State-Directed Political Protest in US Capital Cities: 1998-2001
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Abstract

Using a new dataset, we analyze four years of political protest events in US state capitals, in order to specify the processes and possibilities for collective action at the state level. Drawing from resource mobilization/political process theory, we test hypotheses regarding density of activist communities, political culture, social capital, administrative capacities, and political processes in affecting the number of protests, rallies, and demonstrations directed at state government. We find that the most important factors include the density of contentious communities of individuals (specifically university students), political culture, Democratic Party control of government, and the option to use direct legislation (a negative effect), while administrative capacity, generalized social capital, and party competition have no effects. We also find strong positive baseline effects for the population size of the state, the relative importance of the capital compared to other cities, and urbanization. We argue that these findings illustrate how aggregate levels of state-level political protest arise out of collective action processes and the mobilization of small groups, as mediated through stable cultural repertoires of political tactics and moderated by certain political opportunities and processes.

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<u>"Teachers mass at the Capitol, heckle school chief"</u>

A crowd of impatient teachers including several hundred from Clark County rallied at the Capitol on Saturday, shouting their demand for a 15 percent pay boost and grumbling at recent comments from schools chief Terry Bergeson, Gov. Gary Locke and key lawmakers that the demand can't be met this year."

The Columbian (Vancouver, WA), Pg. A1, 4/18/99

<u>"Protesters crash conference, send governor fleeing; Upset about welfare reform, they pound on car as he leaves"</u>

Several hundred ACORN protesters upset about Arkansas welfare reform marched into a Little Rock hotel meeting room where Gov. Mike Huckabee was to give a civil rights speech Tuesday, shouted at him and chased him offstage before he could speak. Attempts to calm the protesters failed, and four Arkansas State Police troopers whisked Huckabee offstage and out of the room through a side door… About a dozen ACORN protesters followed. A few jumped on Huckabee's car and pounded on it as two people stood in front of it to block the governor's departure. The protesters moved when plainclothes troopers approached."

The Arkansas Democrat-Gazette (Little Rock, AR), 4/29/98

“Protesters storm Capitol over income tax; lawmakers cut budget, go home

The Legislature passed a budget with no new revenue and abandoned plans for an income tax Thursday night after protesters stormed the Capitol, breaking windows and chanting "No New Taxes!" State troopers locked the doors to the Capitol after hundreds of protesters got out of control - banging on the chamber doors, breaking office windows with their fists and accosting lawmakers as they made their way down the statehouse hallways with police escorts. One demonstrator outside the Capitol hurled a rock through the window of Gov. Don Sundquist's office. The governor was not there at the time. A state employee trying to lock a side door to the Capitol injured his hand as the weight of the crowd pushed against him.

AP State and Regional Wire, BC cycle (Nashville, TN), 7/12/01

“Protesters in Harrisburg seek mining moratorium

Tri-State Citizens Mining Network, a grassroots citizens group, has asked the state to impose a moratorium on full extraction mining…Four dozen network members traveled to Harrisburg on Tuesday to ask for the moratorium. There they joined a rally in the Capitol Rotunda with other environmental groups from across the state. Two hundred people protested current environmental policies. They displayed a dummy depicting Gov. Ridge, suit pockets stuffed with hundred-dollar bills.”

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, Pg. W1, 5/2/98

Introduction

The four examples listed above illustrate some of the colorful tactics that diverse social movements and interest organizations use when attempting to effect political change. They include groups that normally have access to the channels of political access (teachers unions), and groups specifically formed to represent the underserved (the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now, or ACORN). They represent both classic, and accepted, forms of political demonstration (a rally, a satirical effigy of an elected leader), as well as threatening and disruptive actions that border on riot. But all are making substantive claims upon elected officials of either the executive or legislative branches of their state governments. In capital cities across the United States, groups regularly engage in protests and demonstrations as part of their repertoire of political tactics. However, one can note a wide spectrum in the extent to which capitols experience these mass gatherings. What explains the relative contentiousness or quiescence of state-level politics in the United States? Under what kinds of political structures and in what social contexts do we see activists and interest organizations (Burstein 1998) using rallies, demonstrations, and other forms of collective action to further their political goals? In other words, what are the relevant factors that limit or encourage political actors to use contentious, demonstrative, possibly disruptive tactics at the state level?

Using a new dataset for a recent time period (1998-2001), we test a number of theories in the social movements literature by constructing a model of political contentiousness at the state government level. We test hypotheses on the causal importance of the density of activist communities, political culture, social capital, administrative capacities, and political processes. We find that the most important positive factors include the presence/density of contentious communities of individuals (specifically university students), political culture (Elazar 1972), and control of government by the Democratic Party, while administrative capacities and party competition have no effects. The option to use direct legislation has a surprising negative effect, and thus does not appear to encourage new, "outsider," actors to engage the political process, at least not through contentious means. We also find a strong positive baseline effect for the population size of the state and urbanization, which we interpret as reflecting basic collective action processes.

We argue that these findings illustrate how aggregate levels of state-level political protest arise out of collective action processes, as mediated through cultural traditions of political engagement and certain specific political processes. Domestic political protest in the US thus involves the mobilization of small groups, informed by stable repertoires of political tactics, but heavily moderated by available political opportunities, as measured by which political party is in power. We discuss in our conclusions how these findings bear upon our understanding of the political process theory of social movements (Tilly 1978; McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald 1996; McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001)

Existing Models and Hypotheses

Sociologists of social movements have long been interested in protest as a social phenomenon (see Olzak 1989; Oliver 1993; Gamson 1990; Tarrow 1988; McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001 for general treatments of protest and other forms of collective action). This literature is quite large, with researchers treating many facets of public collective action. While we already possess an excellent understanding of riots, protests, and demonstrations at the municipal level (Eisinger 1973; Olzak 1987), as well as the models to predict collective events at the national level (Kriesi, et al. 1995; Jenkins and Schock 1992; Kitschelt 1986) our knowledge of state-level political contention in the United States is lacking. In analyzing this dataset, we hope to define more closely the extent to which contentious collective political action rests upon elements of the population, such as the density of communities of aggrieved and/or mobilizable persons, regional variations in political culture, or aggregate levels of social capital; versus the configuration of access, as measured by institutional capacity and changing opportunity structures, to the political system. Since the United States operates as a federal political structure, with multiple points of access, we see this dataset as an opportunity to conduct a sort of natural experiment on multiple dimensions of state variation.

Although a full review of the literature is not possible in this space, we would like to focus on the particular question of how researchers have explained different levels or rates of protests, riots, demonstrations, and contentious collective action in general,

across time and space. Scholars have identified four key explanatory factors, either singly or in combination, as contributing to the level of contentious political action: networks (which we discuss here in terms of the presence, or density, of "activist communities"), broad cultural repertoires, state institutional capacities, and formal and informal relations of political power (which, for shorthand, we refer to as political opportunities). We discuss each of these in turn.

Activist Communities

Starting with groundbreaking work on the American Civil Rights movement (Morris, 1981), and extending to work on European movements (Gould, 1990; Tilly 1986; Kriesi et al, 1995), scholars have focused on the importance of bounded communities for the mobilization of bodies and resources for collective action. Networks matter in at least three ways. In the first place, aggrieved persons must be connected to one another in some way to form the collectivity necessary to mount a protest. Secondly, the form of the connections between people relates directly to the organizational capacity of the network to mount sustained collective action (Traugott, 1985). Thirdly, communities form around particular interests and identities, and this relates directly to the grievances around which people mobilize (Clemens, 1997)

> *Hypothesis 1: The presence and density of communities of historically contentious political actors will be positively related to the number of protests, rallies, and demonstrations in a given state capital.*

For different reasons, groups such as public university students (Van Dyke 1998; Scott and El-Assal, 1969; Wickham-Crowley, 1992), church members (Morris 1981; McAdam 1982) and public-sector unions, have been historically likely to foment contentious political action. University students are likely to participate in protest for at least two reasons. First, they are among the most "biographically available" members of the population, having both the time and the resources to dedicate to political activism. Secondly, however, students of all ages are often directly affected by state legislative action in the education policy area, an area that includes funding, teachers' salaries, affirmative action, and standardized testing, among others. Churches, on the other hand, form both the most common form of associational membership in America (Putnam 2000), one of the main sources of individual civic skills (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995) and the wellspring of social movements as diverse as abolitionism, temperance, civil right, pro-life, anti-death penalty. Public sector workers, on the other hand, often appear in political protests at US Capitols for the simple reason that they are essentially engaging in strikes or contract negotiations with their employer (the government).

Broad Social and Cultural Repertoires

Closely related to the ideas developed above, Robert Putnam (1993, 2000) has been foremost among those scholars developing and working with the idea of social capital. Although grounded in specific individual relationships and networks, social capital can also be understood as a property of the collective, operating as a powerful mechanism underlying the stability and health of democratic governance and participation. Although

contentious, rallies and demonstrations in the United States are a long-standing, and usually (although not always, and not everywhere) acceptable form of political participation. Inasmuch as high stocks of social capital encourage all citizens to participate in politics, we would naturally expect that those states high in generalized social capital would also see more political rallies and demonstrations – both contentious and institutionalized (such as political party rallies). Thus,

> *Hypothesis 2: States with high levels of social capital should also have high levels of political protests and demonstrations*.

We specify this hypothesis using Putnam's Social Capital Index (Putnam 2000). Not only must protesting individuals be imbedded in mobilizable networks and communities, they must understand the "repertoire of contention" (Tarrow, 1998; Tilly, 1993) as including protests, rallies, and demonstrations as possible/efficacious forms of collective behavior. In this sense, one might wonder if some states have a history of radical action in the capital – a history that feeds on itself and forms part of the stable political culture. In other words, just as there are contentious French (Tilly, 1986), might there not also be contentious New Englanders? While many scholars within political science have worked with Daniel Elazar's (1972) political culture variables, little use has been made of them in the social movements literature. In his view, stable political cultures (labeled Individualism, Moralism, and Traditionalism) help to structure the forms and processes of political behavior and outcomes. Traditionalist political cultures

involve deference to (elected) elites, while Individualist cultures suspect government regulation and action altogether and Moralist cultures encourage government activity, particularly in social and economic matters. At the individual level, Moralist cultures encourage political participation and activity of all forms, while Individualist cultures see participation as more narrowly a matter of individual costs and gains. Traditionalist polities cede political action to the elite, and so should see lower rates of collective action and political engagement. Thus, we propose the following:

> *Hypothesis 3: States with Moralist political cultures should exhibit higher rates of political protest than Individualist states, and Traditionalist states should exhibit the lowest rates of protest.*

Although Elazar originally conceived of his political culture as consisting of an essentially three-part categorical scheme, Sharkansky (1969) has demonstrated how it can also be used as a linear variable, particularly when looking at political participation (as we are here). We thus use Sharkansky's 9 point scale to measure political culture.

State Capacities

Moving from explanations focusing on networks/mobilizing structures and relatively stable stocks of social capital or cultural repertoires of contention, many scholars have focused instead on attributes of the formal and informal rules and relations of politics and political processes. Eisinger (1973), for instance, was one of the first to point to the now-

familiar U-shaped curve describing the openness of the political structure and protest events (in his case, at the municipal level). While open political systems subsume the need for protest (since all or most political actors have access), closed systems foreclose it (either because of repression or because actors know that protest won't lead to policy gains or change). Kitschelt (1986) also, among others, has pointed out the importance not just of "input structures" (whether or not the political system is open or closed to new actors) but also the importance of "output structures" (how able the government is to put new policies into action). We can extend Kitschelt's reasoning regarding the policy implementation and regulation capacity of states, by specifying somewhat the mechanisms through which groups attempt to influence political debate and policy outcomes. Hence, we would expect the size of the state government – the professionalization of the legislature, and administrative/budgetary capacity – to encourage more claims upon the government. In other words, as a government can do more, the electorate should expect more from it, and so make more claims upon it. With more executive and legislative staff, and more bureaucratic agencies to deal with, we expect that (given the relative openness of the American political system) interest organizations in high-capacity states will engage in more claims-making activities of all kinds. Although this point seems obvious when it comes to lobbying, we expect similar results even with contentious political action. Thus:

Hypothesis 4: States with high institutional capacity should have higher rates of political protest than those with low capacity.

We specify this hypothesis by using an index of professionalization of the legislative branch of government. To test the importance of output structures, we also examine the importance of the relative size of the state budget.

Political Opportunities

Although all US states are relatively open politically (particularly in the post-Civil Rights era), one major difference across states comes in the presence of the direct legislation mechanism (popular initiatives and referenda). As argued since the progressive era (Cronin, 1989), direct legislation opens up the policy-making process in a substantial manner. By doing so, direct legislation provides aggrieved and interested political actors with another channel of influence to affect the policy-making process. There is substantial evidence that by doing so, direct legislation increases the number of lobbying groups (Boehmke in press, Camp 2001). By increasing the number of interest organizations making claims on state government, we would expect that political protest would increase in a commensurate manner, in part because of movement-countermovement interactions (Meyer and Staggenborg, 1996), but also because of the dynamics of increased pluralism. We thus expect that:

> *Hypothesis 5: States with direct legislation mechanisms (initiatives and popular referenda) will have higher levels of protest events than states without direct legislation.*

In addition to institutional openness and state capacity, scholars have often pointed to the importance of political alignments. In general, the relationship between political elites and activists depends upon the issue at hand – Kriesi et al (1995) find that activists generally tone down disruptive tactics when allies are in control of the government. While one might suppose that those engaging in protest are generally allied with the left (the Democratic party), a brief survey of the qualitative evidence shows a healthy presence of issues close to the traditional core of the Republican party (e.g., pro-life demonstrations, or anti-tax rallies). Assuming that protest at the state level is not primarily an activity of the political left, we focus instead on a corollary hypothesis, namely that we should expect protest to increase with electoral competitiveness. This could be true for one of two reasons: either political parties are (directly or indirectly) encouraging demonstrations as part of their electoral mobilization strategy, or, social movement organizations are using moments of divided power to capture the attention (and favor) of elected officials through demonstrations (Tarrow, 1998). Thus:

> *Hypothesis 6: States showing close electoral competition should show high levels of protest.*

We specify this using the Ranney indices of party competition and control (Gray and Jacobs 1996).

Finally, since there is a strong and diverse research tradition showing effects for population size and heterogeneity (Smelser, 1963; Scott and El-Assal, 1969; Eisinger 1973; Dahl, 1961) we include controls for the size of the state, the size of the capital city, and the percentage of the population living in urban areas, all of which we expect to increase the number of political protests.

In developing a full model using elements of each of these hypotheses, we argue that the number of protests experienced by a particular polity is a product of a combination of factors: certain essentially Durkheimian characteristics of the population as a whole (the sheer size of the state, urbanization, and the social capital which its population possesses in the aggregate) which bear upon the possibilities for gathering a committed group of activists together in order to mount a protest (Olson, 1965). Along with this, we stress the importance of the presence and density of certain classes of mobilizable individuals, or activist communities, who draw upon accepted repertoires of contention and take advantage of specific transitory political opportunities. As we show in our analysis, and contrary to our expectations, the formal institutional mechanisms of the state (legislative professionalization and budgetary capacity), have no effect on the level of protest, once we control for other factors. The option to use direct legislation, on the other hand, has a negative effect, suggesting that direct democracy does not in fact encourage political outsiders to engage issues, at least not contentiously. We discuss the implications of this latter finding further in our conclusions.

Methods

Using Lexis-Nexis, we did full text "guided" searches on the US News database. Our search string used the name of the capital city and the following terms to narrow the search: (statehouse or capit*l) and (rall! or protest! or demonstrat!), with "*" substituting for one letter, and "!" substituting for any number of letters. This resulted in a wide number of hits, typically 10-20 times the final number of events included in the dataset. For a very few select states (North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Michigan), we also used the Dow Jones Interactive archive (with the identical search string) to supplement state capital coverage. Coders included all events that took place in the capital city and were directed toward a state-level issue or government entity. We decided to search only on the capital city to confine our newspaper search as closely as possible to the universe of collective events targeted at the state polity. Although protests and demonstrations targeting the state government certainly occur in cities other than the state capital, we assumed that the vast majority of political demonstrations take place at the physical and symbolic seat of power. We assumed further that these non-capital city events would be significantly harder to find in the "noise" of other collective actions. As a partial test of these assumptions, we constructed a dummy variable (described in further detail below) measuring the relative "importance" of the capital relative to other cities in the state. Briefly, our analysis showed that including the logged population of the capital city as a

control variable captures some of what some call the "Sacramento effect,"[1] but that there do appear to be additive effects to a capital being the most important city in the state.

Events in cities other than the capital were dropped, as were events on national issues (e.g., foreign policy, peace) and political party rallies.[2] Events had to include at least 10 persons, and events on the same issue had to be separated by at least 24 hours to be counted separately. We chose to focus our search on the 1998-2001 period only because we knew that all of the newspapers included in the database went back at least that far (including the AP service). For the period 1998-2001, there were, on average, 46.8 protest events in each capital city (SD of 33.2). The most quiescent state we found was Delaware (six events in Dover) while the most contentious was Massachusetts (168 events in Boston). See Appendix A for a list of the number of protests in all 50 states

Following the suggestions of previous authors (Olzak, 1989; Maney and Oliver, 2001), we include controls for the number of papers available for each state, and a dummy variable for whether or not Lexis-Nexis uses the paper for the capital city. The latter, as it turns out, are highly powerful predictors, indicating the importance of media coverage in shaping our "view" of the number of protests in a particular state. Indeed, nearly 43%

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[1] The name comes derives from the argument that, in states where the capital is relatively unimportant or small in comparison to other cities, protests will happen in larger, more important cities (such as, in the case of California, Los Angeles and San Francisco).
[2] Certain third-party collective actions (e.g., by the state Green Party, or the Reform Party) focus on particular issues rather than on the election of a party candidate. These events (which were most often on campaign finance reform or term limits) were included in the analysis.

of the variance can be explained by our methodological controls. All states have at least the AP, but a few (e.g., Vermont, South Dakota, Mississippi, and Montana) have no news services other than the AP listed; we have included these here but would note that we believe the estimates of event counts in these states are biased downward (as indicated by the predictive strength of the control variables). While we take this as a precautionary note regarding the ultimate utility of Lexis-Nexis as a search engine, particularly in light of the recent court decision in *Tasini et al. vs. New York Times et al.*[3], we are confident that our results provide significant added value to our understanding of the patterns of protest and collective action in US states.

In order to test some of the hypotheses laid out above, we developed the following variables:

Population Effects:

1.) Log of the state's population, 2000

2.) Log of the population of the capital city, 2000

3.) Percentage of the state's population living in census-defined urban areas (50,000 or more)

[3] This court decision affected the reprintability of stories and collection of royalties therefrom by certain freelance journalists. In the aftermath of this decision, search engines such as Lexis have been gradually cleaning their archives. This indicates that these archives are not 100% stable, and may affect at the margins the exact reproducibility of this study. However, as political protests are almost always the subject of multiple stories in newspapers, by different authors, we do not believe this to be a significant problem.

4.) Dummy for "Sacramento effect." Coded 1 of there is another city, larger than the capital, that comprises more than 10% of the population of the state, coded 0 otherwise.

(source for all of the above: Census 2000)

Networks:

1.) Number of university students enrolled at colleges in the capitol city in 1999.[4]

2.) Percentage of the public labor force (meaning government workers) that was unionized in 1998.[5]

3.) Churches/1000 population, 1990 (the most recent year available).[6]

Broad Socio-Cultural Repertoires:

1.) Political Culture. Following Sharkansy's (1969) transformation of Elazar's (1972) political culture variables, we use a 9 point linear scale, with Moralist states coded closer to one and Traditionalist states approaching nine.

2.) Social Capital. Here we used Robert Putnam's (2000) Social Capital Index.

State Capacities:

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[4] Source: Barron's Profiles of American Colleges: 2001. Since there is inconsistent evidence that students at public universities protest more than those at private colleges, we chose to use the total number of undergraduates, both public and private. Although Scott and El-Assal argue for the importance of large "multiversities" in producing protest, see Van Dyke (1998) for evidence that public universities are less likely to produce activism than private schools. In separate analyses (not shown; available upon request), we find evidence to support Van Dyke's thesis.

[5] Source: Current Population Survey, Feb. 1998. We also ran a regression using the unionized percentage of the total labor force. The results were, surprisingly, in a negative direction and not significant.

[6] Source: American Religion Data Archive

1.) Legislative Professionalization. This was operationalized as a series of three dummy variables, with citizen legislatures as the omitted category.[7]

2.) State Budget per capita.[8] This measure is of the 1998 budget (the most recent data available) divided by the population in 2000.

Political Processes:

1.) Direct Legislation. We ran two different formulations of this variable. First, we tested a simple dummy variable for whether or not a state allows for direct legislation. Second, we used the count of the number of ballot initiatives in each state (1978-1996), with all non-initiative states coded as zero.[9]

2.) In order to measure Democratic Party control, we used the Ranney index (as described in Gray and Jacobs, 1996). Party competition was calculated using the folded Ranney Index. Both measures were calculated by the authors using election data for the 1995-2000 period.[10]

Controls:

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[7] Source: Gray and Jacobs (1996)
[8] Source: Ibid.
[9] Source: DuBois and Feeney (1998)
[10] Sources of election data: The Book of the States (various years) and Scammon et al (2000). The Ranney Index combines the average Democratic vote for governor, the average number of seats held by Democrats in the lower house for all terms, the average number of seats held by Democrats in the lower house for all terms, and the average number of seats for all offices (Gubernatorial, lower house, and upper house) held by Democrats in all terms. Thus low scores reflect Republican control and high scores reflect Democratic control. The folded Ranney index is calculated by the formula 1 - | 0.5 – Ranney Index|. This gives a number between 0.5 and 1, with 0.5 reflecting perfect monopoly by one of the two parties and 1 reflecting evenly split control of the legislative and gubernatorial branches of government. Because Nebraska has a nonpartisan unicameral legislature, the Ranney index was calculated using only the gubernatorial vote.

1.) Number of newspapers (not including the AP) carried for each state by Lexis-Nexis
2.) Dummy variable for capital city coverage. 1 if Lexis-Nexis or Dow Jones carried the paper, 0 otherwise.

We then tested each of these variables in a series of partial poisson regression models, after which we constructed a full model, which we discuss below.

Findings

See Tables 1 and 3 for our partial regressions and a table of means and correlations. See Table 2 for our full model. In the discussion below, our interpretations of the size and importance of effects refers to the coefficients in Table 2.

We would turn the readers' attention first, however, to Appendix A, where we show the number of protests in each state normalized by population. Here we find relatively clear regional patterns: the Rocky Mountains, the Plain States, and New England all stand out as high protest regions. At least one of the exceptions to these patterns is relatively easy to explain: South Carolina stands out among Southern states as being "too high" – this in part derives from a rather idiosyncratic series of protest events during this period having to do with the flying of the Confederate flag over the statehouse. These overall geographic patterns suggest two possible explanations. First, this pattern may arise from there being a certain predictable "set" of protests that occur relatively regularly in all state

capitols. Qualitatively, coders remarked upon the seeming ubiquity of death penalty vigils, pro-life rallies, and teacher strikes in all states.[11] As all states experience at least these three species of protest events, low-population states (such as in the Rocky Mountains and the northern Plains States) will show a higher density of protest events. In all of our models this may account for the strength of the variable measuring logged population. Alternatively (or in conjunction with this explanation), we may be seeing an irreducibly regional pattern of politics, relying upon a theory of contentious New Englanders and Rocky Mountainers. As we show in our results below, much of this regionalism can be explained via the Sharansky/Elazar index, indicating that the strongly regional patterns one can note here may in part be a function of the slight correspondence between regionalism and state political cultures.

Starting with the variables measuring population effects, we see strong positive effects for the logged population of the state and percent living in urban areas. We interpret this as a basic reflection of the collective action processes that underlie political protest: with more people in a state, and more people living in dense urban communities, it becomes easier to collect a group of individuals together to protest at the statehouse. However, the "Sacramento effect" variable reflects a slightly different process. Although crude, our measure here attempts to capture the effect of a capitol city playing "second fiddle" to larger, more important cities in the state. Examples of such states include Alaska,

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[11] In further analysis of these data, we intend to present a systematic picture of the actors and issues involved in these protest events. See conclusion.

California, or Illinois, while the converse grouping includes both states where the capital is the largest city (e.g., Massachusetts, Georgia, Arkansas), and states where no particular city dominates the state in terms of population (e.g., North Carolina, New Jersey, Iowa). This suggests that the symbolic importance of a capitol city as the primary cite of political contention does in fact depend upon the size and importance of the city itself. Although we do not here measure protests in cities other than capitals (which would be necessary to unpack more precisely this effect), this finding alone points to the possible decentralization of state-directed political contention in America, and an intriguing avenue for further research.

There was only one significant measure of the density of communities of interest: we see a modest positive effect for public university student networks. For every 16,000 undergraduate students (or one standard deviation) living and studying in the capital, we can expect a 1/8 increase in the number of protests. In other words, adding a medium-sized university to the capital city will, on average and holding all other variables at their mean, result in an additional political protest every eight months. Although in our partial model we see a similar effect for the density of public sector unions, with an 11.3% increase in the number of protests (about one per year) for every standard deviation change in the unionization rate, this effect drops out in the final model. These groups are particularly likely to protest for two separate, but overlapping, reasons. While public sector unions are, in effect, engaging in contentious contract negotiations with their employer, university students are the universally available "bodies" for protests of all

kinds. Moreover, however, education policy is also one of the continuously important issue-areas in state politics, and students are often demonstrating on policy changes that directly affect them: education funding, teachers' salaries, standardized testing, affirmative action, etc. In further analysis of these data, we intend to show how students of all ages (secondary and college) are the modal actor in protest events across the US.

In examining culture, Elazar's measure of political culture shows significant effects. In comparison to other variables, a shift from one mode to another (say, from a Traditionalist such as Tennessee to an Individualist state such as Indiana) involves a change of about 18% in the number of protests. In keeping with prior research in political science, we find that political culture, although a somewhat imprecise measure, has enduring power for predicting patterns of state political behavior in the US. Indeed, although this effect is somewhat smaller than some of the others discussed here (such as population size, or Democratic Party control), in regressions not shown (available upon request), we find that this variable's effects underlies others which appear significant in the partial regressions shown in Table 1. This includes the effects of public sector unionization and social capital.

In the partial model shown in Table 1, Putnam's social capital index appears at first to have a large and significant effect on the distribution of protests across states. However, in our final model, social capital's effects are absorbed by political culture (although note that these measures are quite correlated (r = -.67). What does this suggest? Partly, we

believe, it sheds light on a certain puzzle regarding the importance of social networks in solving collective action problems at different levels of aggregation. Putnam and others have clearly shown the importance of state- and nation-wide stocks of social capital to the functioning efficiency of democratic governance. However, political protest (as we have measured it here) would appear to depend more upon the sheer number of available bodies (particularly biographically available college students), and the political traditions of a given state.

When looking at the size and configuration of the state government, the effects of legislative professionalization and budgetary capacity are not significant in the final model. Given previous research using cross-national comparisons we interpret this finding as indicating that, at least among US states, differences in formal channels of access and the size of state government are too small to have any effect on the level of political protest during this period.

When looking at political processes, however, the results were mixed, and not entirely expected. Coders did find qualitative evidence in the data supporting the common view that, by bringing contentious issues to the forefront of public life, direct legislation opens up new arenas of conflict between various citizen groups. However, the pure presence of the direct legislation mechanism appears in fact to <u>depress</u> protest (by about 13%), once all other effects are controlled for. Given other qualitative findings on specific movements (Camp 2002; Gamble 1997; Haider-Markel and Meyer 1996; Jackman 1994),

as well as quantitative work (Boehmke, forthcoming) this finding lends support to the argument developed by Camp (2001) that the presence of DL shifts movement tactics away from protest, and far from encouraging polity "outsiders" to make claims upon government, direct legislation encourages institutionalization: namely legislative lobbying by groups already endowed with access.

Also surprising was the importance of Democratic Party control, particularly given the lack of significance for the competition variable (which is not simply a measure of the average competitiveness of elections, but properly speaking a comprehensive measure of divided government). In comparative terms, this variable shows that for every standard deviation increase (say, from an evenly divided government to one that was controlled by the Democrats with a 12 seat majority in a hundred-person Statehouse), protests increase by approximately 20%. Two authors would suggest two interpretations. First, the time period under consideration covers the closing years of the Clinton Presidency, as well as one of the most contentious Presidential elections in modern history. Thus, even though our dataset is restricted to purely state-directed protests, the increase we see from Democratic party control may thus be a product of certain historical conjunctures, which of course must be tested against data from other periods in time. Secondly, however, this effect may be a product of the basic responsiveness of a center-left party to contentious political action. This latter interpretation will be explored in future work, in analysis of the issues and actors engaging in these protest actions. A third possibility, that protest and Democratic party control are both a product of a liberal electorate, we tested using

mass ideology data from Erikson, Wright, and McIver (1993). We found no significant relationship.

Conclusions

These results point us toward an interpretation of contentious collective action in the US states as arising out of a combination of factors:

a) Certain ineluctable Durkheimian properties of large, urbanized states. In densely populated polities, we find a significant increase in the number of protests, indicating most directly the importance having a number of people available to mount a collective action.

b.) Connected with this, protest depends upon networks of mobilizable activists, most particularly near-by college students. Both of these comments reflect the fact that protest is a risky venture, even in a liberal democracy such as the US. Although the number of events involving arrests in our dataset is vanishingly small, they do occur. This suggests that for people to engage in protest they must be relatively assured that (i) others will join them in making claims upon the government,[12] and (ii) the state will not engage in violent repression.

(c) Stable repertoires of political culture. As mentioned earlier, while much use has been made in political science of Elazar's notions, little has been said within the social

[12] We are grateful to Prof. Robert Putnam for suggesting this interpretation of the evidence.

movements literature (in part, perhaps, because it is unclear how replicable his study is beyond the United States). More broadly, these findings indicate that cultural traditions of accepted political action and collective behavior interact strongly with the demographic and political processes outlined here. This latter notion has, of course, already been well-explored within the social movements literature – we would here simply suggest that for understanding domestic US patterns of political action, we needs must give critical attention to Elazar's (admittedly somewhat hazy) definitions and categories.

(d) Specific opportunities for challenging those in power. In our analysis we find that control by the Democratic Party (and not party competition per se) leads to an increase in political protest. As discussed above, these findings are somewhat difficult to interpret, although may arise from either historical conjunctures (the Clinton Presidency, the 2000 election) or a basic receptiveness of the Democratic Party to "outsider" tactics. Future analysis of the issues and actors involved in these protests will help us to unpack this finding. .

(e) Finally, as mentioned above, while we find no support for the idea that differences in formal administrative capacity have any effect on protest, we do find a negative effect for direct democracy (ballot initiatives). Given other research focusing on international comparisons, our results regarding the null effects of bureaucratic capacity may simply reflect the relatively small differences across US states compared to other polities. However, our findings regarding direct legislation constitute a fundamental critique of the

supposed “openness” (or invitational quality) of direct democracy to polity outsiders. Since protest is the perquisite of those actors who do not have institutional access, and ballot initiatives were ostensibly designed to “open up” the legislative process (Cronin, 1989), it appears that any connection between direct legislation and increased access is at best indirect.

Overall, however, these findings suggest that, at least for the purposes of understanding the circumstances under which state-level US political protest arise, the size and formal rules of the state polity are less important than who is engaging the political debate, their characteristics, and the shifting nature of which party is in power. Thus, these findings lend quantitative support to several streams of more qualitative research in the social movements literature, highlighting the importance of the presence and organization of aggrieved communities, differences in regional political/cultural repertoires, and the political opportunities presented by which party is in power. In sum, protests are part and parcel of large, pluralist democracies (as measured by the powerful effect of population, urbanization, and the relative importance of the capital city), but are carried out by organized populations of mobilized individuals who carry with them expectations about proper political behavior. Furthermore, protests happen at particular moments – presumably when expectations are high regarding possible returns, and protestors expect those in power to respond to their demands. Future work with this dataset will focus on the distribution of claims (e.g., redistributive/economic versus social, moral, or symbolic), and the distribution of actors. This work will hopefully help us detail a more

precise picture of the universe of actors engaging in political demonstrations, as well as a better idea of the kinds of claims that are made through contentious protest events at US statehouses.

Appendix A: Protests by State, 1998-2001

State	# of Protests	Protests Per Million	State	# of Protests	Protests Per Million
Alabama	21	5	Montana	21	23
Alaska	9	14	Nebraska	33	19
Arizona	24	5	Nevada	10	5
Arkansas	24	9	New Hampshire	37	30
California	94	3	New Jersey	36	4
Colorado	99	23	New Mexico	62	34
Connecticut	52	15	New York	133	7
Delaware	6	8	North Carolina	56	7
Florida	68	4	North Dakota	11	17
Georgia	49	6	Ohio	64	6
Hawaii	21	17	Oklahoma	42	12
Idaho	29	22	Oregon	33	10
Illinois	56	5	Pennsylvania	87	7
Indiana	47	8	Rhode Island	65	62
Iowa	36	12	South Carolina	49	12
Kansas	31	12	South Dakota	7	9
Kentucky	13	3	Tennessee	40	7
Louisiana	37	8	Texas	116	6
Maine	29	23	Utah	63	28
Maryland	54	10	Vermont	16	26
Massachusetts	168	26	Virginia	44	6
Michigan	38	4	Washington	77	13
Minnesota	56	11	West Virginia	32	18
Mississippi	15	5	Wisconsin	80	15
Missouri	33	6	Wyoming	18	36

Appendix B: Table 1

Table 1: Partial Poisson Regression Models: Population, Mobilization, Repertoires, State Capacity, and Political Process Effects on Political Protest in US Capitol Cities, 1998-2001

		Model 1: Baseline Effects	Model 2: Mobilizable Communities	Model 3A: Political Culture	Model 3B: Social Capital	Model 4: Capacity	Model 5A: Polity #1	Model 5B: Polity #2
Population Effects	Log of the State's Population, 2000	.1252*** (.0358)	.1485*** (.0366)	.2280*** (.0384)	.2027*** (.0409)	.0923** (.0476)	.1099*** (.0383)	.1153*** (.0450)
	Log of the Pop. of the Capital City	.0965*** (.0239)	.0592** (.0305)	.1009*** (.0238)	.1076*** (.0238)	.0988*** (.0241)	.0945*** (.0247)	.1050*** (.0263)
	% Living in Urban Areas	.0091*** (.0013)	.0041** (.0020)	.0057*** (.0014)	.0093*** (.0014)	.0082*** (.0014)	.0086*** (.0013)	.0090*** (.0014)
	"Sacramento Effect"	-.1534*** (.0508)	-.1075** (.0548)	-.1871*** (.0514)	-.1349*** (.0511)	-.2008*** (.0536)	-.1693*** (.0511)	-.1473*** (.0510)
Mobilizable Communities	# of College Students in the Capital, 1999		7.61 e-6*** (1.87 e-6)					
	Percentage Gov't Workers Unionized, 1998		.0064*** (.0014)					
	Churches/1000 pop., 1990		-.0376 (.0738)					
Socio-Political Repertoires								
Elazar Political Culture	Sharkansky Index			-.0664*** (.0098)				
Social Capital	Putnam SC Index				.1891*** (.0325)			
State Capacities								
Legislative Professionalization	Professionalized					.2070** (.0890)		
	Mixed					.1108* (.0647)		
	(Citizen Omitted)							
Budget	State Budget Per Capita, 1998					4.15 e-5 (3.56 e-5)		
Political Processes								
Polity Model #A	Dem. Party Control, 1995-2000						.4750*** (.1878)	
	Direct Legislation Mechanism?						-.0825* (.0475)	
Polity Model #B	Party Competitiveness, 1995-2000							-.1512 (.3552)
	# of Initiatives, 1978-1994							-.0015 (.0013)

Methdological Controls	# of Papers in Lexis-Nexis	.0899*** (.0135)	.0696*** (.0138)	.0690*** (.0136)	.0712*** (.0139)	.0902*** (.0143)	.1012*** (.0145)	.1012*** (.0170)
	Capital Paper in Lexis-Nexis?	0.4961*** (.0428)	0.4170*** (.0462)	.5050*** (.0429)	.5071*** (.0441)	.5064*** (.0450)	.4742*** (.0440)	.4688*** (.0478)
Constant		-.2263 (.4788)	-0.0658 (.5800)	-1.2610 (.4965)***	-1.8967 (.5966)***	0.0817 (.7367)	-.1603 (.5154)	-.0359 (.5027)
X-square		744.35***	802.05***	789.99***	718.84***	755.19***	755.62***	745.98***
Pseudo R-Square		0.5704	0.6146	0.6054	0.5843	0.5787	0.579	0.5717

* P < .10; ** P < .05; *** P < .01

NOTE: All coefficients are unstandardized and logged.

All models use 50 cases, except for the Social Capital (n=48, HI and AK missing) model (see text)

Table 2: Full Poisson Regression Model: Population, Mobilization, Repertoires, State Capacity, and Political Process Effects on Political Protest in US Capitol Cities, 1998-2001

		Model 1: Community, Repertoires, Capacity, and Process	Model 1A
Population Effects			
	Log of the State's Population, 2000	.1771*** (.0561)	.2402*** (.0403)
	Log of the Pop. of the Capital City	.0517 (.0329)	
	% Living in Urban Areas	.0039** (.0017)	.0032** (.0015)
	"Sacramento Effect"	-0.1476** (.0602)	-0.1641*** (.0554)
Mobilizable Communities			
	# of College Students in Capitol, 1999	6.28 e-6*** (1.94 e-6)	7.77 e-6*** (1.56 e-6)
	% Public Workers Unionized, 1998	-.0024 (.0025)	
Socio-Political Repertoires			
Political Culture	Sharkansky Index	-.0702*** (.0199)	-0.0849*** (.0108)
Social Capital	Putnam Index	.0251 (.0487)	
State Capacities			
Legislative Professionalization	Professionalized	.0195 (.0989)	
	Mixed	.1484*** (.0738)	
	(Citizen Omitted)		
Political Processes			
Democratic Party Control	Ranney Index	.8229** (.2687)	1.0006*** (.2101)
Openness	Direct Legislation Mechanism?	-0.1278*** (.0540)	-0.1245*** (.0468)
Methodological Controls	# of Papers in Lexis-Nexis	.0836*** (.0156)	.0738*** (.0142)

Capital Paper in Lexis-Nexis?	.4391*** (.0516)	.4163*** (.0469)
Constant	-.4574 (.8514)	-0.5789 (.5794)
X-square	793.08***	846.04***
Pseudo R-Square	0.6446	0.6483

* P < .10; ** P < .05; *** P < .01

NOTE: All coefficients are unstandardized and logged.

Model 1: N = 48 cases (AK and HI missing)

Model 1A: N = 50 cases

Predicted values: mean = 46.82 (30.34), min = 12.76, max = 140.92

Table 3: Correlations, Means, and Standard Deviations for Dependent and Independent Variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
1.) # of Political Protests	…																			
2.) Log of State's Population, 2000	0.616	…																		
3.) Log of Capital City's Population, 2000	0.417	0.534	…																	
4.) % of Population Living in Urban Areas	0.582	0.600	0.375	…																
5.) "Sacramento Effect"	0.025	0.021	-0.180	0.037	…															
6.) # of College Students, 1999	0.631	0.496	0.645	0.392	-0.240	…														
7.) % Gov't Workers Unionized, 1998	0.417	0.124	-0.163	0.380	0.121	0.113	…													
8.) Churches per 10,000 population	-0.502	-0.436	-0.153	-0.767	-0.004	-0.305	-0.537	…												
9.) Sharkansky Index	-0.149	-0.247	0.209	-0.096	-.1474	0.050	-0.554	0.260	…											
10.) Putnam SC Index	-0.133	-0.494	-0.399	-0.336	0.051	-0.215	0.228	0.072	-0.674	…										
11.) Professionalized Legislature	0.525	0.549	0.140	0.436	0.227	0.281	0.547	-0.427	-0.244	-0.080	…									
12.) Mixed Legislature	-0.097	0.188	0.240	-0.018	-0.118	0.036	-0.490	0.090	0.380	-0.199	-0.442	…								
13.) Citizen Legislature	-0.327	-0.644	-0.364	-0.337	-0.062	-0.267	0.064	0.225	-0.196	0.272	-0.356	-0.681	…							

14.) Budget/Capita, 1998	0.100	-0.318	-0.361	-0.085	0.009	-0.047	0.441	-0.050	-0.328	0.305	0.211	-0.341	0.183	…						
15.) Ranney Index	0.177	0.151	0.148	0.109	-0.016	0.169	0.145	-0.067	0.422	-0.2815	-0.058	0.231	-0.193	0.073	…					
16.) Presence of DL	-0.065	-0.104	0.033	-0.013	0.030	-0.103	-0.030	0.087	-0.243	0.145	0.074	-0.129	0.075	-0.099	-0.185	…				
17.) Folded Ranney Index	0.094	0.396	-0.003	0.158	-0.0377	0.049	0.009	-0.318	0.121	-0.071	0.088	0.211	-0.292	-0.053	-0.051	-0.229	…			
18.) # of Initiatives, 1978-1994	0.131	0.122	0.098	0.159	0.221	-0.054	0.149	-0.147	-0.349	0.172	0.133	-0.018	-0.090	0.025	-0.023	0.614	-0.036	…		
19.) # of Papers in Lexis	0.662	0.667	0.215	0.476	0.209	0.316	0.301	-0.452	-0.057	-0.152	0.510	-0.122	-0.289	-0.085	-0.058	0.097	0.221	0.363	…	
20.) Capital Paper in Lexis?	0.410	0.090	0.100	0.143	0.118	0.253	0.064	-0.061	0.022	-0.145	0.180	-0.296	0.162	0.179	0.064	-0.169	-0.174	-0.207	0.199	…
Mean	46.820	15.060	11.755	56.801	0.340	16172.100	30.588	1.281	4.993	2.083	0.180	0.480	0.340	3138.920	0.503	0.480	0.902	11.940	2.200	0.460
SD	33.180	1.020	1.163	20.586	0.479	16161.350	17.696	0.578	2.547	0.988	0.388	0.505	0.479	906.932	0.124	0.505	0.076	20.406	2.060	0.503

N=48, HI and AK missing

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