

Dear PPW Members:

This is a draft paper adapted from a book project we are currently working on. The paper provides an argument for how repression affects participation at the organizational and the individual levels. Using this argument and analysis as a starting point, the book then goes in two directions. First, it narrows down on the individual level analysis. There is a chapter addressing who exactly within the arrested population is continuing to participate after repression. We find that identity is crucial—individuals with strong ethnic or organizational affiliations continue, while those without these identities drop out. Prior experience with repression also provides a positive impact on mobilization following the political arrest. Second, we zoom out to look more at what is occurring at the organizational level. Here we see that there are a number of related effects taking place simultaneously. Movement events are becoming smaller, more clandestine, and more violent in response to repression. We also show how all of these changes combine to contribute to a movement that is more removed from popular sentiment and more difficult for government institutions to track. In the conclusion we draw these analyses together and seek to synthesize findings from the literature on the conflict-repression nexus.

Any and all comments on this article as well as the broader book project would be hugely beneficial.

Thank you!

Chris

**If you Arrest a Revolutionary, Do you Arrest a Revolution?
Understanding the Impacts of Repression on Challenges and Challengers**

Abstract

How does repression influence the mobilization of collective challenges directed against political authorities? To date, the answers to this question have been mixed. This paper argues that existing work has been unable to adequately address the topic of interest because it has not yet jointly considered repression's effects on both challenges (i.e., the organizational-level response) and challengers (i.e., the individual-level response). To investigate the effects of repression, the study uses original panel data on organizational behavior and individual participation in a black-nationalist insurgency, the Republic of New Africa, and US counter-dissident activities directed against them between 1968 and 1970. Results show that the effects of repression are more complex than previously imagined. At the organizational level, repression is related to an increase in collective challenges. At the individual level, however, the results are multifaceted. Challengers who personally experience repression become more likely to participate, while those within the organization who did not experience repression drop out. Repression does not increase or decrease dissent; instead, it does both.

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For approximately forty years, researchers have been examining the impact of state repression¹ on the *occurrence of collective challenges* against political authority, such as dissent, terrorism, and insurgency, as well as the *participation of individual challengers* in these events. The principal objective of this work has been to assess how well governments do at constraining and/or eliminating overt threats to political order, a central concern for authorities, activists, social scientists as well as ordinary citizens. Yet, one of the most prominent conclusions from this work is that the results are mixed. For example, some research shows that repression increases subsequent challenges (e.g., Lichbach and Gurr 1981; Koopmans 1997; Francisco 2004; Walsh and Piazza 2010; Dugan and Chenoweth 2012) and participation in these activities (e.g., Opp and Gern 1993; White 1993), while other work demonstrates that repressive action can decrease relevant challenges (e.g., Hibbs 1973; Olzak et al. 2003; Earl and Soule 2010) and participation (Jeffries 2002). Some research finds that repression can either positively or negatively affect mobilization depending on diverse contextual factors (e.g., della Porta 1995; Brockett 2005; Moore 1998; Opp and Roehl 1990), and some finds that repression has no impact on contention whatsoever (e.g., Gurr and Moore 1997).

Although researchers have speculated about what accounts for the variation in findings noted above, highlighting theoretical and methodological issues (e.g., Lichbach 1987; Koopmans 1997; Pierskella 2009), we maintain that diversity results from researchers

(1) asking slightly different questions (e.g., does repression impact the scope of collective challenges or the willingness of individuals to participate in challenger activities?),

¹ Repression refers to actions taken by authorities against individuals and/or groups within their territorial jurisdiction that either restrict the behavior and/or beliefs of citizens through the imposition of negative sanctions or that physically damage or eliminate citizens through the violation of personal integrity.

- (2) examining distinct but related units of analysis (e.g., does repression change mobilization in a whole nation-state, across social movements, or across individuals in a particular movement?) and,
- (3) utilizing different sources (e.g., newspapers, surveys, interviews, government reports, and simulations).

Our approach differs fundamentally from earlier work. We argue that to better understand the impact of repression it is critical to examine behavior at both the individual and the organizational level. This combination of micro- and meso-level analyses is particularly useful for it assists researchers in understanding *why* specific individuals within the same social movement might increase their participation while other members drop out as well as *how* these changes combine to impact collective challenges to authority. Although two questions among many that could be asked about the influence of repression on mobilization, we maintain that these are centrally important to policies of protest policing and counter-terrorism/insurgency, the survival of social movements, as well as the popular discourse surrounding the role of coercion in human relations.

To demonstrate the utility of combining micro- and meso-level analyzes, we examine unique data derived from previously undisclosed police records. The records present detailed information on individual and organizational activity in a case of high-risk activism: a black-nationalist and secessionist social movement called the Republic of New Africa (RNA), which existed in the United States during the 1960s-1970s (XXX). We consider mobilization at both the individual and organizational level for one year prior to as well as a year following a specific repressive event (a large-scale raid, arrest, and interrogation referred to as the “New Bethel Incident”).

The results show that the effects of repression are more complex than previously imagined. In particular, when examining repression's effects at the organizational level, we find that while repression is related to significant increases in collective challenges, it has insignificant effects on per-event participation. Looking at the challengers within the organization, however, we see quite different effects. When examined at the individual level, repression does not increase or decrease dissent; instead, it does both. We find that repressed members are more likely to participate after experiencing repression, while those within the organization who did not personally experience repression drop out. *The repressed revolutionary rebels, while the non-repressed revolutionary withdraws.*

The implications of these findings for studies of conflict and repression are substantial and require scholars to rethink both their theoretical and methodological approaches to the subject. The study demonstrates that if we truly want to understand how repression influences those who seek to change/overthrow government, then we must get "inside" the movement to study effects both on individuals and on their organizational interactions. Indeed, if the impact of repression is contingent on who is repressed, then we cannot understand how repressive action influences behavioral challenges solely by studying event counts of observed acts of contention in some aggregate fashion. This should prompt those interested in government action as well as collective challenges to not only consider who is or is not repressed within a challenging institution, but also contemplate how organizations sustain themselves over time.

Below, we outline variation in the existing literature on repression and mobilization. This discussion is used to guide the development of our theory and research design. The next section presents the empirical analysis. In the conclusion, we address the implications for academic studies of repression and mobilization as well as the practical importance of the results.

The Influence of Repression on Mobilization: Dimensions of Study

Although the investigation of how repressive behavior influences mobilization is rooted in a common interest with understanding the establishment and maintenance of political order (e.g., Hobbes [1651] 2010; Wrong 1979; Foucault 1977), there is actually a great diversity in the way the topic is examined. In particular, three dimensions of existing scholarship are worthy of attention: 1) the research questions addressed, 2) the units of analysis, and 3) the principal sources of data.

Research Questions. Historically, there are different aspects of mobilization that researchers have found relevant for assessing the impact of state repression. Two are noteworthy. On the one hand, there are those focused on the *generation of challenges*: i.e., the number of times that people engage in coordinated acts making collective demands of political authorities (e.g., Gurr 1969; Hibbs 1973; Tilly 1978; Muller 1985; Moore 1998; Wisler and Giugni 1999; Francisco 2004; Earl and Soule 2010; Dugan and Chenoweth 2012; XXX). Here, it is deemed important to identify whether or not repressive action influences contentious political behaviors such as protests, strikes, acts of terror, and/or insurgency. While unified in a focus on challenge occurrence, there are nevertheless important differences within this work. For example, some highlight the variety of events that occur at the same time (e.g., Muller 1985; Ziegenhagen 1986) whereas others focus on specific types of challenges (e.g., Walsh and Piazza 2010).

On the other hand, there are those interested in the *participation of challengers* within relevant events: i.e., who (exactly) returns to engage in subsequent challenging behavior after repression has occurred (e.g., White 1989; Opp and Roehl 1990; Opp and Gern 1993; Earl and Soule 2010; Earl 2011). Here, it is deemed important to identify who is willing to continue with the relevant struggle despite being subject to the costs/hardships of arrest, beating and/or

shooting. Differences exist in this work as well. Some focus on the occurrence of a single dissident event (e.g., Opp and Roehl 1990) whereas others focus on repeated challenging activities (e.g., White 1993).

Units of Analysis. Research differs in other ways as well. For example, several studies have the nation-year as the unit of analysis (e.g., Hibbs 1973; Muller 1985), whereas others do not concern themselves with whole countries but instead focus on a particular sector or family of movements (e.g., Tarrow 1989; Moore 1998; Wisler and Giugni 1999; Lyall 2009). There is also research focusing on a particular social movement or group, attempting to ascertain if repressive behavior influences their activity (e.g., McAdam 1982). Finally, some researchers focus on either individuals within a population that could become involved in some type of contentious behavior (e.g., Opp 1994) or a particular set of individuals who are already engaged in a specific social movement (e.g., White 1989; della Porta 1995). The former endeavors to understand the degree to which individuals who exist in a situation where contention is a possibility are or are not influenced by repressive behavior (either actualized or expected), while the latter endeavors to understand the degree to which individuals who exist in a social movement are or are not influenced by repressive behavior.

Data Sources. Lastly, research varies in the materials that are relied upon to determine what transpires when challenge(r)s are repressed. Historically, one of the most common involves newspaper articles (e.g., McAdam 1982; Francisco 1996; Moore 1998; Earl and Soule 2010). Interviews are another common source for information about repression and contention but they are not as ubiquitously available to scholars as newspapers. Typically to get data from these sources members of social movements are asked questions about their involvement in repressed institutions (e.g., White 1993). Surveys are administered toward similar ends but these are not

generally directed toward social movements but rather some part of the relevant population that may/may not be involved with activism (e.g., Opp 1994; Zeira 2012). Acknowledging that obtaining the information about responses to repressive action is somewhat difficult to obtain, some researchers have relied upon computer simulation in their efforts to comprehend the topic (e.g., Hoover and Kowalewski 1992). Finally, some research has employed government records (e.g., surveillance, informant and/or arrest) in order to assess challenger responses to repressive action (e.g., Cunningham 2004). These efforts have been relatively limited given the difficulty with obtaining relevant material.

Patterns, Strengths, and Weaknesses

The above review helps to identify specific combinations of research questions, units of analysis, and data that are most common in contemporary research as well as direct attention to how the present study can improve upon existing work. For example, representing one of the more predominate approaches, numerous works investigate the influence of repressive events on the production of contentious events at the nation and movement levels (Hibbs 1973; Muller 1985; Francisco 1996; 2004; Moore 1998; Shellman 2006; Dugan and Chenoweth 2012). The aggregation of behavior in such work has led to some important shortcomings, which should be discussed. Despite causal mechanisms rooted in identifying how repression influences individual challengers through fear or anger (e.g., Gurr 1969; Tilly 1978; Lichbach 1998), all of this work examines the impact of repressive behavior on collective challenges at the group or the country level.² As a result, the actual challengers who compose the relevant organization engaged in

² If one is trying to understand how more encompassing forms of state repression like national curfews on behavior or bans on social movement organizations influence mobilization, then an analysis focused on the national level would be appropriate but if one were trying to gauge the aftereffects of less encompassing action like the arrest of an individual dissident or targeted raid/assassination of a specific movement, then this approach is less useful.

struggle and their individual responses to repression are absent from existing research. This limitation is significant because there are behaviorally equivalent explanations for the results that cannot be addressed due to the high level of aggregation in the data being explored.

Another predominate research approach focuses on individual-level responses to repressive action (e.g., White 1989; Opp and Roehl 1990; Opp and Gern 1993). These studies also possess some important limitations that necessitate further exploration. For example, these works do not frequently examine social movement organizations exclusively. By combining ordinary citizens along with people who are explicitly associated with social movements, research tends to conflate very distinct issues. When movements are evaluated, access to participants is neither random nor comprehensive and the research usually examines relationships after contention has taken place, missing a baseline against which to gauge influences. Finally, many of the studies tend to analyze lower-risk activities where the likelihood of violence/death is limited as well as where the nature of the claims-making effort is moderate.

The comparative analysis sheds light on a number of critical factors that are necessary to improve upon. To begin, units are extremely important. Investigations of single movements are useful because they allow researchers to directly probe the government behavior of interest as well as the subsequent mobilization of the repressed target (the challenging institution). In this case, one would need to examine the behavior of individuals within the movement as well as organizational behavior in the aggregate to get an encompassing perspective on how repression impacts mobilization. When researchers evaluate individuals within a specific movement, they are attempting to understand the influence of repression on the most essential element of any response. But one cannot examine these individuals in isolation without downplaying the relevance of social movement institutions. Looking at both the micro- and the meso-level can

direct attention to how individual and organizational mechanisms interact to produce outcomes such as polarization or demobilization. Finally, alternative sources of data need to be explored in order to get the most comprehensive view on mobilization possible. In this case, time-series investigations are extremely important because they allow the researcher to establish some baseline against which the influence of repression can be evaluated. Comparatively, one-shot (cross-sectional) evaluations are somewhat more problematic because they force the researcher to speculate about the impact and/or rely upon projections/recollections of subjects to guide them in assessing the influence.

Below we outline our approach to each of these issues.

Re-Evaluating the Impact of Repression on Mobilization

Building on the strengths and attempting to overcome the limitations of earlier work as well as employing diverse causal mechanisms, we draw upon the insights of prior work combining the meso and micro (e.g., Hirsch 1990; Opp and Roehl 1990; Klandermans 1997). At this preliminary stage of research on the topic, however, we do not attempt to adjudicate between the different components of our claims, which is currently beyond our capability.³ Instead, we develop an argument that represents a specific synthesis of the disparate individual and organizational elements and then subject expectations taken from this causal story to empirical analysis. The objective is to demonstrate the utility of combining individual and organizational responses to repression, while also developing some initial conjectures about the manner in which processes operating at these two levels interact to inspire variation in post-repression mobilization.

³ Along with Koopmans (1997) we suggest humility in the study of the conflict-repression nexus as we attempt to more precisely examine and understand what is taking place.

Essentially, our argument begins with repressive behavior disturbing a social movement organization. Now, it is clear that the repression needs to exceed a particular threshold in order to have an impact and that the relevant social movement needs to be somewhat receptive/vulnerable to the governments behavior by being at least partially aboveground/visible. With that in mind, we contend that in order to understand how repression influences mobilization it is crucial to identify which sub-group within a repressed social movement one is considering. Two are relevant.

On the one hand, there are those who are directly repressed/victimized. We expect that these individuals are angered by government activity, highlighted by earlier work concerning emotions (e.g., Gurr 1969). Drawing upon later research, we note that anger would likely be magnified by deviation from perceived legitimate/illegitimate government behavior as well as organizationally specific sentiments that emerge from prior groundwork (McAdam and Sewell 2001). In line with other literature, we expect that repressive behavior leads to specific cognitive processes whereby those that survive the repressive experience derive benefits from continued participation beyond simple survival. This is where organizational dynamics come into play. Specifically, we argue that survivors would become heralded as heroes to the group as they have suffered at the hands of the state, signifying their commitment to the “struggle” (e.g., Zwerman and Steinhof 2005). This canonization would result in their opinions counting more within movement deliberations, receiving a greater percentage of resources as well as obtaining exalted status in movement discussions, images and folklore. Indeed, their survival becomes a positive signifier to others and they become the “true” members of the organization, increasing their participation and activity. This not only concerns how the survivors are treated by others but also how they treat one another.

On the other hand, there are those who are not directly repressed/victimized but still exist in the same dissident organization. For these individuals, there are numerous costs associated with being among the group “spared” repression. These members become heralded as “outsiders-absentees” having missed out on the transformative repressive event. In contrast to insider-heroes, this experiential deficiency signifies their lack of commitment to the struggle because they were not there for their comrades when the “shit hit the fan.” Obviously members might have been engaged in different activities, but absence at such a critical juncture could establish a major impression upon the membership. This stigmatization would result in the opinions of these individuals being discounted, their receiving fewer resources as well as being diminished or removed from movement discussion, images and folklore. In this case, the lack of victimization becomes a different signifier, denoting “outsider” status, leading to diminished activity as well as participation. Again, this concerns not only how the non-repressed are treated by the repressed, but also how they treat one another.⁴

New members are also important for understanding the impact of repression on mobilization because in all likelihood after government action these people enter an institution fully understanding the potential risks involved, providing an extra-organizational component linked through work on moral outrage added to the intra-organizational component noted above.⁵ This becomes relevant to the discussion because only by identifying those who enter the movement alongside those who withdraw can the full organizational effects of repression be identified. Entering a movement with the knowledge of prior repressive behavior (outrage

⁴ This account deviates from other work in important ways. For example, the argument is not a standard polarization story (e.g., Tarrow 1998; White 2000) because individuals depart, but we make no claims about them joining another claims-making effort. Indeed, we highlight complete disengagement, although abeyance is a possibility.

⁵ The concept of cohesion resulting from punishment/repression is central to the sociological tradition far beyond the social movements subdiscipline (e.g., Durkheim 1984 [1893], 56-59; Coser 1956, ch. 5). What is somewhat novel here is the idea that punishment/repression reshape social hierarchies and network ties to simultaneously motivate division as well as cohesion.

garnered outside of the movement) tends to significantly depart from the idea of repression being a cost that is to be avoided whenever possible (e.g., Olson 1965). Indeed, some work suggests that under specific circumstances repressive behavior becomes something of a benefit that individuals outside of the organization wish to obtain not just for the praise they might obtain within the movement (an intra-organizational element), but also for the praise as well as sympathy they might obtain outside of it (another extra-institutional component).

The above arguments lead to clear expectations regarding repression's effects. At the individual level, it is anticipated that following repression, repressed members of dissident groups become more committed to organizational participation; non-repressed members will withdraw from organizational activity; and, a range of new recruits will be drawn into the movement. At the organizational level, repression's effects on mobilization generally are theorized to be contingent on the balance of these forces.

Measurement and Method

To investigate the relationships identified above, we rely upon a unique data source regarding the political mobilization and repression of a dissident organization called the Republic of New Africa. As discussed in earlier work (XXX):

This Detroit-based dissident organization, composed of (approximately several hundred) African Americans, explicitly challenged national, state, and local authorities during the period between March 1968 (the founding of the organization) and April 1973 (the last month of police activity reported in the files and when the organization shifted its base of operation to Mississippi). The primary goal of the RNA was to establish independence from the U.S.

government (through secession). This objective was to be achieved through a threefold strategy: (1) holding a plebiscite among African Americans to determine the “national status”; (2) receiving reparations from the United States for the treatment of blacks as slaves; and (3) purchasing five states from the U.S. government: Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and South Carolina for the Republic (Republic of New Africa 1968). Toward these ends, the RNA engaged in many legal forms of protest: rallies, petitions, political education courses, “self-defense” programs, food drives, lectures, conferences, and the publication of “independent” newsletters/newspapers. The organization also engaged in numerous illegal and violent activities as well: robberies, shootouts with police, plots to bomb state and federal buildings, and even a plane hijacking.⁶

The activities varied in number across the period from several dozen meetings and protest events to a single hijacking.

Given the objectives and tactics of the RNA, it should come as no surprise that the US government was directly involved with monitoring as well as disrupting the behavioral challenge presented. Toward this end, a wide variety of organizations were involved including local police (e.g., the Detroit Police Department – Special Investigations, Demonstration Detail, Detective Division, Homicide, Criminal Division, the Public Complaints Division, and Tactical Reconnaissance), state police (e.g., the Michigan State Police – Special Investigation Bureau, Special Investigation Unit), and diverse federal institutions (e.g., the Internal Revenue Service, the U.S. Department of State, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation). These organizations engaged in both covert (i.e., surveillance, informants and agents provocateur) as well as overt activity (i.e., verbal and physical harassment, arrests and raids).

⁶ Greater discussion of traits this movement and its broader generalizability can be found in (XXX)

The data used to investigate this case were compiled, scanned and coded between 1999 and 2003 (XXX). The main source for information about the RNA, what they did and what was done to them was compiled by a Detroit anti-radical police unit or “Red Squad.” The objective of the unit was twofold: 1) the monitoring of behavior that was deemed radical in its intent, violent or relevant to “national security”; and, 2) the elimination of targeted organizations (Donner 1990). As for the records themselves, they are composed of different types of documents. *Informant reports* come from the diverse local, state and federal institutions identified above. These records identify when/where events took place, who was in attendance (individual members as well as institutions), and what was done at events (e.g., general discussion, reflection on past events, planning, collection of dues, protesting, shooting practice). *Surveillance records* were submitted by police officers at all levels who either sat outside specific locales and/or followed specific individuals. These identify where/when surveillance was undertaken, who was seen and what they were doing. Finally, *arrest records* were submitted by all police organizations, identifying the individual under arrest, the charge, the arrestee’s name, address, job, criminal record, and occasionally known affiliations. Combined, the documents provide detailed knowledge of RNA as well as police actions, who (specifically) was involved, and where.

The Red Squad documents are complimented by a set of internal memos and directives from the RNA provided to one of the coauthors by members of the organization (XXX). These records are similarly rich and contain detailed information about what was happening within different movement activities, as well as who was participating at each event.⁷ The RNA documents work well with the files from the Red Squad by supplying data on the activities and activists where the state was and was not present. The documents also provide detailed

⁷ The volume of information here is much less than the police records, which makes sense given the different resource endowments as well as organizational objectives.

information about the repressive tactics employed by the different repressive organizations, including specifics about when and where activities took place and whom they targeted.⁸

Measuring Challenges – RNA activism and participation

Consistent with existing literature, we operationalize challenging activity (our dependent variable of interest) by considering all activities undertaken by members of the Republic of New Africa. This includes rallies, petitions, political education courses, food drives, lectures, conferences, the publication of news letters/papers, conducting armed “self-defense” programs, purchasing land for the new nation, electing a government and developing an army (the Black Legion), engaging in demonstrations, robberies, gun battles with police, conducting boycotts, plotting to bomb state and federal buildings and hijacking. Deviating from existing literature but consistent with the basic argument, we also identify the participants at all RNA events by the number of attendees as well as by name. Each of these is used to understand who participates in the behavioral challenge.

Measuring Repression – The New Bethel Incident

The measure of political repression employed in this study, our main independent variable, is an event concerning several hundred RNA members known as the “New Bethel Incident.” On March 28, 1969, at the year anniversary of the organization, black-nationalists from all around the US converged on the New Bethel Baptist Church in Detroit. There were officials to be elected, proposals and resolutions to be evaluated, organizational initiatives to be discussed, and

⁸ We are cognizant of the fact that relevant policing organizations may have either destroyed some of their files entirely or blacked out entries, especially information concerning the most controversial actions. Interestingly, however, there was very little redaction in the police records. Names of informants and contact officers were redacted, but all other information was included in the surveillance reports and arrest records.

updates to be provided.

The discussion of these issues would be started but not resolved because at the end of the first day there was an altercation (which was historically unprecedented for the RNA). While several armed members of the group stood outside as the meeting was coming to an end, two police officers drove up (Michael Czapski and Richard Worobec). Before getting out of their car, they informed the dispatcher that they had seen several African American males in the alley behind New Bethel with rifles filing into vehicles. The individuals they had seen just escorted Gaidi Obadele (first Vice-President and acting President) as well as other ministers out of the building, into a car and out of the vicinity. More members remained on the street. Pulling up, the two officers exited the car and approached.

It is not known exactly what happened at this point with regard to what (if anything) was said and who shot first but within minutes Officer Czapski was killed, and Officer Worobec was shot several times before getting to his car, calling for backup and driving away, shortly thereafter crashing his car into a pole. Remarkably, none of the RNA members standing outside were injured. Within minutes, officers from various precincts arrived. Perceiving the large and aggressive show of force, the RNA members who were outside moved into the church.

What happened next is also shrouded in controversy, but with approximately 50 officers and the discharge of several hundred rounds (mostly fired by the police), within 20 minutes almost all occupants in the church were in custody and arrested en masse (142 individuals). They were later brought to a nearby police station, imprisoned and repeatedly interrogated through the next day before most were released. Although limited in lethality, the government's behavior was salient enough to garner the attention of the RNA, influencing its members (present as well

as non-present) and conversations for years to come.⁹

Analysis of Repression's Meso and Micro Effects

Meso-Level Analysis. The first series of models examined evaluates repression's influence at the organizational level. As such, it replicates some of the techniques employed within the literature. The models employ a time-series design that estimates the effects of repressive action on temporally aggregated counts of movement behavior and movement participation. Two dependent variables are analyzed—the number of RNA events undertaken and the number of individuals participating in these events. Each dependent variable is measured weekly for one year prior to and one year after the New Bethel Incident.¹⁰ The police raid, as well as the mass arrest and interrogation that accompanied it, is used to identify the independent variable, state repression, and this is measured dichotomously; weeks prior to the raid and arrest are coded 0, while weeks after the raid and arrest are coded 1.¹¹

A series of ARMA models estimate the effects of repressive action on organizational events and participation. The substantive interpretation of these tests is to estimate how repression influences movement activity at the organizational level, while controlling for the movement's internal mobilization dynamics. Because event counts are considered, the ARMA

⁹ Part of the reason why New Bethel stands out and serves as an important opportunity to examine an influence is the fact that up until that time the RNA had largely been left alone (at least overtly).

¹⁰ Given the nature of the data, we are unable to directly examine the operation of the casual mechanisms put forward in our theory. Instead, we develop and test implications for observable behavior derived from the empirical expectations suggested by the theory. Future research can compliment our effort by probing activists' decision-making processes more directly.

¹¹ This specification treats the act of repression as a categorical and lasting shock to the social movement, and is employed in all of the analyses presented in this paper. Alternatively, repression's effects may be thought to depend on the amount of time that has passed since the repressive action. To test this proposition, alternative specifications identified New Bethel's effects as a decay function measured as $1/k$, where k was the number of weeks or events following the raid. Results proved substantively identical to those presented in Tables I and II below.

models are run on log-transformed measures of the dependent variables.¹² The Box-Jenkins method was utilized to identify the potential auto-regressive and moving average components of time trends in each dependent variable (Enders 2004). The method reveals that the number of events conducted weekly by the RNA contains significant AR2 effects while the number of participants in RNA events displays AR3 properties. Neither variable displays any significant trends over the period, suggesting that they are mean stationary.

For each model, Table I displays the coefficients and standard errors.¹³ Model 1 estimates the relationship between repression and challenging events. Models 2-3 estimate the number of participants at these events, with Model 2 examining the sum of weekly participation and Model 3 examining weekly per-event participation.

(Insert Table I About Here)

As found in Model 1, repression is significantly related to an increase in the number of events engaged in by the RNA. Committing the raid, arrest, and interrogation is estimated to have increased RNA events by 6 events in the week after NBI took place. The long-term effects of New Bethel are estimated to have increased contentious activity by 8 events.¹⁴ When analyzed at the meso-level, the effects of repression on the RNA appear consistent with “backlash”

¹² The distributions of the dependent variables were normalized using the transformation $\log(Y)+1$ (Cameron and Trividi 2005). The addition of one to the log transformed data is necessary to prevent the zero counts from being dropped from the analysis.

¹³ The sum of significant parameters is calculated by adding together the beta coefficients from all of the statistically relevant auto-regressive parameters.

¹⁴ The immediate effect of repression is calculated by transforming the identified effect of the raid on the logged dependent variables into an estimate of its effect on a count of the (non-logged) variable. The long-term effect is calculated using the formula $\beta / (1 - \Phi)$ where β is an individual beta coefficient and Φ is the sum of the significant autoregressive parameters, and then transforming the resulting value into a (non-logged) count estimate (Enders 2004).

theories of repression and collective challenges (e.g., Francisco 2004; Hess and Martin 2006). Following repression, the number of organized challenges significantly increases.

But at the same time, the results from Model 2 indicate that the participation of black-nationalists engaging in RNA events was unrelated to the state's coercive behavior. Repression is positively, but insignificantly correlated with weekly participation rates. This suggests that while repression is associated with an increase in RNA activity, coercion did not significantly impact aggregate measures of organizational participation. Of course, given this consideration, it could be the case that repression is not influencing total participation, but is driving down per event participation. Model 3 considers this possibility explicitly. The model examines a measure created by taking the number of participants for each week and dividing that by the number of weekly events.¹⁵ The results show that per event participation did decrease slightly following New Bethel, but this result does not meet conventional standards of statistical significance.

Getting deeper into how repression impacts participation requires opening up these aggregate figures to see who is participating at any given moment. This form of analysis is explored below.

Micro-Level Analysis. Where the first set of models investigate repression's effects at the meso-level, this second set of analyses gets "inside" the movement to examine the impact of repressive behavior at the micro-level. To do so, a series of cross-sectional time-series models estimate how the New Bethel incident affected whether individuals who had recently participated in RNA activities continued to support collective action after repression.

Specifically, we analyze the attendance or non-attendance of individual RNA members at events before and after the New Bethel incident. The units of analysis for the investigation are individual RNA members, whose attendance or non-attendance is recorded on a per-event basis.

¹⁵ Estimating participation while controlling for weekly event counts produced comparable results.

The 232 individuals identified as having participated in RNA activities prior to the act of repression constitute the sample population for the analysis.

The dependent variable for the analysis is the per-event attendance of these individuals, which is coded for the 45 events preceding and 35 events following the act of repression. These events take place during the year before and following New Bethel, representing the cases that have complete information. By comparing the probability of each individual's participation in RNA events before and after repression, we can gauge the effects of that act at the level of the individual RNA member.

Repressive action is again identified as the New Bethel Incident, but is viewed in two different ways. For all 232 RNA members, the variable *New Bethel Average Effect* is coded dichotomously as 0 for events prior to the arrest and 1 for events after the arrest. Accordingly this variable identifies the average effect of the New Bethel Incident across all members – those repressed at New Bethel and those not present at the event. A second independent variable *New Bethel Arrested Effect* is employed to measure the effect of the repression specifically on those who were subjected to it (i.e., RNA members who were [raided, arrested, and interrogated] at New Bethel). This variable tests the proposition that individuals subjected to repressive behavior will respond differently to government action than others in the group. It is similarly measured dichotomously such that for individuals not subject to arrest, it is coded 0 across all time periods and for the 48 RNA members who were subject to arrest, it is coded 0 prior to the arrest and 1 after.

Drawing on existing literature, a number of control variables are included to condition the estimates on the varying attendance rates of the different RNA members. For example, each of the individuals was coded for the *Events Since their Last Attendance* in order to control for the

individual-level dynamics that lead some individuals to be more likely to participate than others. Natural cubic splines were also included in the analysis to further control for temporal dependence in participation, and the models were run using random effects to adjust the standard errors for heterogeneity across individual participation rates (Beck et al. 1998; Beck and Katz 1996). To address broader mobilization dynamics operating at the organizational level, the models include a control for the total number of *Participants per Event*. This is done to control for time-varying heterogeneity in movement mobilization writ large.

(Insert Table II About Here)

Table II displays the results of seven cross-sectional time-series logit models, which estimate the probability that a given individual participated in RNA events before and after the act of repressive action. Models 4-5 and 8-10 test the effects of New Bethel across all participants, while Models 6 and 7 estimate repression's effects on the non-repressed and repressed subsamples, respectively. Because the coefficients for such models can be difficult to interpret, Table II displays the odds-ratio, robust standard error, and level of significance for each variable in the model. Odds-ratios above one signify a relative increase in the predicted probability of participation, while odds-ratios below one signify a relative decrease.

Model 4 estimates the average effect of the New Bethel incident on RNA members' participation. Here, New Bethel is shown to have a significant and negative effect on the activity of those who had previously participated in the movement. The New Bethel Incident is related to a nearly 30% decrease in the average participant's activity. In this case, relating back to the title of the article, repression of revolutionaries diminishes the revolution.

How can this be? If New Bethel was previously shown to have no effect on RNA attendance rates, how is it possible that when analyzed at the individual level we see that the average effect of the raid, arrest, and interrogation was to decrease the willingness of RNA members to commit to contentious activities? It must be that New Bethel had divergent effects, pushing some individuals towards fewer RNA actions, while at the same time inspiring others to contribute even more to the RNA.¹⁶ XXX's history of the RNA confirms the multiple effects of the New Bethel raid. As they write, "Perhaps one of the most notable modifications within the RNA concerned the membership. Immediately following the shooting and mass arrest (at New Bethel), some individuals simply stopped showing up; some showed up but no longer seemed to be engaged... In this highly fluid as well as contentious situation filled with emotion, mostly fear, some individuals within the organization came together while some began to turn on one another."

To delve deeper in into the mechanics of this process, we identify exactly who was pushed out of the organization by investigating the argument that repressive behavior has differing effects contingent on who was subject to the relevant treatment (i.e., repression). Model 5 estimates the effects of New Bethel both across the entire sample of RNA participants and on the subsample of repressed members. For those who were not raided, arrested, and interrogated, the effects of the raid are calculated using just the first variable – *New Bethel Average Effect*. For those who were arrested, the effect of the raid and arrest is calculated as the sum of the effects of

¹⁶ The present study is able to provide greater detail on how repression shapes the behavior of those already in the social movement than it is able to inform the reader about the characteristics of new members. Opportunities remain for future research to provide greater insight into who joins a movement after repression and how these individuals might differ from those who joined prior to repression.

that variable and *New Bethel Arrested Effect*, the binary variable identifying the period following the raid for those arrested.¹⁷

When this is done we see that in the act of repression had divergent effects on the two populations in line with our argument discussed above. Among those who were not arrested, the New Bethel Incident continued to have a negative and statistically significant effect on rates of participation. The average participant who was not arrested was nearly 50% less likely to engage in RNA activities following NBI. Here, repression is successful and dramatically so.

Among those who experienced the raid, arrest, and interrogation, however, the model estimates a positive and significant relationship between the New Bethel Incident and their subsequent participation. Being subjected to the act of repression is estimated to increase the average arrestee's participation by more than 85%. Here, direct experience with repressive action prompts increased effort on behalf of the victimized, likely out of anger about what happened and, as we suggested, an interest in justifying this victimization with an eventual victory for the RNA.

To further examine these effects, Models 6 and 7 split the sample into non-arrested and arrested subsets. The effects of New Bethel on those who were not repressed are documented in Model 6 and are consistent with previous results. Repressive behavior is shown to decrease the average non-arrested individual's participation by about 50%. Interestingly, when we examine repression's influence looking just at those who were subjected to the New Bethel incident, Model 7 estimates that there was no significant relationship between being subjected to repressive action and an increase or decrease in participation in RNA events. Combined, Models 6 and 7 continue to show a divergent trend among those who were and were not subjected to repression, with those who were not raided and arrested decreasing their willingness to

¹⁷ We estimate the joint marginal effect and statistical significance using the delta method (Green 2008).

participate and those who were subject to New Bethel continuing to participate at the same rate as they were prior to the arrest.

Several additional methods are employed to examine the effects of repression on the repressed and not-repressed subpopulations, while addressing the fact that members of the RNA were non-randomly subjected to repression. The first technique is to include an added control for *Count of Events Attended* prior to a given organized event (Model 8). The second is to include individual member fixed-effects (Model 9). The third is to engage in a modified difference-in-difference design (Model 10).

Including the *Count of Events Attended* allows the models to control for how likely a given individual was to participate in an event based on how many activities they had participated in previously. These values were significantly different for the repressed and not-repressed subgroups, with repressed members having participated in approximately 25% more events as compared to those who were not repressed. This in part captures the fact that these members were likely to be at New Bethel (and therefore be subject to repression) as well as to participate in additional actions later on. However, when the variable is introduced to the analysis in Model 8, results are not substantively affected. To address any remaining individual-level factors that may motivate an individual to both be at New Bethel and also participate more frequently, Model 9 introduced member fixed-effects. The results remain robust to the inclusion of these individual member controls.

As a final technique to address the non-random assignment of repression, Model 10 separates out RNA members into those who were or were not arrested prior to assignment to the treatment group, and then estimates the temporal effects of the arrest contingent on whether members were part of the arrested population. We achieve this through the inclusion of a

temporally invariant control variable (*Arrested Individual*), which is coded 0 for individuals in the non-arrested sample and 1 for individuals in the arrested sample.¹⁸ Including this control makes the model resemble a difference-in-difference (DiD) estimator because it includes both temporal (pre- and post-arrest) and cross-sectional (arrested or not arrested) fixed-effects (Angrist and Pischke 2009).¹⁹

Substantively, the *New Bethel Arrested Effect* variable in this model estimates the effect of the arrest on the arrested population controlling for both the systematic differences between the arrested and non-arrested samples and the average effect of the arrest across the entire sample of RNA members. Interestingly, the variable estimating systematic differences between the repressed and non-repressed groups fails to identify significant effects. The coefficient for the general effect of New Bethel maintains its negative and significant result, leading to the conclusion that for the average non-repressed member, participation dropped by more than 45% following New Bethel. Finally, as in the earlier results, after the act of repression, individuals subjected to repression were significantly more likely to participate in RNA events. Being arrested, raided, and interrogated during the New Bethel Incident increased the arrested sample's willingness to participate by nearly 70%. Here, repressive behavior fails and significantly so.

What is clear from the analysis is that repressive behavior has divergent effects across the two different samples supporting our basic point about the importance of getting inside and disaggregating challenging institutions. Those who participated in RNA events and merely heard about the act of repression, but were not subjected to it personally, became less willing to

¹⁸ There is significant collinearity between the number of prior events participated in and whether that individual was arrested or not ($p < .001$).

¹⁹ In traditional DiD models, the temporal fixed-effects variable is understood as a control variable, rather than a causally significant independent variable as it is in our model.

participate in RNA collective action. At the same time, RNA participants who were subjected to raid and arrest show an increased willingness to participate after being repressed.

Conclusion

This study identified significant limitations associated with the traditional model and method used to study the effects of political repression on political dissent. Rather than aim to reconcile the competing findings that have been produced in the literature over the past 40 years, the current research instead argued that such studies have consistently suffered from deficiencies resulting from focusing on readily observed behavior that has prevented researchers from identifying how repression actually influences contentious political activity. While scholars have postulated individual as well as group level mechanisms linking repression to challenging behavior, without actually examining both micro- and meso-level behavior they have missed the fact that repressive action actually has a variety of effects within the same dissident organization.

Utilizing a unique data source on the internal dynamics of a black-nationalist organization called the Republic of New Africa, we investigated the effects of repression at both the organizational and the individual level. With this focus, a number of previously hidden mechanisms become apparent. To begin with, the effect of repressive behavior varies across individuals within the relevant social movement organization depending on who was/was not repressed. The raid, arrest, and interrogation pushed those who were not explicitly victimized out of movement engagement, while generating a core of activists who had experienced state repression and were now committed to engaging in increasing levels of contentious activity.

With these findings, the research has numerous implications.

Theoretically, these results challenge scholars to move past the responses of whole movements and towards theorizing about how repression influences individual members within a challenging institution. This advancement will open up theorizing to thinking about the implications of repressive behavior for organizational adaptation and explanations of how movement trajectories are shaped by repressive behavior.

Methodologically, the study suggests that scholars should collect data on some of the less easily observed aspects of state-social movement interactions in order to inform their empirical investigations. Studies that fail to examine the individual choices that lead to observed collective behavior distance themselves from the theorized causal mechanisms and are too often unable to decipher between behaviorally equivalent explanations.

Practically, our research has problematized the conception of “successful” state repression. Indeed, we have shown that while repressive behavior might compel some challengers to leave/disengage from behavioral efforts, it compels others to stay with/continue their challenges. This yields clues into the how specific repressive tactics, such as mass raids, arrests, and interrogations, might influence movement membership. But it renders simplistic assessments of repression’s efficacy inappropriate.

We view our work as representing an important step in the re-evaluation of the conflict-repression nexus in general and the influence of repression on collective challenges in particular. Clearly, there are some worthwhile improvements that could be made to the current examination. For example, we are in the process of collecting diverse variables for examining what influences reactions to repression such as the age, gender, organizational position, and, especially, the network that members occupy (e.g., Snow et al. 1986; McAdam 1986; 1989). We could compare the specific repressive event identified in the current study (a massive raid, arrest and

interrogation) to other forms of repression examined (e.g., physical harassment or receiving false letters) as well as other dimensions (e.g., scope, timing in movement cycle, or [in]consistency). The repressive action studied here was relevant because it was encompassing, severe, and distinct enough from prior government action to be considered salient. Of course, not all tactics would be viewed this way. There is a need to delve deeper into the case, exploring the police side of the equation: e.g., why did authorities leave the RNA alone for so long and why did they opt for mass arrest and interrogation instead of selective targeting of members adorned in the uniforms of the armed self defense unit. There is also a need to move beyond the case of the Republic of New Africa to gauge the (in)comparability of the findings across space, time and context. Finally, we believe it merits further attention to consider exactly what it means that repression produces a social movement organization that is populated with individuals who not only do not fear repressive behavior, but who might actually prepare for its use as well as enjoy the social/cultural benefits that might accrue from its deployment. In a sense, this makes governments responsible for radicalization and militancy, which is something not generally considered.

These challenges we view as reasonable and, indeed, we hope that the research presented here, like many of the pieces cited in this article on related themes, will continue to prompt further development of the micro-foundational/sub-national exploration of conflict and contentious politics.

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Table I – ARMA Models of Repression’s Effect on Organizational Behavior

	RNA Events	RNA Participants	RNA Participants Per Event
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
New Bethel	1.847 (.236)***	0.561 (0.845)	-1.134 (0.721)
Sum of Significant AR Parameters	.347	-	-
Constant	2.251 (0.121)	3.825 (0.147)	1.445 (0.121)
N	103	103	103

Huber-White (Robust) Standard Errors in Parentheses.

* p<.05, ** p<.01, ***p<.001 (Two-Tailed Test)

Table II: Cross-Sectional Time-Series Logistic Models of Repression’s Effects on Individual Participation

	Full Sample		Not-Arrested Sample	Arrested Sample	Additional Controls	Full Sample	Difference-in-Difference
	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8	Model 9	Model 10
New Bethel Average Effect	.709 (.088)**	0.524 (0.073)***	0.533 (0.083)***		0.407 (0.059)***	0.309 (0.051)***	0.545 (0.078)***
New Bethel Arrested Effect		2.371 (0.394)***		1.168 (0.251)	1.855 (0.239)***	2.181 (0.474)***	1.996 (0.416)***
Events Since Last Attendance	.699 (0.015)***	0.694 (0.016)***	0.695 (0.019)***	0.696 (0.028)***	0.694 (0.015)***	0.731 (0.017)***	0.694 (0.016)***
Participants per Event	1.146 (0.012)***	1.147 (0.011)***	1.156 (0.015)***	1.127 (0.021)***	1.142 (0.012)***	1.146 (0.013)***	1.147 (0.123)***
Count of Events Attended					1.199 (0.012)***	1.098 (0.016)***	
Fixed Effects						Y	
Arrested Individuals							1.315 (0.268)
Constant	0.050 (0.006)	0.051 (0.006)	0.045 (0.007)	0.071 (0.018)	0.054 (0.006)		0.047 (0.007)
N	18,328	18,328	14,536	3,792	18,328	18,328	18,328

Odds-Ratios Displayed. Huber-White (Robust) Standard Errors in Parentheses. * p<.05, ** p<.01, ***p<.001 (Two-Tailed Test)
 Models 4-8, 10 Include Random Effects. Model 9 Includes Fixed Effects. Cubic Splines and Fixed Effects Omitted From Presentation.

