

Tanks, Tear Gas, and Taxes: Toward a Theory of Movement Repression

Author(s): Jennifer Earl

Source: *Sociological Theory*, Vol. 21, No. 1 (Mar., 2003), pp. 44-68

Published by: American Sociological Association

Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3108608>

Accessed: 26-11-2018 10:29 UTC

---

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <https://about.jstor.org/terms>



JSTOR

*American Sociological Association* is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Sociological Theory*

# Tanks, Tear Gas, and Taxes: Toward a Theory of Movement Repression\*

JENNIFER EARL

*University of California, Santa Barbara*

*Despite the importance of research on repression to the study of social movements, few researchers have focused on developing a refined and powerful conceptualization of repression. To address the difficulties such theoretical inattention produces, three key dimensions of repression are outlined and crossed to produce a repression typology. The merit of this typology for researchers is shown by using the typology to: (1) reorganize major research findings on repression; (2) diagnose theoretical and empirical oversights and missteps in the study of repression; and (3) develop new hypotheses about explanatory factors related to repression and relationships between different forms of repression. Such a typology represents an important step toward creating richer theoretical explanations of repression.*

## INTRODUCTION

From Southern sheriffs spraying civil rights protesters with fire hoses in the 1960s to tanks crushing student protesters in Tiananmen Square to South American “disappearances” of activists, images of state authority and movement repression are not hard to conjure, few in number, or small in impact. Further, these well-known instances of movement repression constitute only the proverbial tip of the iceberg, since covert repression occurs as well. In the United States, for instance, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) undertook an operation known as COINTELPRO from 1956 to 1971 that was a domestic counterintelligence program dedicated to gathering information on, discrediting, and otherwise interfering with social movements (Churchill and Vander Wall 1988). Even sociology’s own Talcott Parsons, among other famous sociologists, was subjected to FBI investigations as an assumed Communist (Keen 1999).

Recognition of the importance of repression within the study of social movements has generated two primary lines of research: (1) research that casts repression as the dependent variable; and (2) research that casts repression as a key independent variable in explanations of such things as movement mobilization and tactical adoption. While both questions contribute to a deeper understanding of repression, this paper focuses on the former research area.

Explaining repression has become a growth industry as scholars have recently moved away from a solitary focus on the effects of repression (Carley 1997; della Porta 1996; Loveman 1998; White 1999; Wisler and Guigni 1999). Despite this exciting array of new research projects, current research on repression still suffers from several major problems. Most importantly, existing explanations of movement repression have not accounted either in explanatory approaches or in the comparisons

\*This research was supported in part by a graduate research fellowship from the National Science Foundation and by NSF SES#9874000. I would like to thank Sarah Soule, the anonymous reviewers, and the editor of *Sociological Theory* for their contributions to and comments on this paper. Address correspondence to: Jennifer Earl, Department of Sociology, University of California, Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara, CA, 93106. E-mail: jearl@soc.ucsb.edu.

of research findings for theoretically critical differences between different types of repressive activity. Put simply, the forces that propelled tanks in Tiananmen were importantly different from the dynamics driving Southern sheriffs' actions in the civil rights movement; to construct and test theoretical approaches without this insight both obscures important questions and leads to uncertain answers. This paper addresses this concern by developing a more theoretically sophisticated understanding of repression and applying this understanding to the interpretation of existing studies and to the development of new hypotheses. Specifically, I will introduce a theoretically driven typology of repression and demonstrate its usefulness to theory development and testing. In doing so, this paper takes a long overdue first theoretical step in creating a more viable and productive dialogue on explanations of repression.

## THE CALL TO ARMS

Stockdill summarizes a definition of repression common in social movement research: "any actions taken by [government] authorities to impede mobilization, harass and intimidate activists, divide organizations, and physically assault, arrest, imprison, and/or kill movement participants" (Stockdill 1996:146). Taking such a definition as a satisfactory foundation, most work on repression has ignored further conceptualization of repression, leading scholars to regularly compare findings from qualitatively different forms of repression without considering the theoretical implications of such comparisons. All the while, the major differences between *types* of repression remain empirically manifest, whether one compares Chinese military tanks in Tiananmen to COINTELPRO operations or repression committed by countermovements (Bromley and Shupe 1983) to authoritarian regimes (Loveman 1998).

As well, few scholars have taken seriously differences in state form and state authority in their explanations of repression (Kriesi et al. 1995 is a notable exception). For instance, the type of repression used by della Porta's (1996) democratic police cannot be easily compared to the type used by Loveman's (1998) more authoritarian states. Beyond the gross differences in state form, further subtleties have also been neglected. Researchers lump the overt policing of protest (della Porta 1996) with covert repression (Carley 1997), even within democratic states.

Lest readers feel that these conceptual concerns are semantic, consider the serious theoretical implications. Illustratively, inattention to differences between types of repression confounds research on the relationship between repression and political opportunities. It has long been argued that short-term shifts in openness to protest by political elites may affect the type or severity of repression (McAdam 1982; della Porta 1995, 1996; della Porta and Reiter 1998). Loveman (1998) found this to be the case where several authoritarian states were concerned, and della Porta's (1995) study of repression by national police forces also found support. However, the coupling between short-term shifts in political opportunities and repression should be looser when considering democratic states (Meyer and Staggenborg 1996), particularly in federalist democratic states such as the United States where policing is radically decentralized. Understanding repression as a more variegated phenomenon implies that whether the link between political opportunities and "repression" is taut or lax depends in part on the type of repression under study.<sup>1</sup> Clearly, then, a typology is not just about

<sup>1</sup>Here I am referring to what della Porta and Reiter (1998) call "volatile political opportunities," which open and close over the course of a protest cycle (Tarrow 1989). Later, I discuss the connection between more stable political opportunities (often referred to as political opportunity *structures*) and repression. In both instances, I argue that their relationship to repression depends on the *type* of repression under study.

rearranging a literature for its own sake; to the contrary, the typology developed here will be used to diagnose theoretical missteps and oversights and to develop future research topics.

Unfortunately, previous typologies have not provided leverage on these issues. Most prior typologies of repression have focused on the severity of repression, not the type of repression. For instance, della Porta's (1996) typology outlines five dimensions of protest policing that focus largely on severity, including whether policing is: (1) repressive versus tolerant (i.e., how many behaviors are restricted); (2) selective versus diffuse; (3) preventative versus reactive; (4) hard versus soft (i.e., the degree of force); and (5) dirty versus lawful. Even when "types" of repression have been discussed (Marx 1979; Carley 1997), scholars have created catalogs of repressive tactics only loosely organized by salient, theoretically driven nomenclatures.

### RETHINKING REPRESSION: REPRESSION AS A MULTIDIMENSIONAL CONCEPT

To develop a theoretically informed typology of repression, a more satisfactory definition of repression must be adopted. Tilly defined repression as "any action by another group which raises the contender's cost of collective action" (Tilly 1978:100). I argue that Tilly's definition is superior to more common definitions, such as Stockdill's (1996), because Tilly's definition better accommodates several frequently ignored findings in repression research.

First, most repression researchers have exclusively focused on the role of state authorities, as is true of Stockdill in his definition above. This focus ignores the small but growing amount of research that has shown that state authorities are not the only actors who can serve as repressive agents (Bromley and Shupe 1983). While some may dispute the value of including private agents, many now argue that such an expansion is fundamental (Ferree 2001). As Tilly (1978) acknowledged earlier than most, private actors—particularly private organizations—have an immense capacity to repress movements. For example, consider how perfunctory our understanding of the civil rights movement would be if social movement scholars did not study the activities of white-power organizations and focused only on state-based repression of movements.<sup>2</sup>

While throwing private action into the mix without a theoretical grounding could further confuse future research, the typology introduced shortly actually introduces space for researchers to think critically about how the differences between state and private repression may affect explanatory factors related to repression. Thus, instead of obscuring the meaning of repression, including private actors can contribute to a full and rich understanding of repression.

Second, researchers must acknowledge *and study* a wider array of activities that could impede mobilization beyond Stockdill's (1996) harassment, intimidation, assault, detainment, and murder. Oberschall (1973) introduced the distinction between channeling and coercion almost 30 years ago, and Tilly's (1978) definition explicitly creates theoretical space for such a distinction. Nonetheless, the vast majority of research on repression ignores channeling and other types of repression unrelated to uses of force.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Since I will be discussing state *and* nongovernmental/private authorities, I will distinguish between these authorities in the text by clearly noting to which I am referring.

<sup>3</sup>It would be advantageous to address facilitation, as Tilly (1978) did. He argued that movements could be facilitated, tolerated, or repressed and suggested hypotheses explaining each reaction. Despite its importance, however, it is beyond the scope of this paper to fully explore facilitation here.

Three Key Theoretical Dimensions of Repression

Using this expanded definition of repression, three key theoretical dimensions of repression can be identified, as shown in Table 1: (1) the identity of the repressive agent; (2) the character of the repressive action; and (3) whether the repressive action is observable. In terms of the character of the repressive agent, agents can have variable connections to political elites and state authorities. While it would be possible to place repressive agents on a continuum of connections to state political elites (e.g., from military state leaders to private citizens), I make distinctions between only three possible repressive agents in order to simplify the discussion. First, repressive agents may be state agents who are tightly linked to national political elites (and hence more subject to their control), such as military/police agencies in authoritarian regimes or national police agencies in democratic countries. Second, repressive agents can be state agents who are only loosely connected to national political elites, such as local police agencies in the United States. Finally, repressive agents can be private citizens or groups such as vigilantes or countermovements (Meyer and Staggenborg 1996; White 1999).

The focus on the connection to national political elites versus more local political elites is intentional. In nation-states where states, provinces, or other local units have separate legal and law enforcement capacities from the national government, national political elite influence on local law enforcement is often diminished. This can dramatically affect the ability of national political elites to actualize their will, since local police agencies must be relied upon to execute (or allow the execution of) national political elite will, even though local governmental agents are not always concerned with the goals and interests of *national* political elites. For example, the Kennedy administration was unable to directly control interactions between Southern sheriffs and the civil rights movement on the one hand and the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) on the other. While the Kennedy administration may have preferred that more repression be directed at the KKK and less at civil rights protesters, it was ultimately local law enforcement that acted.

A second dimension of repression is the character of the repressive action taken. Here I am contrasting two models of repression: coercion versus channeling

Table 1. Three Key Dimensions of Repression

The Identity of the Repressive Agent	State agents tightly connected with national political elites (e.g., military units and military governments)	State agents loosely connected with national political elites (e.g., local police departments in the U.S.)	Private agents (e.g., counterdemonstrators and countermovement participants)
The Character of the Repressive Action	Coercion (e.g., the use of tear gas and rubber bullets)	Channeling (e.g., restrictions on 501(c)(3) social movement organizations)	
Whether the Repressive Action Is Observable	Observable (i.e., overt or manifest; e.g., the Tiananmen Square massacre)	Unobserved (i.e., covert or latent; e.g., COINTELPRO)	

(Oberschall 1973; Tilly 1978). Coercive repression involves shows and/or uses of force and other forms of standard police and military action (e.g., intimidation and direct violence). Channeling involves more indirect repression, which is meant to affect the forms of protest available, the timing of protests, and/or flows of resources to movements. For instance, channeling frequently involves limiting the capacity to protest by regulating key resource flows to movements. Tax restrictions on not-for-profit groups (also called “501(c)(3) groups” in the United States) have been shown to structure what tactics such social movement organizations (SMOs) can use (McCarthy, Britt, and Wolfson 1991).<sup>4</sup>

Finally, whether repression is observable is centrally important. I employ a stark contrast between observable and unobserved here, even though the level of visibility could be placed on a continuum from entirely invisible actors, actions, and intentions to entirely visible actors, actions, and intentions. Just as was the case for the connection of repressive agents to national political elites, I have simplified the discussion by making such a coarse distinction. However, in later discussions I do point out cases that may occupy the hinterlands of a visibility continuum.

That said, whether coercive repression is observable is simply a matter of whether it is covert or overt. Covert repression occurs when the agents of repression, their actions, and the purpose of their actions are *intended* to be unknown to the general public.<sup>5</sup> In contrast, overt, coercive repression is intended to be obvious to both protesters and wider publics. The importance of this dimension is clear when the question is raised as to how applicable findings based on secretive operations like COINTELPRO are to much more public repression, such as Southern sheriffs’ use of violence against civil-rights protesters (Barkan 1984).

I have refrained from using the language of “overt” and “covert” more generally, however, because this contrast can be misleading when applied to channeling. As will be discussed in more detail shortly, many types of channeling are “overbroad” in their regulation. For example, when the U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS) regulates the activities of 501(c)(3) nonprofits, it regulates SMOs and non-SMOs alike. However, this does not diminish the impact that such regulation has on the activities of nonprofit SMOs (McCarthy, Britt, and Wolfson 1991). Since most lay observers cannot readily identify the connection between tax law and protest control, I label that connection “unobserved” (although not “unobservable”—hopefully scholars can make sense of these relationships!). Of course, sometimes the intentions of channeling are manifest. As shown in Table 1, whether the focus is on overt/covert coercion or manifest/latent channeling, the central theoretical distinction is whether repression is readily observable to the general public.<sup>6</sup>

### *Combining Dimensions to Create a Repression Typology*

When combined, these three dimensions produce a powerful and inclusive typology for repressive activities. Whereas Table 1 outlined these dimensions in isolation, Table 2

<sup>4</sup>Channeling may still be subjectively experienced as “coercive,” in that individuals and SMOs may *feel* pressured, constrained, or forced into actions they would not otherwise take. However, this subjective feeling of “being coerced” is different from Oberschall’s (1973) more technical use of coercion. His distinction between force or threats of force (i.e., coercion) or other negative sanctions (i.e., channeling) does not attend to the subjective interpretation of those sanctions.

<sup>5</sup>Accounting for intention allows for cases where secret operations were discovered and foiled.

<sup>6</sup>One could further specify that the repressive act must be observable at the time of occurrence or immediately thereafter. While initially unobserved repression could be rendered translucent over time, as actors discover hitherto hidden connections, it is not reasonable to expect that repressive actors can fully anticipate whether (or when) such discoveries will be made. Thus, the key period for repression researchers directly surrounds the repressive act itself.

Table 2. A Typology of Repression\*

	Coercion		Channeling	
	Observable	Unobserved	Observable	Unobserved
State agents tightly connected with national political elites	Example: Murders, disappearances, and political arrests in Chile, Uruguay, and Argentina (Loveman 1998)  Other research: Brockett (1995); della Porta (1995, 1998); McCarthy and McPhail (1999); Timberlake and Williams (1984); Zwerman (1987)	Example: COINTELPRO (Churchill and Vander Wall 1988)  Other research: Carley (1997); Churchill (1994); Stotik, Shriver, and Cable (1994)	Example: The Pinochet government’s attempts to obstruct the flow of funds to the Chilean Catholic Church (Loveman 1998); national collective bargaining (Oberschall 1973)  Other research: Hebdon and Stern (1998)	Example: U.S. tax laws that provide tax relief for not-for-profit organizations (McCarthy, Britt, and Wolfson 1991; Simon 1987)
State agents loosely connected with national political elites	Example: Southern sheriffs and the civil-rights movement (Barkan 1984)  Other research: Koopmans (1993); Kritzer (1977); McPhail, Schweingrubber, and McCarthy (1998); Useem (1997); White (1999); Wisler and Guigni (1999)	Example: Mississippi State Sovereignty Commission in the 1960s (Irons 2001)	Example: State laws regarding protests on state university campuses (Gibson 1989; Rowland 1972); police permitting requirements (McCarthy and McPhail 1998)  Other research: Gregory (1976)	Example: State “cut-off” statutes, which rendered students convicted of crimes ineligible for state and local financial aid (Rowland 1972)
Private agents	Example: Countermovements (Bromley and Shupe 1983)  Other research: Pichardo (1995)	Example: Threatening phone calls to activists; systematic attacks on abortion providers	Example: External funding agency preferences for less radical goals and less confrontational tactics (McAdam 1982)  Other research: Haines (1984); Jenkins and Eckhert (1986)	Example: Organizational disciplinary codes; “company towns”; internal organizational grievance proceedings

\* The list of research examples included is not intended to be exhaustive. Research examples were chosen to give readers a flavor for the various studies that would fit into each category.

“crosses” the dimensions, yielding a 12-cell representation of all possible combinations of the dimensions. For example, *observable, coercive repression by state agents tightly connected with national political elites* represents one type of repression, and *unobserved, channeling by private agents* represents another. In addition to simply crossing the dimensions, Table 2 offers research and/or hypothetical examples for each of the 12 types of repression. As well, it should be understood that the severity or amount of repression can vary within each cell.

Given that examples of coercive repression are well known, only a few examples are required to familiarize readers with the major distinctions that are important here. *Observable, coercive repression by state agents tightly connected with national political elites* is frequently used by authoritarian regimes. Examples of research on this type of repression include Loveman's (1998) discussion of murders, disappearances, and political terror in Chile, Uruguay, and Argentina, Brockett's (1995) discussion of violence against Salvadorian and Guatemalan protest leaders, and McCarthy and McPhail's (1999) analysis of ATF/FBI actions in Waco against Branch Dividians. The most well-known example of *unobserved, coercive repression by state agents tightly connected with national elites* is probably the FBI's COINTELPRO operation, mentioned above. Research on COINTELPRO includes Carley (1997), Churchill (1994), Churchill and Vander Wall (1988), Cunningham (forthcoming), and Stotik, Shriver, and Cable (1994).

Examples of coercive repression committed by state agents loosely connected with national political elites are also familiar. In terms of *observable, coercive repression by state agents loosely connected with national political elites*, Barkan (1984) offers an informative analysis of Southern law-enforcement activities directed at civil-rights-movement demonstrators. Many others have also discussed local police actions against protesters, including Ericson and Doyle (1999), Koopmans (1993), Kriesi and colleagues (1995), Kritzer (1977), Lindgren and Lindgren (1995), Marx (1998), McPhail, Schweingrubber, and McCarthy (1998), Stockdill (1996), Useem (1997), White (1999), and Wisler and Guigni (1999), to name but a few.

*Unobserved, coercive repression by state agents loosely connected with national political elites* occurs as well. For instance, the Mississippi State Sovereignty Commission was a state agency that monitored the civil rights movement in Mississippi along with local law enforcement agencies. While it is not yet clear whether the commission's activities directly affected civil rights activities, Irons (2001) documents pervasive surveillance conducted by the commission and informal cooperation between the commission and local law enforcement agencies as well as White Citizen's Councils. Despite the likelihood of local unobserved, coercive repression, few other researchers have studied this type of repression.

Few researchers have focused on coercive repression by private agents. Counter-movements can explicitly attempt to repress their opponents, which is an example of *observable, coercive repression by private agents*. For instance, Bromley and Shupe (1983) discuss attempts by anticult activists to discredit the cult movement and “deprogram” particular cult members. In addition, *private agents* can also exert *unobserved, coercive pressure*. A pure example of this type of repression would be anonymous death threats and threatening phone calls to activists. This may seem insignificant when compared to more consolidated governmental pressure, but one should not underestimate the psychological—and sometimes physical—effects of such threats on activists. Less pure, or ideal-typical, examples of this type of repression exist as well. For instance, hate crimes and armed attacks against abortion providers represent semicovert forms of direct, private repression. In these instances, the identity of the agent is intended to remain unknown (although perpetrators are occasionally



identified and apprehended), while the act and intention underlying it can be public (e.g., vandalism or attacks against abortion providers).

While these six types of coercive repression are fairly easy to identify, channeling can be much harder to identify. In part, this is because many people think of channeling as *regulation* instead of *repression*. However, regulation must be considered a less virulent—although not less effective—form of repression (Oberschall 1973; Tilly 1978). That is, channeling can diminish or affect future activism, just as police action can diminish future activism or limit the range of spaces, activities, and issues in and on which activism can safely occur.

Of course, some channeling has been identified. For instance, *observable channeling by state agents tightly connected with national political elites* is often only a thinly veiled attack on protesters. Loveman (1998) documents the use of such repression in Chile by the Pinochet government. When the government realized that the Chilean Catholic Church was facilitating activism, the government attempted to obstruct the flow of international funds to the church to limit the amount of resources the church could ultimately dedicate to activism. Other examples of observable channeling by national agents include nationalized collective bargaining laws that institutionalize and tightly regulate labor contract negotiations and strikes (Oberschall 1973; Tilly 1978). Oberschall argues: “Because every step in the confrontation between union and management is initially known and accepted by both parties and backed by law and precedent, the conflict is regulated and bounded with penalties to those who step out of the institutionalized channels” (Oberschall 1973:245).

Some types of channeling have been harder to identify in the past but are gaining increasing attention. This is true of *unobserved channeling by state agents tightly connected with national elites*. For instance, McCarthy, Britt, and Wolfson (1991) argue that IRS 501(c)(3) regulations create a “tangle of incentives” that SMOs can neither afford to ignore or endorse. They also suggest that state authorities may prefer channeling for quotidian protest control, since coercion can be “costly, crude, and potentially dangerous for authorities” (McCarthy, Britt, and Wolfson 1991:49).

In terms of *observable channeling by loosely connected state agents*, state and local governments have not been quiescent where protest control is concerned. Gibson (1989) models the passage of state laws meant to prevent or limit campus protests at state universities in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Locally, police permitting requirements (McCarthy and McPhail 1998) and time, place, and manner restrictions also regulate protest without physical force.

Where *unobserved channeling by loosely connected state agents* is concerned, research by Rowland (1972) suggests that several states have enacted “cut-off” statutes in part to punish student activists. Typically, these statutes render any student convicted of a crime ineligible for state or local financial aid. As is true with most unobserved channeling, these restrictions are over-broad: just as more organizations than SMOs are 501(c)(3) organizations, so too are more student law-breakers punished by “cut-off” statutes than just student protesters. Aside from legislative context, it would not be apparent that many supporters of these laws had protesters in mind. Nonetheless, these statutes exerted pressure on students to pursue their grievances through more institutional channels, even if the connection to protest control was unnoticed by most.

The last two types of repression involve channeling by private agents. Discretionary elite patronage is a good example of *observable channeling by private agents*. For instance, elites may prefer moderate reformers to radical reformers and direct their financial support to movements or SMOs that pursue less radical agendas or use less radical tactics. McAdam’s (1982) critique of resource mobilization and his

valorization of indigenous movement resources is principally built around the potential destruction de-funding could wreak.

Finally, *unobserved channeling by private agents* can occur, for example, when disciplinary policies limit the kinds of activities in which employees can engage both inside and outside of work. Similarly, “company towns” are often built so that dissent cannot germinate, let alone thrive. Organizations can also require that members channel their grievances through individualized grievance proceedings instead of recognizing organized opposition. In each of these examples, the connection to protest control is obscured, even though each of these tactics can still exert a powerful influence on the sources, shape, timing, and level of protest.

### THE VALUE ADDED FROM A TYPOLOGY OF REPRESSION

The nuanced view of repression enabled by this typology contributes three important achievements: (1) it organizes research examples and, more importantly, sets of theoretical insights so that approaches can be more productively evaluated and compared; (2) it indicates where unproductive silences in the repression literature are located and suggests the limitations of current approaches; and (3) by reshaping how researchers think of repression as a phenomenon, the typology allows scholars to generate new hypotheses about repression. In doing so, it moves researchers toward more sophisticated theories of repression that are able to recognize, understand, and explain important differences in repressive form.

#### *Typology as Reorganization*

While Table 2 reorganized research examples of repression to make clear the salient theoretical dimensions that divide them, a reorganization of major explanatory approaches to repression using this new typology takes this contribution further. I begin by identifying six major approaches that have been used to explain levels of repression, as shown in Table 3.

A number of scholars have argued for a “threat” model of repression where the larger the threat to political elites, the greater the amount of repression. For instance, McAdam (1982) has argued that groups using noninstitutional and confrontational tactics face greater amounts of repression. McAdam (1983) also showed that threatening tactics and repression may even co-evolve through tactical innovation and repressive adaptation. McAdam (1982) and Bromley and Shupe (1983) have argued that groups pursuing revolutionary or radical goals will be repressed more than less radical groups. Tilly (1978) focused partly on the “scale of action,” signaling, among other things, the importance of levels of mobilization and/or protest size.

In contrast to the “threat” school, another strand of work suggests that weakness begets repression. Gamson ([1975] 1990), the leading scholar in this school, argues that repression is dangerous for power-holders because elites risk public ridicule if they fail in their repressive attempts. Thus, power-holders should only repress movements that are likely to collapse under pressure. Others have expanded on this approach. For instance, protests by marginalized groups—such as racial and ethnic minorities, religious minorities, and the poor (Piven and Cloward 1977)—could be considered “weaker,” since subordinate protesters may be perceived as less able to resist repression by police or less able to retaliate politically against repressive policing agencies (Stockdill 1996). Alternatively, a “weakness-from-without” approach has

Table 3. Dominant Approaches in Repression Research\*

Theoretical Approach	Main Argument	Key Variables	Research Examples
Threat	The more threatening a movement, group, or particular protest is to power-holders, the more severe the repressive reaction	- use of confrontational, violent, or new tactics - adoption of radical or revolutionary goals - protest size	- Bromley and Shupe (1983) - Davenport (2000) - McAdam (1982) - Wisler and Guigni (1999)
Weakness	Since repression can backfire on authorities, movements or groups presumed to be more likely to succumb to repression will experience more repression	- overall movement strength, level of mobilization, and resources - minority group membership in the movement or presence at a protest - lower levels of (or no) media coverage of protests	- Gamson ([1975] 1990) - Stockdill (1996) - Wisler and Guigni (1999)
Threat and weakness	Movements that are both threatening and weak will be major targets of repression	- radical minority activists and SMOs - confrontational tactics used by “weak” protesters	- Piven and Cloward (1977) - Stockdill (1996)
Stable and volatile political opportunity arguments	Protests and movements will experience less repression when PO/POS are open and more repression when they are closed	- openness/favorability of more stable POS - timing of movement emergence or protest within the larger protest cycle - shifts between “law and order” and “civil-rights” regimes	- della Porta (1995) - McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald (1988) - Tarrow (1989, 1994) - Wisler and Kriesi (1998)
Other timing-related approaches	The timing of protest matters to repression, but in varying ways depending on the researcher	- initial overreaction is followed by institutionalization of moderates and delayed severe repression for isolated radical groups - historic events can create spikes and troughs in repression	- Karstedt-Henke (1980) - Koopmans (1993) - White (1999)
Law-enforcement characteristics	The characteristics of law-enforcement agencies predict the types of repression and level of repression	- police administration openness to protest - prior history of brutality by agency - agency preparation	- Cunningham (forthcoming) - McPhail, Schweingrubber, and McCarthy (1998) - Stockdill (1996) - Waddington (1998)

\*The approaches outlined and references cited in this table represent dominant trends in the study of repression. However, this table is not meant to be an inclusive review of *all* theories related to repression.

been supported by recent work. Wisler and Guigni (1999) found an inverse relationship between the level of media coverage and repression. This suggests that protests that are less "protected" by the watchful eye of the media may be "weaker" and thus more prone to repression.

A third school combines the seemingly oppositional "threat" and "weakness" schools to argue that protests that are *both* weak and threatening are the most likely to be repressed. For instance, Stockdill (1996) found that within the threatening HIV/AIDS movement, protests predominately attended by people of color were frequently and vigorously repressed.

Another strand of research suggests focusing on political opportunities of two varieties: volatile political opportunities (PO) and stable political opportunities structures (POS) (della Porta 1995; Jenkins 1995; Kriesi 1995).<sup>7</sup> POS are based on fairly fixed aspects of nation-states such as formal institutional structures, informal procedures, and prevailing strategies (Kriesi 1995). I say "fairly fixed" because the characteristics can change but tend to change very slowly and only with great effort. Since POS change at a glacial rate, they are often more useful in explaining repression across nation-states or between political regions within a given nation-state.

In contrast, more volatile PO have been linked to short-term shifts in protest and repression. Tarrow (1989), for instance, suggests that the initial opening of PO begins a protest cycle and PO continue to become more favorable through the middle of the cycle. The closing of these more volatile PO signal the end of the cycle. He also argues repression should vary across a cycle of protest such that the highest levels of repression should occur at the end of the cycle, when the movement sector is bifurcating into extremely violent, radical groups and increasingly institutionalized groups. The lowest level of repression should occur in midcycle. McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald (1988) argue that movements are less likely to be repressed if they mobilize when PO are still favorable. Similarly, della Porta (1995) argues that "law and order governments" tend to close PO and increase repression, while "civil rights" regimes tend to open PO and decrease repression.

Other authors have advocated for less cyclical yet still temporal approaches to repression. Karstedt-Henke's counterstrategies theory (Karstedt-Henke 1980; Koopmans 1993) argues that at the start of a protest wave, there will be an initial overreaction by police.<sup>8</sup> This overreaction will be followed by a dual strategy of continued but slightly diminished repression and simultaneous appeasement. Finally, when moderate allies have been appeased and more radical groups are isolated from moderate allies, repression will increase to crush remaining dissenters.

Finally, some scholars have suggested that internal police characteristics affect trends in repression. For instance, Stockdill (1996) argues that police forces that have historically high rates of brutality may be more repressive with respect to social movements and protest events.

Given the wide range of theoretical approaches to repression and the large number of types of repression, clearly comparing research findings can be difficult at best. However, just as the repression typology was able to effectively sort examples of repression into categories, this typology can also help researchers to match theoretical

<sup>7</sup>I use "PO" to refer to volatile political opportunities (frequently associated with more processual explanations) and "POS" to refer to stable political opportunity *structures* (frequently associated with more structural explanations).

<sup>8</sup>See Koopmans (1993) for an articulate and well-researched explanation of the differences between Karstedt-Henke's and Tarrow's arguments. Readers interested in arguments over protest waves versus protest cycles should consult Koopmans (1993, 1995).

Table 4. Theoretical Approaches to Different Types of Repression\*

Type of Repression	Threat	Weakness	Threat and Weakness	PO/ POS	Timing	Law Enforcement
Observable, tightly connected coercion	Strong support	Inferential support		Strong support		Support
Observable, loosely connected coercion	Strong support	Support	Limited support	Inconclusive	Support	Support
Observable, private coercion	Inferential support			Inferential support		
Unobserved, tightly connected coercion	Inferential support			Inferential support		Support
Unobserved, loosely connected coercion						
Unobserved, private coercion						
Observable, tightly connected channeling				Inferential support		
Observable, loosely connected channeling	Limited support					
Observable, private channeling	Inconclusive					
Unobserved, tightly connected channeling						
Unobserved, loosely connected channeling						
Unobserved, private channeling						

\*This table represents my classification of existing work (based upon both central and less central hypotheses in works cited), not necessarily the self-labeling of individual researchers.

approaches used in the literature to specific types of repression. Table 4 reorganizes the literature by mapping research representing the six dominant approaches onto the 12 types of repression identified in Table 3.

Three things are made apparent by the reorganization of existing research. First, there are a large number of empty cells. These indicate silences in the literature that need to be addressed by future research. As Table 4 makes visually apparent, five types of repression are particularly in need of research: unobserved, coercive repression by loosely connected state agents (row 5); unobserved, direct, private repression (row 6); and all three types of unobserved channeling (rows 10–12). While case studies that describe the form of the repression and/or discuss the impacts of such repression have been completed on these five types of repression, researchers have not yet attempted explanatory analyses for these types.

Second, several other types of repression have received only minimal empirical attention from researchers interested in explaining repression. For instance, Bromley and Shupe’s (1983) case study of observable, private repression only provides inferential support for threat and PO approaches (see row 3). The authors studied the direct action of anticult activists against the Unification Church/Movement. In terms of threat, the authors suggest that the anticult activists were either parents of cult

members who experienced their child's membership as a major "abrupt, irrational, and unacceptable" change or churches who saw the Unification Church as a threat to Christianity (Bromley and Shupe 1983:340, 342). Nonetheless, the support for threat remains inferential because: (1) the parental reactions could have been motivated by quotidian disruption (Snow et al. 1998) instead of by threat, and (2) the authors note that many churches did not see the Unification Church as an "imminent threat" (Bromley and Shupe 1983:342). Where PO are concerned, their findings are equally inferential. They suggest that the anticult movement was most successful in repressive efforts when it was able to enlist either tacit or direct support from external allies such as the media or governmental/law-enforcement officials. However, since they do not directly tie private repressive efforts to shifts in PO, their research remains only suggestive.

Where unobserved, coercive repression by state agents tightly linked to national political elites is concerned (row 4), inferential support for both threat and PO come from Zwerman's (1987) study of overt and covert federal action against protesters during the Reagan administration. Her study suggests that more radical groups were targeted for repression and that the conservative Reagan administration worked to increase the repressive capacity of federal agents. Cunningham (forthcoming), in contrast, demonstrates the importance of internal organizational factors on covert, federal law-enforcement action.

While case studies of observable channeling by tightly connected state agents have been completed (row 7), inferential support is available for only one of the six main theoretical approaches: a PO approach. As discussed above, Loveman found that the Chilean government attempted to block the flow of international funds to the Chilean Catholic Church on several occasions, but "it repeatedly backed down in response to international pressure from the Roman Catholic Church, the World Council of Churches, and in the case of Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) funds, members of the U.S. Congress, the U.S. ambassador, and representatives of IDB" (Loveman 1998:495). While this use of PO is more akin to McAdam's (1998) international PO argument, where international actors create short-term shifts in national PO, it nonetheless provides inferential support for a variant of PO.

Similarly, only limited support is available for the role of threat in observable channeling by loosely connected state agents (row 8). Gibson (1989) studied the passage of state laws designed to limit protest at public universities. In support of a threat model, he found that larger amounts of prior protest predicted the adoption of such laws. However, he did not model other measures of threat, such as protest size or the use of confrontational tactics.

Only inconclusive results are available for the role of threat in observable channeling by private agents (row 9). McAdam (1982) proposes that moderate external funding agents may try to de-fund radical social movement organizations. Even where de-funding does not occur, "elite support is offered as an inducement to insurgents to pursue movement goals through normal political means" (McAdam 1982:28), thereby fundamentally funneling, or channeling, dissent into more conventional forums.<sup>9</sup> In contrast, Jenkins and Eckhert's (1986) study of the civil rights movement proposes that elite preferences for moderate groups may have been

<sup>9</sup>Some radical groups may reject outside support and thus not subjectively consider differential funding support for moderate groups as repression. This subjective understanding should not affect the academic classification of such funding dynamics under the rubric of observable, private channeling. It is clear that differential funding discourages radical protest, just as tax laws discourage certain types of activism (McCarthy, Britt, and Wolfson 1991), and thus serves to shape, structure, and mold insurgency into forms more amenable to elites.

motivated by a legitimate belief that more moderate groups would build a stronger movement, instead of being motivated by the destruction of radical groups or the co-optation of protest. While their study found that elite patronage was reactive and tended to favor moderate SMOs (Jenkins and Eckhart 1986:819), they argue that the clear control model McAdam (1982) advances may be overstated. It was not the case that radical groups were punitively de-funded so much as that radical groups were entirely bypassed by funders. Similarly, Haines's (1984) study of radical flank effects found that the growth of radical movement groups actually resulted in *increased* funding to moderate groups, thereby facilitating the overall growth of the movement and producing a "positive radical flank effect." Nonetheless, I label the evidence "inconclusive" because of these conflicting findings and because, as Jenkins and Eckert note, "inferring the interests behind patronage is . . . hazardous" (Jenkins and Eckert 1986:814).<sup>10</sup>

Finally, there are two types of repression that have received the mainstay of research attention, at least where research on explanatory factors for repression are concerned. First, observable, coercive repression by agents tightly connected to national political elites has been studied frequently (row 1). Several studies suggest strong support for the threat model (see examples in della Porta 1995, 1996; della Porta, Fillieule, and Reiter 1998; Fillieule and Jobard 1998).<sup>11</sup> Weak, inferential support is available for claims regarding weakness. Jaime-Jiménez and Reinares (1998) found that the Spanish police were sensitive to the level of public scrutiny that they faced, and one could infer that the police might, therefore, be more permissive when policing protests that would likely garner major media attention. Tarrow (1989), della Porta (1995), and Brockett (1995) offer firm support for a PO model of this type of repression. Finally, McCarthy and McPhail (1999) suggest that national policing outfits in the United States, such as the FBI and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, have recently moved toward more negotiated, low-force models of protest policing.

Second, observable, coercive repression by state agents loosely linked to national political elites has also been studied extensively. Threat, in particular, has received a great deal of support. Kriesi and colleagues (1995) found that protesters using more radical tactics were more likely to be repressed in Germany and the Netherlands than other protesters, and Reiner (1998) and Waddington (1998) separately argued that the development of paramilitary crowd-control tactics and other aggressive policing tactics by British police were spurred by the unruliness of protesters and their confrontational style. Wisler and Guigni's (1999) study of Swiss protest supports a weakness approach: protests following lower levels of protest coverage by local media outlets had higher likelihoods of police intervention and rubber bullet usage. In support of a threat-and-weakness interaction model, Stockdill's (1996) work on the HIV/AIDS movement is suggestive of an interaction between minority presence and the use of confrontational tactics.

Evidence on PO and observable, coercive repression by loosely linked state agents is inconclusive. While some, such as Waddington (1998), suggest that the will of the political elite filters down to the local level and significantly affects local protest policing,<sup>12</sup> others have failed to confirm this finding in quantitative analyses. In particular, in Wisler and Guigni's (1999) quantitative study of Swiss protest, only

<sup>10</sup>Scholars interested in facilitation (Tilly 1978) should note the dual character of channeling: it represses (or regulates) radical SMOs and facilitates more moderate SMOs.

<sup>11</sup>Classification of state policing structures into "strongly connected" and "loosely connected" state agents is based on Gregory's (1976) description.

<sup>12</sup>Ericson and Doyle (1999) show that international pressure can result in stricter policing.

one PO proxy variable was significant in all three of their models of police action, and that coefficient suggested that civil rights coalitions, which should predict more open PO, actually increased the odds of rubber bullet use by police.

Where stable POS are concerned, Wisler and Kriesi (1998) found that Zurich's more open political structure (as measured by initiative and referendum use) facilitated protest, but these higher levels of protest generated more repression. Other timing-related models have also been supported. Koopmans (1993), Kriesi and colleagues (1995), and White (1999) found varying temporal effects in West Germany, the Netherlands, and Ireland, respectively.

Finally, law enforcement agency characteristics have been shown to affect this kind of repression. Kritzer's (1977) study of police uses of force at U.S. protests and McPhail, Schweingrubber, and McCarthy's (1998) more historical treatment of "public order management systems" in the United States demonstrate the importance of law-enforcement preparation and planning to protest policing. Waddington (1998) explores similar issues with respect to British protest policing, while White (1999) found that police capacity predicted heavier repression of Irish Republican activists. Finally, Kriesi and colleagues (1995) found an increase in repression directed toward confrontational groups in Germany in the period between 1975 and 1989, which they attribute to a publication by a well-known police theorist on the need for harsher treatment of militant protesters.

While this review and reorganization of the literature is helpful in its own right, it more importantly demonstrates the merit of the proposed typology. This typology has allowed (1) roughly comparable works to be identified and (2) the weight of research evidence for and against major approaches to be assessed across different types of repression. Without this typology, such an efficient review of *comparable* findings simply would not be possible.

### *Typology as Diagnosis*

This reorganization of research findings provides more than just an overview of contemporary repression research; it suggests directions that researchers should pursue and approaches that need to be reconsidered and/or reformulated. For instance, because so little research on channeling of any form has been done, researchers interested in explaining channeling may need to conduct more exploratory analyses, possibly through detailed case studies, before proceeding to any sort of cross-theory testing. It is possible, after all, that models used to explain one type of repression will not explain other types.

Similarly, researchers studying more well-researched types of repression, such as observable, coercive repression by loosely linked state agents, should consider developing studies that model several dominant approaches at once. This is a more important suggestion than it may initially seem to be, since the majority of existing research has tested only one or two approaches simultaneously. The reorganization of the literature reveals that cross-theory testing, not exploratory analyses, are required for progress in this particular area.

As well, researchers interested in particular theoretical approaches can also benefit from this reorganization. For example, threat researchers would benefit from testing threat models for types of repression that have not yet been exposed to such analyses (e.g., most forms of channeling and unobserved, coercive repression by local state agents or private agents). It may be that threat is a salient predictor of most types of



repression (Davenport 2000), but researchers should confirm this prediction by studying threat for all 12 repressive forms.

Finally, this typology suggests that some aspects of existing approaches may be more applicable to some types of repression than others. For instance, the typology lays bare the variable connection between the national political elites, possible repressive agents, and these agents' actions. When private agents are involved, it is almost meaningless to understand repression as subject to changes in volatile PO since these agents are, by definition, unconnected to the state. In the intermediate case of loosely connected state agents, which most U.S. protest policing falls into, policing cannot be assumed to automatically respond to shifts in national political will (i.e., changes in PO). In fact, Table 4 suggests that research results for PO arguments have been inconclusive for this type of repression. In favor of PO, there is probably a tight connection between the overall PO and repression when examining repressive state agents tightly linked to national political elites (e.g., national police agencies), especially in the case of observable, coercive repression. Indeed, Table 4 reveals substantial support for this position. Thus, this reorganization of the literature suggests that scholars should think of repression as analytically distinct from PO. Researchers should begin to theorize instead about *when* repression and PO will be tightly coupled, instead of subsuming a tight or perfect coupling.

### *Typology as Forbearer*

This typology also implies important new directions for research. I will suggest two types of hypotheses that are inspired by this typology: (1) hypotheses that explore possible relationships *within specific types of repression*; and (2) hypotheses that suggest interrelationships *between different types of repression*. While readers may question—and future research may empirically challenge—the validity of some of the hypotheses introduced below, this is ultimately immaterial for evaluating the typology presented. What is important in this paper is that without the typology presented above, the hypotheses presented below could not even be generated. That is, the hypotheses presented below are meant to demonstrate the generative capacity of the typology, not to create and defend specific theoretical statements.

Readers should also note that the eclecticism represented in theoretical propositions below is intentional: it is ultimately more suggestive, even if more unorthodox, to show the wide range of hypotheses and styles of theoretical derivation made available by the typology. Any typology of repression that was restricted to a single theory of repression (e.g., threat approach) or a family of theories (e.g., rationalist explanations) would not provide a common language through which multiple theoretical lineages could communicate and compare findings.

### WITHIN-TYPE HYPOTHESES

As the preceding discussion makes clear, some approaches to repression as a general phenomenon may actually explain only a few forms of repression, and yet this has not been evident to most researchers who use only very rough conceptualizations of repression. However, once a more precise conceptualization of repression is employed, the applicability of different explanatory approaches to specific types of repression is brought into relief.

For instance, this typology can help researchers make sense of the often conflicting predictions of threat and weakness scholars. While not all threat-related claims (e.g., the use of confrontational tactics) rely on movement strength, many do have at least an indirect connection to movement strength (e.g., protest size). In such instances, threat and weakness approaches appear to be competing. Scholars have resolved this tension by either ignoring directly conflicting hypotheses or suggesting interaction effects between noncompeting threat and weakness variables (Stockdill 1996). This typology offers a new way to understand this debate.

Instead of imagining threat and weakness in the proverbial straw-man theory contest, sensitivity to differing types of repression suggests an alternative. It is reasonable to expect that Gamson's (1990) claims about the role of weakness are only operative for observable repression and repression committed by state agents. The reasoning behind Gamson's (1990) claim was that state authorities could publicly (and quite embarrassingly) "fail" at repression. This implies two assumptions: (1) the repression must be observable so "failure" could be assessed by the public; and (2) failure must be a state-centered public relations concern. Thus, I suggest:

*HYPOTHESIS ONE: Movement weakness is positively associated with observable, coercive repression by state agents (either tightly or loosely linked to national political elites).*

*HYPOTHESIS TWO: Movement weakness should not predict any form of private repression.*

These hypotheses have already received some research support: Table 4 showed that weakness received inferential and direct support where observable, coercive repression by tightly and loosely linked state agents were concerned. As well, in the few studies that have examined private coercion, weakness has not been operative.

Applying this insight further, a weakness and threat interaction should only occur under conditions where weakness would itself encourage repression, thus:

*HYPOTHESIS THREE: A threat and weakness interaction will be positively associated with observable, coercive repression by state agents but will not explain other types of repression.*

Finally, given Gamson's (1990) particular stress on public relations concerns, one should suspect that movements that are threatening but that have received large amount of press coverage—particularly more favorable press coverage—would be less likely to be repressed overtly by state authorities. However, this is not to suggest that such movements are immune to repression or simply ignored by state authorities. Instead, state authorities wishing to avoid possible public relation boondoggles while still wishing to neutralize a threatening movement might prefer unobserved repressive strategies. Further, since coercive repression is more likely to gain immediate results when compared to channeling, the larger the threat of the movement, the more likely that state authorities should also prefer coercive repression versus channeling:

*HYPOTHESIS FOUR: Where strong movements buoyed by favorable and consistent media coverage are concerned, state authorities are more likely to deploy unobserved, coercive repression when these movements are also threatening, but are more likely to deploy unobserved channeling against fairly nonthreatening but still strong movements.*<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Readers interested in recursive models of repression, which argue that prior repression and insurgent reactions to that repression influence future repression, should note that this hypothesis attends to the dynamic properties of repression over time as well as changes in repressive form over time. While this hypothesis is not explicitly recursive, it suggests a capacity to include recursive claims through its attention to time-sensitive processes.

One caveat is in order: the initial level of strength should be related to unobserved, coercive repression, but it is less clear that strength should equally predict unobserved, coercive repression over a movement's life-cycle. If initial strength begets unobserved, coercive repression, then the movement may experience decline. When the movement has weakened, state authorities may choose to switch to more public repressive strategies, or they may, due to path dependence, continue with unobserved, coercive strategies or combine the two approaches.

Clearly, these four hypotheses and their sensitivity to the type of repression under study help to move scholars beyond coarse and often stilted theory tests between these two approaches. This is not to say that these approaches cannot ever be seen as competitors. When researchers are comparing explanatory approaches for the *same type of repression*, there are great benefits to tests of competing theories. In fact, comparing threat and weakness as explanatory factors for the same type of repression would add to the study of repression by forcing researchers to clarify the meaning and import of each approach and the salient distinctions between these two approaches.

Hypotheses about PO and POS are also suggested by this typology. To begin, one would expect that sharp changes in volatile PO should lead to similarly dramatic changes in repression. However, not all forms of repression are equally adapted to this task. With all of its institutional baggage, channeling is less malleable over short periods of time, but coercion can be turned on and off more like a spigot. Put bluntly, even slow tanks move faster than tax regulations in controlling protest. This is not to say that channeling is unrelated to any form of political opportunity. Rather, Hypothesis Five asserts:

**HYPOTHESIS FIVE:** *Channeling by tightly connected state agents should be more responsive to stable POS.*

Further, several studies have demonstrated a connection between more volatile PO and observable, coercive repression (della Porta 1995; Loveman 1998). However, as Table 4 showed, this linkage has been supported almost exclusively by cases where the state authorities are tightly connected to national political elites structurally and by interest.

There are several reasons why more local policing may be relatively sheltered from changes in national PO. First, the interests of national political elites can conflict with the interests of state or local political elites, leading to a decoupling of national PO and repression. McAdam's (1982, 1988) explanation of federal intervention on behalf of civil-rights activists is built around the movement's ability to play national elite interests against state and local elite interests. Second, when police agencies are led by elected officials, such as many sheriff departments in the United States, these elected police officials are less fettered by the interests of other officials. Third, police agencies that see themselves as more civil (when compared to militaristic) and as more professional (and therefore less dependent on political decision-making) may be less likely to force their policing practices to conform to political interests of any ilk. Finally, discretion further complicates tales of directly political policing: one of the most robust findings in sociolegal research on police in the United States has been the large amount of discretion police officers (and agencies) enjoy. Classic policing research (e.g., Wilson 1968) and contemporary research on repression (e.g., Fillieule and Jobard 1998; Waddington 1998) confirm this. Taken together, these arguments suggest:

**HYPOTHESIS SIX:** *Volatile PO should predict observable, coercive repressive strategies by state authorities that are tightly connected to national elites, such that open PO predict less observable, coercive repression by tightly connected state authorities.*

**HYPOTHESIS SEVEN:** *Volatile PO should only slightly predict observable, coercive repressive strategies by state authorities that are loosely connected to national elites.*

Further, private actions should be even less responsive than local police to prevailing PO. Put simply, private actors are as likely to pursue their own agenda when PO favor the movement they oppose as when PO disfavor the movement they oppose. However, I am not suggesting that private actors do not notice the PO that face movements they oppose. In fact, one could expect that state authorities in a “closed” system of PO would be less likely to punish private actors who committed acts of observable, coercive repression, since those actions further state authorities’ interests. The KKK most likely benefited from Southern police antipathy toward African-Americans and the civil-rights movement. In contrast, favorable PO may push private, coercive repression underground, as is arguably the case with violent, pro-life protest. Thus, I assert:

**HYPOTHESIS EIGHT:** *PO should not predict the overall level of private, coercive repression, but PO should predict whether private, coercive repression is observable or covert.*

Of course, all of these hypotheses need to be tested in future research. Nonetheless, even if several of these hypotheses were not ultimately supported empirically, the typology and the generative capacity it brings to social movements still contribute to the field by suggesting questions movements scholars should be asking and studying but are not.

## BETWEEN-TYPE HYPOTHESES

Perhaps more important than developing within-type hypotheses, this typology opens up questions about relationships between different types of repression. It encourages scholars to be creative and to try to break new ground. For instance, it is possible that there is a relationship between the level of state-based repression and the level and type of private repression.

Black and Baumgartner (1980) argued that crime rates, in part, reflect a kind of private justice, or “self-help.” That is, in situations where people do not feel that law-enforcement agencies will provide (or have provided) an adequate remedy, people may seek retribution or repayment on their own (e.g., vigilantes, private debt collection, assaulting those that have wronged one, and so on).<sup>14</sup> More formally, Black and Baumgartner (1980) suggest that private justice and formal justice should be inversely related. These claims can be applied to repression research if one assumes that: (1) coercive repression by state authorities tightly or loosely linked to national political elites represents “formal justice”; and (2) the actions of these state authorities are visible enough that private citizens could actually observe rises and falls in coercive repression.

**HYPOTHESIS NINE:** *If observable, coercive repression by state agents declines, then direct, private repression should increase.*

This is not to suggest that private repression would be at an absolute low level when coercive state repression was high; this is a *relative* hypothesis. While both state and private repression could initially be at high absolute levels, if coercive state repression

<sup>14</sup> Law-enforcement agencies could fail to provide adequate remedies for several reasons: (1) the agencies may be weak; (2) the agencies may give more weight to certain types of crime; or (3) the agencies may not perceive themselves as having a mandate to police certain injustices.

then declines, private repression should increase as a result. Of course, over time, this increase in private repression may attenuate. For instance, as Southern law-enforcement officials were forced by federal authorities to refrain from more egregious civil-rights violations, private repressors such as the KKK and White Citizen's Councils took up some of the short-term slack. However, as civil-rights claims began to be accepted by larger and larger segments of the U.S. population, private repression by the KKK and other white-power organizations gradually declined.

Hypotheses can also be developed about channeling. Since channeling can be so overbroad as to be entirely removed from short-term repressive waves, it is unlikely that unobserved channeling by state authorities should substitute for other types of repression. For instance, while McCarthy and colleagues (1991) suggest that the U.S. tax code on not-for-profit status dramatically affects the character of social movements, the tax code's main purpose is not to quell protest, and tax codes are certainly less effective substitutes for coercion in the short term.

Nonetheless, if such channeling is successful at quelling or subduing movements over the long run, the composition of movements, tactics, and ideologies should change over time. These compositional changes may, in turn, affect other types of repression. For instance, if threat does predict observable, coercive repression by loosely connected state agents—as the literature strongly suggests—but movements largely abandon more confrontational tactics over time, repression due to threat may decline. Taking this and previous considerations together, I argue:

*HYPOTHESIS TEN: Levels of unobserved channeling by state agents should only have an indirect effect on other forms of repression and this effect is likely (a) to have a significant time lag, and (b) to be mediated by changes in the composition of movements, movement ideologies, and movement tactics over time.*

Since the majority of movement research has attended to within-type repression studies, the balance of the hypotheses developed here also reflects that trend. Nonetheless, the two between-type hypotheses suggest that there is much to be gained by beginning to unpack this relatively unexplored area of movement repression research.

## CONCLUSIONS

The typology of repression developed and supported here has a great deal to offer movement researchers. As has been shown, the typology itself captures important theoretical dimensions of repression and considers the impact of various combinations of these dimensions of repressive form. As well, the typology suggests courses for future research given the level of theoretical development and empirical research conducted for each type of repression using six major explanatory approaches to repression. For instance, researchers interested in channeling may consider beginning with exploratory case studies or small, comparative case analyses. Researchers interested in observable, coercive repression by tightly connected state agents should pursue more cross-theory testing. Researchers interested in particular theoretical approaches, such as threat, should test their explanatory power across different types of repression.

The typology also suggests areas where research findings have called theoretical claims into question. Perhaps most important to the study of social movements generally are the questions that arise surrounding the role of PO in explaining various types of movement repression. Both when considering the typology as a tool for

diagnoses and as generative tool for hypotheses development, the invariant and tight coupling of PO to repression has been called into question. For instance, while research has suggested that PO explain observable, coercive repression by tightly connected state agents, support for this connection is more tenuous where loosely connected state agents are concerned and still more questionable where private agents are concerned. Further, the hypotheses developed here suggest that stable POS may predict channeling and cross-national differences in observable, coercive repression, but PO may explain observable, coercive repression by tightly connected state agents within a nation-state. Thus, it is apparent that this typology addresses more than semantic quibbles—the relationships between repression and PO/POS (and the relationship between PO/POS and movement mobilization and outcomes) lie at the core of a great deal of movement research.

Finally, the generative capacity of this typology was shown by developing and exploring 10 hypotheses about explanatory factors related to repression. These hypotheses demonstrate the fertility of this typology and the utility it could have for future research on repression. As stated before, even if several of these hypotheses are not supported by later research, the fact remains that the generation of such hypotheses offers a map for future research on repression that could not exist without this typology. Further, the typology has been shown to be robust with respect to theoretical preferences and logical substructures: Black's "pure sociology" (2000) was rendered as useful as very delicate state-centered debates on volatile PO and stable POS. This suggests that the typology is as theoretically versatile as it useful.

Across the contributions, I have demonstrated the importance of developing a common language and nomenclature for repression. There cannot be significant advancements in repression theorizing without a common conceptualization of repression that facilitates conversations (and debates) between theoretical camps, renders research findings commensurable, and highlights new questions and new tentative answers. Put simply, researchers cannot move toward deeper, richer, more empirically sound theories of repression until the conceptual groundwork, like the typology discussed here, is laid.

Of course, this paper marks a beginning, not an end, to critical conversations over the meaning of repression. The typology could be developed further theoretically and empirically. For instance, future work should consider repression as one of a range of state responses to insurgency. Tilly (1978) strongly advocates for theorizing about facilitation, toleration, and repression, arguing that repression lies at the end of a continuum of reactions to protest, with facilitation occupying the other pole and toleration situated between the two. Gaining theoretical leverage over the relationship between different types of repression, facilitation, and toleration would have great theoretical payoffs but was simply beyond the scope of this paper.

Researchers should also build on the linear relationships suggested here and develop approaches to repression that are more sensitive to recursive relationships between repression and protest over time. The typology defended here has taken important first steps in this regard. For instance, some of the hypotheses suggested here have already hinted at possible recursive relationships between repression and protest over time: Hypothesis Ten suggests that channeling will contribute to the institutionalization of protest, which will in turn reduce the level of overt, coercive repression by state authorities of any ilk as the threat represented by insurgency declines. At its most basic level, this hypothesis argues that an increase in one type of repression affects insurgency, which, in turn, later affects the likelihood or severity of different types of repression. As well, if recursive relationships do affect repression,

we cannot move forward in understanding this dynamic relationship without first conceptually understanding repression. In that sense, neither linear models *nor* recursive models of repression can advance without the sort of theoretical reconceptualization of repression the typology outlines. Even still, researchers must give more attention to such recursive approaches in both theoretical and empirical treatments of repression. Such recursive relationships, described as a “cycle of parry and thrust” by Tilly (1995:140), are empirically critical.

Finally, scholars should theoretically deepen the approaches used to explain repression using the typology presented here. Scholars not identified with Black’s “pure sociological” (2000) approach should go beyond identifying expected correlations and discuss the sorts of rationalist, state-centered, or culturalist logics that undergird these expectations. Theorists of each ilk should explain how the deep logics of their theoretical approaches provide leverage over different types of repression. For instance, scholars must theoretically deepen their approaches to explain why rationalist logics may govern overt, coercive repression by national authorities. It is doubtful that students of repression will be able to undertake such theoretical deepening without the theoretical sensitivity to differing forms of repression introduced here. Explanations, after all, are ultimately limited by the conceptual integrity of that which they seek to explain.

## REFERENCES

- Barkan, Steven. 1984. “Legal Control of the Southern Civil Rights Movement.” *American Sociological Review* 49:552–65.
- Black, Donald. 2000. “Dreams of Pure Sociology.” *Sociological Theory* 18:343–67.
- Black, Donald, and M. P. Baumgartner. 1980. “On Self Help in Modern Society.” Pp. 193–208 in *The Manners and Customs of the Police*, edited by Donald Black. New York: Academic Press.
- Brockett, Charles D. 1995. “A Protest-Cycle Resolution of the Repression/Popular Protest Paradox.” Pp. 117–44 in *Repertoires and Cycles of Collective Action*, edited by Mark Traugott. Chapel Hill, NC: Duke University Press.
- Bromley, David G., and Anson D. Shupe, Jr. 1983. “Repression and the Decline of Social Movements: The Case of New Religions.” Pp. 335–47 in *Social Movements of the Sixties and Seventies*, edited by Jo Freeman. New York: Longman.
- Carley, Michael. 1997. “Defining Forms of Successful State Repression of Social Movement Organizations: A Case Study of the FBI’s COINTELPRO and the American Indian Movement.” *Research in Social Movements, Conflicts and Change* 20:151–76.
- Churchill, Ward. 1994. “The Bloody Wake of Alcatraz: Political Repression of the American Indian Movement during the 1970s.” *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 18:253–300.
- Churchill, Ward, and Jim Vander Wall. 1988. *Agents of Repression: The FBI’s Secret Wars Against the Black Panther Party and the American Indian Movement*. Boston, MA: South End Press.
- Cunningham, David. Forthcoming. “The Dynamics of Repression: FBI Counterintelligence and the New Left.” In *States, Parties, and Social Movements: Pushing the Boundaries of Institutionalized Politics*, edited by Jack Goldstone. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
- Davenport, Christian (ed.). 2000. *Paths to State Repression: Human Rights Violations and Contentious Politics*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- della Porta, Donatella. 1995. *Social Movements, Political Violence, and the State: A Comparative Analysis of Italy and Germany*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- . 1996. “Social Movements and the State: Thoughts on the Policing of Protest.” Pp. 62–92 in *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements*, edited by Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy, and Mayer N. Zald. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
- della Porta, Donatella, Olivier Fillieule, and Herbert Reiter. 1998. “Policing Protest in France and Italy: From Intimidation to Cooperation?” Pp. 111–29 in *The Social Movement Society*, edited by David S. Meyer and Sidney Tarrow. Boulder, CO: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers.
- della Porta, Donatella, and Herbert Reiter. 1998. “Introduction.” Pp. 1–31 in *Policing Protest: The Control of Mass Demonstrations in Western Democracies*, edited by Donatella della Porta and Herbert Reiter. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

- Ericson, Richard, and Aaron Doyle. 1999. "Globalization and the Policing of Protest: The Case of APEC 1997." *British Journal of Sociology* 50:589–608.
- Ferree, Myra Marx. 2001. "Soft Repression: Ridicule, Stigma, and Silences in the Gender Wars." Paper presented at "Mobilization and Repression: What We Know and Where We Should Go From Here?" Conference, University of Maryland, College Park, MD, 21–24 June.
- Fillieule, Olivier, and Fabien Jobard. 1998. "The Policing of Protest in France: Toward a Model of Protest Policing." Pp. 70–90 in *Policing Protest: The Control of Mass Demonstrations in Western Democracies*, edited by Donatella della Porta and Herbert Reiter. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Gamson, William A. [1975] 1990. *The Strategy of Social Protest*. Homewood, IL: Dorsey Press.
- Gibson, James L. 1989. "The Policy Consequences of Political Intolerance: Political Repression During the Vietnam War Era." *Journal of Politics* 51:13–35.
- Gregory, Frank. 1976. "Protest and Violence: The Police Response." *Conflict Studies* 75:1–15.
- Haines, Herbert H. 1984. "Black Radicalization and the Funding of Civil Rights: 1957–1970." *Social Problems* 32:31–43.
- Hebdon, Robert P., and Robert N. Stern. 1998. "Trade Offs Among Expressions of Industrial Conflict: Public Sector Strike Bans and Grievance Arbitrations." *Industrial and Labor Relations Review* 51:204–21.
- Irons, Jenny. 2001. "Identifying Racial Trouble: State-Level Response During the Civil Rights Movement." Paper presented at the 2001 American Sociological Association Annual Meeting, Anaheim, CA. 18–21 August.
- Jaime-Jiménez, Oscar, and Fernando Reinares. 1998. "The Policing of Social Protest in Spain: From Dictatorship to Democracy." Pp. 166–87 in *Policing Protest: The Control of Mass Demonstrations in Western Democracies*, edited by Donatella della Porta and Herbert Reiter. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Jenkins, J. Craig. 1995. "Social Movements, Political Representation, and the State: An Agenda and Comparative Framework." Pp. 14–35 in *The Politics of Social Protest: Comparative Perspectives on States and Social Movements*, edited by J. Craig Jenkins and Bert Klandermans. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Jenkins, Craig J., and Craig M. Eckhart. 1986. "Channeling Black Insurgency: Elite Patronage and Professional Social Movement Organizations in the Development of the Black Insurgency." *American Sociological Review* 51:812–29.
- Karstedt-Henke, Sabine. 1980. "Theories for the Explanation of Terrorist Movements." Pp. 198–234 in *The Politics of Internal Security*, edited by E. Blankenberg. Frankfurt, Germany: Suhrkamp.
- Keen, Mike Forrest. 1999. *Stalking the Sociological Imagination: J. Edgar Hoover's FBI Surveillance of American Sociology*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.
- Koopmans, Ruud. 1993. "The Dynamics of Protest Waves: West Germany, 1965 to 1989." *American Sociological Review* 58:637–58.
- . 1995. *Democracy from Below*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Kriesi, Hanspeter. 1995. "The Political Opportunity Structure of New Social Movements: Its Impact on Their Mobilization." Pp. 167–98 in *The Politics of Social Protest: Comparative Perspectives on States and Social Movements*, edited by J. Craig Jenkins and Bert Klandermans. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Kriesi, Hanspeter, Ruud Koopmans, Jan Wilem Dyvendak, and Marco G. Guigni. 1995. *New Social Movements in Western Europe*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Kritzer, Herbert M. 1977. "Political Protest and Political Violence: A Non-Recursive Causal Model." *Social Forces* 55:630–40.
- Lindgren, Jon G., and H. Elaine Lindgren. 1995. "Social Change Within the 'Establishment': A City's Response to National Antiabortion Protesters." *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science* 31:475–89.
- Loveman, Mara. 1998. "High-Risk Collective Action: Defending Human Rights in Chile, Uruguay, and Argentina." *American Journal of Sociology* 104:477–525.
- Marx, Gary T. 1979. "External Efforts to Damage or Facilitate Social Movements: Some Patterns, Explanations, Outcomes, and Complications." Pp. 94–125 in *Dynamics of Social Movements: Resource Mobilization, Social Control, and Tactics*, edited by Mayer Zald and John D. McCarthy. Cambridge, MA: Winthrop.
- . 1998. "Some Reflections on the Democratic Policing of Demonstrations." Pp. 253–69 in *Policing Protest: The Control of Mass Demonstrations in Western Democracies*, edited by Donatella della Porta and Herbert Reiter. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- McAdam, Doug. 1982. *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930–1970*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.



- . 1983. "Tactical Innovation and the Pace of Insurgency." *American Sociological Review* 48:735–54.
- . 1988. *Freedom Summer*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- . 1998. "On the International Origins of Domestic Political Opportunities." Pp. 251–67 in *Social Movements and American Political Institutions*, edited by Anne N. Costain and Andrew S. McFarland. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.
- McAdam, Doug, John McCarthy, and Mayer Zald. 1988. "Social Movements." Pp. 695–738 in *Handbook of Sociology*, edited by Neil Smelser. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- McCarthy, John D., David W. Britt, and Mark Wolfson. 1991. "The Institutional Channeling of Social Movements by the State in the United States." *Research in Social Movements, Conflicts, and Change* 13:45–76.
- McCarthy, John, and Clark McPhail. 1998. "The Institutionalization of Protest in the United States." Pp. 83–110 in *The Social Movement Society*, edited by David S. Meyer and Sidney Tarrow. Boulder, CO: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers.
- . 1999. "Policing Protest: The Evolving Dynamics of Encounters Between Collective Actors and Police in the United States." Pp. 336–51 in *Eigenwilligkeit und Rationalität sozialer Prozesse*, edited by Jürgen Gerhards and Ronald Hitzler. Germany: Westdeutscher Verlag.
- McPhail, Clark, David Schweingrubber, and John McCarthy. 1998. "Policing Protest in the United States: 1960–1995." Pp. 49–69 in *Policing Protest: The Control of Mass Demonstrations in Western Democracies*, edited by Donatella della Porta and Herbert Reiter. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Meyer, David S., and Suzanne Staggenborg. 1996. "Movements, Countermovements, and the Structure of Political Opportunity." *American Journal of Sociology* 101:1628–60.
- Oberschall, Anthony. 1973. *Social Conflict and Social Movements*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Pichardo, Nelson A. 1995. "The Power Elite and Elite-Driven Countermovements: The Associated Farmers of California During the 1930s." *Sociological Forum* 10:21–49.
- Piven, Frances Fox, and Richard A. Cloward. 1977. *Poor People's Movements: Why They Succeed, How They Fail*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Reiner, Robert. 1998. "Policing, Protest, and Disorder in Britain." Pp. 35–48 in *Policing Protest: The Control of Mass Demonstrations in Western Democracies*, edited by Donatella della Porta and Herbert Reiter. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Rowland, Ronald L. 1972. "An Overview of State Legislation Responding to Campus Disorders." *Journal of Law Education* 1:231–50.
- Simon, John G. 1987. "The Tax Treatment of Nonprofit Organizations: A Review of Federal and State Policies." Pp. 67–98 in *The Non-Profit Sector: A Research Handbook*, edited by Walter W. Powell. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Snow, David A., Daniel M. Cress, Liam Downey, and Andrew W. Jones. 1998. "Disrupting the 'Quotidian': Reconceptualizing the Relationship Between Breakdown and the Emergence of Collective Action." *Mobilization* 3:1–22.
- Stockdill, Brett C. 1996. "Multiple Oppressions and Their Influence on Collective Action: The Case of the AIDS Movement." Ph.D. dissertation, Department of Sociology, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL.
- Stotik, Jeffrey, Thomas E. Shriver, and Sherry Cable. 1994. "Social Control and Movement Outcome: The Case of AIM." *Sociological Focus* 27:53–66.
- Tarrow, Sidney. 1989. *Democracy and Disorder: Protest and Politics in Italy 1965–1975*. Oxford, England: Clarendon Press.
- . 1994. *Power in Movement: Social Movements, Collective Action, and Politics*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Timberlake, Michael, and Kirk R. Williams. 1984. "Dependence, Political Exclusion, and Government Repression: Some Cross-National Evidence." *American Sociological Review* 49:141–46.
- Tilly, Charles. 1978. *From Mobilization to Revolution*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company.
- . 1995. *Popular Contention in Great Britain, 1758–1834*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Useem, Bert. 1997. "The State and Collective Disorders: The Los Angeles Riot/Protest of April, 1992." *Social Forces* 76:357–77.
- Waddington, P. A. J. 1998. "Controlling Protest in Contemporary Historical and Comparative Perspective." Pp. 117–40 in *Policing Protest: The Control of Mass Demonstrations in Western Democracies*, edited by Donatella della Porta and Herbert Reiter. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- White, Robert W. 1999. "Comparing State Repression of Pro-State Vigilantes and Anti-State Insurgents: Northern Ireland, 1972–1975." *Mobilization* 4:189–202.
- Wilson, James Q. 1968. *Varieties of Police Behavior*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Wisler, Dominique, and Marco Guigni. 1999. "Under the Spotlight: The Impact of Media Attention on Protest Policing." *Mobilization* 4:171–87.

- Wisler, Dominique, and Hanspeter Kriesi. 1998. "Public Order, Protest Cycles, and Political Process: Two Swiss Cities Compared." Pp. 91–116 in *Policing Protest: The Control of Mass Demonstrations in Western Democracies*, edited by Donatella della Porta and Herbert Reiter. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Zwerman, Gilda. 1987. "Domestic Counterterrorism: U.S. Government Responses to Political Violence on the Left in the Reagan Era." *Social Justice* 16:31–63.