

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND MASS PARTISANSHIP:  
CONVERGENT IDENTITIES, CENTRIFUGAL FORCES, AND THE CASE OF CLIMATE ACTIVISM

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# SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND MASS PARTISANSHIP:

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## Abstract

The studies compiled in this dissertation examine the intersection of mass partisanship and social movements. I hypothesize that certain types of movement actions (i.e. “disruptive”, violent, and cooperative protest) generate greater partisan polarization. I further hypothesize that more disruptive protests decrease tolerance for authoritarianism amongst partisans. Finally, I compare the effects of different types of protest on movement support across partisan groups. That is, I consider the tradeoffs that protest organizers face between generating support and generating partisan-based hostility. I base this study on an emerging social identity approach to mass partisanship, which clearly predicts that extreme protests increase outgroup threat, thus leading to more negative attitudes toward the outgroup. Likewise, the social identity approach to mass partisanship suggests that protest effectiveness should be moderated by the extremity of protest tactics. I situate this study within the social conflict—and associated protests—around global climate change. Using a large, online survey experiment (N = 2764), I expose participants to media coverage of three types of protest events:

disruptive and violent, disruptive and non-violent, and non-disruptive non-violent.

There is also a fourth control condition. Using a series of regression models, I demonstrate what effects these treatments have on (1) partisan polarization, (2) social dominance orientation, and (3) movement support/opposition.

Dylan Bugden received his M.P.P. from Oregon State University in the spring of 2014 before enrolling as a Ph.D. student in the department of Natural Resources at Cornell University in the fall of the same year. He has published in journals such as *Rural Sociology*, *Environmental Politics*, *Energy Policy*, *Energy Research and Social Science*, and others. In the fall, he will begin an appointment as Assistant Professor of Sociology at Washington State University.

To Maeve. Because joy begins with the curiosity to look within *and* without.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A journey of a thousand miles may begin with a single step, but it's not always clear when we took our first step, or who helped us take it. Even the most conscious of decisions—like, say, committing to conducting a dissertation—has many tangled roots. So, I suppose a good way to approach an “acknowledgements” section is to pull at the roots of this manuscript and see where they lead me.

The longest and most complicated of these roots trace back to my parents. I think quite often about what their support—even when undeserved—has meant to this process.

They made it possible for me to press reset ten years ago, a moment that seems more compelling than any for marking this journey's genesis. This public document is hardly the place to unravel that moment, so it must suffice to say that it is the one that has most profoundly shaped my life. I am more thankful to each of you—Julie, Joe, Steve, and Jan—than I will ever be able to express in words.

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Neither a scholar in my field (how often does the work of limnologists and sociologists overlap, really?) nor a member of any of my degree conferring committees, I have nonetheless had the pleasure of collaborating with Cliff Kraft for a number of years, largely in my role as a teaching assistant. Cliff has not only facilitated my growth as an educator but has also been a sounding board for ideas big and small. I'll miss greatly our spontaneous debates in the hallway and office pop-ins.

A Ph.D. advisor is, for better or worse, a categorically diverse role. Advisors facilitate professional socialization, help you build a network of colleagues, guide you through the literature and debates that shape your field, and support you through the various trials and tribulations of academic life. At least, these are the things a good advisor does. And they are most certainly the things my advisor did. The modest successes of my time at Cornell would simply not have been possible without Rich Stedman's constant support. Perhaps the most significant thing I can say is that Rich has shown me that the greatest meaning we can derive from the academic profession is to foster the growth and success of the next generation. I can only hope of emulating his unequivocal success in doing just that.

Graduate school is hard. As a profession we have a sort of collective blind spot about this. It has seemed to me at times that graduate school is an exercise in failure and futility. Certainly, some of this is institutional dysfunction and is totally unnecessary. But some of the difficulty simply comes down to the fact that *generating* knowledge is a

whole hell of a lot harder than *consuming* knowledge. I've faced my share of failure and anxiety, and I have managed to overcome it first and foremost because of the endless source of love I have come home to each and every day for the last several years.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section	Page
List of tables	12
Introduction	13
Literature review	30
Methods	49
Data	66
Study 1	70
Study 2	85
Study 3	97
Conclusion	109
References	119

## LIST OF TABLES

Table description	Page
Table 1. Experimental conditions	51
Table 2. Background and screener questions	51
Table 3. Vignette: Anti-climate change, high-hostility	54
Table 4. Outcome variables	60
Table 5. Demographic questions	62
Table 6. Comparison between sample and US population	68
Table 7. Mean values for polarization measures	74
Table 8. Regressions on thermometer and social distance bias (pooled treatment)	75
Table 9. Regressions; thermometer and social distance bias (disaggregated treatments)	77
Table 10. OLS regression on thermometer bias with partisan affiliations	79
Table 11. Ordinal logistic regression on willingness to be friends with Democratic voter	80
Table 12. Ordinal logistic regression on willingness to be friends with Republican voter	81
Table 13. Social dominance orientation items	89
Table 14. Mean values for social dominance orientation	90
Table 15. OLS regression on social dominance orientation (pooled treatment)	91
Table 16. OLS regression on social dominance orientation (disaggregated treatments)	92
Table 17. OLS regression on social dominance orientation with partisan affiliations	93
Table 18. Dependent variables for movement support	100
Table 19. Mean values for movement support (Democratic movement)	101
Table 20. Mean values for movement support (Republican movement)	101
Table 21. Regressions on support outcomes (pooled treatments)	102
Table 22. Regressions on protest support (disaggregated treatments)	104
Table 23. OLS regression on protest support with partisan affiliations	105
Table 24. Logistic regression on willingness to sign protest petition with partisan affiliations	106

## Introduction

This study takes up the relationship between social movements and political partisanship. Surprisingly, this is a less frequently studied relationship than we might assume. Perhaps this is because it is merely taken for granted that social movements are partisan and that we can all intuitively identify along which partisan lines various prominent movements fall. Perhaps it is because of academic silos: partisanship tends to be studied within political science while social movements are the arena of sociology. Regardless of the reasons for this gap, my aim is to demonstrate why it matters for both the study of partisanship and the study of social movements.

So, what *do* we know about the relationship between partisanship and social movements? In their recent book, McAdam and Kloos (2014) demonstrate how social movements influenced the polarization of the present day American political parties (see also McAdam and Tarrow 2012; McVeigh, Cunningham, and Farrell 2014; Rosenfeld 2017). In their view, movements act as “centrifugal forces” in politics, pushing party platforms away from the center and toward activist positions on the party’s flanks. When this happens on one or both sides of the party divide, parties move away from one another, i.e. party polarization. The relationship between social movements and polarization represents a crucial piece of social movement scholars’

renewed interest in the general relationship between movements and party politics (see Hutter, Kriesi, and Lorenzini 2018 for discussion).

However, partisan polarization is not merely a party-level phenomenon. There has been substantial debate about the existence of public partisan polarization over the last two decades (Baldassarri and Gelman 2008; DiMaggio, Evans, and Bryson 1996; Fiorina and Abrams 2008; Iyengar and Westwood 2015), but recent evidence demonstrates that the American public has in fact grown more polarized. The catch is that this polarization is quite different than anticipated by past debates. Rather than becoming more polarized on issues of policy or ideology in the way party leaders have, most Americans' partisan polarization is *social* (Iyengar, Sood, and Lelkes 2012; Iyengar and Westwood 2015; Mason 2018; Westwood et al. 2018; Iyengar et al. 2018). Social polarization refers to negative feelings toward partisans and a desire to distance oneself from them socially. That is, we just don't like people from the other party, we don't want to be around them, and these feelings are *not* rooted in disagreements about policy or ideology. The effects of social polarization are potentially severe. By definition, social polarization means that we are generically less likely to want to interact with members of the other party (Iyengar et al. 2012; Mason 2018). This generic avoidance impacts more specific social interactions, including dating (Gift and Gift 2015; Nicholson et al. 2016), marriage (Iyengar et al. 2012), the job market (Huber and Malhotra 2016; McConnell et al. 2018), and even talking to outgroup partisans (Chen and Rohla 2018). In a series of

experiments, Iyengar and Westwood (2015) find that partisan bias in the job market may even be stronger than racial bias! But perhaps the most significant problem with social polarization is its implications for our democracy. Social polarization is associated with lower trust in a governing outgroup party (Hetherington and Rudolph 2015) and it may yield more polarized politicians and tolerance of democratic norm-breaking (Mason 2018). As Iyengar et al. (2018) note:

“...we suspect that affective polarization increases support for extremist politicians, or, at least, blinds partisans to the ideological extremity of candidates from their party. In terms of the latter, we suspect that affective polarization increases partisans’ willingness to conform to their party’s policy positions. Hence, affective polarization may yield extreme politicians, who then send policy cues to their base, exacerbating mass ideological polarization.”

But how do social movements fit into this disconcerting story? Even though it is now well documented that movements influence *party* polarization, why should we suspect that movements influence partisan polarization amongst the *public*? After all, these processes may act independently.

Several broad findings in social movement scholarship attest to the likelihood that movements influence public partisan polarization. The first is that public opinion is

both an established movement outcome (Andrews, Beyerlein, and Farnum 2016; Gamson and Modigliani 1989; Rochon 2000) and a condition for movement success (Agnone 2007; Burstein and Linton 2002). Movements bring issues to public attention through protest by garnering media attention (Koopmans 2004; Vliegenthart, Oegema, and Klandermans 2005). Media attention can merely raise the salience of an issue or allow movements to actively frame it by emphasizing particular features of the issue (Chong and Druckman 2007; McCammon 2009). Simply, we know that social movements influence the attitudes, beliefs, and actions of the public and not only elites and policymakers (see also Banaszak and Onderchin 2016; Enos, Kaufman and Sands 2017; Dumas 2018).

But public opinion is quite distinct from social polarization. Studies on social movements and public opinion have focused on attention to and support for a movement's objectives and positions. So, while research shows that movements can influence the public's attitudes, more is needed to justifiably hypothesize that movements influence social polarization. Social polarization is about intergroup dynamics and the presence of strong and competing social identities (see Huddy and Bankert 2017; Huddy 2018; and Mason 2018 for detailed discussions; also see discussion in literature review). Research on social identity sees conflict emerging between ingroups and outgroups over competition for resources and/or status. When strong group boundaries become salient, the members of those groups experience heightened

prejudice and tendencies toward discrimination of the outgroup. Likewise, negative feelings toward the outgroup increase, while positive feelings toward the ingroup increase. The world becomes a conflict of us-vs-them, Sharks vs Jets, Democrats vs Republicans. That is, social polarization.

If movements are likely to influence social polarization, it may occur because social movement *also* become entangled in social groups and identities (Bernstein 2008; Klandermans 2014; Polletta and Jasper 2001). Research shows that movements use identity to actively create perceptions of ingroup and outgroup conflict. That is, identity is a tool for movements to cast a conflict as “us-vs-them”, motivating support and action through the activation of social identities and group boundaries (Hunt and Benford, 1994; Klandermans, 1997; Polletta and Jasper, 2000; Tilly, 2003; Vestergren, Drury, and Chiriac, 2018). When movements intersect with partisan politics—as they do in the cases of prominent movements around civil rights (e.g. Black Lives Matter), abortion, or climate change—identification with the movement and party become muddled. Partisan movements activate partisan identities. Simply, social movements capitalize on group-based identities that overlap with partisanship, feeding the intergroup conflict that drives social polarization.

And so finally we arrive at the central question of this dissertation: Do social movements influence the social polarization of the American public? Taking as a starting point the aforementioned entanglement of movements, public opinion,

partisanship, and social identity, we certainly have grounds to suspect they might. The first chapter of this study explores this central question as well as one mechanism through which movements may cause heterogenous effects on polarization: protest tactics. Given the open questions around social polarization and democracy, I also examine how social movements influence the public's tolerance for authoritarian behavior and the role that partisanship plays in this process.

To compliment my examination of movements and social polarization, I will also examine how movements impact public support in the context of hyper-partisanship.

In the third study, I examine how varying protest tactics influence support for the movement across partisan identities. Movements use tactics strategically, but the effects of these tactics may trade increased support and mobilization for greater social polarization. Conversely, it may be that the same tactics yield both increased support *and* have a lighter or null effect on polarization.

In the preceding chapters I will offer more targeted, detailed reviews of these questions and why they matter for the study of movements and partisanship. A literature review is provided in the next section that covers, in detail, the theoretical and topical knowledge underlying my empirical work. Each empirical section begins with an outline of the theoretical logic and importance of each study, building on and referring back to the literature review.

Following the three empirical studies, I offer in the discussion section a challenge for movement leaders and scholars to consider the unanticipated consequences of movement actions. The study of movement impacts has largely been confined to impacts on policy, public support for the movement, and on movement actors. While some typologizing has been done on types of movement effects, an underlying goal of this dissertation is to push scholars and activists to consider the “perverse” effects of social movements on society. I suggest here that social polarization is one such perverse effect, but that many others likely exist. In the discussion section I attempt to articulate what is meant by a perverse social movement effect and provide guidance on this concept and how it may be integrated into the extent research literature.

A final note: this dissertation focuses on the case of climate change activism and the social movement that surrounds it. Climate change is a profoundly partisan issue. If I had chosen activism around civil rights, racial resentment would have proven a significant confounding factor. If I had chosen abortion, religion would have proven a powerful confounder. In the case of climate change, the social identity most powerfully influencing attitudes, beliefs, and actions is partisanship, as an abundance of research demonstrates (see Borick et al. 2018 for a recent discussion). While the implications of this study could certainly be applied specifically to “environmental” or climate activism, I wish to avoid reducing the impact of this work. Focusing on environmental issues has long provided broad, generic insights into social theory (e.g. McCright and

Dunlap 2010; Gamson 1975) and bounding the insights of this study would ultimately be arbitrary and justifiable only on disciplinary grounds. My hope is that this study contributes to a broader discussion on how partisanship intersects not only environmental social movements, but all social movements, and possibly other forms of environmental and social conflict.

## Literature review

### Social movements: a review

Definitions of social movements are heterogenous across the scholarly landscape (see Tarrow, 1998; McAdam and Snow, 1997; Benford and Snow, 2000), but as Snow et al (2004) points out, these definitions generally engage several dimensions:

“Although the various definitions of movements may differ in terms of what is emphasized or accented, most are based on three or more of the following axes: collective or joint action; change-oriented goals or claims; some extra- or non-institutional collective action; some degree of organization; and some degree of temporal continuity.” (p. 6)

Aside from their internal qualities, we can also think of social movements as they relate to their environment. Social movements are cornerstones of modern life. Meyer and Tarrow (1998) go so far as to argue that we exist in a “movement society” (particularly in the West), where participation in organized collective action is ubiquitous (also see Eder, 2003). Social movements are not simply vehicles for discreet concerns to be addressed, but are more generally a structural feature of democratic life (Goldstone, 2003). They are how the marginalized and/or aggrieved give voice and authority to their cause and, at times, change policy and culture. Social movements may directly seek policy change, but they are not solely oriented toward political processes and

operate at least in part outside of formal political processes (Gamson, 1975). Rather than engaging institutionalized processes, social movements may engage the broader society and culture through public displays such as protests or marches. The use of public display is part of a social movement's "repertoires of contention" (Tilly 1995), or the suite of tactics that movements use to achieve strategic ends. Thus, Snow (2004) offers us the following working definition of social movements:

*"Social movements can be thought of as collectivities acting with some degree of organization and continuity outside of institutional or organizational channels for the purpose of challenging or defending extent authority, whether it is institutionally or culturally based, in the group, organization, society, culture, or world order of which they are a part."* (p. 11)

We can further expand our understanding of social movements by asking how social movements come to exist and function. Several complimentary (and sometimes competing) frameworks exist, typically distilled as follows: resource mobilization, with an emphasis on the importance of organization (McCarthy and Zald, 1977; Zald, 1992; Edwards and McCarthy, 2004), political opportunity or process (Kitschelt, 1986; Kriesi, 1995; Meyer and Staggenborg, 1996; McAdam, 1982), and cultural framing (Benford and Snow, 2000). Each of these positions contributes to our understanding of social movements in different ways, and each offers considerable insight into how social movements matter.

The resource mobilization perspective emphasizes the role of organizational capacity to mobilize several types of resources that can be put to use by a given movement. Several elements of this description deserve individual attention. The resources employed by a given movement manifest in different types. Edwards and McCarthy (2004) offer us a typology of five distinct resources: moral, cultural, social-organizational, material, and human. Moral resources include, predominantly, legitimacy (Gillham and Edwards, 2011), but also include solidarity, celebrity, and sympathy (Cress and Snow, 1996). Cultural resources are a form of knowledge that allow a movement to accomplish a given specialized task, such as organizing an event or interacting with the media (Oliver and Marwell, 1992). Social-organizational refers to access to infrastructures, organizations, and social networks and the further resources they provide. Human resources refer to labor, skills, expertise, and leadership. Finally, material resources refer to financial and physical capital. Access to these resources helps us to fundamentally understand how bystanders become participants.

In order to acquire resources, social movements must take on some organizational form. What form is taken can be driven by mimetic or isomorphic pressures (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983) or by rational strategic decisions (McCarthy and Zald, 2001).

Organizational form in part determines what resources a social movement has access too. For instance, Skocpol (1999) shows how professionalization can constrain access to financial support from a broad base of individual supporters. The argument embedded

in the resource mobilization approach is that by organizing into formal groups, social movement organizations can rally resources to achieve explicit goals, including the recruitment and retainment of supporters.

Resources can be distributed by internal actors, but they are often produced exogenously. Moral resources, for instance, are bestowed upon social movements by cultural elites who possess moral authority. Comparatively, cultural resources are those that can be deployed from within the movement and are not subject to retraction from an external entity. Most social movements acquire resources through both internal and external means. Likewise, access to resources can be considered proprietary (i.e. access by a given movement can be restricted by external actors) and non-proprietary (i.e. access cannot be controlled by external actors). Resources are also unequally distributed: middle class support for social movements is vital for just this reason, as this group has access to many of the types of resources thus far specified. The efforts of external entities, such as the state or other powerful organizations, can act as both barriers and opportunities for social movements to gain access to resources. The resource mobilization perspective, therefore, provides a useful link to broader social stratification issues and their relationship to social movements.

The political opportunity or political process framework has its roots in McAdam's early work on the civil rights movement (1982)<sup>1</sup>. It emphasizes the role of context in shaping movement decisions and outcomes. Movement actors don't make choices about the direction of the movement without considering environmental conditions. In the political opportunity framework, scholars focus on those conditions external to the movement that interact with the movements which "enhance or inhibit a social movement's prospects for (a) mobilizing, (b) advancing particular claims rather than others, (c) cultivating some alliances rather than others, (d) affecting mainstream institutional politics and policy" (Meyer, 2004, p. 126). This framework was proposed in direct contrast to the resource mobilization framework, with its emphasis on organizations and the mobilization of resources. McAdam, alternatively, emphasized the importance of "expanding political opportunities, established organizations, and the social psychological process of 'cognitive liberation'". (McAdam, 2013, p. 1) The notion of "expanding political opportunities" has perhaps been the most impactful (Meyer and Staggenborg, 1996; Kitschelt, 1986; Goodwin and Jasper, 1999; Meyer and Minkoff, 2004). Put simply, it refers to emergent conditions of political regimes that leave them vulnerable to change from the outside, e.g. by social movements. McAdam also emphasized the ability of social movements to gain access to established

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<sup>1</sup> Though McAdam's work builds on important early considerations of context such as those by Eisinger (1973) and Tilly (1978).

organizations—in this way complimenting the resource mobilization perspective—as a necessary but insufficient condition for mobilization. Importantly, McAdam argues that “cognitive liberation”, or the awareness of injustice and the ability to produce change through collective action is also a critical precondition for mobilization.

Political opportunities can be viewed as both objective structural qualities of the political system (Kriesi, 1995; Kitschelt, 1986) and socially constructed (Noonan, 1995; Kurzman, 1996). Structural qualities are observable vulnerabilities in the political system that expose it to change; socially constructed political opportunities emphasize the agentic role of movement actors in creating and recognizing opportunities where none previously existed, particularly through discursive efforts (Ferree, 2003; McCammon et al., 2007). The subjective awareness of opportunities is critical, as objective opportunities may exist, but for them to lead to change, movement actors must be aware of them. However, there is disagreement over how deliberate movement actors are in seeking out and identifying opportunities (see Gamson and Meyer, 1996 for discussion).

Functionally, political opportunities can help scholars of social movements understand when mobilization and protest occur (Almeida and Stearns, 1998), how movements effect public policy (Amenta and Zylan, 1991), when movements crystalize into organizations and coalitions (Minkoff, 1995), and the emergence of specific strategies (Rochon and Meyer, 1997; Minkoff, 1997).

Finally, the framing perspective primarily addresses the role of what we can broadly refer to as the “cultural” aspects of social movements<sup>2</sup>. The framing perspective refers to “meaning work”, or “the struggle over the production of mobilizing and countermobilizing ideas and meanings.” (Benford and Snow, 2000, p. 613) Movements need to articulate a message, and this message can be constructed from an array of choices. The message, with all of its symbolic, informational, and emotional contents is a frame, or what is often referred to as a collective action frame (CAF). Gamson and Modigliani (1989) refer to a frame as an “interpretive package”, or a bundling of information presented in a deliberate way that tends to be interpreted in a predictable way. Frames are not only a communicative object. In fact, Goffman’s work on frames referred to frames in thought, or a “schemata of interpretation” (Goffman, 1974). Goffman write that frames in thought “help in making an otherwise meaningless succession of events into something meaningful (Goffman, 1974, pg. 21). To make sense of our world, we use activated knowledge structures to filter information, incorporating it into our understanding of the world. A schema represents a top-down approach in cognitive psychology, with schemas representing broad forms of knowledge that provide meaning to smaller, component parts (Brewer & Nakamura, 1984; Markus &

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<sup>2</sup> We return to the framing approach in the next chapter. There we engage in a “deep dive” into the concept by engaging with the social psychology of framing and its importance for understanding political polarization and social movements. Social movement scholarship has peculiarly failed to engage the much broader social psychological literature on framing, where the precise individual mechanisms through which framing occurs has received considerable attention.

Zajonc, 1985). A frame in thought can be thought of as a subjective theory of how some aspect of the world operates. They are not bound to a particular place or time, but represent a general understanding that can then be applied to a specific situation.

Goffman (1974) argues that the primary import of frames in thought to a sociological understanding of the world is that they help us explain why people see the same “objective” situation in different ways. He argues that we have learned to interpret certain events in certain ways, focusing on some aspects of the situation and not others. This is what Goffman refers to as a “strip”, or “any arbitrary slice or cut from the stream of ongoing activity, including here sequences of happenings, real or fictive, as seen from the perspective of those subjectively involved in sustaining an interest in them.” (pg. 10) He further argues that frames in thought allow us to live by inference (Barsalou & Hale, 1993). That is, we use our frames in thought to fill in the gaps of our cognitive interpretation of the environment. Goffman (1974) writes, “we can hardly glance at anything without applying a framework, thereby forming conjectures as to what occurred before and expectations as to what is likely to happen now.” (pg. 38) We live by inference because of the cognitive burden of applying a thorough analytical lens to every situation we find ourselves in. In other words, it would be impossible for us to systematically think through every aspect of every situation. We need to use frames in thought to provide a foundation of information. While frames in thought are highly useful, arguably necessary, cognitive tools, they can limit one’s scope of understanding.

Frames can be too rigid to integrate unusual or highly novel events or information (Wilensky, 1986).

As it pertains to social movements, then, framing is the process through which social movements attempt to create resonance or alignment between their message and the message recipient's understanding of the world (recipients need not be those outside of the movement; framing process are often rich observational opportunities within movements themselves—see Poletta, 2009). Framing is often done strategically, actively. It is a process with several functions and emerges from a variety of factors. The effectiveness of frames is in large part the product of discursive opportunity structures (McCammon, 2013; Koopmans and Statham, 1999). By latching onto dominant public logics, frames resonate with audiences, allowing movements to mobilize support, resources, or to change cultural knowledge.

Frames emerge through three primary processes: discursive, strategic, and contested (Benford & Snow, 2000). Discursive processes refer to the “talk and conversations—the speech acts—and written communications of movement members that occur primarily in the context of, or in relation to, movement activities.” (pg. 623). Discursive processes involve two sub-processes: frame articulation and frame amplification. Frames are articulated by piecing together strips of reality, including public events, memories, and information, into a coherent story. Frames are then amplified by making salient particular issues, events, or beliefs that accentuate the frame. For instance, by

highlighting the latest police shooting, activists can amplify the relevance of their articulated frame. The event serves as a way to magnify the frame in the eyes of the public.

Strategic processes involve the deliberate creation and application of a frame, typically with a pre-determined purpose. Strategic processes may be targeted to recruit new members, mobilize supporters, or to access new resources (Markowitz, 2009; Oliver and Johnston, 2000; Polletta and Kai Ho, 2006). Snow et al. (1986) identify four sub-processes that are utilized to achieve these ends: 1) frame bridging, or linking multiple previously unconnected frames targeted at a single issue; 2) frame amplification, or priming information that will increase the degree to which the frame resonates; 3) frame extension, or vertically expanding the scope of the frame to link with broader interests and concerns in the population; and 4) frame transformation, or by changing the understanding of a field-level frame to an alternative understanding.

Contested processes occur between and within four entities: social movement actors, opponents, the media, and events themselves (Kaplan, 2008; Ryan, 1991). CAFs put forward by social movement actors can be challenged by opponents through counter framing efforts, relying on strategic development and application of frames. There can be considerable disagreement within and between social movement organizations over the meaning or use of a given frame. The media also plays a crucial role in framing

movements and their opponents, shaping the nature of the contest. Lastly, events themselves can contest a frame by changing the context in which it is applied.

Frames have three purposes: to identify a problem and attribute responsibility, identify a solution, and to rally behavioral support for creating change (Snow & Benford, 1988).

The most commonly referenced approach for identifying a problem is for social movement actors to engage an “injustice frame” (Gamson, Croteau, Hoynes, & Sasson, 1992). In this process, social movement actors identify a victim and increase awareness of the injustice affecting that victim. However, this is clearly not the only form of problem identification present in CAFs, and it may not be necessary in the case of some movements (Benford & Snow, 2000). CAFs may also attempt to attribute responsibility for the identified problem, though there can be considerable intra-movement disagreement over the cause of the problem (Benford, 1987). With a problem identified, a narrowed range of solutions to the problem are then available to social movement actors, who will advance their chosen solution through CAFs. Preferred solutions also differ between organizations engaged within a particular movement (Haines, 1996). Lastly, social movement actors must mobilize support for change, using CAFs to motivate the behaviors necessary for a preferred solution to work (Gamson, 1995). Benford (1993) identified four types of motivational frames: severity, urgency, efficacy, and propriety. Put differently, frames are “tools for strategic and creative behavior”

(Diehl and McFarland, 2010, p. 1719). In this way, framing is one element of the repertoire of contention available to movements.

It is crucial to recognize that each of the three frameworks reviewed, while contributing greatly to our overall understanding of social movements, have been criticized, both explicitly in the emergence of the other (political opportunity of resource mobilization, and framing of both) and internally. For instance, the political opportunity perspective has been criticized as being too rationalist (McAdam, 2013) and for unclearly specifying major concepts both theoretically and operationally (Meyer, 2004) and for only partial empirical support (Goodwin and Jasper, 21999). As such, we take these frameworks as complimentary, and focus instead on the specific elements of their orientations that relate to perverse effects and political polarization. I will draw on these perspectives in the discussion where I explore the implications of a perverse effects typology for the broader field of social movement studies.

Aside from these general frameworks, several other topics have received substantial attention in the social movements literature that require attention in our background check, as they will directly inform our own framework. The first is the body of scholarship on “repertoires of contention”, briefly mentioned earlier as the suite of tactics and frames that movements employ to achieve their goals. Tactics employed by movements include violence (Bosi, Demetriou, and Malthaner, 2014), hunger strikes (Scanlan, Cooper-Stoll, Lumm 2008), parades (McCammon, 2003), protest camps

(Feigenbaum, Frenzel, McCurdy, 2013), sit-ins (Morris, 1981), and a whole suite of emerging digital tactics to name just a few. Repertoires are critical for understanding movement outcomes, as research has shown they influence whether movements achieve their goals (King, Cornwall, and Dahlin, 2005).

Of course, tactics and frames are not chosen at random. Classically speaking, tactical choices are made through a rational accounting process wherein movement actors weight the costs and benefits of a given tactic (McAdam, 1983). Complimentarily (see Taylor, Kimport, Van Dyke, and Andersen, 2009), others have emphasized that the costs and benefits of a given tactic are constrained by exogenous social conditions that require movements to fit their tactics to conditions they cannot control. That is, exogenous conditions constrain which tactics are likely to be effective, resonate (McCammon, Muse, Newman, and Terrell, 2007), or fit within cultural expectations of normative behavior (Tarrow, 1994). Tactical choice is also constrained by endogenous factors, such as what social movements know how to do (Tarrow, 1994). What is critical to understand about repertoires of contention is that they are not merely a grab-bag of tactics, *but they are strategically chosen to fit a given end and a set of contextual factors*. As we will review in our discussion of movement outcomes, tactics may have a direct role in shaping whether a movement succeeds or fails, but those tactics are informed by both internal movement characteristics and external conditions. For instance, frames are one element of a movement's repertoire, but frames are only effective if they resonate with

what the target audience already believes and/or feels. Movements cannot simply engage any frame they want, but must tailor their message strategically to fit the pre-existing perspective of the audience.

Another area that has received substantial attention in movement scholarship is the role that the media plays in shaping movements and their outcomes. It is widely agreed that the media plays a strong mediating role in the relationship between movements and their targets (Lipsky, 1968; Barakso and Schaffner, 2006; Andrews and Caren, 2010). The media is vital to movements because they are a pathway to reach large audiences.

Public demonstrations may be powerful, but if they reach only the small number of people who witness them in person, they are unlikely to have much influence. Thus, the media is an amplifying device for movement activities, and therefore are of central import to understanding effects on policy (Baumgartner and Jones, 1991) and public opinion (Vliegenthart, Oegema, and Klandermans, 2005), as well as movement diffusion (Andrews and Biggs, 2006). Koopmans (2004) goes so far as to say that direct interaction between movements and authorities are of little importance. Rather, he argues, movements and authority interact within the public sphere, the medium of which is the media (Oliver and Myers, 1999). Historically, movements involved direct engagement with authority (Tilly, 1986). But the growth of the modern nation-state and the technological revolutions that led to the emergence of a mass media have changed how protest happens. As Koopman (2004) notes:

“But nowadays protesters rarely get to see the addresses of their demands, nor do the latter directly observe, let alone engage, with the protesters. Bystander publics may still be present and occasionally they still cheer and boo, but it is no longer the co-present public that counts most, but the mass audience that sits at home and watches or reads the media coverage of the demonstration. In the context of mass electoral politics, the importance for both protestors and authorities of winning the sympathy of this audience has increased enormously. It is in the news media, moreover, that the most relevant part of the mutual observation and interaction between protesters and authorities takes place. Authorities will not react to – and will often not even know about – protests that are not reported in the media, and if they are reported, they will not react to the protests as they “really” were, but as they appeared in the media. If authorities find protests worthy of public response, that reaction is usually not communicated directly to the protesters by, say, calling up the organizers and expressing support for their cause, but by saying so in the media, and that message is usually not just addressed at the protesters and their sympathizers, but also at third parties such as political opponents and competitors, and last but not least at the elusive mass audience.” (p. 368).

The media serves several specific purposes. As identified by Gamson and Wolfsfeld (1993), the media assists movements in mobilizing, receiving validation, and expanding the scope of their claims. The media assists movements in reaching their broadest constituency, most of whom are non-participants and will only engage with the movement via media coverage of their actions and claims. The media also validates the movement by covering it; receiving media attention can show that the movement is a meaningful player in the policy or public sphere. Only when movements are validated are their concerns likely to be recognized and responded to by authority. The media also does a service to movements by linking their claims to broader cultural issues of actors. In doing so, the media expands the relevancy and resonance of the movement.

The media are hardly “passive channels of communication or neutral and objective observers and recorders of events” (Oliver and Myers, 1999, p. 39). Editors and managers of media outlets must select which movements and protests to cover amidst a cacophony of claims, actions, and organizations shouting for public attention.

Unsurprisingly, much attention has been paid to the factors that influence when the media covers a movement or protest, and the factors that increase the probability of a movement receiving media attention are too numerous to discuss in detail here.

Generally, the relationship between the media and movements is the product of arrangements of resources, political context, the identities they invoke, the tactics they employ, and their degree of organization. For instance, preferences by journalists for

authoritative sources and information place loosely organized movement organizations at a disadvantage in gaining media attention (Tanner, 2004), though there are techniques movements can use to subvert this barrier (see Griffin and Dunwoody, 1995). Highly organized and well-resourced organizations are better able to gain media attention though their ability to signal to journalists the newsworthiness of their actions (Elliot et al., 2016; Barker-Plummer, 2002; Staggenborg, 1988). “Insider tactics” are more likely to gain media attention (Andrews and Caren, 2010; Ryan et al., 2005; Schudson, 2002; see Gitlin 1981 for an alternative view). Crises may also provide windows of opportunity for protests to increase movement coverage (Elliot et al., 2016; Molotch and Lester, 1975). In a recent synthetic empirical effort, Andrews and Caren (2010) find that the most critical factors in increasing media attention are higher levels of professionalization and routinization, the number of people the movement organization can mobilize, and the degree to which organizations tailor their claims to issues the media is already focused on. Elliot et al. (2016) note, importantly, that media coverage is largely determined by an interaction of both organizational and movement characteristics and exogenous contextual factors, similar to the political mediation model previously described (Amenta et al., 2010).

A substantial body of research has been conducted on how news editors determine “newsworthiness”. As it relates to movements, left of center news organizations are more likely to cover movements and protests (Kriesi et al., 1995; Franzosi, 1987; Oliver

and Myers, 1999). Movements and protests that journalists can construct as being particularly dramatic, unusual, timely, and of great magnitude are more likely to receive coverage (Harcup and O'Neill, 2001; Gamson and Meyer, 1996; Shoemaker and Reese, 1991; Jacobs, 1996). The most critical and empirically supported newsworthiness criteria, however, is the scale of disruption caused by a movement or protest and its size (Andrews and Caren, 2010; Thornton and Shah, 1996; Oliver and Myers, 1999; McCarthy, McPhail, and Smith, 1996). Routine constraints in the process of publishing news also limits what gets covered, with journalists favoring movements that are easily packaged and templated (Shoemaker and Reese, 1991; Oliver and Myers, 1999).

The picture painted thus far is that the flow of information and effects is unidirectional—from movements, through the media, to authority and the public. This is not a complete model (Koopmans, 2004). Movements also learn from the media's coverage of the public and authority. Media coverage becomes a form of strategic information, allowing movements to adapt to a changing public sphere. Media coverage is a tool through which movements can learn about their constituencies and their opponents. Even if we assume that media coverage of movements and countermovements are biased and inaccurate (Gitlin, 1980; Ryan, 1991), the information that is provided still provides the basis of movement strategy.

### A conceptual framework: movements and social polarization

Having reviewed the social movements literature and identified key concepts and observations to be drawn in later, it is now useful and necessary to outline the conceptual framework I will use in the empirical section of this dissertation. This is perhaps unusually important in this case because no standard approach exists for the topic of this dissertation. Simply, no one has studied how social movements might drive social polarization or even how social movements intersect with partisanship. The very idea of social polarization is embryonic, with most research being published on the topic in the last two years. Even partisanship is a concept under persistent debate. What's more, social movement studies themselves apply a wide range of theoretical approaches, operating from different methodological, epistemological, and conceptual assumptions. The goal here, then, is to find convergence between these concepts at an appropriate and useful level of abstraction.

Where does research on social polarization overlap with social movement studies at the theoretical level? Does it overlap at all? Fortunately—as I will argue—it does. I build on the nearly five decades of research on social identity and intergroup conflict, beginning with the influential work of Henri Tajfel and John Turner (1979). The reasons for this are simple, though require some grounding. First, social movement scholars have used this theoretical approach to understand the conflicts that are central to the study of social movements and protest (see Klandermans, 2014 for a review). However, as Klandermans also

notes in his review, this approach is not necessarily consistent with other research on social movements that deploys the concept of identity. Research on “collective identity” often focuses on the shared characteristics of a group, and the way those characteristics influence mobilization or strategic decisions. In this study, I focus on social identity as a characteristic of an individual (see Turner, 1982). Social identity in this sense is a recognition by a person that they belong to a group (e.g. political party). This view is consistent with recent work that has demonstrated powerfully the fact that political party identification is a forceful social identity (Mason 2015, 2018; Huddy 2001, 2013, 2018; Huddy, Mason, and Aaroe 2015; Margolis 2018; Achen and Bartels 2017; Greene, 1999; Iyengar et al. 2018; Iyengar and Westwood 2015; Iyengar, Sood, and Lelkes 2012).

More importantly, however, social identity theory has from its outset been used to explain both intergroup conflict and intergroup attitudes, including discrimination and prejudice toward out groups respectively. If this sounds familiar, that’s good: prejudice and discrimination are the very essence of social polarization. Unsurprisingly, this is the theoretical approach used by Huddy, Mason, and their colleagues in developing an identity-based approach to partisanship and social polarization. The theoretical move required here, then, is to connect a social identity-based view of social polarization to a social identity-based view of social movements and protest.

I contend that social movements act as vehicles for social identities that are often subsumed by or interact with partisan identities. As Mason (2018) notes, partisanship has become a sort of “mega-identity”, capturing numerous other social identities. This is true for identities such as feminism (Huddy and Willman, 2018), religion (Margolis, 2018; Campbell et al., 2018), or race (Iyengar and Westwood, 2015). But as Mason (2018) demonstrates, this can also include identification with a social movement. This is possible because today’s parties act as “broad umbrellas under which various constituencies—including mobilized social movement wings—co-exist in uneasy alliances.” (McAdam and Tarrow, 2010, p. 535) The climate change movement, the pro-life and pro-choice movements, the Tea Party movement, the anti-fracking movement, the Black Lives Matter movement, the LGBTQ movement—each of these movements, amongst the most prominent in the U.S., are deeply partisan in their orientation. In 2016, the Pew Research Center found that 64% of Democrats supported the Black Lives Matter movement, while only 20% of Republicans supported the movement. Pew data from 2017 on abortion is similar: 34% of Republicans believe that abortion should be legal in all or most cases, while 75% of Democrats share this view. The story is the same for climate change: 50% of Republicans believe that climate change is occurring, compared to 90% of Democrats (Borick, 2018). On climate change, the difference between partisans is a near consensus compared to a coin flip.

The relationship between social identity, partisanship, and social polarization is well demonstrated in empirical scholarship. The lesson is simple enough: the stronger a person's partisan identity (or the more aware they are made of that identity), the more likely they are to discriminate against, evince prejudicial attitudes toward, and even dehumanize members of the outgroup, i.e. Democrats or Republicans (see Iyengar et al. 2018 for review of research).<sup>3</sup> Social identity theory suggests that merely identifying with a group is sufficient to create conflict. If we can identify ourselves as part of a group that is somehow distinct from another group, conflict can emerge. Conflict grows more severe when there is a competition for resources (broadly conceived), a perceived loss of status, or the perception of a zero-sum outcome. These conflicts result in out-group prejudice and discrimination. Members of the groups begin to negatively stereotype the out-group, exaggerate the positive qualities of the in-group, and actively work to exclude, avoid, or harm the out-group, exacerbating group conflict. In other words: social polarization.

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<sup>3</sup> This hostility toward out-group members is referred to alternatively as affective (see Iyengar and colleagues) or social (see Mason and colleagues) polarization. Affective polarization refers, as Iyengar and Westwood (2015) describe, to “the tendency of people identifying as Republicans or Democrats to view opposing partisans negatively and copartisans positively.” (p. 691) Westwood et al. (2018) describe the presence of “warm feelings for the in group and correspondingly hostile evaluations of out groups” (p. 6). Social polarization, on the other hand, is a broader term that encapsulates a wider range of possible manifestations of intergroup polarization. However, given the cross-citation patterns in these respective areas, that both concepts rely on social identity theory, and their general conceptual overlap, we can proceed by simply treating the two terms as synonymous. Social polarization, then, is defined by Mason (2018) as “prejudice, anger, and activism on behalf of that prejudice and anger.” (p. 4) In this view, social polarization speaks to a sense of group-based animosity with both attitudinal and behavioral manifestations. Social polarization can be expressed through a wide range of actions. I will use social polarization as my outcome variable, as I agree with Mason (2018) that it is a broader designation than affective polarization, which I view as one example of social polarization.

One mechanism that drives intergroup conflict, then, is *identity threat*. That is, when the status or resources of a group that an individual identifies with are threatened, existing group biases and hostilities become amplified. The mechanism of identity threat is useful for understanding *how* social movements drive social polarization. Social movements often explicitly challenge how society distributes resources among groups, especially when the movements are oriented to change policy (Amenta et al. 2010; Amenta et al., 2005; Amenta and Caren, 2004). This can create what social psychologists refer to as a “realistic threat” (Sherif, 1966; Tajfel and Turner, 1979), or a group-based threat that is based on instrumental concerns. Social movements engage in other activities that are likely to amplify group boundaries, including reducing group stigma, promoting positive identities, and increasing public awareness of group-based issues (See Giugni, McAdam, and Tilly, 1999 for discussion). While these activities do not directly challenge the distribution of resources between groups, they do challenge the superordinate status of outgroups by drawing attention to other (typically marginalized) groups and raising their status in society. This is an example of “status threat” (Outten et al., 2012; Craig and Richeson, 2014; Craig, Rucker, and Richeson, 2018), which can operate in tandem or independent from realistic threat.

Movements may also heighten social polarization through emotional pathways. When groups experience a threat, they are likely to experience a subsequently strong, negative emotion toward the outgroup, particularly anger (see Marcus, Neuman, and MacKuen

2000; Mason 2018). These negative emotions motivate behavior (Valentino et al. 2011; Van Zomeren, Spears, and Leach 2008; Groenendyk and Banks 2014; Banks 2016) and information seeking and processing (Albertson and Gadarian 2015). Negative emotions toward the outgroup are likely to be more severe when an individual's social identities are well aligned (Mason, 2018; Roccas and Brewer 2002—see below for more detailed discussion of identity “sorting”).

Aside from generating identity threat and emotional responses, social movements may heighten social polarization through mere priming. Research shows that simply being primed with an outgroup—consciously or unconsciously—influences individual attitudes and behavior (Rios, Ybarra, and Sanchez-Burks 2013; Paladino and Castelli 2008; Cesario, Plaks, and Higgins, 2006; Jonas and Sassenberg 2006). When a strongly identified Republican sees news coverage of a climate change protest, they are reminded of their own ingroup by virtue of being exposed to the outgroup. Social movements prime *partisan* identities because, as I note above, many social movements are highly politicized and partisan. This connection can be made implicitly, but it can also be made explicitly if a movement focuses its energy on a particular politician or party. Merely being aware of the boundaries between groups can be sufficient to affect prejudice and discrimination toward an outgroup.

So far I've outlined only a generic framework for how social movements can influence social polarization. But a critical question is how the variation in movements

themselves—not only their issues (which are conflated with partisanship itself), but also their strategic choices—overlaps with this underlying social identity framework. Put differently, amongst the litany of strategies that movements can deploy, which are likely to induce group threat? While an exhaustive description of how this might happen is beyond the scope of this study, I highlight a critical pathway that is central to the broader literature on social movements and protest: disruptive tactics. One of the dominant debates in movement research is over whether or not disruptive or violent tactics are more likely to achieve movement goals (see Giugni 1999). Much of this debate is rooted in the classic works of Gamson (1975) and Piven and Cloward (1979), who find that violent tactics are more successful than cooperative tactics. Importantly, violent tactics are hypothesized to produce success at least in part through threat—the disruption caused by a violent protest may cause a challenged authority to engage in some combination of repressive and conciliatory action to retain order (Mirowsky and Ross, 1981). This idea dates back to James Wilson (1961), who argued that the powerless have little to bargain with and thus must resort to disruption or violence to create something with which to bargain. Likewise, media attention is a vital factor for movement success (Koopmans, 2004; Gamson and Wolfsfeld, 1993), and the most critical and empirically supported newsworthiness criteria for a movement or protest is the scale of disruption it causes (Andrews and Caren, 2010; Thornton and Shah, 1996; Oliver and Myers, 1999; Hocke, 1998; McCarthy, McPhail, and Smith, 1996). The most

disruptive of tactics are those that involve violence and property damage (McAdam and Su 2002), which is one way I operationalize disruption here.

In social identity terms, disruptive and violent protest are likely to evoke the perception that a previously ineffective and weak outgroup are increasingly a threat to the group's status, resources, or values, leading to greater negative emotions with subsequent effects on judgment and behavior (see Brewer 2010, p. 85 for discussion of threat and social change). This means that *more disruptive protests will drive greater social polarization amongst partisan groups*. Cooperative, peaceful demonstrations are less likely to evoke such a response. Social identity theory, then, provides us a blueprint for understanding how the actions of social movements interact with partisan identities to differentially contribute to social polarization.

To conclude, I present the research questions that will be explored empirically. Each study (i.e. chapter) revolves around one of the following core research questions:

*Study #1, RQ1: Does exposure to protest increase social polarization?*

*Study #2, RQ1: Does exposure to protest increase social dominance orientation?*

*Study #3, RQ1: Does exposure to protest increase support?*

These questions reflect the general goals of this dissertation as outlined in the introduction. Study #1 examines whether and how movements influence social polarization. Study #2, addressing aforementioned concerns over how partisanship may

relate to democratic declines, examines whether and how movements influence support for authoritarian political leadership, operationalized in this instance by the construct of “social dominance orientation” (see study #2 for detailed discussion of this construct).

Study #3 examines whether movements influence public support, with the goal of comparing the effects of protest types across the three outcomes studies here.

Each of these research questions is developed through two additional research questions, focusing (1) on how different types of protest influence each outcome variable, and (2) on how partisanship conditions the effects of different types of protest on each outcome. These research questions are stated as such:

Study #1:

*RQ<sub>2</sub>: Is effect of protest on social polarization conditioned by the type of protest?*

*RQ<sub>3</sub>: Is the effect of protest on social polarization conditioned by the type of protest and partisan identity?*

Study #2:

*RQ<sub>2</sub>: Is the effect of protest on social dominance orientation conditioned by the type of protest?*

*RQ<sub>3</sub>: Is the effect of protest on social dominance orientation conditioned by the type of protest and partisan identity?*

Study #3:

*RQ<sub>2</sub>: Is the effect of protest on support conditioned by the type of protest?*

*RQ<sub>3</sub>: Is the effect of protest support conditioned by the type of protest and partisan identity?*

These additional research questions allow me to probe the core questions of this dissertation in an ordered and structured way. My goal is to evaluate how partisanship interacts with differentially threatening protest styles to influence social polarization, support for authoritarian leadership, and public support for the movement. I discuss the meaning of each question in the context of the separate studies within each chapter.

## Methods

The goal of this study is to examine the combinatorial effects of protest and partisanship, focusing on three outcomes: polarization, support for authoritarian political leadership, and movement support. In order to demonstrate these effects, I use an online vignette survey. Simply, respondents who participated in the study were tasked with (first) answering several background questions, (second), reading a mock news story about a protest, (third) answering a series of questions related to the outcomes of interest, and (fourth) answering standard demographic questions.

This section walks through each of these sections of the survey in order while the next section discusses the data itself. However, several other design issues are worth addressing first. The base design involves a 3x2 design with three protest styles on the X-axis and two political positions on the Y-axis. The three protest styles are (1) violent, (2) non-violent but disruptive, and (3) non-violent and non-disruptive. As discussed in the literature review, these different types of protest represent a scale of “disruption”, with higher levels of disruption relating to greater perceived group threat. The two political positions are (1) supportive of policies to address climate change, or the “Democratic” position, and (2) opposed to policies that address climate change, or the “Republican” position.

There are two control conditions. Each of the conditions is used for one set of outcomes. The “movement outcomes” control condition is used in models with outcome variables related to support for the movement. The “polarization” outcomes control is used in models on polarization. The reason that two control groups are needed is because of the nature of the different outcome variables. The first two (social polarization and social dominance orientation) are best analyzed by comparing the effect of protest against a true baseline (i.e. someone who has not been primed with information about any movement at all). However, this is essentially impossible for the other outcome: movement support. By very definition, in order to understand how movement tactics influence movement support, questions about support must be tagged to a specific protest. This means that the other control group—the true baseline—can’t be used, because that control by design is not priming any movement-related information. The only potential conflict that might be caused by this choice is in the comparing the effects of the treatments on each of the outcomes. However, because I am only interested in the directional nature of the effects (e.g. if more disruptive protest increases/decreases social polarization and increases/decreases support), using a baseline control for social polarization and social dominance orientation and a minimal control for public support is unproblematic. The general framework for the vignettes is described in table 1.

Table 1. Experimental conditions

	Violent protest	Non-violent, disruptive protest	Non-violent, non-disruptive protest	Control (movement outcomes)	Control (polarization outcomes)
Democratic-leaning position	1	2	3	7	8
Republican-leaning position	4	5	6		

At the beginning of the questionnaire, and prior to reading the vignette, respondents answer questions pertaining to their political leanings and their beliefs about climate change. A quota was used to ensure a given number of Republican (30%), Democrats (30%), and Independents (40%). Respondents who selected “Other” were removed from the survey immediately and did not proceed. The only other quota for this sample was gender, where the quota was roughly a 50/50 split. Following Q1, respondents were redirected to a follow-up question based on their answer. Democrats and Republicans were directed to one of two questions that asked them about the strength of their affiliation with their party, while independents were asked if they leaned Democrat, leaned Republican, or neither. Table 2 below describes the background and screener questions as well as the source for the survey items.

Table 2. Background and screener questions

Gender	<b>Source: U.S. Census</b>
	Q1: What is your gender? A: <i>Male, Female, Other</i>
Partisan identification	<b>Source: Party affiliation: National Election Survey</b>

Q2. Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, Democrat, an Independent, or something else?

A: *Republican, Democrat, Independent, Other*

Q3/Q4 (Republicans and Democrats only): Would you call yourself a strong Republican (Democrat) or a not very strong Republican (Democrat)

A: *Strong Republican (Strong Democrat), Weak Republican (Weak Democrat)*

Q5 (Independents only): Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican party or the Democratic party?

A: *Republican party, Democratic party, Neither*

Q6: Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this?

A: *Extremely liberal; Liberal; Slightly liberal; Moderate/Middle of the road; Slightly conservative, Conservative; Extremely conservative; Haven't thought much about it*

Climate beliefs **Source: *Climate Change and the American Mind* survey, 2018**

Q7: Recently, you may have noticed that climate change has been getting some attention in the news. Climate change refers to the idea that the world's average temperature has been increasing over the past 150 years, may be increasing more in the future, and that the world's climate may change as a result.

What do you think: Do you think that climate change is happening?

A: *Yes, No*

Q8: How sure are you that climate change is happening?

A: *Extremely sure, very sure, somewhat sure, not at all sure*

Q9: Assuming that climate change is happening, do you think it is caused by...

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*A: Human activities; Natural changes in the environment; Both human activities and natural changes; Nothing, because global warming isn't happening; Something not listed here*

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Following the completion of background and screener questions, each respondent was tasked with reading only one of the vignettes or skipping the treatment (control), to which they are randomly assigned, making this a between-subjects design. In order to be able to derive unbiased causal estimates, subjects are assigned at random to one of the conditions (Charness, Gnezy, and Kuhn, 2012). A between-subjects design assures that the order of the questions does not introduce issues of non-independence (Grice, 1966; Auspurg and Jackle, 2015; Charness, Gnezy, and Kuhn, 2012). All non-outcome measures are taken prior to treatment to avoid conditioning on posttreatment variables in subsequent analyses, particularly those involving multiple regression and interaction effects (Montgomery, Nyhan, and Torres, 2018).

Below is a table identifying the key elements of the vignettes, as well as how they are varied. The example below represents the Republican orientation with a violent protest, representing cell #4 from Table 1 above. The violent protest is the most disruptive of the three conditions. We build on the work of McAdam and Su (2002) to incorporate four elements of protest intensity, including violence by both police and demonstrators, property damage, and injuries.

Table 3. Vignette: Anti-climate change, high-hostility

<u>Vignette text</u>	<u>Presence in vignette</u>
<p>PROTESTORS, POLICE CLASH OVER CLIMATE CHANGE BILL</p>	<p>Violent headline</p>
<p>June 14, 2018 - Dozens of people remain in custody after a protest at the capitol building turned violent, police said.</p>	<p>Violent condition</p>
<p>Around noon, thousands of protestors gathered at the capitol building for a planned demonstration. At approximately 1 p.m., protesters began pushing back on police barricades that had been set up around the capitol building. In response, police began to use pepper spray to subdue protestors. Video from the scene shows protestors hitting and throwing objects at police officers. After nearly thirty minutes of physical confrontation, many protestors were arrested and the protest was broken up. Several protestors, as well as two police officers, were treated for injuries by paramedics.</p>	
<p>Photographs show extensive damage to several local businesses. One business owner told reporters that several thousand dollars' worth of damage was done to his storefront by protestors. Footage also showed damage to public property, including several street lights and fencing around the capitol building.</p>	
<p>The city's police chief declined to offer details on what charges might be filled against protestors.</p>	
<p>Prior to the outbreak of violence, several protestors told reporters that they showed up to oppose the state's efforts to address climate change, including a recently proposed bill from Congressman Turner that would immediately become the most aggressive state-level policy for addressing climate change in the United States. One protestor told reporters that "climate change is not caused by human actions, and we have real, important priorities to deal with in the state. We believe the state's policy to address climate change is based on bad science and will hurt everyone in our state." Protest organizers</p>	<p>Republican orientation</p>

pledged to continuing organizing public demonstrations until a vote takes place on Turner's bill.

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Non-disruptive headline:

“PROTESTORS MARCH ON CAPITOL OVER CLIMATE CHANGE  
BILL”

Non-disruptive description:

“June 14, 2018 - On Thursday, thousands of protestors took to the streets as the state legislature prepares to vote on a climate change bill.

At approximately 1 p.m., protestors began marching down Capitol Street.

Protestors marched arm-in-arm, chanting demands and holding signs.

The march lasted one hour and culminated at a nearby park. Following the march, several community leaders spoke to the crowd. Protestors also organized voter registration for participants and bystanders. Before dispersing, organizers informed their fellow protestors of future events and how to remain in touch with organizers.

Police oversaw the protest and confirmed with reporters that the protestors cooperated with law enforcement throughout the day. The chief of police confirmed that the protest organizers had applied for and

received a permit two weeks earlier and he thanked them for remaining peaceful.”

Disruptive, non-violent headline:

“PROTESTORS DISRUPT CAPITOL OVER CLIMATE CHANGE BILL”

Disruptive, non-violent description:

“June 17, 2018 - Hundreds of protestors shut down the capitol building on Thursday over the state's efforts to address climate change.

Around noon, thousands of protestors gathered at the capitol building for a planned demonstration. At approximately 1 p.m., protesters began entering the capitol building chanting demands and holding signs.

Protestors refused to leave the building, which was largely paralyzed by the flood of protestors. Congressional staffers and administrators were unable to move around the building, as protestors filled hallways, lobbies, and offices. Many protestors took over congressional offices to demand an audience with elected officials.

At 6:45 p.m., city police arrived to force protestors from the building.

While many left under threat of arrest, hundreds stayed, tying themselves to banisters and even one another in order to make arrest difficult. As of Friday morning, police have yet to remove several dozen protestors,

though the chief of police told reporters on the scene that they would be cleared by the afternoon. The chief of police also noted that protestors were peaceful and respectful throughout the day and that no violence had come out of the day's events."

The third block is adjusted to include the following for the Democratic-leaning position:

"Several protestors told reporters that they showed up to support the state's efforts to address climate change, including a recently proposed bill from Congressman Turner that would immediately become the most aggressive state-level policy for addressing climate change in the United States. One protestor told reporters that "climate change is caused by human actions, and it is a real and important priority that the state must deal with. We support the state's efforts to address climate change, especially Congressman Turner's bill." Protest organizers pledged to continuing organizing public demonstrations until a vote takes place on Turner's bill."

As previously mentioned, there are two control conditions. The first (the movement outcomes control) involves a very brief bit of text prior to answering the questions on movement outcomes (see below) The other (the polarization

control) involves no text. Respondents simply skip the vignette section altogether:

“There are a number of protest groups that support government efforts to reduce greenhouse gases and solve global climate change.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements on these protest groups?”

After reading the vignettes (or not, if assigned to one of the two controls), respondents then answer a series of questions that serve as outcome variables in my analyses. These variables, and the sources for the items (when available), are described in table 4 below. All questions with multiple items had the order of items randomized to limit order-effects.

The first set of variables measures support for the movement via five items (see table 4 below for full description of post-treatment variables). The first is a simple support/opposition question, similar to what appears in a wide range of attitudinal survey work around climate change and energy. The next three items are non-standard and measure moral or sympathetic support for the organization they read about in the vignette. That is, these variables measure if the respondents identify with the organization and its cause. This is a crucial objective for social movements in interacting with the public. The final item measures willingness to behaviorally support the

movement by signing a petition. Respondents are told that they will be directed to the organization's website following the survey to complete the task if they agree to it.

While I describe the conceptual meaning of social polarization in the literature review, it is a new enough concept that some effort is needed to accurately describe how it is operationalized. Mason (2018) examines social distance, or our desire to avoid interpersonal interaction with members of the outgroup, as well as a "feeling thermometer" that gauges generic affect toward a group. Iyengar and Westwood (2015) look at job market discrimination in the form of interview callbacks. In this study, I use social distance and thermometer bias, building on the work of Mason (2018; 2015) and others (see Iyengar, Sood, and Lelkes 2012; Klar et al 2018 for examples).

The social polarization measures used here are adapted from the approaches used by Mason (2018). The first is a "feeling thermometer", itself adopted from the ANES. In this question, respondents are asked to rate the warmth (positivity) or coldness (or negativity) of their feelings toward eight individuals or groups associated with either the Republican or Democratic parties on a scale of 0-100. Higher scores (> 50) represent more positive feelings while lower scores (< 50) represent colder feelings. The second item represents a respondent's willingness to be close friends with a Republican or Democratic voter. This is an adapted version of the social distance measure used by Mason (2018).

Finally, as a measure of tolerance for authoritarianism, I use a truncated version of the social dominance orientation measures developed by Sidanius et al. (1994), now widely used as measure of tolerance for authoritarian political leadership.

Table 4. Outcome variables

Movement support	<p><b>No source</b></p> <p>Q10: Do you agree or disagree with the following statements on the protestors you just read about?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) If they achieve their goals, people like me would be better off</li> <li>2) I share their beliefs and values</li> <li>3) They represent people like me</li> <li>4) I support the protestor's cause</li> </ol> <p><i>A: Strongly agree, somewhat agree, neither, somewhat disagree, strongly disagree</i></p> <p>Q11: Would you like to sign a petition in support of the protestors? If you select "yes", you will be directed to a petition from the group at the completion of the survey.</p> <p><i>A: Yes, no</i></p>
Polarization	<p><b>Source: Mason 2018/ANES</b></p> <p>Q12: Please read the name of the group or person listed on the left and rate that group or person using something we call the feeling thermometer.</p> <p>Ratings between 50 degrees and 100 degrees mean that you feel favorable and warm toward the group/person. Ratings between 0 degrees and 50 degrees mean that you don't feel favorable toward the group/person and that you don't care too much for that group/person. You would rate the group/person at the 50 degree mark if you don't feel particularly warm or cold toward the</p>

group/person. If we come to a group or person whose name you don't recognize, you can rate that person at 50.

*A: Democratic party; Republican party, Donald Trump, Hillary Clinton, The National Rifle Association (NRA), Planned Parenthood, The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency (ICE), Democratic Voters, Republican Voters*

Q13: How willing are you to be close friends with someone who votes Democrat almost all of the time?

*A: I absolutely would, I probably would, Not sure, I probably would not, I absolutely would not*

Q14: How willing are you to be close friends with someone who votes Republican almost all of the time?

*A: I absolutely would, I probably would, Not sure, I probably would not, I absolutely would not*

Social  
dominance  
orientation

**Source: Sidanius et al., 1994**

Q15: Please describe whether you agree or disagree with the following statements

- 1) Some groups of people are simply not the equals of others
- 2) Some people are just more worthy than others
- 3) This country would be better off if we cared less about how equal all people were
- 4) To get ahead in life, it is sometimes necessary to step on others
- 5) In an ideal world, all nations would be equal

*A: Strongly agree, agree, slightly agree, neither, slightly disagree, disagree, strongly disagree*

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Finally, respondents are asked several demographic questions based on items from the U.S. Census.

Table 5. Demographic questions

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Age	<b>Source: None</b>  Q16: In what year were you born?"  <i>A: Free response</i>
Race	Age computed by subtracting year from 2018. <b>Source: U.S. Census</b>  Q17: What is your race?  <i>A: White, Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian (e.g. Chinese, Filipino, Korean, Vietnamese, Japanese, Indian, Pakistani), Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, Other</i>
Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin	<b>Source: U.S. Census</b>  Q18: Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?  <i>A: No, yes (Mexican, Mexican American, Chicano), yes (Puerto Rican), yes (Cuban), yes (Another Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin)</i>
Education	<b>Source: U.S. Census</b>  Q19: What is the highest level of education you have received?  <i>A: Less than high school, high school graduate, some college, two-year degree, four-year degree, professional degree, doctorate.</i>
Gender	<b>Source: U.S. Census</b>  Q20: What is your gender?  <i>A: Male, female, other</i>
State	<b>Source: None</b>  Q21: Respondents select from drop down menu to the question "In what state do you live?"

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At the completion of the survey, respondents were informed that the story they read was not true, and I describe to them the purposes of the study and why deception was necessary. The debriefing text read as follows:

“Thank you for completing the survey!

Before you sign off, I wanted to inform you that the topics addressed in the survey were fabricated. While there are many protests every year around the issue of the climate change, the protest described here was not actually based on a news story. Instead, it was constructed to represent critical features of protest that might influence how you think and feel about protest in general. Some of you read about one protest while others saw a different protest or none at all.

Thank you again for participating in this survey.”

After reading the debriefing section, respondents were thanked for their participation and exited the survey.

Before concluding the methods section, it is worth pointing out the broader contribution of using experimental research in the study of social movements. Recent discussions within the social movements literature has argued that amongst other challenges facing studies of movements, particularly movement outcomes, is the issue of causal attribution (Giugni and Bosi 2012). Causal attribution is usually addressed in the social

sciences through time-series analyses and experimental designs. But, as was the case for McAdam and Su (2002), data quality makes time-series analyses for protest and social movements exceptionally challenging and open to statistical and analytical problems (i.e. relying on biases in protest coverage by newspapers). Regarding experiments, Bosi, Giugni, and Uba (2016) note that, to their knowledge, experimental research designs have never been implemented to evaluate the effect of social movement activities on policy outcomes. They go so far as to say that “the dilemma of causal attribution, finally, seems the most fundamental problem in this field of research.” (pg. 22)

McAdam and Boudet (2012) note the problem of spuriousness in empirical work on movement outcomes, which can be difficult to address outside of experimental or quasi-experimental research designs. These authors also note that while a body of work on movement outcomes has begun to develop, “it is still relatively thin and plagued by a host of empirical problems that often make it difficult to reach any firm conclusion about the extent of a movement’s impact in any given case.” (pg. 99)

Three recent studies in prominent sociology journals, however, use a similar approach to the one proposed here (Simpson, Willer, and Feinberg, 2018; Wouters and Walgrave 2017; Bloemraad, Silva, and Voss 2016). While experimental studies may be far less effective in addressing a wide range of movement dynamics and outcomes, these three studies build on the established field of experimental studies on framing effects. The

experimental approach used in framing research allows these scholars (and myself) to examine how the public responds to a wide range of movement frames and tactics.

By exposing a survey respondent to a different type of protest, we can compare the relative effects of those protests on the respondent's self-reports of relevant perceptions.

This, of course, does not apply to many of the outcomes of interest to social movement scholars (e.g. policy change), but it can be useful for understanding the subject of this dissertation: "public opinion", broadly conceived. My approach here, then, is itself a contribution to the study of social movements in that I am furthering the effort to bring experimental research into the field in order to address persistent issues of causal attribution.

## Data

The survey has a total of 2,764 respondents. Three respondents dropped out after beginning the survey. This does not include the 229 respondents who selected “other” as their party affiliation and were screened out of the survey. Respondents were required to answer every question in order to complete the survey, meaning there is essentially no missing data in this dataset aside from the three individuals who did not complete the survey.

The sample for this study is derived from Qualtrics, which relies on numerous online panels (with total number of participants in the millions) for generating samples. Qualtrics panels are generally quite representative of the U.S. population, but they are not a randomly selected national sample. All respondents are compensated for their time. Participants self-select into online panels that Qualtrics then draws upon to gather respondents. I discuss the “representativeness” of the sample below.

The self-selection of participants into a paid labor pool of survey respondents raises questions over the data quality derived from of a convenience sample via crowdsourcing (Landers and Behrend, 2015). However, in studies across disciplines, the comparability of findings and respondent characteristics between convenience samples (including MTurk) generated samples and standard nationally representative samples (i.e. ISS, random-digit dialing) has found high levels of comparability between the two,

particularly along demographic characteristics (Mullinix, Leeper, Druckman, and Freese, 2015; Weinberg, Freese, and McElhattan, 2014). For instance, MTurk respondents exhibit similar classic heuristic biases and pay attention as well as in alternative sampling approaches (Paolacci et al., 2010). MTurk workers are also able to replicate laboratory findings of complex cognitive behavioral experiments (Crump, McDonnell, and Gureckis, 2013). Of most direct relevance for this study, convenience samples are also comparable to national samples in terms of partisanship, ideology, and political behavior, though there are small differences amongst older respondents (Huff and Tingley, 2015; Clifford, Jewell, and Waggoner, 2015).

The data were collected between October 23 and November 1 of 2018. The survey took an average of seven minutes to complete following the procedure described in the previous section. In the table below two types of information are given regarding the demographic information of the sample. First, I report the percent of respondents in my sample who fit each category. Second, I compare this to the most recent American Community Survey estimates (2017). Generally, the sample looks similar to the U.S. population according to these four factors, though I do appear to have a more educated group than the national average.

Table 6. Comparison between sample and US population

Variable	Category	Sample	U.S. Population
Gender	Female	50.3%	50.8%
	Male	49.1%	49.2%
	Other	0.6%	N/A
Age	Average years old	41.8	37.9
Race	White	78.3%	76.6%
	Black	12.7%	13.4%
	Asian	3.2%	5.8%
	American Indian	1.7%	1.3%
	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.2%	.2%
	Other	3.9%	2.7%
Hispanic, Latino, Spanish origin	Hispanic or Latino origin	10.3%	18%
	Not Hispanic or Latino Origin	89.7%	82%
Education	High school graduate or higher	97.1%	87.0%
	Bachelor's degree or higher	49.0%	30.3%

One potential problem with the data from this survey was that I had no control over whether respondents did in fact read the treatment conditions carefully. Rather than using an attention or manipulation check, which recent research suggests may be problematic (Hauser, Ellsworth, and Gonzalez 2018), I instead dropped respondents who spent less than 45 seconds reading the treatment. Using Qualtrics software, I observed how long each respondent spent on the page displaying the treatment. The 45 second cutoff was chosen after several non-research participants allowed me to time how long it took to read each treatment. None of the participants completed the reading in under 45 seconds. Importantly, nearly 30% of respondents completed the task in 30-

35 seconds, which is essentially impossible. It seems likely that respondents waited for the “proceed” button to appear on the webpage, which did not appear until 30 seconds after respondents entered the page but was necessary for the respondent to continue with the questionnaire. Ultimately, this resulted in between 126-148 respondents being dropped from each of the six treatments (no one was dropped from the control conditions as no time was required to complete the task). A total of 799 respondents were dropped, leaving 1,965 respondents.

## Study one: Social movements, social identities, and social polarization

In this first study I will address the most fundamental of my research questions: do social movements drive social polarization? While I will, of course, attempt to address this question dichotomously, I will also explore one mechanism through which it might occur. I previously argued that social movements can widen social polarization by producing perceived group (e.g. partisan) threat. While movements may do this in a variety of ways, I focus here on one: protest.

One of the dominant debates in movement research is over whether or not disruptive or violent tactics are more likely to achieve movement goals than less disruptive tactics (see Giugni 1999). Much of this debate is rooted in the classic works of Gamson (1975) and Piven and Crawford (1979), who find that violent tactics are more successful than cooperative tactics. Importantly, violent tactics are hypothesized to produce success at least in part through threat—the disruption caused by a violent protest may cause a challenged authority to engage in some combination of repressive and conciliatory action to retain order (Mirowsky and Ross, 1981). This idea dates back to James Wilson (1961), who argued that the powerless have little to bargain with and thus must resort to disruption or violence to create something with which to bargain. Likewise, media attention is a vital factor for movement success (Koopmans, 2004; Gamson and Wolfsfeld, 1993), and the most critical and empirically supported newsworthiness

criteria for a movement or protest is the scale of disruption it causes (Andrews and Caren, 2010; Thornton and Shah, 1996; Oliver and Myers, 1999; Hocke, 1998; McCarthy, McPhail, and Smith, 1996). The most disruptive of tactics are those that involve violence and property damage (McAdam and Su 2002), which is how I operationalize disruption here.

In social identity terms, disruptive and violent protest are likely to evoke the perception that a previously ineffective and weak outgroup are increasingly a threat to the group's status, resources, or values, leading to greater negative emotions with subsequent effects on judgment and behavior (see Brewer 2010, p. 85 for discussion of threat and social change). This means that *more disruptive protests will drive greater social polarization amongst partisan groups*. Cooperative, peaceful demonstrations are less likely to evoke such a response. Social identity theory, then, provides us a blueprint for understanding how the actions of social movements (e.g. protest) interact with partisan identities to differentially contribute to social polarization.

To summarize briefly, this chapter demonstrates the relative effects of (1) violent and disruptive protest, (2) non-violent but disruptive protest, and (3) non-violent, non-disruptive protest, compared to (4) a control group where respondents did not read about any protest. These protest styles are interacted with partisanship in order to evaluate the combinatorial effect of protest and partisanship on social polarization. The

expectation is simple: the greater the partisanship and the greater the disruption, the greater the social polarization.

In order to demonstrate the role that protest styles and partisanship play in widening social polarization, I will work through my analysis in three steps. The first step involves a simple analysis examining whether exposure to any protest widens social polarization, as stated by research question number one:

*RQ<sub>1</sub>: Does exposure to protest increase social polarization?*

The next step is to evaluate how protest types differ in their effects on social polarization. I suspect that more disruptive, violent protest is more likely to increase social polarization than non-violent and non-disruptive protest. Thus, research question two:

*RQ<sub>2</sub>: Is effect of protest on social polarization conditioned by the type of protest?*

Finally, I've argued so far that protest style will interact with partisanship to widen social polarization. The effects of disruptive and violent protests on social polarization are more likely to occur for individuals who identify as partisan. That is, the effect should not exist or be much weaker for non-partisans. Thus, research question three:

*RQ<sub>3</sub>: Is the effect of protest on social polarization conditioned by the type of protest and partisan identity?*

## Results

Before describing the results of my analysis, some notes on the variables used here, beginning with the two dependent variables. I use two measures of social polarization.

The first is thermometer bias. Thermometer bias represents the distance between placement on a scale of 0 to 100. As described in the methods section, respondents are asked to place Democratic and Republican voters on a scale of 0 to 100 where 100 represents positive, warm feelings and 0 represents negative, cold feelings.

“Thermometer bias” is the absolute value of the distance between them, or the degree to which a respondent is socially polarized. This variable construction is in line with its use in other studies (Mason, 2018; Iyengar, Sood, and Lelkes 2012).

Thermometer bias, as noted by Mason (2018), is but one way to evaluate social polarization. Thermometer bias captures affective polarization—the distance in emotional reactions to voters of the different party—better than it does an actual willingness to socially distance oneself regardless of how one feels. That is, we can examine a measure of social distance bias, or the willingness of persons to spend time with partisans and copartisans, respectively. All dependent variables are described in Table 4 in the methods section and are coded so that higher values represent greater polarization (thermometer bias) or greater unwillingness to be close friends with a partisan (social distance bias).

What are the initial levels of the dependent variables used here? These are displayed in table 7. The thermometer bias measures are the absolute value of the distance between

the respondent's ranking of Democratic voters and Republican voters on a scale of 0-100. As would be expected based on the social identity framework used here, Independents exhibit a substantially lower thermometer bias value, on average, than either Democrats or Republicans. A small difference exists between Republicans and Democrats, with Democrats appearing to be more negative towards Republicans than vice versa. The social distance measures capture willingness to spend time with a partisan. The patterns, once again, are as expected. Republicans are the least likely (increasing value) to want to spend time with a Democrat and the most likely (decreasing value) to spend time with a Republican. The inverse is true for Democrats, while Independents in both cases are the median value.

Table 7. Mean values for polarization measures

	Thermometer bias	Social distance, Democrat	Social distance, Republican
Pooled sample	40.84	1.74	1.83
Republicans	47.33	1.86	1.39
Independents	28.38	1.82	1.89
Democrats	53.33	1.49	2.15

Turning to the first analysis, depicted in table 8, all treatment conditions are collapsed into a single dummy variable. That is, the six treatments described in table 1 are collapsed into one treatment variable representing any person who was exposed to protest, with the other value representing respondents in the control condition. In table 9, these treatments are disaggregated. In table 10, respondents are broken out by

partisan identification. That is, I run sub-analyses for each set of questions based on the respondent’s self-identification as either a Republican, Democrat, or Independent. The question wording is described in table 2, under “Q2.”

The first analysis addresses the first research question, stated as:

*RQ1: Does exposure to protest increase social polarization?*

To address this question three regression models are used. The independent variable in each case is a dummy variable where all treatments are collapsed and coded as “1” (i.e., exposure to *any protest*) and the control group (no exposure) is coded as “0.” Three dependent variables are used: thermometer bias, social distance bias against Democratic voters, and social distance bias against Republican voters (i.e. stated willingness to spend time with a Democratic/Republican voter). For models of thermometer bias, ordinary least squares regression is used because the thermometer bias scales run from 0-100. The social distance bias models use ordinal logistic regression, as the dependent variable is ordinal (1-5 scale). Results are presented in Table 8.

Table 8. Regressions on thermometer and social distance bias (pooled treatment)

	Model 1: Thermometer bias	Model 2: Social distance, Democrat	Model 3: Social distance, Republican
	B (SE)	B (SE)	B (SE)
Protest	4.00 (2.09)*	0.35 (0.12)**	0.18 (0.12)
Constant	37.57 (1.88)**	n/a	n/a
N =	1,569	1,569	1,569

\* p < .05; \*\*p < .01

Clearly, exposure to protest increases social polarization. In model 1, we see that exposure to protest of any type increases thermometer bias by four percent.<sup>4</sup> Likewise, exposure to protest also increases social distance bias against Democratic voters but *not* Republican voters. This suggests, as expected in research question three, that partisanship may condition the effects of protest on social polarization, perhaps asymmetrically (i.e. Republicans are more likely to dislike Democrats, but not vice versa).

Yet, not all protest is created equal. As argued at length previously, we should expect different forms of protest to have different effects on social polarization. That is, more threatening protests (those that are violent or highly disruptive) to have less of an effect than less threatening protests (those that are neither disruptive nor violent), with the possibility of non-threatening protest having no effect at all. This was stated as research question two:

*RQ2: Is the effect of protest on social polarization conditioned by the type of protest?*

Table 9 below demonstrates the results of disaggregating the treatments and examining their effects separately. What we see is that a pattern begins to emerge around what types of protest are most likely to drive social polarization. Three out of six violent protests lead to greater social polarization; two out of six disruptive, non-violent

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<sup>4</sup> Because the dependent variable here is on a scale of 0-100, the incremental effect of treatment conditions on social polarization can be interpreted as percent change.

protests increase social polarization; and one type of non-violent, non-disruptive protest increases social polarization.

Table 9. Regressions; thermometer and social distance bias (disaggregated treatments)

	Model 1: Thermometer bias	Model 2: Social distance Democrat	Model 3: Social distance Republican
	B (SE)	B (SE)	B (SE)
Dem-Violent	2.26 (2.96)	0.44 (0.17)**	0.33 (0.17)*
Rep-Violent	7.05 (2.91)*	0.24 (0.17)	0.08 (0.17)
Dem-Disrupt	2.28 (2.93)	0.51 (0.17)**	0.37 (0.16)*
Rep-Disrupt	3.63 (2.92)	0.21 (0.17)	-0.01 (0.17)
Dem-Cooperative	4.59 (2.98)	0.42 (0.17)**	0.24 (0.17)
Rep-Cooperative	4.11 (2.99)	0.35 (0.17)*	0.11 (0.17)
Constant	37.57 (1.88)**	n/a	n/a
N =	1,569	1,569	1,569

\*  $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$

All coefficients should be interpreted as the average difference between the treatment group and the reference condition (control group—see methods section for discussion of treatments and controls).

As with the previous set of models, the effect once again appears asymmetrical, with social distance bias increasing for more protest types and in greater magnitude against Democratic voters, further suggesting the possibility that partisanship may be conditioning the effects of protest on social polarization. This was presupposed by research question three:

*RQ<sub>3</sub>: Is effect of protest on social polarization conditioned by the type of protest and partisan identity?*

In Table 10 below, I demonstrate results from a series of regressions on a measure of thermometer bias where both protest types *and* partisan identity are disaggregated.

When examining the effects of protest on Republicans only (model 2), we see that several types of protest increase social polarization. However, two of the three do not come from Democrat-oriented protest. Rather, the strongest effects are from the non-disruptive and violent Republican-oriented protests, respectively. Respondents in the violent treatment condition exhibit levels of social polarization 15.59% higher than respondents in the control condition, while respondents in the non-violent, non-disruptive treatment condition exhibit levels of social polarization 18.46% higher than those in the control condition. Likewise, Republican respondents who received the non-disruptive Democrat-oriented position exhibit levels of social polarization 12.15% higher than the treatment group. That is, the *distance* between how positively Republicans rate Republican voters and how negatively they rate Democratic voters increases when Republicans observe several different types of protest.

Democrats respond in line with expectations: Democrats who received the violent, Republican-oriented protest exhibit levels of social polarization that are 10.14% higher than the control condition, while respondents who received the non-violent, disruptive condition exhibit levels of social polarization 12.76% higher than the control condition.

Democrats who received the non-disruptive condition exhibited signs of social polarization equal to the control group.

Table 10. OLS regression on thermometer bias with partisan affiliations

	Model 1: Republicans only	Model 2: Independents only	Model 3: Democrats only
	B (SE)	B (SE)	B (SE)
Dem-Violent	5.06 (5.90)	-1.06 (3.96)	4.37 (5.11)
Rep-Violent	15.59 (5.51)**	0.99 (3.86)	10.14 (5.30)*
Dem-Disrupt	8.58 (5.72)	-3.43 (3.96)	3.89 (5.05)
Rep-Disrupt	5.11 (5.32)	-3.70 (3.99)	12.76 (5.30)*
Dem-Cooperative	12.15 (5.69)*	1.37 (3.85)	7.41 (5.64)
Rep-Cooperative	18.46 (5.90)**	-1.98 (3.80)	8.24 (5.67)
Constant	38.76 (3.49)**	29.49 (2.57)**	47.11 (3.36)**
N =	436	680	453

\* p < .05; \*\*p < .01

All coefficients should be interpreted as the average difference between the treatment group and the reference condition (control group—see methods section for discussion of treatments and controls).

Tables 11 and 12 demonstrate the effects of protest on social distance bias with the same three partisan categories. The dependent variable in this case is a willingness to be close friends with someone who votes for either the Democratic or Republican party most of time, as described in table 4 in the methods section.

Several things become clear from this analysis. The pooled-sample models in Tables 8 and 9 indicate that protests increase social distance bias (values are coded such that higher values represent a greater unwillingness to be close friends with a Democratic or Republican voter) for both Democratic and Republican voters. However, when I segment the analysis out by party (tables 11 and 12), it becomes clear that the effects in the pooled-sample models are driven almost entirely by self-identified Republicans. In both Republican only models (models 2 in both tables), we see that Republicans who are exposed to violent or disruptive protests express greater unwillingness to spend time with Democrats. Surprisingly, exposure to non-disruptive forms of Republican-

oriented protest also increase social distance bias amongst Republicans. No effects emerge for Democrats and, as expected, Independents.

Table 11. Ordinal logistic regression on willingness to be friends with Democratic voter

	Model 1: Republicans only	Model 2: Independents only	Model 3: Democrats only
	B (SE)	B (SE)	B (SE)
Dem-Violent	0.81 (0.33)**	0.42 (0.27)	0.13 (0.32)
Rep-Violent	0.57 (0.31)	-0.24 (0.26)	0.56 (0.33)
Dem-Disrupt	0.94 (0.32)**	0.44 (0.26)	0.18 (0.32)
Rep-Disrupt	0.54 (0.30)	0.04 (0.26)	-0.01 (0.34)
Dem-Cooperative	0.37 (0.32)	0.43 (0.26)	0.27 (0.34)
Rep-Cooperative	0.65 (0.32)*	0.32 (0.25)	-0.31 (0.37)
N =	436	680	453

\*  $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$

All coefficients should be interpreted as the average difference between the treatment group and the reference condition (control group—see methods section for discussion of treatments and controls).

Shifting attention to willingness to be friends with Republican voters, we find a similar pattern. Once again, this effect appears to be driven by Republicans. In this case, however, that effect is surprising. Based on the identity-framework used here, we would expect that, if anything, Republicans would be more likely to want to be friends with a Republican voter. Instead, they appear to be less willing, not only when exposed to Democratic-oriented protest, but also violent Republican-oriented protest.

Table 12. Ordinal logistic regression on willingness to be friends with Republican voter

	Model 1:	Model 2:	Model 3:
	Republicans only	Independents only	Democrats only
	B (SE)	B (SE)	B (SE)
Dem-Violent	0.87 (0.37)*	0.16 (0.26)	0.09 (0.29)
Rep-Violent	0.77 (0.35)*	-0.45 (0.25)	0.36 (0.29)
Dem-Disrupt	0.76 (0.37)*	0.09 (0.26)	0.28 (0.28)
Rep-Disrupt	0.42 (0.35)	-0.35 (0.26)	0.21 (0.30)
Dem-Cooperative	0.78 (0.36)*	0.07 (0.24)	0.06 (0.31)
Rep-Cooperative	0.50 (0.38)	0.05 (0.24)	-0.27 (0.32)
N =	436	680	453

\*  $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$

All coefficients should be interpreted as the average difference between the treatment group and the reference condition (control group—see methods section for discussion of treatments and controls).

## Discussion

The results of this chapter have a clear message: protest drives social polarization. But it appears to do so for different reasons, and in different patterns, than expected.

What is critical to take from the analysis presented here is that the effects are bipartisan in their presence yet asymmetrical in their extent. Consistent with other research (see Grossman and Hopkins, 2018 for broad discussion), Republicans appear to be substantially more susceptible to social polarization. Democrats are no less willing to spend time with a Republican voter regardless of their exposure to protest. Republicans, on the other hand, are less likely to want to spend time with a Democratic voter and exhibit higher levels of thermometer bias.

However, the pattern of significant effects suggests something surprising. Rather than being driven purely by ingroup and outgroup dynamics, the effect appears to be

driven, at least in part, by a general distaste for protest. Protest appears to drive social polarization because people simply do not like politics, as suggested in recent work by Klar et al (2018). While I cannot directly test a mechanism for this, one explanation that would be consistent with this pattern, as argued by Klar et al (2018) and others, is that Americans are simply tired of politics and do not wish to engage in unpleasant debates with people whom they disagree. This is particularly apparent in the examination of variation in willingness to spend time with partisans and copartisans after reading about a protest. Republicans are not only disinclined to want to be friends with Democratic voters after observing a protest, but also Republican voters.

Effects simply do not exist for self-identified Independents. This is predictable: Independents have little allegiance to a given party, may find political debates less disagreeable, and as predicted by the identity framework deployed here, are not inclined to become more polarized based on exposure to a partisan protest.

Of course, the treatments used in this study lack the ecological validity that one might hope for. Future research should examine how intensity of exposure to protest influences social polarization. I suspect that individuals come to exposure of protest in much more powerful ways, either through repeated or detailed exposure (lengthier articles or daily news coverage of an ongoing protest), through heavily editorialized coverage (e.g. Fox or MSNBC news), and with far more visceral coverage, involving images and video of the protest. That these admittedly weak treatments yield any

impact at all is a sign that genuine news coverage is likely to elicit much greater effects. As Koopmans (2004) reminds us, the media is the primary conduit through which the vast majority of movement bystanders experience protest and social movement activity. While this study mimics media exposure to protest by design, we do not capture the true ecological experience of media exposure to protest for the reasons listed above. In an era of partisan news coverage, I suspect that the effects identified here are compounded and amplified by news room that selectively present protest behavior.

One broad interpretation of this study is that partisanship is part of what movement scholars describe as the political opportunity structure (McAdam 1982). The political opportunity or political process framework emphasizes the role of context in shaping movement decisions and outcomes. In the political opportunity framework, scholars focus on those conditions external to the movement that interact with the movements which “enhance or inhibit a social movement’s prospects for (a) mobilizing, (b) advancing particular claims rather than others, (c) cultivating some alliances rather than others, (d) affecting mainstream institutional politics and policy” (Meyer, 2004, p. 126). The framework in particular focuses on the notion of “expanding political opportunities” (Meyer and Staggenborg, 1996; Kitschelt, 1986; Goodwin and Jasper, 1999; Meyer and Minkoff, 2004), or the emergent conditions of political regimes that leave them vulnerable to change from the outside, e.g. by social movements.

Functionally, political opportunities can help scholars of social movements understand

when mobilization and protest occur (Almeida and Stearns, 1998), how movements effect public policy (Amenta and Zylan, 1991), when movements crystalize into organizations and coalitions (Minkoff, 1995), and the emergence of specific strategies (Rochon and Meyer, 1997; Minkoff, 1997).

It's hardly a leap to suggest that partisanship is one part of the broader political opportunity structure. In times when hyper-partisanship reigns, as is the case today, this critical contextual factor will both shape the effects of movements (e.g. social polarization, but also public support — see chapter three) and which strategies are likely to be most successful (e.g. violent, disruptive, or cooperative tactics). This is one way through which movement scholars may begin to think about partisanship at an appropriate level of abstraction. By interrogating partisanship as a political condition through which movements must navigate, we can better understand its role in shaping movements and their effects.

## Study two: Movements, polarization, and democracy

Social polarization is hypothesized to contribute to declines in democratic norms and attitudes (see Mason 2018; Iyengar et al 2018). That is, as partisan groups become increasingly hostile toward one another, it is possible that they become increasingly willing to support a political system or party leaders who take extreme measures to protect the ingroup. This can become authoritarianism when it involves violating the rights of outgroups (e.g. “fake news” and the “enemy of the people”). This is arguably a deeper form of social polarization: being willing to support political actions that violate systemic norms of fairness and mutual tolerance are extreme forms of social distancing. Likewise, declines in mutual tolerance and support for the rights of outgroups are early indicators of democratic decline and the rise of authoritarian political leadership (Levitsky and Ziblatt 2018). That is, if social movements deepen social polarization, they may also be strengthening support for authoritarianism. Thus, my second chapter examines if and how social movements produce this deleterious spillover effect.

The relationship between social movements and support for authoritarianism are predictable according to social dominance theory, which builds on work on realistic threat and social identity discussed previously. Social dominance theory is concerned with group-based hierarchy and the processes that maintain such hierarchies. This includes institutional forces, i.e. the use of official state power. According to social

dominance theory, group-based discrimination occurs because group-based identities and ideologies “coordinate the actions of institutions and individuals... [and] as such, people support institutions that allocate resources in accordance with those ideologies [Mitchell and Sidanius, 1995; Pratto, Stallworth, and Conway-Lanz 1998; Pratto, Stallworth, and Sidanius, 1997] (Sidanius et al 1994, p. 847). This is driven by social dominance orientation (social dominance orientation), a psychological orientation toward group dominance. Research in social dominance theory has shown that social dominance orientation moderates the effect of group conflict on discriminatory behavior (e.g. social polarization).

“For example, in a minimal-groups experiment, we found that people higher in social dominance orientation were most discriminatory against the out-group when the ingroup was one with which they could highly identify (Sidanius, Pratto, & Mitchell, 1994). In implicit group discrimination experiments, people high and low in social dominance orientation appeared equally discriminatory until they were put under group threat, at which point high-social dominance orientation people became highly discriminatory and low-social dominance orientation people failed to discriminate (Pratto & Shih, 2000). Independently, Jackson and Esses (2000) have shown that reducing perceptions of the group threat posed by immigrants reduces prejudice against them by those low

in social dominance orientation, but that this intervention does not work for those high in social dominance orientation.” (Sidanius et al 1994, p. 850)

Support for authoritarian political leadership, then, may be a manifestation of support for a specific group-based hierarchy. A willingness to suppress the rights of the outgroup for the purposes of protecting the ingroup is a logical extension of the identity threat dynamics previously described. When a group is threatened, members’ heightened prejudice and negative emotions toward the outgroup increase the likelihood that they will believe that the outgroup is undeserving of equality under the law and to believe an authority is needed to protect the ingroup from the encroaching threat of the outgroup. This will occur even if it requires the violation of norms of mutual tolerance that a democracy relies on (Levitsky and Ziblatt, 2018). In more extreme cases, when outgroup hostility becomes dehumanizing, groups are more likely to endorse outright violence against the outgroup (Kteily, Bruneau, Waytz, Cotterill 2015).

In the case of social movements and partisanship, I suspect that exposure to threatening social movement tactics not only increases social polarization amongst partisans, but has the additional effect of increasing support for generic authoritarian political leadership amongst those same partisans. Partisans will express greater support for authoritarian political leadership because they will be more likely to perceive the

outgroup (the movement and its associated partisan affiliation) as representing a threat to their ingroup. Importantly, this is a case where the effects of social movement tactics may be asymmetrical. I suspect that the effect of high-threat tactics will be greater for Republicans than Democrats in this instance, given evidence of higher levels of social dominance orientations amongst conservatives (Pratto et al. 1994; Sidanius and Pratto 1999; Van Hiel and Mervielde 2006).

Given aforementioned research on the central role of social dominance orientation in influencing discriminatory outgroup behavior, I focus here on how protest increases or decreases social dominance orientation. My assumption is that if protest increases social dominance orientation, it will therefore also increase outgroup discriminatory behavior and support for other such authoritarian political action, though I am not able to test those outcomes directly.

Understanding the effects of social movements on tolerance for anti-democratic norms has potentially serious implications. If movements exhibit either direct and/or indirect effects on support for authoritarian political behavior due to partisan group dynamics, it would point toward a much deeper meaning of McAdam and Kloos' (2014) notion of movements as centrifugal forces. If this were to be observed, movements may in fact hasten the demise of, rather than preserve, democratic institutions and norms, *driven largely by the force of mass partisanship*.

Thus, I have my next set of research questions, following the structure of the first analysis wherein I identify a basic effect, and add dimensionality with types of protest and partisanship, respectively:

*RQ<sub>1</sub>: Does exposure to protest increase social dominance orientation?*

*RQ<sub>2</sub>: Is the effect of protest on social dominance orientation conditioned by the type of protest?*

*RQ<sub>3</sub>: Is the effect of protest on social dominance orientation conditioned by the type of protest and partisan identity?*

## Results

The dependent variable in this analysis is a composite measure of social dominance orientation, based on the items described in the methods section ( $\alpha = .84$ ) and detailed in table 13 below.

Table 13. Social dominance orientation items

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Please describe whether you agree or disagree with the following statements

- 1) Some groups of people are simply not the equals of others
- 2) Some people are just more worthy than others
- 3) This country would be better off if we cared less about how equal all people were
- 4) To get ahead in life, it is sometimes necessary to step on others
- 5) In an ideal world, all nations would be equal

*A: Strongly disagree, disagree, slightly disagree, neither, slightly agree, agree, strongly agree*

---

Table 14 shows the levels of social dominance orientation between different segments of the sample. As expected, Republicans exhibit the highest levels (agreement) of social dominance orientation. Democrats and Independents are essentially equivalent.

Table 14. Mean values for social dominance orientation

	Social dominance orientation
Pooled sample	3.41
Republicans	4.23
Independents	3.09
Democrats	3.10

As with the previous study, the first analysis here uses a pooled treatment dummy variable for the independent variable in order to evaluate the generic effect of protest on social dominance orientation. This model allows us to address research question one:

*RQ1: Does exposure to protest increase social dominance orientation?*

The results of this analysis are presented in table 15 below. Surprisingly—confoundingly, really—the general effect of protest on social dominance orientation is negative. That is, respondents who were exposed to protest exhibit a *lower* social dominance orientation than those who were not exposed to a protest. Needless to say, this runs counter to expectation. However, further analysis is needed to better understand why this effect may be occurring.

Table 15. OLS regression on social dominance orientation (pooled treatment)

	B (SE)
Protest	-0.51 (0.11)**
Constant	3.78 (0.09)**
N =	1,569

\* p < .05; \*\*p < .01

Another way to evaluate the effects is to see if any particular type of protest is driving the effect over others. It may be that the direction of the effects differ, and that perhaps cooperative protest lowers social dominance orientation more so than violent and disruptive protest, making a pooled sample appear to move in a negative direction.

Thus, research question two:

*RQ<sub>2</sub>: Is the effect of protest on social dominance orientation conditioned by the type of protest?*

To address research question two, I disaggregate the protests into the six treatments described in the first study with a control reference condition. Again, quite contrary to expectation, the effects are all negative. Likewise, the magnitude of the effect is fairly consistent. For each type of protest, exposure to a protest lowers social dominance orientation compared to a control group. The effects are highly significant in each case.

Table 16. OLS regression on social dominance orientation (disaggregated treatments)

	B (SE)
Dem-Violent	-0.43 (0.15)**
Rep-Violent	-0.45 (0.15)**
Dem-Disrupt	-0.56 (0.15)**
Rep-Disrupt	-0.59 (0.15)**
Dem-Cooperative	-0.51 (0.15)**
Rep-Cooperative	-0.50 (0.15)**
Constant	3.78 (0.99)**
N =	1,569

\* p < .05; \*\*p < .01

It is worth noting here for the reader that considerable care was taken to evaluate the coding of the social dominance orientation variable. I ensured that the survey instrument was producing properly coded responses, that all syntax transformed the variables appropriately, and that the coding of the final composite variable was computed accurately.

But perhaps the effect is not surprising after all. According to the social identity theory framework used here, we should expect social dominance orientation to increase when a group is under threat. However, the only way to properly evaluate the effects of protest on social dominance orientation is to capture ingroup and outgroup dynamics. A pooled treatment or a disaggregated set of treatments are essentially meaningless if not disaggregated further—protest should only be threatening when the protest comes from an outgroup, i.e. a Republican seeing a protest from a group aligned with Democrats. Disaggregation of the treatments must be paired with a segmented analysis by partisanship. Thus, we must address research question three:

*RQ3: Is the effect of protest on social dominance orientation conditioned by the type of protest and partisan identity?*

The results of this analysis are demonstrated in table 17, which begins to make some sense of the negative effects. The effects of protest on social dominance orientation are almost entirely isolated to Republicans. That is, with only the exception of the violent, Democratic-oriented protest, each treatment has the effect of lowering social dominance orientation in comparison to the control group. Effects are also apparent for the violent and non-violent disruptive Republican-oriented treatments for Independents, though the magnitude of the effect is substantially smaller. The greatest effects for lowering social dominance orientation are from cooperative protest.

Table 17. OLS regression on social dominance orientation with partisan affiliations

	Model 2:	Model 3:	Model 4:
	Republicans only	Independents only	Democrats only
	B (SE)	B (SE)	B (SE)
Dem-Violent	-0.56 (0.31)	-0.35 (0.20)	-0.16 (0.28)
Rep-Violent	-0.74 (0.30)**	-0.41 (0.20)*	-0.08 (0.29)
Dem-Disrupt	-0.80 (0.30)**	-0.28 (0.20)	-0.49 (0.28)
Rep-Disrupt	-0.76 (0.29)**	-0.68 (0.20)**	-0.39 (0.29)
Dem-Cooperative	-1.16 (0.30)**	-0.26 (0.19)	-0.12 (0.31)
Rep-Cooperative	-0.90 (0.31)**	-0.24 (0.19)	-0.33 (0.31)
Constant	4.83 (0.31)**	3.37 (0.13)**	3.24 (0.18)**
N =	436	680	453

\* p < .05; \*\*p < .01

## Discussion

The results of this analysis are surprising to say the least. It is difficult to offer a clear explanation for why Republicans social dominance orientation is reduced through exposure to protest, though I am confident that the effect is real. As such, I will be cautious in interpreting these findings.

The most obvious way to interpret the findings in this study is to take them at face value. When Republicans are exposed to protest they become less inclined to support social hierarchies and inequality. This implies that protest is a clear democratic *good*: protest has the useful effect of promoting social egalitarianism. Above and beyond the effects of protest on support for a given cause, they have the secondary benefit of promoting a more egalitarian society.

I conducted several secondary analyses to try to understand what might be going on with these findings, i.e. what mechanisms might explain the observed effect. One hypothesis is that, while we might assume all Republicans would find an anti-climate change protest representative of an outgroup, it may be that many Republicans believe in climate change and perceive the protest as representative of their own beliefs. Indeed, about 20% of Republicans in this sample do believe in anthropogenic climate change. Some Republicans may therefore be buoyed by seeing such protests, accounting for all of the observed effect. Of course, this would fail to explain why no such effect exists for

Democrats or why exposure to Republican-oriented climate change protest also exhibits a negative effect. In fact, using this dichotomous variable as a control does not weaken the effect amongst Republicans.

Alternatively, it may be that because Republicans exhibit higher levels of social dominance orientation in general—both within this sample and consistent with prior research on social dominance orientation—that the effects of protest on lowering social dominance orientation is not dependent on party identification. Rather, Democrats' pre-existing levels of social dominance orientation are so low that it is difficult for treatments such as these to lower them further. On the contrary, because Republicans have higher levels of social dominance orientation, it has more elasticity, allowing these treatments to produce an effect.

Regardless of how future research might be able to explain these findings—or what factors they are conditioned upon—it does appear that we can conclude that protest, whether agreeable or not, has the effect of lowering social dominance orientation amongst the group of Americans who exhibit the greatest levels of it. This is critical. As reviewed earlier, social dominance orientation is linked to support for authoritarianism and tolerance of social inequality. By protesting, activists may, contrary to much expectation, be generating the exact opposite of a backlash. Instead, they are promoting underlying values of democracy, equality, and tolerance, regardless of the specific content of the protest.

If taken at face value, a second implication is that it is non-violent, non-disruptive protest that most decreases social dominance orientation amongst Republicans. This is another sign, in line with the preceding and ensuing analyses, that non-violent, non-disruptive protest is preferable to the alternatives. Not only—as I will show in the next analyses—does it have the most positive effect on support, but it also is the least likely to increase social polarization (and with the smallest magnitude) and has the secondary benefit of lowering social dominance orientation amongst a group with high, pre-existing levels.

### Study three: Protest, partisanship, and public opinion

Obviously, movements do not use protest for the purposes of polarizing the public along partisan lines. They do so for a variety of reasons well-articulated by social movement scholars and partially reviewed earlier. There is a long-standing debate, however, about the best means through which to achieve these goals. This debate between the efficacy of cooperative, disruptive, and violent protest styles has been addressed repeatedly to this point, but a brief review is worthwhile here.

The classic argument for violence—and disruption more generally—is that by creating social unrest, disenfranchised and marginalized groups are able to create something with which to bargain (Piven and Crawford, 1979). Elites will bargain with the protesting group to restore order. Disruptive and violent protest have the additional value of generating media attention, which assists in gaining and changing public opinion (Rochon 1998; Gamson and Modigliani 1989; Andrews, Beyerlein, and Farnum 2015) which is a condition for movement success (see Angone, 2007; Burstein and Linton, 2002; Burstein and Freudenburg, 1978).

Specific to violent protest, Turner (1970) hypothesizes that protest that is viewed as threatening (e.g. violence) is less likely to be viewed as credible protest at all, diminishing support from the public. However, other empirical work suggests the opposite. McAdam and Su (2002) find that, rather than movements generating a generic

effect on public opinion, it is violent protest that shifts public opinion toward movement objectives, though it may be associated with a backlash against the movement itself. In an experiment similar to the one used here, Thomas and Louis (2014) find that violent protest undermines bystander support, while non-violent protest is more effective. Though research that directly targets the effect of violent protest on public opinion is limited, Kalmoe (2017) finds that aggressive metaphors motivate voters who are inclined toward aggression but demobilize others. What's more, Kalmoe, Gubler, and Wood (2017) find a similar pattern for partisan polarization. Simpson, Willer, and Feinberg (2018) find that violent protest tactics tend to *lower* support for a protest. Overall, research on the relationship between protest styles and public opinion is ambivalent.

Perhaps contributing to this ambivalence is that none of these studies evaluate the role that partisanship plays in moderating the effect of violent protest on public opinion. In an interesting corollary to this study, Bloemraad, Silva, and Voss (2016) find that partisanship plays a significant role in determining how collective action frames influence public opinion about a movement or its goals. Within the social identity framework used here, we would suspect that public support for a politicized movement following a protest will increase for copartisans and decrease for opposed partisans through the same threat and emotional processes described earlier. What is unclear is (a) how such tactics will influence moderates and non-partisans and (b) which of those

tactics will have the greatest effect. These are vital questions, however. Research shows that public opinion is a vital step for movements to achieve policy change, yet the effects of various types of protest and how they are moderated by the increasingly dominant identity of partisanship are unclear or unexplored entirely. Therefore, for my third research question I evaluate the relative effects of protest on public opinion and how those effects are moderated by partisanship. As with previous chapters, I disentangle these effects using three separate research questions with accompanying analyses:

*RQ<sub>1</sub>: Does exposure to protest increase support?*

*RQ<sub>2</sub>: Is the effect of protest on support conditioned by the type of protest?*

*RQ<sub>3</sub>: Is the effect of protest support conditioned by the type of protest and partisan identity?*

## Results

The dependent variables in this study are four self-reported items on support for the protest and willingness to sign a petition in support of a protest group associated with a protest. The details of these items are explained in the methods section. For the first outcome, respondents were asked to report agreement or disagreement with four questions regarding support or opposition to the protest described in the treatment vignettes. The final dependent variable for support is a composite of the four items

(alpha = .94). The second outcome—willingness to sign a petition in support of a protest—required respondents to report whether they would be willing to sign a petition in support of a protest. This is coded as a dummy variable with “1” for “yes” and “0” for “no.” These questions are re-presented in table 14 below.

Table 18. Dependent variables for movement support

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DV1: Do you agree or disagree with the following statements on the protestors you just read about?

- 1) If they achieve their goals, people like me would be better off
- 2) I share their beliefs and values
- 3) They represent people like me
- 4) I support the protestor’s cause

*A: Strongly agree, somewhat agree, neither, somewhat disagree, strongly disagree*

DV2: Would you like to sign a petition in support of the protesters? If you select "yes", you will be directed to a petition from the group at the completion of the survey.

*A: Yes, no*

---

Tables 19 and 20 show the mean values of the two dependent variables used in this study. Table 19 shows the mean values for the Democratic-leaning movement. Overall support is modest, and, as expected, highest amongst Democrats for both variables. Interestingly, Republicans have nearly the same level of stated support as Independents and are much more willing to sign a petition in support of the Democratic climate change protest group.

Table 19. Mean values for movement support (Democratic movement)

	Stated support (aggregate measure)	Petition
Pooled sample	3.50	.35
Republicans	3.29	.38
Independents	3.36	.24
Democrats	3.89	.47

Table 20 shows the mean values for the Republican-leaning movement. Overall support for this group is lower than the Democratic-leaning movement, suggesting that the partisan effects do not offset. The Republican movement simply does not have the same legitimacy as the Democratic movement, an issue to which I'll return later.

Table 20. Mean values for movement support (Republican movement)

	Stated support (aggregate measure)	Petition
Pooled sample	3.01	.29
Republicans	3.19	.47
Independents	2.88	.19
Democrats	3.31	.37

Turning to analyses, for models on stated support I use ordinary least squares regression. For models on willingness to sign petition I use logistic regression with odds ratios reported for the coefficients. The independent variables in this case are consistent with the pattern used in chapter five: in table 21, the independent variable is a pooled dummy variable where "1" represents all treatment conditions and "0" represents the control condition. In tables 22-24, the independent variables are the six treatment conditions with a control reference condition.

In the first analysis I pool the treatment conditions and compare them to a control condition in correspondence with research question 1:

*RQ1: Does exposure to protest increase support?*

What we see is that protest is not uniformly effective at shifting stated support in either direction. It is apparent, however, that protest does have a negative effect on willingness to sign a petition in support, with respondents in the treatment conditions only 78% as likely to sign a petition compared to the control group.

Table 21. Regressions on support outcomes (pooled treatments)

	Model 1: Support <sup>1</sup>	Model 2: Willingness to sign petition <sup>2</sup>
	B (SE)	B (SE)
Protest	0.01 (0.07)	0.78 (0.09)*
Constant	3.29 (0.06)**	0.54 (0.05)**
N =	1,651	1650

\* p < .05; \*\*p < .01

<sup>1</sup>Coefficient should be interpreted as the average difference between the treatment group and the reference condition (control group—see methods section for discussion of treatments and controls).

<sup>2</sup>Coefficient is reported as an odds ratio; that is, the percentage difference in willingness to sign petition in support of protest between treatment and control conditions.

As stated in research question two, however, it is unlikely that all protest exhibits the same effect on support:

*RQ2: Is the effect of protest on support conditioned by the type of protest?*

In table 22, I show how different types of protest differentially shift support. What we see is that five of the six treatment conditions influence support, with only the non-

disruptive Republican-oriented treatment having a null effect. However, the directions are not the same, explaining the null effect in the pooled sample: each of the three Democratic-oriented treatments have a positive effect. Importantly, the non-disruptive protest has approximately twice the effect on support that the violent or non-violent disruptive protest has. The Republican oriented protest, on the other hand, has a negative effect on support, with support declining for respondents exposed to both the violent and non-violent, disruptive treatments. The violent treatment produced twice the decrease of the disruptive, non-violent treatment. Effects are also observed for willingness to sign a petition. Respondents who were exposed to the violent Republican oriented protest were 48% as likely to sign a petition as those in the control group, while respondents exposed to the non-violent disruptive Republican oriented protest were 63% as likely. No difference was observed for the Republican oriented non-disruptive, which means it was more effective than the violent or non-violent disruptive protests. No effect was observed for Democratic oriented protests of any type.

Table 22. Regressions on protest support (disaggregated treatments)

	Model 1: Support <sup>1</sup>	Model 2: Willingness to sign petition <sup>2</sup>
	B (SE)	B (SE)
Dem-Violent	0.23 (0.10)*	0.95 (0.17)
Rep-Violent	-0.56 (0.10)**	0.48 (0.09)**
Dem-Disrupt	0.28 (0.10)**	0.94 (0.16)
Rep-Disrupt	-0.30 (0.10)**	0.63 (0.12)*
Dem-Cooperative	0.50 (0.10)**	1.11 (0.20)
Rep-Cooperative	-0.07 (0.10)	0.69 (0.13)
Constant	3.29 (0.06)**	0.54 (0.05)**
N =	1,651	1,650

\*  $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$

<sup>1</sup>Coefficient should be interpreted as the average difference between the treatment group and the reference condition (control group—see methods section for discussion of treatments and controls).

<sup>2</sup>Coefficient is reported as an odds ratio; that is, the percentage difference in willingness to sign petition in support of protest between treatment and control conditions.

Of course, consistent with the preceding chapters, I am primarily interested in how partisanship interacts with protest styles to influence support, thus research question three:

*RQ<sub>3</sub>: Is the effect of protest support conditioned by the type of protest and partisan identity?*

As depicted in table 23, when I segment the analysis, I find that the effects are largely driven by Independent and Democratic respondents. The only observed effect for Republicans is lower protest support when they observe a violent, Republican-oriented protest. Independents respond positively to both disruptive (but non-violent) and non-disruptive Democratic protests and respond negatively to disruptive Republican-oriented protests. Democrats respond positively to both disruptive, non-violent and

non-disruptive Democratic protests and respond negatively to violent Republican-oriented protest.

Importantly, the effects are not equivalent between categories. For both Democrats and Independents, the positive effects of Democratic oriented protest are greater for the non-disruptive than the disruptive non-violent protest. Likewise, the negative effects of protest are strongest for violent protest.

Table 23. OLS regression on protest support with partisan affiliations

	Model 2: Republicans only	Model 3: Independents only	Model 4: Democrats only
	B (SE)	B (SE)	B (SE)
Dem-Violent	0.10 (0.21)	0.26 (0.15)	0.27 (0.18)
Rep-Violent	-0.49 (0.20)*	-0.42 (0.14)	-0.82 (0.18)*
Dem-Disrupt	-0.11 (0.20)	0.33 (0.15)*	0.48 (0.17)**
Rep-Disrupt	0.05 (0.19)	-0.36 (0.15)*	-0.61 (0.18)
Dem-Cooperative	-0.09 (0.20)	0.85 (0.14)**	0.61 (0.20)**
Rep-Cooperative	-0.14 (0.21)	-0.01 (0.14)	0.03 (0.20)
Constant	3.31 (0.12)**	3.04 (0.09)**	3.61 (0.11)**
N =	451	722	478

\*p < .10; \*\* p < .05; \*\*\*p < .01

All coefficients should be interpreted as the average difference between the treatment group and the reference condition (control group—see methods section for discussion of treatments and controls).

When I apply the segmentation to willingness to sign a petition, it becomes clear that the negative effect of the violent, Republican-oriented protest is consistent across all partisan categories, but that the effect of the non-violent disruptive protest is isolated to Democrats. Across each category, the violent, Republican-oriented protest lowers willingness to sign a petition by approximately 50%. Likewise, Democrats are only 42% as likely as the control condition to sign a petition in support of a Republican-oriented

disruptive, non-violent protest. None of the protest styles *increase* the likelihood of a respondent signing a petition in comparison with the control group.

Table 24. Logistic regression on willingness to sign protest petition with partisan affiliations

	Model 2: Republicans only	Model 3: Independents only	Model 4: Democrats only
	B (SE)	B (SE)	B (SE)
Dem-Violent	1.09 (0.38)	0.89 (0.28)	0.91 (0.27)
Rep-Violent	0.44 (0.15)*	0.51 (0.17)*	0.49 (0.16)*
Dem-Disrupt	0.86 (0.29)	0.78 (0.25)	1.12 (0.33)
Rep-Disrupt	0.94 (0.29)	0.54 (0.19)	0.42 (0.14)*
Dem-Cooperative	0.83 (0.28)	1.34 (0.38)	1.39 (0.47)
Rep-Cooperative	0.58 (0.21)	0.79 (0.24)	0.81 (0.28)
Constant	0.66 (0.13)**	0.32 (0.05)**	0.84 (0.15)**
N=	451	721	478

\*  $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$

Coefficients are reported as odds ratios; that is, the percentage difference in willingness to sign petition in support of protest between treatment and control conditions.

## Discussion

Clearly, protest has an effect on public support. But what is the pattern such effects take? Violent protest is clearly ineffective at shifting public support. Each partisan group was approximately 50% less likely to sign a petition in support of a violent protest compared to the control condition. Violent protest exhibited a negative effect on public support for both Republican and Democrats—for the latter, it occurred for both ingroup and outgroup protest, while the former an effect was observed for the ingroup protest.

However, the pattern of our findings demonstrates something unexpected. Rather than the success of the protest being dependent on whether the respondent was a member of

the ingroup or outgroup, the only positive effects occurred for the Democratic-oriented protest. For both Independents and Democrats, the disruptive, non-violent and non-disruptive protests generated increased support, with no effect on Republicans. However, we see that the only effects generated by the Republican oriented protest were *negative*. Given that the details of the protest were held constant and only the position of the protestors was changed within protest types, we might surmise that the reason for this directional pattern is that the Republican-oriented protests were not seen as legitimate.

Recent research suggests that legitimacy is a key moderating variable in determining the effectiveness of protest (Wang and Piazza 2016; Simpson, Willer, and Feinberg 2018). Simply, when a movement is seen as illegitimate, bystanders tend to identify less with the group and believe the group less reasonable. It is plausible that the Republican-oriented protest is simply seen as less legitimate in this case, particularly given the lower levels of movement support depicted in tables 23 and 24 and the surprisingly high level of support for the Democratic protest amongst Republicans. Even though Republicans tend to be less likely to believe in *anthropogenic* climate change, the vast majority of our sample does believe that climate change is happening (89.14%), including 79.85% of Republicans. This may explain the unexpected pattern of responses observed here. The reason that Republicans display negative reactions to Republican-oriented protests is that while they may not believe action should be taken

to address climate change, they do not necessarily identify with active efforts to oppose policies that address a problem they believe exists.

What *is* clear from these findings is that the largest and most consistent positive effects for protest support occur when movements are non-disruptive and non-violent and, I suspect, are seen as legitimate. Importantly, we do observe that disruptive but non-violent protest has a positive effect on movement support, even for Independents. This may represent a sort of tradeoff for protest organizers: organizers realize that some level of disruption is likely necessary to gain public attention in the first place and may be willing to sacrifice the marginal gains in public support from less disruptive protest if it means that they are able to garner media coverage. It is well established that some level of disruption is necessary to gain media coverage and reach the public in the first place. Thus, disruptive but non-violent tactics represent a middle ground between maximizing public support and gaining media coverage.

## Conclusion: A place for perverse movement effects

While analyses were partitioned for clarity, this somewhat obscures the broader contributions of this work. Taken together the preceding analyses make several contributions to our shared understanding of protest, social movements, and partisan polarization, which I'll now explore in some depth.

The simplest of these contributions is to demonstrate how critical the partisan nature of modern protest is in understanding its effects. On the one hand, study number three shows that the effectiveness of protest is not uniform along party identification. When I disaggregate the effects of the treatments on support, I find that the effects were largely isolated to one party and not the other. On the other hand, study number one shows that partisanship interacts with protest to create a kind of perverse effect: widening social polarization. Taken together, the results of these studies suggest that partisanship has a quite wide-ranging impact on how protest is experienced by the public.

This project set out to engage with a long-standing interest in the activist paradox.

Activists are often caught between competing effects of their tactics. For instance, a tactic may produce public sympathy, but it may also produce a violent backlash from authorities. McAdam and Su (2002) argue that understanding these apparent paradoxes is a critical challenge for social movement scholars. In their words, the field should attend "...much more closely to the dynamic relationships among tactics, targets, and

the ways in which certain outcomes (e.g., the successful courting of media attention through victimization) may preclude others (policymaker support for policy change)... Only at attending to the variable patterning of such findings can we begin to understand the general dilemmas confronting social movements and the generic mechanisms on which these dilemmas may turn." (p. 717).

This paradox has indeed been observed in a range of recent scholarship. Bloemraad, Silva and Voss (2016) find a similar paradox in the study of collective action frames. They find that collective action frames can simultaneously deepen support amongst a sympathetic base but reduce support amongst moderates and opposed groups. Other research notes the ways in which movements face a tradeoff between disruption and public support specifically (see Wang and Piazza 2016 for discussion; also, Miller, Feinberg, and Willer 2018). My work here suggests that as it relates to social polarization, activists face no such paradox. The tactics most likely to increase support and exhibit the largest effects are non-disruptive and non-violent. These are also the tactics least likely to widen social polarization and exhibit the smallest effects. My findings, in conjunction with other recent work (Simpson, Willer, and Feinberg 2018), also challenge McAdam and Su's (2002) arguments that violent and disruptive tactics are the most effective at shifting public opinion. At the very least, these recent findings ought to cause hesitation amongst activists who believe in the efficacy of such tactics.

The combined findings of this study suggest that understanding the relationship between social movements and politics—from the behavior of parties to individual voting behavior—requires we be attentive to social identity processes. Movements and politics are vehicles of collective identity, and the foundation of their relationship is one of overlapping and cross-cutting groups. As our identities become increasingly sorted under partisan banners, movements will follow. Partisanship will then act as a filter through which most movement actions will be understood and will interact with patterns of contention in potentially deleterious ways. Rather than seeing movements as centripetal forces, as social movement scholars implicitly do today, movements may instead become powerfully centrifugal forces, pushing society further and further apart. This calls to mind Hayek's (1988) notion of the fatal conceit of intellectuals, which is that emancipatory action does not necessarily lead to positive social change. Our collective actions have both intended and unintended effects, and it is the "fatal conceit" of social movement activists and movement scholars that the effects of movements are uniformly or on balance positive. This study begins a process of challenging this conceit. As I have demonstrated here, the effects of a movement may be quite "perverse." That is, in attempting to address an injustice or social problem, activists simultaneously contribute to another significant social problem (polarization). While this study cannot address the balance of such tradeoffs, it calls attention to a critical research need: to begin to explore the perverse effects of social movements. We must acknowledge our untested

assumptions about the centripetal force of social movements lest we risk perpetuating a centrifugal force instead. *This is, in the author's view, the most important contribution of this study.* I've demonstrated at least one way in which social movement produce a perverse effect, raising the bigger question, "what other perverse effects do movements have?"

To close this dissertation, I offer the beginnings of a framework for understanding perverse effects and considering their overlap with existing notions of movement impacts. To begin this process, we need to make clear what perverse effects are not.

First, perverse outcomes are distinct from mere setbacks. No social movement has ever succeeded so well as to encounter zero resistance. As a point of fact, there would be no reason for a movement to exist if there was not an established authority failing to address collective grievances and resisting such effort. All social movements provoke resistance that will stifle efforts at achieving explicit goals. A primary distinction then, between mere setbacks and perverse outcomes, is that setbacks are failures to achieve a goal. For instance, when a grassroots anti-fracking organization fails to pass a zoning ordinance banning the industry, they are experiencing a setback. A failure to achieve a goal is not a *perverse* effect, it is *the absence of* an effect. Simply, perverse effects are not null effects. A perverse effect is a clear reaction either: (A) against the movement itself or (B) in response to the movement but outside of its intended milieu. What setbacks and perverse effects have in common, however, is that they are both unintentional.

They are, in fact, the opposite of the intention of the movement. In this way, they are a

subset of the unintentional effects identified by other scholars (Giugni and Bosi, 2012, Bosi, Giugni, Uba, 2016), though as I will argue, perverse effects are defined by more than their unintentionality.

Perverse effects are also beyond the scope of anticipation. They are effects produced from social movement activity that could not reasonably be anticipated by movement actors. Social movements operate in inherently complex systems where the effects will often be incomprehensible to actors within them (Perrow, 1984). This is not the same as claiming an outcome is unintentional; a wide range of unintended outcomes could occur that would be entirely predictable by the movement, including something as simple as failure to achieve an explicit goal such as passing an ordinance or defeating a piece of legislation. These are unintended outcomes, but they are certainly anticipatable. For instance, perverse effects are not the same as repression. Giugni and Bosi (2012), in briefly describing perverse effects, discuss police repression as an example of “unintended and perverse effects”. We agree that repression is unintended, but it is often anticipatable in that it is predictable in many cases, and therefore does not fit within the meaning of perverse outcomes. Countermovements and resistance from established authority are routine and anticipatable consequences for social movement actors and organizations. However, other forms of repression may be beyond the scope of anticipation, including violence. The recent attack on peaceful protesters in Charlottesville, Virginia is a case in point. Protesters were attacked by a member of

white nationalist organization, an escalation that could not have been reasonably anticipated by participants at the rally. A more historical example is the counter-intelligence operations against New Left and Black Power movements in the 1960's sanctioned by the FBI (Cunningham, 2003).

Perverse outcomes are often unanticipated because they take many years to occur.

Indeed, they may not be directly observable at all to actors within a given contentious episode. This is because the effects may take years to accumulate, or because the effects are so far outside the contended space that they are merely unseen. Indeed, if this were not the case—that perverse effects were easily observed—movements would be keen to avoid them altogether. Simply, perverse consequences exist precisely *because* they are unseen and unanticipated. This is consistent with case study research that has emphasized how the effects of movements vary over extended periods of time, even within similar contexts (McAdam and Boudet, 2012; Freudenburg and Gramling, 1994; Molotch, Freudenburg, and Paulsen, 2000).

Being unanticipatable and unintended is not sufficient for an outcome to be perverse.

Outcomes that fit the first two criteria could actually be positive, fitting the goals of the movement. An example of this type may be unexpected surges in support following a repressive act by a powerful regime. I call this criteria desirability. We can think of a desirable outcome as one that promotes the cause of the movement, leads to improvement in life course metrics, or promotes some broader democratic attitudes,

norms, or processes, etc. Perverse outcomes, on the other hand, entail undesirable outcomes. Undesirable outcomes derail or harm the movement and/or its members, produce policy or institutional change that punishes the movement and makes their future efforts less likely to succeed, or promotes anti-democratic attitudes, norms, or processes.

What of the locus of perverse effects? Perverse effects need not accrue to only the movement itself. Perverse effects can also be accrued externally, in other social systems or by non-movement actors. Given that social movements often have as a subtextual mission to promote democratic process, one critical potential perverse effect can relate to the functioning of the democratic system broadly. The aforementioned Dakota Access Pipeline protests in North Dakota provide a strong example. Protests over the DAPL led several states to push legislation that would have limited liability for drivers who hit protesters assembling in the street. This, of course, was directly targeted at ongoing protests, but it would have had smothering effects for future efforts at public assembly. Partisan polarization, analyzed in this study, is another external perverse effect.

Critically, it should not be taken from this description that perverse outcomes are absolute barriers to movement success. The Southern civil rights movement provoked enormous physical harm for its participants and led to the escalation of suppressive and violent behavior of the established authorities the movement was resisting. Yet, the

movement was able to achieve considerable success, though these perverse outcomes may have been successful in suppressing participation and may have reduced the movement's possible degrees of success.

Social movement scholars who have worked to link social movements to democratic systems have at least partially hinted at the existence of perverse outcomes. Tilly (2003) argues that anti-democratic movements can promote democracy by unintentionally spurring pro-democratic counter movements, not unlike recent surges in democratic activism following the 2016 U.S. presidential election. More recently, in analyzing partisan polarization in the U.S., McAdam and Kloos (2014) refer to a clear case of perverse movement effects as "ironic", obfuscating the generalizable nature of the findings. Indeed, McAdam's findings regarding the relationship between the segregationist and civil rights movements and their roles in generating partisan polarization is perhaps the strongest social movement study to date in demonstrating how perverse effects can be forged. Amenta et al. (2010) refer to how movements can "do worse than fail", but again fails to problematize or even bother to elaborate on this particular condition. In the same article, the authors describe only one case study which they define as having "negative" outcomes, or what we label here as undesirable. Andrews (2004) notes, "...a movement could have counterproductive effects—for example, if a campaign led to increasing surveillance or imprisonment of activists or bystanders." (p. 17)

To be clear, perverse outcomes can only be understood by considering the perspective of a movement. A perverse outcome is one that backfires on the explicit or implicit goals and beliefs of the movement. I previously mentioned the DAPL protests and legislation targeted as protesters. This legislation was a perverse effect for two reasons: 1) it attempted to squelch that particular movement; and 2) it would have had a chilling effect on future protests beyond the scope of the DAPL protests. Given the explicitly democratic structure of the protest—it was directly seeking voice for underrepresented persons—the broader effect of the legislation undermines the implicit beliefs of the movement, above and beyond the movement’s explicit goals. However, we should not assume that only pro-democratic, liberal movements can experience perverse outcomes. The anti-civil rights countermovement in the American South in the 1960’s used violent and visceral techniques to repress civil rights protesters. The images of these violent countermovement tactics helped to galvanize national support for the civil rights movement (Garrow, 1978). This clearly is a perverse outcome from the perspective of Bull Connor and Henry Wallace.

Bosi, Giugni, and Uba (2016) inadvertently offer some insight into why perverse outcomes are generally missed by social movement scholars. They emphasize that to understand the outcomes of movements, scholars need to “refocus the analysis on the targets of protest, that is, those who are supposed to respond.” (p. 15) This is a useful piece of advice for those interested in standard social movement outcomes related to

policy or other external loci, but it is also a way to narrow the scope of vision of what a movement *actually impacts*. Movements are so pervasive in Western society that we should expect them to have a wide range of impacts on surprising objects and processes, *far* beyond those which are the target of the movement or protest itself. Similar to the argument made by McAdam and Boudet (2012), it is possible that movement scholars have been selecting on the dependent variable by focusing largely on desirable movement outcomes, ignoring or failing to see the ways in which movements create adverse effects. This is evidenced in the aforementioned review piece by Amenta et al. (2010), which identified only one study of undesirable outcomes. So, before parting this manuscript, I will offer the reader a simple definition of a perverse movement effect with the hope that this definition and the preceding elaboration leads to greater interest in the subject. A perverse social movement outcome can be defined as follows:

An effect attributable to movement actions (frames, protests, etc.) that is both (a) unanticipated and (b) counterproductive to the explicit or implicit goals and values of the claimant.

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