no political parties were present | |
| Subordinate | Dummy turned on when protest event is primarily comprised of subordinate groups | Gays and lesbians, foreigners, and the unemployed |
| Threat * Weakness | | |
| Subordinate* Protest Size | Interaction Term | |
| Subordinate* Confrontational Tactics | Interaction Term | |
| Subordinate* Radical Goals | Interaction Term | |
| *Controls* | | |
| Years | Dummy variables for each year between 1976 to 1989, with 1975 as the baseline | Included to control for unobserved temporal effects |
| Duration of Risk | Duration of protest event in days | Longer events give police more time to gauge threat or weakness of the event and to plan action accordingly |
| Countries | Dummy variables for each country: Germany, France, and the Netherlands, with Switzerland as the baseline | Included to control for systematic differences across countries |

protest. The next section describes the operationalization of the independent variables derived from the previously outlined theoretical approaches (see appendix A for descriptive statistics).

*Independent Variable: Threat*

Three variables are employed to operationalize the concept of threat: protest size, confrontational tactics, and radical goals. Protest size refers to the logged number of participants, from 2 to 550,000, at each protest event (the measure is logged to obtain a more normal distribution and to alleviate heteroskedasticity). Following past scholarship on policing, I predict that police will feel more threatened by larger crowds (McAdam and Su 2002; Earl 2003; Earl et al. 2003). As the number of protestors increases, the ability of police forces to control the group becomes more challenging. Large masses of people are also less constrained by laws and civil codes due to a sense of empowerment in numbers (Waddington 1994). Heightened opportunity for law breaking is "threatening to the physical safety of officers present and to the power of political elites" (Earl et al. 2003: 592). This leads to my first hypothesis, which states:

> Hypothesis 1a: The likelihood of at least one arrest and the number of arrests will increase as protest size increases.

A second measure of threat is the use of confrontational tactics. To measure confrontational tactics I again follow Earl et al. (2003) and create a dummy variable that separates those tactics that are confrontational from those that are not. Here, confrontational tactics refer to all forms of protest expression that go beyond demonstrative forms of protest, which include legal and nonviolent marches, rallies, and institutionalized festivals. Examples of confrontational tactics include illegal demonstrations, blockades, occupation of public buildings, property damage, and physical violence against persons (see appendix B for the list of confrontational tactics).[9] I predict that the use of confrontational tactics will threaten the police forces at hand and prompt action. Heeding Soule and Davenport's (2009) warning that violent and large events are over reported—and, thus, may lead to a selection bias—I randomly and incrementally remove those events that were both large and violent. The results continuously hold, even when dropping all of the events coded as using heavy violence. This leads to:

> Hypothesis 1b: The likelihood of at least one arrest and the number of arrests will increase when confrontational tactics are used.

The final measure of threat is the protest event's promotion of radical goals. Here radical goals are defined as being diametrically opposed to the dominant state and social norms.[10] Defining a radical goal is sensitive to time and context (Soule and Davenport 2009: 20). For example, protesting segregated schools in the United States was radical at the time of *Brown v. Board of Education*, whereas demanding desegregation is no longer a radical goal within the current normative framework. Furthermore, each country or region, with its own historical experience is subject to a different definition of "radical." In 2010, advocates of gay marriage may be perceived to be radical in the United States but less so in Belgium, where gay marriage has been legal since 2003. These sensitivities were taken into careful consideration when I coded the dummy variable radical goals, with an eye on appropriate measures of "radical" for the specific countries and the time frame of the analysis. Only those goals that can be considered "radical" in all four countries and over all fifteen years will be considered radical in this analysis. Claims for gay and lesbian rights meet this criterion. All four countries entered the period of analysis at the beginning of the modern gay and lesbian liberation movement.[11] Despite the introduction of limited legal rights, societal anxiety connected to the AIDS crisis of the 1980s made claims associated with this group salient and radical (Adam,

Duyvendak, and Krouwel 1999: 359). Other radical goals include the claim of rights for foreigners, right-wing movements (especially salient in Germany), and autonomous movements (see appendix B for a complete list of radical goals). Following Earl et al. (2003: 593), I test whether the political elite perceives radical goals to be threatening, which in turn results in higher police presence and action.

> Hypothesis 1c: The likelihood of at least one arrest and the number of arrests will increase when the protest group advocates radical goals.

*Independent Variable: Weakness*

Five variables operationalize the concept of weakness: the absence of union organizations, social movement organizations (SMOs), church organizations, political parties, and the predominance of subordinate groups.[12] The first four are organizational variables based on the assumption that the more state channels available to a group, the more likely its demands will be heard. Different organizations have different channels, and thus I test how and whether each strengthens the protest event individually. Some of the organizational variables (unions, churches, and parties) included here are novel to operationalizing the weakness approach, but they are important measures for the countries in this study, which have structures of social partnership. Their inclusion also reflects Kriesi's (1996) call to differentiate the political channels of SMOs from those of parties and interest groups and those of supportive associations, which differ in terms of their orientations toward authorities and constituencies, and in the (in)direct participation of their constituencies (1996: 153).

Unions and the government are closely connected, though to different degrees, in the corporatist collective bargaining structures of the countries under analysis (Katzenstein 1985).[13] The same logic applies to churches. Esping-Andersen (1990) attributes substantial power to church organizations in conservative-corporatist welfare states because they rely on subsidiarity. Subsidiarity refers to transferring the responsibility to the smallest competent authority—in this case from the state level down to the level of the church. In a section on domestic context (below) I will discuss the extent to which churches and unions are more or less powerful in each of the four countries, but generally, the presence of political parties signals strength through their direct connection with government representation. I only code the presence of established and moderate political parties—an extremist fringe party does not represent governmental support. Finally, SMOs are a common measure in previous research, because they link supporters, allies, and authorities, and are increasingly common in Western nations (Tarrow 1998: 137; Soule and Earl 2005). Of all organizations, SMOs are most experienced in channeling a social movement's grievances to the relevant authorities. Four dummy variables are employed to identify protest events that lack each type of organization: *No Unions, No SMOs, No Churches, and No Parties.* All variables are conceptually similar in that they measure resource mobilization. Protest events without organizational support are inherently weaker, because they are endowed with fewer resources to channel their grievances to the political elite. More resources equal strength, while fewer resources equal weakness (Jenkins 1993). Thus, I hypothesize that:

> Hypothesis 2a: The likelihood of at least one arrest and the number of arrests will increase when no unions are involved.

> Hypothesis 2b: The likelihood of at least one arrest and the number of arrests will increase when no SMOs are involved.

> Hypothesis 2c: The likelihood of at least one arrest and the number of arrests will increase when no churches are involved.

Hypothesis 2d: The likelihood of at least one arrest and the number of arrests will increase when no political parties are involved.

The final weakness measure is the dummy variable for the predominance of subordinate groups. Previous studies have shown that subordinate groups are expected to attract state repression, as they have fewer means to channel their grievances, and political elites do not face costs by losing their support. Subordinate groups include sexual minorities and foreigners, as well as the poor and the unemployed (see Lacey et al. 1990: 71). I depart from previous research by only coding those events that consisted predominately of subordinate groups, as opposed to any event that had the presence of a subordinate group. This is partly due to data limitations, but also, more importantly, for theoretical reasons. How does one discern the identity of a poor person or a gay person at a peace rally?[14] If the state does target subordinate groups, it will target those events where their subordinate status becomes visible—these are events with subordinate group claims. Measurements are based on protest events that consisted of subordinate protestors who also purported goals associated with their subordinate status.

Hypothesis 2e: The likelihood of at least one arrest and the number of arrests will increase when subordinate groups comprise the main constituency of the protest event.

### *Independent Variable: Interaction*

To capture the possibility that arrest is prompted by a combination of weak groups with threatening elements, I interact variables from the different approaches. The conceptualization behind an interaction term is that an increase in Y (arrests) is associated with an increase in $X_1$ (subordinate groups) when $X_2$ (for example, confrontational tactics) is present, but not when condition $X_2$ is absent (Brambor, Clark, and Golder 2006: 64). Based on the interactions designated by Earl et al. (2003), I create three interaction terms: subordinate group * logged protest size, subordinate groups * confrontational tactics, and subordinate groups * radical goals.[15] The expectation of this approach is that a combination of threat and weakness will result in police action. Thus, I hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 3a: The likelihood of at least one arrest and the number of arrests will increase as the protest size grows and when the event is predominately comprised of subordinate groups.

Hypothesis 3b: The likelihood of at least one arrest and the number of arrests will increase when the protest event is predominately comprised of subordinate groups that also advocate radical goals.

Hypothesis 3c: The likelihood of at least one arrest and the number of arrests will increase when the protest event is predominately comprised of subordinate groups that also use confrontational tactics.

### *Control Variables*

Additional variables are included to control for the year and country where an event took place and for the duration of an event. First, dummy variables for each year (except for 1975, the baseline) control for unobserved temporal effects. Second, dummies for each country (except Switzerland, the baseline) control for any policing outcomes unique to any one country, as well as the possibility of spatial autocorrelation. Finally, a control variable for the duration of a protest, measured from 1 to 9 days, is included in the model. Longer events give authorities more time to gauge the threat or weakness of an event and to plan action accordingly. Control variables are included in all models but the fourteen year variables are not reported in the tables (available on request from the author).

*Methods*

I test my hypothesis using logistic and ordinary least squares (OLS) regression. First, logistic regression is used to explore the determinants of police action. A logistic regression model infers the probability that arrest will occur. The model includes all 6,490 protest event observations. Second, I explore what explains the severity (or number) of arrests by using OLS regression. This method considers the linear relations between the predictors in the model and the number of arrests made (when arrest > 0). The OLS regression includes the 560 protest events that resulted in arrest. Because the first dependent variable includes many "zero" observations—90 percent of protest events in the analysis did not result in arrest—and because selection effects may be present, I also estimate the model using a zero-inflated negative binomial regression and a Heckman's selection model. The results of these analyses largely match the results reported in the text (available on request from the author).

## RESULTS

Table 2 presents the results for the full and trimmed regression models for the probability of arrest (logit) and the severity of arrest (OLS). In each table, the full model tests the three approaches in relation to the dependent variable—a dichotomous dummy variable in model 1 and a continuous variable in model 3. The tables also include trimmed models (models 2 and 4) that drop all focal variables that do not fall within a .1 probability level in the full models. All control variables are included in each model.

*Logistic Regression: Explaining the Probability of Arrest*

In the sample of all protest events, including both events that resulted in no arrest and events that did, my model provides a measure of support for two of the three theoretical approaches (see table 2, model 1). For the threat approach all three measures are significant ($p \leq .001$) and qualify for the trimmed model. For the weakness approach no variables are significant but three of the five variables qualify for the trimmed model, *no SMO, no church,* and *subordinate group* ($p \leq .1$).[16] The other two weakness variables, *no party* and *no union,* are not statistically significant and do not qualify for the trimmed model ($p = .44$ and $p = .88$). Finally, the interaction terms all fall far short of statistical significance ($p \geq .49$). Overall, the full model explains 23 percent of the variance (McFadden's $R^2$)[17]—this is high compared to other analyses on repression (see Earl et al. 2003)—and the results are robust in a variety of diagnostic tests.

The explanatory power of the trimmed model is only slightly lower, at 22 percent. All threat variables in the trimmed model remain statistically significant. Of the weakness variables, only *subordinate group* reaches statistical significance. An examination of model 2 in table 2 indicates that, on average, threatening protest events are more likely to produce an arrest outcome and events with subordinate groups are not. Consistent with expectations, *protest size*, the use of *confrontational tactics,* and the advocacy of *radical goals* are strong predictors of arrest (all have positive signs). In order to better interpret the results of the coefficients, I transform the logit regression into predicted probabilities of each outcome for given values of the independent variables. An increase in *protest size* from the smallest to the largest event increases the probability of an arrest outcome by 13 percent, controlling for all other variables in the trimmed model.[18] The odds of arrest are 15 percent greater if the event uses *confrontational tactics*. Finally, protest events that purport *radical goals* increase the probability of an arrest outcome by 4 percent. While all threat variables do indeed play a role in determining an arrest outcome, the results suggest that police may respond more to situational threats—such as *protest size* and *confrontational tactics*—than they do to the *radical goals* that may be more threatening to state interests and social structures.

**Table 2.** Coefficients from Pooled Logistic and OLS Regression Models Predicting Arrest at Protest Events in France, Germany, the Netherlands, and Switzerland, 1975-1989[†]

| | *Model 1* *Logit Full* | *Model 2* *Logit Trimmed* | *Model 3* *OLS Full* | *Model 4* *OLS Trimmed* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Threat* | | | | |
| Protest Size | .17*** | .16*** | .20*** | .20*** |
| | (.02) | (.02) | (.02) | (.02) |
| Confrontational Tactics | 2.43*** | 2.46*** | .28* | .30* |
| | (.14) | (.13) | (.14) | (.13) |
| Radical Goals | .96*** | .97*** | .33** | .31** |
| | (.11) | (.11) | (.12) | (.12) |
| *Weakness* | | | | |
| No Union | .39 | | .59 | .61* |
| | (.26) | | (.33) | (.30) |
| No SMO | .21 | .21 | .24* | .26* |
| | (.11) | (.11) | (.12) | (.11) |
| No Church | .91 | 1.09 | -.52 | |
| | (.54) | (.53) | (.63) | |
| No Party | .24 | | .33 | |
| | (.32) | | (.38) | |
| Subordinate Group | -.17 | -.87** | .13 | |
| | (1.23) | (.23) | (1.18) | |
| *Threat * Weakness* | | | | |
| Subordinate * Protest Size | -.10 | | .02 | |
| | (.13) | | (.12) | |
| Subordinate * Conf. Tactics | -.03 | | .17 | |
| | (.66) | | (.63) | |
| Subordinate * Radical Goals | -.30 | | -.39 | |
| | (.61) | | (.81) | |
| *Controls*[‡] | | | | |
| Duration | -.15*** | -.14*** | .02 | .02 |
| | (.03) | (.03) | (.04) | (.04) |
| France | -.76*** | -.78*** | -.23 | -.21 |
| | (.19) | (.19) | (.23) | (.23) |
| Germany | 1.19*** | 1.17*** | .34 | .34 |
| | (.16) | (.16) | (.18) | (.18) |
| The Netherlands | .68*** | .67*** | -.07 | -.07 |
| | (.17) | (.17) | (.19) | (.19) |
| *Constant* | -6.91*** | -6.46*** | .06 | -.19 |
| | (.69) | (.64) | (.77) | (.49) |
| *McFadden's⁺/Adjusted R-squared* | .23⁺ | .22⁺ | .20 | .20 |
| *Observations* | 6,490 | 6,490 | 560 | 560 |

*Notes*: [†]standard errors in parentheses; [‡]years not reported; * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001 (two-tailed test)

The results also suggest that the odds of arrest are 3 percent lower if the protest event consists predominately of subordinate groups. While this result is in contradiction to what weakness theorists predict, it falls in line with my expectation that, because of increased media scrutiny and changed social norms, police are more careful to not arrest weak protestors. Furthermore, the expansive social welfare states in all four countries may mute subordinate status related to the poor and unemployed. Even the weakest groups in some social European states are arguably more powerful vis-à-vis the state than they are in liberal welfare states with higher income inequality (Pontusson 2005).

The control variables also produce interesting results. The variable *duration* is significant at a .001 level and has an unexpected negative coefficient sign. Contrary to what Earl et al. (2003) expect—that longer events allow more time for police to arrive and to take action—my results suggest that longer protest events are on average less likely to be repressed. The predicted odds of arrest decrease by (a mere) 1 percent with every three additional days of an event's duration. A plausible explanation is that the type of event that lasts long varies across time and context. In Earl et al.'s (2003) data from the American 1960s, longer events were often riots.[19] This is not the case in Europe between 1975 and 1989, where the longest events were overwhelmingly demonstrative and lightly confrontational. Violent events, such as riots, rarely lasted more than one day in Europe (less than 3 percent of the heavily violent events analyzed here lasted more than one day). Next, in comparison with Switzerland (baseline), the likelihood of arrest is higher in Germany and the Netherlands and lower in France. The results suggest that compared to Switzerland the average probability of arrest is 6 percent higher in Germany, 3 percent higher in the Netherlands, and 3 percent lower in France.[20] This is an expected finding, since Germany and the Netherlands experienced a heightened protest wave during the period under analysis, especially compared to France (Kriesi et al. 1995: 124-139).

### *Explaining the Severity of Arrest*

I now turn to the question of what predicts the severity of repression at protest events where the police decide to react with arrest. Models 3 and 4 in table 2 present the results of the OLS regressions, which assess the linear relationships between the predictors and the amount of arrests when arrest occurred. Using the data, I regress the number of people arrested (when arrest > 0) on each predictor variable in the model. Tests on model specification, sensitivity, and multicollinearity are performed to establish confidence in the results.[21] In line with the hypothesis that severity of arrest depends mostly on threat, all three threat variables qualify for the trimmed model. *Protest size, radical goals,* and *confrontational tactics* are significant at the .001, .01, and .05 levels, respectively. Two of the organizational weakness variables (*no SMO* and *no union)* qualify for the trimmed model. Only *no SMO* achieves statistical significance ($p = .05$), though the other variables' coefficients run in the predicted direction except in the case of *no church*. Finally, no interaction terms are significant ($p \geq .63$), and the relationship is not significant at any point when plotting the marginal effect for each interaction. The adjusted-$R^2$ value suggests that about 20 percent of the variation in the average amount arrested is explained by the full model.

In model 4, the trimmed OLS model for severity of arrest (adjusted-$R^2 = .20$), all focal variables achieve statistical significance. Since the dependent variable is the logged amount of arrests, which changes the original scale from 1 to 900 to a scale of .69 to 6.8, the coefficients are smaller and provide little meaning in interpretation.[22] Thus, the analysis will focus on the level of significance and the sign of the coefficient. As the regression results show, there is a positive association between threat and the severity of arrest, an expected finding. All three predictors are positively correlated with the amount of arrests. The results indicate that, on average, an increase in *protest size* is expected to increase the number of arrests that are made. Similarly, the results support the hypothesis that, on average, protest events employing *radical goals* increase the amount of arrests that takes place. The same outcome is expected

for protest events that use *confrontational tactics.* Both weakness variables also find statistical significance at the .05 level, suggesting that generally protest events without union and SMO backing increase the number of arrests. The results suggest that at this level of police action—when they have decided to make arrests—police take into account some forms of organizational weakness. Whereas weakness does not predict the probability of repression, some types of organizational weakness (lacking unions and SMOs) do exacerbate numbers of arrests. This is contrary to what I expected and in favor of the weakness approach, suggesting that the presence of unions and SMOs are able to temper high numbers of arrest. The regression results reported in the OLS models reinforce the baseline expectation that threat always plays a substantial role in explaining the severity of arrest. They also suggest that some types of organizational weakness affect the number of arrests. Unlike weakness variables, threat variables are consistently significant and do not produce divergent results across the levels of analysis.

*Domestic Context*

Next, I use logistic regression to test the observable implications across countries and derive results in favor of the universality of the threat. This section illuminates the second part of the argument that explores the importance of domestic context on protest repression by analyzing variation across the four countries. Aside from situational threats to the police, I do not expect that authorities in different states respond uniformly to protest events. Different types of organizations play different roles and possess varying levels of influence, depending on their political contexts. Similarly, states and societies have unique understandings of subordinate status, depending on their own historical trajectories.

In table 3, I report the results of full and trimmed logistic regressions for each country. Due to the poor performance of the interaction approach, I exclude them from the country analysis.[23] The threat variables perform strongly in all models. *Radical goals* and *confrontational tactics* are significant and positive predictors of arrest in all countries. Results indicate that *protest size* is positively related to the probability of arrest in Germany and Switzerland, but it fails to reach a level of significance in France and the Netherlands. Outside of the threat approach, the results are less static.

The weakness variable *subordinate group* reaches significance in Germany and the Netherlands but again with negative coefficient signs. The results suggest that events consisting predominantly of subordinate groups are less likely to be repressed in these countries. The likelihood of arrest at these events diminishes by 4 and 6 percent respectively in the Netherlands and Germany. I fail to observe a significant relationship between the *subordinate group* variable and arrest in France and Switzerland, but it produces uniformly negative coefficients in both cases and qualifies for the trimmed model in the latter case. In line with the results above, I never find support for repression based on subordinate group status—instead, the reverse is often true.

The effects of organizational weakness vary considerably across domestic context. For one, the types of organizations that participate in protest are different across countries. The data suggest that French and Swiss churches rarely include protest in their political repertoire. Between 1975 and 1989, the church only stood behind twelve protest events in France and five in Switzerland, compared to church presence at over 100 protest events in Germany during the same period (because they are so rare in France and Switzerland, the *no church* variable is dropped from the analysis in those two cases). Most importantly, organizational weakness variables fail to gain significance or to qualify for the trimmed model in any county other than Germany.

Organizational weakness clearly plays the most powerful role in Germany. The variables *no union, no SMO,* and *no church* have positive coefficients and qualify for the trimmed model ($p \leq .1$). In the trimmed model, *no union* and *no church* gain significance at the .05 level

**Table 3**. Coefficients from Full and Trimmed Logistic Regression models Predicting Arrest at Protest Events in France, Germany, the Netherlands, and Switzerland, 1975-1989†

| | *France* | | *Germany* | | *Netherlands* | | *Switzerland* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Threat** | | | | | | | | |
| Protest Size | .00 | | .22$^{***}$ | .22$^{***}$ | -.03 | | .46$^{***}$ | .47$^{***}$ |
| | (.07) | | (.03) | (.03) | (.06) | | (.11) | (.11) |
| Confrontational Tactics | 1.07$^{**}$ | 1.06$^{***}$ | 2.43$^{***}$ | 2.44$^{***}$ | 2.50$^{***}$ | 2.52$^{***}$ | 5.08$^{***}$ | 4.96$^{***}$ |
| | (.45) | (.30) | (.17) | (.17) | (.32) | (.27) | (.79) | (.73) |
| Radical Goals | .85$^{***}$ | .86$^{***}$ | 1.03$^{***}$ | 1.01$^{***}$ | .91$^{***}$ | .92$^{***}$ | .97$^{*}$ | .86$^{*}$ |
| | (.29) | (.27) | (.16) | (.16) | (.22) | (.21) | (.48) | (.46) |
| *Weakness* | | | | | | | | |
| No Union | .31 | | .64 | .71$^{*}$ | .09 | | -1.13 | |
| | (.58) | | (.34) | (.34) | (.67) | | (1.22) | |
| No SMO | .04 | | .26 | .29 | .09 | | .45 | |
| | (.29) | | (.16) | (.16) | (.23) | | (.44) | |
| No Church | — | | 1.16 | 1.26$^{*}$ | -.07 | | — | |
| | | | (.63) | (.62) | (1.21) | | | |
| No Party | .05 | | .38 | | -1.02 | | -1.02 | |
| | (1.08) | | (.35) | | (.90) | | (1.22) | |
| Subordinate Group | -.07 | | -1.07$^{**}$ | -1.07$^{**}$ | -.98$^{**}$ | -.98$^{**}$ | -1.60 | -1.54 |
| | (.55) | | (.38) | (.38) | (.40) | (.39) | (1.10) | (1.10) |
| *Controls*‡ | | | | | | | | |
| Duration | -.04 | -.05 | -.19$^{**}$ | -.19$^{***}$ | -.15$^{**}$ | -.15$^{**}$ | .05 | .04 |
| | (.07) | (.07) | (.05) | (.05) | (.06) | (.06) | (.15) | (.15) |
| Constant | -4.56$^{***}$ | -4.21$^{***}$ | -6.32$^{***}$ | -6.15$^{***}$ | -3.03$^{*}$ | -4.09$^{***}$ | -6.79$^{***}$ | -8.37$^{***}$ |
| | (1.30) | (.47) | (.84) | (.82) | (1.48) | (.57) | (1.72) | (1.14) |
| McFadden's $R^2$ | .08 | .07 | .22 | .22 | .20 | .20 | .39 | .38 |
| Observations | 2005 | 2005 | 2148 | 2148 | 1253 | 1253 | 786 | 786 |

*Notes*: †standard errors in parentheses; ‡years not reported; $^{*}$ p<.05, $^{**}$ p<.01, $^{***}$ p<.001 (two-tailed test)

and are positively correlated with arrest, suggesting that the absence of unions and churches at German protests significantly increases the likelihood of arrest. The predicted odds of arrest increase by 4 and 6 percent respectively when events lack union and church backing. The affect of these variables is modest compared to the threat variables in Germany (30 percent increase for protest size, 29 percent for confrontational tactics, and 8 percent for radi-cal goals), but they nevertheless work in the direction expected by weakness theorists. The German results conform to the hypothesis that organizational support of protests increases their strength and that their strength decreases the likelihood of arrest.

The importance of some organizational weakness variables in the German case can be traced to its neocorporatist state structure. Germany is a uniquely weak state, which makes it highly permeable to formal organizations. Since German institutions bestow a plethora of leverage points upon challenger groups—more so than the other countries under analysis—it is reasonable to accept that police forces need to be more sensitive to the organizational

strength in the German domestic context. This is because Germany's state structure represents a model of formalistic inclusion, which "allows for a multiplication of points of access [for challenger groups] . . . and the strong position of the German judiciary provides the challengers with another set of independent access points" (della Porta 1996: 161). In Germany, "the possibility of protestors appealing to the Administrative Court to reverse police decisions prohibiting demonstration was a deescalating factor [for police repression]" (della Porta 1996: 82; see also Rucht 1996: 199). These conditions are absent in strong states, such as the Netherlands and France, where the challenger has fewer veto powers (della Porta 1996: 160).

Particularly those variables that reached significance have a long history of influence in German politics. It is logical that German policing strategy is sensitive to union strength, which can also be traced back to the neocorporatist model of industrial relations that grew out of a powerful labor movement in the post war period (della Porta 1996: 83). According to della Porta (1996), the German neocorporatist model was born out of the labor movement and is responsible for developing the state's policing strategy. It is likely that unions would have shown themselves to be a similarly powerful predictor of arrest in Austria, had it been included in the analysis. The church, in particular the Catholic Church, also has close ties to the German state. From the founding of the Federal Republic in 1949, the traditional Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and the Christian Social Union (CSU) were able to mobilize the religious working- and lower-middle-class to secure power (in coalition with the liberal Free Democratic Party) for 17 years. The Catholic Church was thus closely linked to governance during the formative development of the new state, establishing itself as a major political player in German politics. While religion and politics are separated culturally in Germany, they remained institutionally intertwined (Ferree, Gamson, Gerhards, and Rucht 2002: 75). The church does not "hesitate to intervene directly in German politics when it can," and has lead many successful campaigns—including largely successful efforts to stall female labor force participation (Ferree et al. 2002: 76; Ayoub 2008: 36).

Weakness variables produced unstable and sometimes contradictory outcomes, a finding which undermines the universality of the weakness approach. In earlier studies, the concept of weakness played a useful role in explaining repression if a certain group was politically salient in a particular context and time period (such as African Americans in the United States in the 1960s). However, such predictions are highly contingent on distinct domestic contexts—and unique domestic perceptions of what constitutes weakness—at any particular time. In the cases and time period studied here, there is no evidence that subordinate groups are overtly targeted for being weak; instead, the opposite is true for Germany and the Netherlands. The role of organizations in relation to protest is also highly context specific. Only in the German case do some organizations yield a significant influence on the probability of arrest. I also find that organizations play varying roles within protest events in different countries. Churches, for example, seem to have an effective repertoire of contention in Germany but not in the other cases. While the causes I offer here are hypotheses, and additional evidence should be collected to evaluate the mechanisms behind these causes, it is safe to say that future research needs to consider that weakness explanations are seemingly less universal and more country specific.

## DISCUSSION

The purpose of this analysis was to test, as well as to contribute to, the theoretical explanations for state repression (by means of protest policing) during a less contentious period. To reiterate the three dominant theoretical expectations: the state represses protest events when it feels threatened, when the protesters are weak, and when there is an interaction between threat and weakness. I hypothesized that changed perceptions of protest—as a legitimate form of participation—and the new role of media as watchdog threaten the weakness approach, which

should also be highly sensitive to domestic context. The results indicate that threat is the most powerful explanation and that the impact of weakness is no longer as consistently relevant as proposed in some older studies—many of which focus on the exceptional civil rights era in the American context. Furthermore, this report has extended the work of Earl et al. (2003) by analyzing similar variables in different countries and time periods. While the data do not allow me to analyze different kinds of policing or to use multinomial logistic regression, distinguishing between the presence of arrests and the severity of arrests taps into a logic similar to that employed by Earl et al. (2003). Both studies go beyond a simple investigation of police presence or absence. Across the board, my findings largely confirm those of Earl et al. (2003).[24]

The importance of threat stands out. All three threat variables, *protest size, confrontational tactics, and radical goals,* achieve statistical significance ($p < .05$) in both the trimmed logistic and OLS regression models. The results suggest that threat begets repression, both in terms of arrest probability and arrest severity. In this category my findings are in line with those of Earl et al. (2003: 600), who say that "large protests, confrontational protests, and protests that endorsed radical goals were more likely to draw police presence, and event size and the use of confrontational tactics escalated police response once police arrived." Here, *radical goals* consistently predicted a police response, but it had a smaller effect than *protest size* and *confrontational tactics*. In general, the threat approach is also generalizable across the four domestic contexts (only *protest size* loses significance in two cases).

Of the five weakness variables, one is significant in the logistic regression and two are statistically significant in the OLS regression, but as a whole they provide little support for the approach because of the inconsistency of the findings. The lack of unions and SMOs does increase the likelihood of the number of arrests in cases that police have chosen to repress. However, the predominance of subordinate protestors lowers the probability of arrest. Furthermore, the findings suggest that interactions between threat and weakness offer no significant explanatory power, as all the variables in this category failed to reach a level of significance. Again in line with Earl et al. (2003: 601), "these findings are not supportive of the importance of weakness or the interaction between threat and weakness." Instead, weakness variables are context specific.

When comparing the weakness approach across various domestic contexts, the results suggest that weakness is not universal and is highly dependent on domestic context. Indeed, organizational variables only have a significant effect in Germany, and even then these are limited to two specific types of organizational support (churches and unions), which are unlikely to have the same effect in many other states. Finally, the variable *subordinate group* runs counter to expectations and is significantly and negatively associated with arrest in Germany and the Netherlands.

If this is correct, the implication is that weak groups gained more voice as "unconventional" protest participation became common in some countries. While I am hesitant to suggest that state authorities no longer target weak groups, the findings do suggest that, on average, these groups are able to voice their grievances in protest—as long as they do not threaten the police. This does not imply that the weakness approach is debunked for non-overt state repression of weak groups. We could speculate that covert repression (such as the Patriot Act's surveillance and detention) has increased as overt protest repression has declined (Boykoff 2007).[25] Second, even overt repression of protest may prevail outside of advanced industrialized countries. Weak groups are clearly targeted by state authorities in many countries (for example, the recent Guyanese police repression of effeminately dressed men).[26]

Thus, the inferences of this analysis are limited to the overt repression of protest in advanced industrialized democracies that have experienced extensive protest participation in the past. While these states surely still produce acts of overt state sponsored repressions of weak groups (especially based on race, immigrant status, and sexuality), these occurrences are inconsistent predictors of repression that seemingly wane as society becomes more inclined to accept their political participation. Davenport (2007) emphasizes that policing of protest is

one kind of state repression in the democratic process. One goal of this article has been to maintain that distinction, while connecting policing of protest to the broader literature on state repression. More research might compare predictors of protest repression in new democracies.

This analysis also confirmed my concern that the distinction between the interests of the state and the police forces need to be parsed out further in future research. Of the significant predictors, variables associated with the situational threat to police forces predicted repression best. Variables concerned primarily with the interests of the state, such as *radical goals, no unions,* and *no SMOs,* accounted for smaller changes in the probability of arrest happening when significant. I again concur with Earl et al. (2003: 600-601), that "the pattern of results suggests that situational threats—like the use of confrontational tactics and protest size—are more important to the police present at the event than any other, more diffuse threats, such as advocating radical goals."

These findings may also suggest that there is an alternative explanation to repression theories that is largely consistent with the data: police officers are simply enforcing the law and maintaining order. This explanation accounts for the three threat variables: (1) *protest size*: the more people there are, the more likely police will be called upon to maintain order, and the more people will be available for potential arrest; (2) *confrontational tactics*: the more that protestors break the law (which I expect is highly correlated with confrontational tactics), the more likely there will be arrests; and (3) *radical goals*: the radical groups may also be those that have prior histories of unlawful or disruptive behavior, making them more likely to draw a response from police. Protest size and confrontational tactics have the most effect, and these measures are the most consistent with the "police-doing-their-job" argument. This alternative needs to be considered more carefully in future research.

Finally, I found that over a fifteen-year period and across four countries, police usually did not take action at protest events. In fact, over 90 percent of all protest events in the sample resulted in no arrests. This suggests that, in line with my expectations, the increasing rate of protest participation in Western Europe became institutionalized and legitimized after the 1960s (Kriesi et al. 1995; Dalton 1996; Tarrow 1998; della Porta and Fillieule 2004). This is consistent with the studies conducted by Earl et al. (2003) and Soule and Davenport (2009), which produced similar findings for the United States. However, it contradicts the early consensus in social movement research that state repression is extensive. If anything, the data have highlighted this contradiction: in most cases, the state does not overtly repress protest events. While protest participation does not appear to be waning, repression of protesters is rare. As such, political scientists and sociologists would be wise to reconsider the strict distinction between conventional and unconventional participation, as protest slips into the ranks of the accepted modes of democratic voice.

## NOTES

[1] The arrest variable is also the most transparent repression variable in my dataset. I also run the analysis with a variable that captures a series of repressive tactics by police (such as the use of water hoses, rubber bullets, tear gas, and massive arrests). Unfortunately, the coding of this alternative variable is more ambiguous and less valid in capturing the differences between the degrees of repression, resulting in the decision not to include it in the paper. It should be noted, however, that the results using the alternative repression variable reinforce the results presented in the text (available from author upon request). Alongside the reaction variable (see note 1), the number of people wounded at protest events was also considered as a measure of repression. The problem with this measure is that we do not know if state authorities are wounding the protestors. It is often the case that protestors wound each other, or are wounded by counterprotestors.

[2] SMOs (1) "mobilize their constituency for collective action, and (2) they do so with a political goal, that is, to obtain some collective good (avoid some collective ill) from authorities" (Kriesi 1996: 152). They can facilitate interaction between supporters, allies, and authorities (Tarrow 1998: 137).

[3] In her study of German and Italian policing from 1950 to 1990, della Porta concludes that public order policing became "softer" in both cases. By softer, she means that policing became more tolerant, more selective, more oriented toward prevention, and more respectful of democratic procedures (della Porta 1996: 79).

[4] For example, cameras captured the unjust police repression of the 1963 March on Washington that subsequently fueled "white" America's involvement in the civil rights movement (Spitzer, Ginsberg, Lowi, and Weir 2005: 106).

[5] Alongside political factors, domestic cultural factors may also play a role (see Curtis, Grabb, and Baer 1992). For example, one might imagine that church organizations exert more influence in Poland than in the Czech Republic, based on the very different role and degree of legitimacy that such organizations have in each country.

[6] Newspapers (*Le Monde* for France, the *Frankfurter Rundschau* for Germany, *NRC/Handelsblad* for the Netherlands, and the *Neue Zuericher Zeitung* for Switzerland) were selected according to the following criteria: continuity (for the period of 1975-1989), frequency (the sample only includes Monday issues, newspapers with Sunday issues were excluded so that the Monday issue would have more weekend coverage—when most protest events take place), quality, national scope, moderate political leaning, and selectivity (selectivity in reporting protest events had to be comparable).

[7] To qualify for being an event in the public sphere, I exclude those events that use covert illegal actions (such as burglary, theft, sabotage, and bomb threats). This is because police only rarely arrest people immediately for such covert actions, and therefore most of these events will have zero arrests.

[8] To test for heteroskedasticity in my models I conducted both a White's Test and a Breusch Pagan Test. Originally, one of the tests, the Breusch Pagan Test, rejected the null hypothesis that the variance between residuals is homoskedastic. Alternatively, White's test failed to reject that null hypothesis. In response to the Breusch Pagan Test, I transform variables by taking the log of *protest size* and the log + 1 of *arrested*. I also calculate all trimmed models (presented later) using robust standard errors. This involves using the robust variance estimator for linear regression developed by Huber (1967). This estimator is available through the ", robust" regression adage in STATA 9.0. In both cases, the signs of coefficients and the significance levels of predictors do not change. Earl et al. (2003) perform similar log transformations on their skewed variables.

[9] Following Earl et al. (2003), I do not distinguish between confrontational and illegal tactics for the following reason: the theoretical force of the threat approach is more concerned with the disruptive nature of the protest, not just the illegal nature of one. Several scholars have shown that police do not react to all instances of law breaking and under-enforce the law at protest events (Wilson 1968; Waddington 1994). As Earl et al. (2003: 592) note, a "fair test of the threat approach should consider confrontational tactics generally."

[10] This measure is different from Soule and Davenport's (2009) measure of radical goals. Because they analyze a 30-year period, they are concerned that the radical nature of some issues changes. I am aware of this measure but do not employ it in my analysis. This is partly due to data limitations, but also to the context of the study: in Europe, even international targets are usually still perceived to be targeting that state, since three of the four countries are embedded in the European Union. Finally, the period of study is shorter (15 years) and defines a politically constant era: beginning after the 1960s movements and the 1973 oil shocks and ending before the fall of the Berlin Wall.

[11] While homophile organizations existed in all four countries following the Second World War, an anti-assimilationist and socially radical movement within the public sphere was born the 1970s. The Christopher Street Liberation Day of June 1970 in New York City marks the most recognized birth of the modern gay civil rights movement, commemorating the first anniversary of the Stone Wall Riots. In the countries of interest, similar notable demonstrations would also begin in the 1970s (for example, Zurich in 1978 and Berlin in 1979).

[12] For theoretical reasons, this analysis does not include the common variable for college student presence as a measure of weakness (see Earl et al. 2003). It was included in previous studies, because students are younger and their youth can limit access to political resources. Young people did not gain the right to vote until 1971 in the United States (when the voting age was lowered from 21 to 18) and young people have been shown to vote less. I do not include the variable for two reasons. First, my cases do not face the same concern on voting rights, as 18-year-old students could vote in all countries during the time period analyzed. Second, students are not as politically "weak" as previous authors contend. While young people in general do indeed vote less, college students represent more privileged and more educated sectors of society with plenty of political channels with which to seek redress (Norris 2002: 83-103).

[13] In corporatist European states, social movements typically do not effect political change on their own (the way they often function in the United States) (Katzenstein 1985: 209).

[14] The initial measure was created in the context of civil rights protests where the subordinate status of the protestors (black or women) was more obvious. Expanding beyond their context requires adapting the measure. I do follow the decision of Earl et al. (2003: 593) not to include women as subordinate. Because this can be contested, I did include women in earlier analyses; the negative relationship between police repression and subordinate group status held, and it did not alter the sign direction or significance level of the other predictors.

[15] I follow Earl et al. (2003) to single out subordinate groups as my measure of weakness in the interactions; using the other measures of weakness in the interaction produce similarly poor results.

[16] It should be noted that *subordinate group* only qualifies for the trimmed model when the analysis is estimated without the interaction terms. I chose to include it in the trimmed model because of a multicollinearity problem, which I am sensitive to throughout the analysis. The reverse is not true. That is, the interaction terms never qualify for the trimmed model, even when I exclude the *subordinate group* variable from the analysis. To test for multicollinearity, I calculated the variance inflation factors (VIF) for my independent variables. While the mean VIF is low (3.24), two variables raise concern. *Subordinate group* has a VIF above 10 (at 21.98). *Subordinate * protest size* is also concerning, with a VIF of 8.78. The correlation matrix (see appendix A) indicates a high correlation between the same predictors. This outcome is common in models with interaction terms. In the logistic regression, multicollinearity only changes the results of the *subordinate group* variable—this concern is not present in the

trimmed model. In the OLS regression, I also perform two tests to be confident that the inclusion of the variables is not exerting an adverse effect on the model. First, I run separate regressions without the interaction terms to make sure that the signs of the coefficients and the significance levels of my other predictors do not change—they do not. Furthermore, I plot the marginal effect of (1) *subordinate* on *arrested* as *protest size* increases and (2) *subordinate* on *arrested* as *radical goals* changes. In both cases, there is no expected effect, as the relationship is not significant at any point (available on request from author).

[17] I report McFadden's $R^2$ because previous literature on arrests at protest events (particularly Earl et al. 2003) has used this measure. Other $R^2$ results are higher: Cragg-Uhler (Nagelkerke) $R^2 = .28$; McKelvey & Zavoina's $R^2 = .40$.

[18] Henceforth, I will not specify that I am "controlling for all other variables in the model" and assume the reader is aware that the result of one predictor is contingent on the others.

[19] Sarah Soule, phone call with the author, November 16, 2009.

[20] Della Porta (1996) might also attribute the considerably higher rates of German repression to Germany's "institutional and emotional legacy" related to its fascist regime. She argues that German authorities perceived protest as threatening to democracy and were focused on enforcing stability—a product of history. Furthermore, Germany had a heightened experience with terrorism in the late 1970s.

[21] I employ three methods to detect model misspecification: LOWESS regression plot, Ramsey's RESET Test, and an Extreme Bound Analysis (EBA). Across the board, LOWESS plots suggest a linear relationship between my predictors and the dependent variable. The Ramsey Regression Specification Error (RESET) Test fails to reject ($p = .36$) the null hypothesis that the model has no omitted variables. Furthermore, the results of the EBA test are not concerning. The model shows little sensitivity to specification changes—the signs of the beta coefficients do not change (they are positive, as is expected in the regression output) and the focal variable remains significant ($p > .05$). I also check for outliers and leverage points. Of the 560 observations in the model, it includes 13 outliers. For example, observation #563 refers to an anti-nuclear demonstration in Germany on December 14, 1985. This particular event consisted of only 1,000 protestors, but resulted in 900 arrests—the largest arrest count in the dataset. To be confident that these observations do not change the output (in terms of sign and significance), I run the regression while excluding the most influential data points(in STATA: reg y x if x!=[#]) —they do not.

[22] If a protest event employs confrontational tactics, the average likelihood of arrest increases by .31 units (on a scale of .69 to 6.8). If it asserts radical goals the average likelihood of arrest increases by .30 units (on a scale of .69 to 6.8). If it lacks union support, the average likelihood of arrest increases by .61 units (on a scale of .69 to 6.8). If it lacks SMO support, the average likelihood of arrest increases by .26 units (on a scale of .69 to 6.8). Since protest size is the logged number of participants, an interpretation based on coefficients is not sensible.

[23] I also run all the individual country regressions with the interaction terms; they never change the levels of significance or signs of the results reported here. In one case (the Swiss case), the presence of the interaction term vastly inflates the coefficient size of *subordinate group*. However, this is due to high collinearity between that predictor and the interaction terms in the Swiss case (see appendix A), further legitimizing the exclusion of the interaction terms in this part of the analysis.

[24] Other studies using this data (in some cases only the West German data) have shown bivariate relationships between levels of arrests and confrontational forms of mobilization (Koopmans 1995: 32), arrests and radical goals (Kriesi et al. 1995: 92, 103), and arrests and organizational support (Koopmans 1995: 29).

[25] Some of the most devastating forms of state repression against movements that threaten government are often covert, not overt and public. For example, forms of repression against the Black Panthers and the American Indian Movement included break-ins into offices, surveillance (including trailing or phone tapping), infiltrating movements, and other forms of demonization to turn public opinion against groups and to deter potential recruits.

[26] In a 2009 letter to the president of the Republic of Guyana, Scott Long of Human Rights Watch stated, "Police are using archaic laws to violate basic freedoms, this is a campaign meant to drive people off the streets simply because they dress or act in ways that transgress gender norms" (Long 2009).

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## APPENDIX A: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND CORRELATIONS

| *Variable* | *Mean* | *S.D.* | *Min* | *Max* | *(1)* | *(2)* | *(3)* | *(4)* | *(5)* | *(6)* | *(7)* | *(8)* | *(9)* | *(10)* | *(11)* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Number Arrested (Log) | 2.55 | 1.30 | .693 | 6.80 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Arrested (0,1) | .085 | .28 | 0 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| (1) Protest Size (Log) | 5.56 | 2.49 | .693 | 13.8<br>1 | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | |
| (2) Confrontational Tactics | .40 | .49 | 0 | 1 | -.63 | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | |
| (3) Radical Goals | .51 | .49 | 0 | 1 | -.10 | .10 | 1.00 | | | | | | | | |
| (4) No Union | .90 | .29 | 0 | 1 | -.26 | .16 | .16 | 1.00 | | | | | | | |
| (5) No SMOs | .69 | .46 | 0 | 1 | -.07 | .10 | -.03 | -.03 | 1.00 | | | | | | |
| (6) No Church | .98 | .14 | 0 | 1 | -.07 | .07 | .02 | .14 | .05 | 1.00 | | | | | |
| (7) No Party | .95 | .21 | 0 | 1 | -.18 | .15 | .01 | .24 | .11 | .22 | 1.00 | | | | |
| (8) Subordinate | .10 | .28 | 0 | 1 | -.01 | -.01 | .08 | -.08 | .10 | .01 | .03 | 1.00 | | | |
| (9) Subordinate * Protest Size | .98 | .50 | 0 | 12.61 | .09 | -.09 | .06 | -.11 | .09 | .01 | .01 | .92 | 1.00 | | |
| (10) Subordinate * Confrontational Tactics | .03 | .18 | 0 | 1 | -.14 | .22 | .03 | -.02 | .07 | .02 | .01 | .59 | .34 | 1.00 | |
| (11) Subordinate * Radical Goals | .06 | .24 | 0 | 1 | .03 | -.03 | .24 | .06 | .05 | .02 | .04 | .79 | .68 | .42 | 1.00 |
| Duration of Risk | 1.43 | 1.62 | 1 | 9 | -.10 | .16 | -.01 | .03 | .03 | -.03 | .04 | .07 | .02 | .19 | .05 |
| France | .31 | .46 | 0 | 1 | -.15 | .18 | -.07 | -.13 | .04 | .07 | .05 | -.02 | -.02 | .03 | -.08 |
| Germany | .33 | .47 | 0 | 1 | .17 | -.12 | .11 | -.02 | -.05 | -.13 | -.11 | -.06 | -.04 | -.06 | -.04 |
| The Netherlands | .19 | .39 | 0 | 1 | -.06 | .03 | -.04 | .09 | .01 | .02 | .07 | .06 | .04 | .06 | .07 |

## APPENDIX B

*Confrontational Tactics*

I coded events as confrontational if they included the following repertories: property damage, symbolic physical violence against persons, violent demonstration, illegal demonstration, blockade, occupation (including squatting), disruption of meetings and assemblies, illegal non-cooperation, symbolic violence (for example, paint bombs), politically motivated suicide, disruption of institutional procedures, confrontational symbolic actions (such as burning effigies), other.

*Note*: Source = New Social Movements Codebook.

*Radical Goals*

I code events as radical if they made the following principal claims: far-right extremism, autonomist movement, regionalist movement, squatters' movement, foreigner rights, civil rights, antiracism, homosexual rights, AIDS movement, and antinuclear (weapons and energy) movements.

*Note*: source = New Social Movements Codebook. Determining what was radical was challenging. Based on previous research, given the country and time context, I determined that all the above movements were opposed to majority social and state opinion. For those familiar with the US context, a questionable inclusion are the antinuclear movements. These movements oppose nuclear technologies; the initial goal was nuclear disarmament but grew to encompass opposition to nuclear power. They are included because antinuclear movements took a radical form in the European Cold War context (especially in Germany), as they were largely composed of a committed and militant wing of activists that a majority of society viewed to be subversives or communists (della Porta and Fillieule 2004, 234; Evans et al. 2009).