Whatever can go wrong will: situational complexity and public order policing
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Police response to public protest in the USA has been seen as stemming from both threats to the interests of political and financial elite as well as threats to the maintenance of public order. Indeed, many of the same features of protest events are used as indicators of both types of threat, leading to substantial uncertainty regarding the interpretation of threat at public gatherings. In this study, we draw on over 16,000 protest events identified from daily issues of the New York Times (NYT) from 1960 to 1995 to develop a more complete picture of public order policing. In doing so, we identify several dimensions of protest events that lead to more complicated and complex interactions between protestors and police. These features, including a diverse tactical repertoire, diverse protesting groups and event size, create crowd management difficulties that contribute to an overall more aggressive police response. Tactical diversity is an especially strong predictor of police action, while protest event size is found to interact with threatening protestor behaviours that largely necessitate a police response. We conclude by placing these findings firmly within a public order management approach to protest policing, thereby clearing up some of the ambiguities in existing protest policing research.

Keywords: protest policing; public order; social movements; collective behaviour

Introduction
Traditional views of public protest cast this type of collective behaviour as a threat to political and financial elite (McAdam 1982, Tilly 1995, Davenport 2000). Accordingly, aggressive police behaviour has been interpreted as repression in response to challenges to elite control. Yet by the last several decades of the twentieth century, public protest in most Western democracies was widely seen as having become increasingly orderly and institutionalised. The ubiquity of such orderly protest led some scholars to refer to the increasingly widespread citizen participation in protest as suggestive of a ‘movement society’ (Meyer and Tarrow 1998, Norris 2002). A similar shift was observed in police response, as police–protester interactions became largely non-confrontational and motivated primarily by the goal of preserving public order (Waddington 1991, 1994, McCarthy and McPhail 2006).

We explore here the utility of these two perspectives (elite threat and public order management) in understanding the likelihood of aggressive police behaviour (making arrests and the use of force) at more than 16,000 protest events in the USA between
1960 and 1995. In doing so, we argue that – consistent with a public order policing framework – there are configurations of protest events that should be expected to lead to more complicated interactions between protestors and police. That is, and largely stemming from threats to public order, police faced with more complex protest events can be expected to react more aggressively, even after taking established predictors of police response into account.

We start with a brief overview of general trends in police response to public protest, outlining here the elite threat and public order management perspectives. We then explore a number of dimensions of events that we expect lead to more complex police–protestor interactions. Drawing on diverse literatures that stress police priorities, situational threats to police control and protestor tactical complexity, we argue that more complex events present police with more difficult and unpredictable public order management problems. During such situations, police officers may be quicker to draw on their discretionary latitude in the use of force and the making of arrests. In support of this expectation, our analyses show that tactical and protestor group diversity are important predictors of aggressive police action. Event size, which we theoretically situate as another element of event complexity, interacts in predictable ways with the presence of threatening protestor behaviours.

Trends in US police response to protest

Much of the existing research on protest policing has been motivated by the view that police response to protest is a reaction to the threats directed at elite political and financial interests (Davenport 1995, 2000, Earl 2003). According to the systemic threat approach, domestic threat is a challenge made to existing political elite in the form of political dissent (Davenport 2000). Different tactics are said to convey different degrees of antagonism to political authorities, and researchers have explored the impact that tactical variations within social movements have on the likelihood of repressive police action. For example, the use of non-institutional or confrontational tactics has been associated with more repressive state responses (McAdam 1982). Movements that pursue revolutionary, radical or multiple goals as well as those that direct their claims towards multiple targets are also conceived as more threatening (McAdam 1982, Bromley and Shupe 1983). Event size has also been interpreted as a component of political threat because large numbers of mobilised citizens represent a greater potential threat to elite control of political, social and economic processes (Davenport 2000). We will argue below, however, that event size can just as well be conceptualised as a threat to public order management, suggesting the need for a more thorough examination of policing at events of varying size.

Furthermore, following the protest wave of the 1960s and early 1970s, a number of scholars noted broad shifts in protest policing. One approach suggested a move away from ‘escalated force’ to ‘negotiated management’ policing, following and in response to disruptive protests by African-Americans, students and anti-war activists during this period (see McPhail et al. 1998, della Porta and Fillieule 2004). This trend was not limited to the USA, as della Porta and Reiter (1998) summarise quite similar trends were there for many Western European democracies over roughly the same period. Not always so explicit (but see McCarthy and McPhail 1998), an underlying theme of these analyses is that political elite came to view most protests as less
threatening to their key interests and/or their regimes, but rather a democratic right that deserved to be protected. As a result, protest policing came to be seen as driven more by crowd management imperatives and the avoidance of ‘trouble’, rather than as the systemic threats to elite control (Waddington 1994).1

Emerging research stresses situational interpretations as driving police response to public protest events (della Porta 1998, della Porta and Reiter 1998, Earl and Soule 2006). This stems from the observation that police are generally and, often, centrally charged with maintaining and protecting the public order. This applies not only to public protest, but also extends more generally to all police–citizen encounters (Bittner 1967). This view is consistent with police-centred approaches to protest policing, which recognise how protestor actions can threaten the universal imperative of police control (Earl and Soule 2006, Soule and Davenport 2009). In the USA, this typically involves the balancing of First Amendment rights to free assembly with a duty to protect persons and property. The ability of police to strike such a balance between the two, allowing for the relatively unfettered expression of a collective voice while still ensuring public safety, varies dramatically over time, across political regimes and police agencies. Public order policing of this type has also been observed among the London Metropolitan Police, who emphasise a strong preference for non-confrontation and an abiding commitment on the part of police commanders for avoiding ‘trouble’ (Waddington 1994).

In large and confrontation protest events, the ability of the police to maintain and control the public order is threatened (Earl et al. 2003, Earl and Soule 2006). Police can then be expected to respond proportionately to the level of situational threat created by the specific protest event (McCarthy et al. 2007). Thus, while the systemic threat approach implies a very tight coupling of elite motives and police behaviour, a public order approach views variation in police behaviour from protest-to-protest as primarily a function of discretionary response to on-the-ground circumstances. This view of policing is consistent with an image of protest policing being nested in institutionalised public order management systems. These systems involve discussions between protestors and police prior to any public encounters and often specify the time, place and manner of protest events, sometimes including surveillance of protest groups, encouragement of organisers of large events to provide a marshal structure and extensive contingent police planning about how to best deploy personnel to preserve public order (McCoy and McPhail 1998, McCarthy et al. 1999, McPhail and McCarthy 2005).

We should note, however, that recent case studies suggest the continued relevance of elite interests in shaping some element of police response to collective gatherings. Protests staged by members of the ‘global justice’ movement, for example, have often targeted symbolic representatives of ‘global capital’ (e.g. the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund) and are seen to represent clear threats to global political and financial interests (Smith 2001). Additional evidence suggests that some cities are adopting more aggressive policing styles during the last decade, apparently the result of the adoption of a new policy of strict enforcement of the law (Vitale 2005, Rafail 2010, Martin 2011). Noakes and Gillham (2006) suggest that these recent responses to protest events are driven by the adoption of ‘new penology’ responses to protest. On the one hand, police are likely to allow demonstrations where the scale and scope have been previously negotiated. On the other hand, police
are likely to act in a way to ‘reduce uncertainty and maintain order’ in the presence of uncooperative protestors or transgressive acts (Noakes and Gillham 2006, p. 115).

**Threat ambiguity and situational complexities**

As the above discussion implies, many features of a protest event may be simultaneously interpreted as both elite threats and threats to public order management. For example, are large events threatening because they demonstrate mass support of social change or because of the manifold crowd management difficulties that threaten the public order? Some features are less ambiguously interpreted as elite threats, such as the sponsorship of the event by a strong insurgent challenging group, an event message including radical goals or an event explicitly targeting the state. Dimensions such as these are useful because they help in a clearer determination of the nature of the threat involved in a protest event. Along this line, we argue that some events involve situational complexities that present clear challenges to the maintenance of public order, but that should be unrelated to elite interests. Here we discuss three distinct features of situational complexity that vary between protest events: (1) tactical repertoires, (2) group diversity and (3) event size. In doing so, we outline a number of explicit research expectations.

**Tactical repertoires**

Protest repertoires are generally understood as cultural templates for collective action (Tilly 1995, Tarrow 1998). Diversity of protest repertoire has been widely seen as a key component to movement success (Tilly 1979, Eckstein 1980, Ziegenhagen 1986, Morris 1993, Davenport 1995). Morris (1993), for example, noted that the 1963 civil rights movement in Birmingham, Alabama, was more than a just a boycott. Protestors also utilised sit-ins, mass marches, picketing and mass arrests to fill local jails in order to press their claims against local elite and to generate favourable public opinion. This type of diversity among social movement organisations (SMOs) requires that regimes focus on a range of dissident activities (Davenport 1995). This implies a fairly straightforward relationship between tactical variety and repression in terms of the strength of the threat that is implied. If the diversity of tactics is narrow, the magnitude of the perceived threat is lower, while a highly diverse set of tactics greatly increases the perceived threat of collective dissent. In movements with a highly diverse set of tactics, organisation capacity for behavioural regulation is ‘stretched thin’ because different lines of strategic action by protestors must be addressed simultaneously (Davenport 1995).

Protest diversity, however, is typically not extended to explanations of police response between otherwise unrelated protest events, even though emerging research has noted that variations in tactical use are associated with police response (Soule and Davenport 2009, Davenport et al. 2011). The ability of the police to make on-the-ground decisions is strained in situations where protestors use a diverse tactical repertoire. Such a situation may occur, for example, when protestors make unauthorised or unexpected tactical shifts during the course of a public gathering. This creates uncertainty among the police as they attempt to allow for the continuation of protest activities while simultaneously ensuring the protection of persons and property. The excerpt below, taken from a 1995 event in which
protestors attempted to turn a planned rally into a march, outlines such a tactical shift:

Thousands of university and high school students, accompanied by professors and teachers, walked out of their classrooms yesterday to protest proposed budget cuts to education...Shortly before 3 P.M., some demonstrators tried to turn the rally into an unauthorized march to Wall Street. The commotion lasted more than an hour, leading to a sitdown protest by hundreds and ending in the arrests, mostly for disorderly conduct. Demonstrators said that police officers beat some of the protesters. (Newman 1995)

In this case, police officers made a decision to intervene once the protestors shifted their primary tactic from a rally in to an unauthorised march. Events which threaten the public order in similar ways should also be expected to involve more aggressive interactions between protestors and the police, which we capture in our first hypothesis:

H1: The number of tactics used at a protest event will be positively associated with the likelihood of police use of arrests or force.

**Group diversity**

Existing research suggests that police are highly sensitive to the presence of multiple – but not necessarily competing – collectivities at public gatherings. A number of researchers have found that police rarely view crowds as constituting homogeneous gatherings of people (Waddington 1991, Drury et al. 2003, Gorringe and Rosie 2008). Rather, surveys of (primarily European) police officers suggest that police typically view all crowds as at least potentially dangerous (Stott and Reicher 1998) and composed of at least two groups: a powerful violent minority and a susceptible majority (Waddington 1991, Drury et al. 2003). Police are hesitant to let a powerful minority gain too much leverage and have been known to clamp down in response to early signs of threats to persons or property, especially since they may not be able to easily differentiate between the troublemakers and the non-aggressive protesters (Reicher et al. 2004). The perceived balance of these groups directly affects the style of policing and the forms of protest that are tolerated (della Porta and Fillieule 2004).

Based on these police perceptions, we argue that the police will respond more aggressively to events that involve more identifiable groups. Indeed, recent research has noted how the racial composition of an event can contribute to police response (Davenport et al. 2011). However, over and above this observed association, we suggest that police are also sensitive to the overall group composition of an event and respond in accordance to perceived or actual disorderly conduct on the part of groups suspected to be troublemakers. The following example, which involves several different groups of students in New York City in the early 1970s, culminated with a confrontation with police and illustrates this point:

A demonstration by three separate groups of students outside Board of Education headquarters...ended in disorder yesterday, with four youths and an adult taken into custody. The police estimated the number of demonstrators at 1,500. The crowd, which could not be contained behind police barricades, overflowed into Livingston Street and
forced the police to reroute traffic...For the most part, the demonstration was orderly...The trouble began shortly after 1 P.M...[when] policemen reported that objects had been thrown at them. The demonstration quickly turned into a melee, with much shoving, pushing and screaming. (Buder 1971)

These groups, who had different motives and goals, the report goes on to specify, also included a small group of protestors who might be viewed as ‘troublemakers’. We imagine that the identification of different groups should increase the likelihood that one of these groups will be viewed as particularly threatening or disruptive, which leads to our second hypothesis:

H2: The number of identifiable groups at a protest event will be positively associated with the likelihood of police force or arrests.

It is important to keep in mind, however, that some types of groups are simply viewed differently by police. For example, researchers have pointed to the presence of counterdemonstrators, who often vehemently disagree with the claims of protestors (Meyer and Staggenborg 1996), as an important aspect of police response to protest (Earl and Soule 2006). The presence of SMOs may also complicate police response. On the one hand, SMOs might lend protest events some legitimacy (McPhail et al. 1998, Early et al. 2003). On the other hand, however, the presence of multiple SMOs could create confusion at an event as police struggle to determine which group (or groups) they should coordinate with and which group (or groups) might be intent on creating ‘trouble’. As such, our empirical analyses focus on three aspects of group diversity: (1) number of groups, (2) number of SMOs and (3) presence of counterdemonstrators.

**Protest event size**

We previously noted that protest event size, a feature shared by all collectivities and infused with often contradictory meanings for external audiences (Martin et al. 2009), has been the subject of considerable debate. Some argue that a primary motivation for gathering large groups of people has been to showcase a group’s support and potential power (Tilly 1979, 1995, DeNardo 1985, della Porta and Diani 1999), as well as to attract media attention (McCarthy et al. 1996, Oliver and Myers 1999). This explains, as illustrated by McPhail and McCarthy (2004), why there has been so much controversy surrounding the size of events like the Million Man March and some of the recent Tea Party protests in Washington, DC. Others point to the threat imposed by larger public gatherings, both in terms of threats to political power holders (Tilly 1979, 1995, Davenport 2000) and threats to situational police control (Earl and Soule 2006, Soule and Davenport 2009). Regardless of the conceptualisation, size is a fairly consistent predictor of police aggressiveness, even after accounting for important protestor behaviours (Earl et al. 2003).

We follow more recent research and locate the effect of event size within challenges to public order (Earl and Soule 2006, Soule and Davenport 2009). However, we further suggest that size is associated with variable police response because larger events often involve more complex interactions between diverse groups of protestors and the police. This argument is theoretically consistent with the
work of Mayhew and Levinger (1976), who demonstrated that increases in the aggregate size of groups (or gatherings) lead to increases in the number of interactions between participants, which can have important implications for difficulties of command and control of police units. Intervention decisions are more complicated at larger protest events. What may work at smaller events can result in a ‘to and fro’ between the police and larger crowds that may only further embolden potentially violent members (Waddington 1991). Attempts to disperse large crowds can also have the effect of increasing cohesion amongst, otherwise, only loosely connected individuals (Waddington 1991).

The larger the size of a public event of any kind, including protest events, the more complicated are the many interrelated tasks confronting the police to maintain an orderly flow of foot and vehicular traffic, control of individual instances of law-breaking behaviour and response to disorderly behaviour among the participants. Police units anticipating large public gatherings typically engage in systematic planning, establishing sub-unit responsibilities and putting in place a system of communication so that all units can act in coordinated ways, especially in the face of trouble (McPhail et al. 1998). Some situations where command and control are thought to have broken down during protest events have been termed ‘police riots’ for that reason (Skolnick 1969). As protest events get larger, the ratio of police to participants and bystanders can be expected to get smaller (Carter 1986), leading to situations where police can be largely outnumbered as they react to perceived or actual disorderliness. The sheer size of an event should be expected, then, to provide absolutely more instances of participant behaviour (such as protester violence) that provokes severe police response. However, because of the logistics involved in some types of police action, we argue that the direct effect of size on police response will be limited to the use of force:

H3: Protest event size will be positively associated with the likelihood of police force, but negatively associated with the likelihood of an arrest.

Furthermore, the effect of protest event size may be dependent on protestor actions that largely require a police response. Since there are proportionately fewer police to monitor larger crowds (Carter 1986), we further suggest that police response to larger events is shaped by the presence or absence of aggressive and disruptive protestor action (such as violence or property damage). Absent these aggressive protestor behaviours, we might alternatively expect that police will be rather hesitant to take some actions at larger events:

H4: The effect of protest event size on police aggressiveness will depend on the presence or absence of aggressive protestor activities.

In sum, the public protest features that we outline above should reflect threats to the maintenance of public order, rather than reflecting more diffuse threats to elite interests. As such, an examination of how police react to the presence or absence of tactical diversity, group diversity and protest event size should provide important insights into the nature of public order policing in the USA. We evaluate our research hypotheses using a data-set spanning over 30 years of public protest, which we now describe.
Data and methods

Data for this study was drawn from daily editions of the New York Times (NYT) between 1960 and 1995 as part of the Dynamics of Collective Action Project (see McAdam and Su 2002, Earl et al. 2003, Soule and Earl 2005, Earl and Soule 2006 for overviews). A team of coders utilised the NYT Historical Digital Archive in a two-stage process to identify protest events. First, researchers read every page of the daily issues of the NYT scanning for any mention of protest events based on three criteria. The event had to have more than a single participant, a claim must have been articulated and it must have occurred in the public sphere. The second stage involved the content coding of each event on a variety of topics such as claim and goals, size, participating group(s), target, tactics, organisational presence and police response. Inter-coder reliability for most items was consistently at or above 90% agreement. A complete list of publications using the resulting data, as well as data access, can be found at http://www.dynamicsofcollectiveaction.com.

The two-stage strategy led to an identification of 23,616 events occurring between 1960 and 1995. We purposely excluded some events to ensure a working data-set of public protest events. For example, we exclude events that were initiated by institutionalised persons (n = 466) because the interactions between police and institutionalised individuals fall outside the realm of traditional policing explanations. Furthermore, events identified as lawsuits (n = 2568) were also removed to restrict the data to ‘outsider’ tactics. These restrictions, coupled with listwise deletion across the variables discussed below, result in a working sample of 16,023 unique protest events.

Newspaper biases

Information collected from newspaper records remains one of the most widely used sources in the study of collective protest, and much of the important research in the field has used newspaper data (Olzak 1989, McAdam and Su 2002). Because news agencies are not unselective observers events, however, there has emerged a body of literature that has examined biases inherent in this type of data (Oliver and Maney 2000, Earl et al. 2004, Ortiz et al. 2005). Two relevant biases have been discussed that we note here: description bias and selection bias. We do not view description bias as a pressing issue because the main focus of this study is on the ‘hard facts’ (i.e. the who, what, when, where and why of the event) rather than the ‘soft facts’ (i.e. impressions and inferences of journalists and commentators) (Earl et al. 2004). Research has shown that, in general, event characteristics (the hard news items) are reported more or less accurately (Earl et al. 2004). This holds even for event size (McCarthy et al. 1998), which is often the subject of disputes among participants and other observers (McPhail and McCarthy 2004).

Selection bias, or the possibility that important events are not covered by the NYT, is more problematic (McCarthy et al. 1996, Oliver and Myers 1999, Earl et al. 2004, Ortiz et al. 2005). Recent evidence, for example, suggests that geographic proximity to news outlets, as well as a group’s organisational capacities, impact the likelihood of media coverage (Andrews and Caren 2010). However, mainstream media are generally attentive to the actions of state authorities, such as the police, so our outcomes of interest should contribute to more complete coverage. Furthermore,
Walker et al. (2008) note that selection bias in national media sources, such as the *NYT*, is likely to be stable over time.

Nonetheless, we try to assess the potential impact of different sources of selection bias on our results in two ways. First, in models not shown, we included a dummy variable coded 1 for all events in New York State to account for regional selection bias. Including this measure did not alter the pattern of results for our key variables. Second, to determine if the selection of intense events (those involving police or protestor violence, property damage or are larger than average) was driving our results, we employed a strategy first outlined by Soule and Davenport (2009), which involves randomly removing those events with intense features. We randomly selected and removed incremental proportions (10, 20, 30 and 40%) of intense protest events and compared these restricted models to the models for the full sample of events. These comparisons suggest that even when we randomly remove 40% of the intense events, the same patterns of results are obtained for our focal independent variables. Thus, while we cannot directly assess the extent that the *NYT* more frequently covers intense events, these analyses suggest that our results are indicative of general trends and not driven by selection bias.

**Police response**

We employ two dependent variables to measure aggressive police response: reported police use of arrests and reported police use of force or violence. Each event was coded for the exact number of arrests and, if the exact number was not known, an estimated number of arrests. These variables were collapsed into a dichotomous measure (coded 1) if police employed arrests, which occurred at about 20% of all events. Coders were also instructed to identify if physical force was clearly used and if police used violence (such as clubs, guns, tear gas or riot control equipment). Police used this type of action at about 10% of the events under consideration. Descriptive statistics for these and all other variables are available in Table 1.

**Event complexity**

Our measures of event complexity focus on the tactics, groups and size of protest events. Each event was coded for the tactical forms used by the protestors, and coders could identify up to four distinct tactics used in the course of an event. Thus, while many events were coded only as a march, for example, others could be coded as a march and also as an instance of a symbolic display. Events with a single tactic were coded zero because all events had to have at least one identified tactic. Just over 20% of all events utilised more than one tactic. We use a similar measure of the number of distinct social groups at an event, which is a combination of both initiating groups and other identified groups. We top coded this variable at 4 because very few events had more than four identified groups, and we assume that all events had at least a single group present. Furthermore, to ensure that our measure of groups was not being driven by the presence of SMOs, we created an additional measure that counted the number of SMOs identified at an event. We also coded for the presence of counterdemonstrators, who were only present at about 6% of the events under consideration. Finally, we included a measure of the number of participants at each event. Since many of the events in the sample ($n = 7378$) were...
missing an estimate of the exact number of participants, size was also coded along a scale based on the description of the event.\textsuperscript{4} We used the natural log of this variable for all regression analyses.

**Control variables**

A number of theoretically relevant event characteristics are included in our regression models to capture the behaviour of protesters. Following Earl and Soule (2006), we created two dummy variables, coded 1 if the event included protestor violence or protestor property damage, respectively. We created an additional variable using event activity codes to capture the use of aggressive collective activities, such as blockades, building takeover, physical attacks or looting. We also created a measure of radical goal use based on support or opposition to a range of general protest claims (see Earl and Soule 2006).\textsuperscript{5}

Following recent work noting the importance of variation across event targets (Walker \textit{et al.} 2008, Martin \textit{et al.} 2009), we created dummy variables for the most common targets: the government, private businesses, universities and schools (reference category) and other (which includes foreign government, medical facility,

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**Table 1.** Descriptive statistics ($N=16,023$).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Situational complexity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tactical repertoire</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0–3\textsuperscript{a}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identified groups</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>0–3\textsuperscript{a}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identified SMOs</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>0–4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counterdemonstrators</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0–1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size (natural log)</td>
<td>4.52</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>0.69–13.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Event characteristics</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Violence</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>0–1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Property damage</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0–1</td>
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<td>Aggressive activities</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0–1</td>
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<td>Radical goals</td>
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<td>0–1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Civil disobedience</td>
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<td>0–1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black initiated</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0–1</td>
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<td><strong>Decade</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960s</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0–1</td>
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<td>1970s</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.45</td>
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<td>1980s</td>
<td>0.19</td>
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<td>0–1</td>
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<tr>
<td>1990s</td>
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<td>0.31</td>
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<td><strong>Target</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Government</td>
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<td>0.50</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Force or violence</td>
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<td>0.30</td>
<td>0–1</td>
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</tbody>
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\textsuperscript{a}Zero on these scales refer to one form and one group, respectively.
racial/ethnic group and other or unspecified target). Additionally, to control for broad trends in policing over time (see e.g. McCarthy and McPhail 1998, McPhail et al. 1998, Earl et al. 2003), we include dummy variables that capture the decade the event took place, with events occurring in the 1990s as the reference category. Given that previous research has shown that police tend to respond more aggressively to events initiated by racial and ethnic minority groups (Gamson 1975, Piven and Cloward 1977, Davenport et al. 2011), we include a dummy variable capturing events initiated by African-Americans. Finally, we created a variable that captured the use of civil disobedience as the primary tactic, as this is a fairly unique and varied tactic often involving direct law violation and aggressive police action (Sharp 1973).

**Analytic strategy**

Given that our dependent measures are both dichotomous, we separately model the likelihood of police use of arrests or police force using logistic regression techniques. For each outcome, we estimate four total models. We start in model 1 by predicting the outcome of interest using established predictors of police response (our control variables, plus event size). Given considerable debate and disagreement regarding the proper conceptualisation of event size, we chose to include it as a predictor in model 1. We argue that the police handle large events different from smaller events largely because of the situational threats to public control inherent in larger events. If size is, indeed, a reflection of the difficulty of public order maintenance, then we might expect to see a reduction in the effect size when we control for our other measures of event complexity. We add our measures of tactical variety and group diversity in model 2. Finally, in models 3 and 4, we examine if the effect of event size is dependent on the presence or absence of other event characteristics (such as protestor violence or property damage) through a series of interactions.

In discussing these models, we keep in mind that the behaviour of the police is the result of a series of ongoing interactions with event participants. Thus, while some pre-existing characteristics, such as whether a gathering is a protest or convivial one (McCarthy et al. 2007), can be thought to have clear causal effects on policing activities, other characteristics are probably both a cause and a result of police behaviour, such as violence that breaks out when police try to forcefully disperse a crowd. Because of the ambiguity of the causal ordering, we will speak about co-variation between protestor and police behaviour, rather than assuming a straightforward casual ordering.

**Results**

Descriptive evidence presented in Table 1 suggests that most protest events can be considered rather routine. Eighty per cent of all events included only a single tactic, and less than 1% of all events included four tactics. Similarly, most events involved only a single group, and over half did not involve a SMO. The presence of counterdemonstrators was also rare, with only 6% of all events involving distinct counterprotest activity. A more careful examination of these descriptive patterns does suggest some basic support for our expectations (not shown). For example, about 15% of single tactic events experience an arrest, and roughly 8% experience police force or violence. However, as events include more tactics, the percentage that
involve aggressive police responses increases accordingly, with about half of events with four tactics experiencing either arrests or police force. Furthermore, compared to single-group events, a higher proportion of multi-group events experience arrests and police force. To determine if these basic associations hold after accounting for several known predictors of police response, we turn to logistic regression models for police use of arrests (Table 2) and use of force (Table 3).

**Police use of arrests**

The results in Table 2 model the likelihood of arrests at public protest events, starting with established predictors of police response in model 1. In model 2, we include our additional measures of event complexity, and explore interactions between protestor actions and event size in models 3 and 4.

The results in model 1 show that aggressive protester action is reciprocated by police intervention via arrests. Protestor violence, aggressive protestor activities and the use of radical goals are all positively associated with the probability of an arrest. Finally, the probability of an arrest is higher at events where intentional law violation is a central component (captured by our measure of civil disobedience) or that included black protestors.

Event size is predictive of the police use of arrests in model 1, but this effect almost completely disappears when we add the four measures of event complexity in model 2. That is, these results suggest that a main reason why large events are policed more aggressively is because these events typically include multiple protestor tactics and a diverse range of protesting groups. Analyses not shown suggest that this mediation is largely through tactical diversity, which alone accounts for 70% of the size effect. Furthermore, both tactical repertoire and group diversity (to a lesser extent) are significant predictors of the police use of arrests. As these are both count measures, we plot in Figure 1 the predicted probability of arrests across increasing tactics and groups.

The figure shows a strong and increasing effect of tactical diversity, as events with four distinct tactics have a probability of arrest that is 0.33 higher than events with a single tactic. The effect of identified groups is much smaller and the difference in predicted probabilities between events with a single group and those with four groups is only 0.04. Additional analyses showed that when we include the number of groups as a series of dummy variables, the significant effect is being driven by events that have two identified groups, which is not entirely inconsistent with views of protestors suggested in the police psychology literature discussed above. Model 2 also shows a significant effect of counterdemonstrator presence, with the odds of arrests over 80% higher at events where counterdemonstrators are present (exp$^{0.50} - 1.80$). The number of SMOs present at an event is not associated with police intervention via arrests.

Our reading of the public order policing literature suggests that event size might interact in meaningful ways with protestor actions that in some cases necessitate a police response. We examine these moderating relationships in models 3 and 4. We first estimated a series of interactions with protest event size in model 3 and then restricted this to only the significant interactions in model 4. These analyses yield two useful pieces of information. First, in large events that lack aggressive protestor activities (such as violence or property damage), event size is actually negatively associated with the police use of arrests. Second, the effects of these variables also
Table 2. Logistic regression predicting police use of arrests at public protest events: 1960–1995 ($N=16,023$).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3</th>
<th>Model 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coefficient (SE)</td>
<td>Coefficient (SE)</td>
<td>Coefficient (SE)</td>
<td>Coefficient (SE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tactical repertoire</td>
<td>0.61 (0.04)**</td>
<td>0.59 (0.04)**</td>
<td>0.59 (0.04)**</td>
<td>0.59 (0.04)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identified groups</td>
<td>0.14 (0.04)**</td>
<td>0.13 (0.04)**</td>
<td>0.13 (0.04)**</td>
<td>0.13 (0.04)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identified SMOs</td>
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<td>-0.02 (0.03)</td>
<td>-0.02 (0.03)</td>
<td>-0.02 (0.03)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counterdemonstrators</td>
<td>0.04 (0.22)</td>
<td>0.02 (0.22)</td>
<td>0.02 (0.22)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size (natural log)</td>
<td>0.01 (0.01)***</td>
<td>-0.10 (0.02)**</td>
<td>-0.10 (0.01)**</td>
<td>-0.10 (0.01)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence</td>
<td>1.03 (0.07)**</td>
<td>-0.15 (0.13)</td>
<td>-0.13 (0.13)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property damage</td>
<td>0.15 (0.08)*</td>
<td>-0.53 (0.16)**</td>
<td>-0.53 (0.16)**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggressive activities</td>
<td>1.31 (0.06)**</td>
<td>1.31 (0.14)**</td>
<td>1.27 (0.06)**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radical goals</td>
<td>0.21 (0.06)**</td>
<td>0.04 (0.15)</td>
<td>0.16 (0.06)*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African-American initiated</td>
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<td>0.54 (0.06)**</td>
<td>0.54 (0.06)**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil disobedience</td>
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<td>0.89 (0.06)**</td>
<td>0.89 (0.06)**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decade*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960s</td>
<td>0.31 (0.08)**</td>
<td>0.23 (0.08)**</td>
<td>0.21 (0.09)*</td>
<td>0.21 (0.09)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970s</td>
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<td>-0.12 (0.09)</td>
<td>-0.12 (0.09)</td>
<td>-0.12 (0.09)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1980s</td>
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<td>0.13 (0.09)</td>
<td>0.13 (0.09)</td>
<td>0.13 (0.09)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>0.84 (0.07)**</td>
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<td>0.83 (0.08)**</td>
<td>0.84 (0.08)**</td>
</tr>
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<td>Private business</td>
<td>0.71 (0.08)**</td>
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<td>0.73 (0.09)**</td>
<td>0.73 (0.09)**</td>
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<td>0.65 (0.09)**</td>
<td>0.65 (0.09)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size × counterdemonstrators</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.11 (0.04)**</td>
<td>0.11 (0.04)**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size × violence</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.27 (0.03)**</td>
<td>0.26 (0.03)**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size × property damage</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.15 (0.04)**</td>
<td>0.15 (0.04)**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size × aggressive activities</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-0.01 (0.03)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size × radical goals</td>
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<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
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<td>-3.89 (0.13)**</td>
<td>-3.34, 1505***</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pseudo $R^2$</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*a*Compared to events in the 1990s and events targeting schools/universities, respectively.

* $p<0.05$; ** $p<0.01$; *** $p<0.001$. 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Model 1 Coefficient (SE)</th>
<th>Model 2 Coefficient (SE)</th>
<th>Model 3 Coefficient (SE)</th>
<th>Model 4 Coefficient (SE)</th>
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<td>Tactical repertoire</td>
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<td>0.52 (0.05)***</td>
<td>0.52 (0.05)***</td>
<td>0.52 (0.05)***</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identified groups</td>
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<td></td>
<td>0.04 (0.06)</td>
</tr>
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<td>Multiple SMOs</td>
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<td>0.05 (0.04)</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.05 (0.04)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counterdemonstrators</td>
<td>0.65 (0.10)***</td>
<td>0.83 (0.26)**</td>
<td>0.63 (0.10)***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size (natural log)</td>
<td>0.22 (0.01)***</td>
<td>0.17 (0.02)***</td>
<td>0.02 (0.03)</td>
<td>0.01 (0.02)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Violence</td>
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<td>1.79 (0.09)***</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.14 (0.18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property damage</td>
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<td>-0.01 (0.09)</td>
<td>-1.17 (0.26)***</td>
<td>-1.19 (0.25)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggressive activities</td>
<td>1.00 (0.08)***</td>
<td>1.00 (0.08)***</td>
<td>1.07 (0.20)***</td>
<td>0.95 (0.08)***</td>
</tr>
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<td>0.27 (0.08)***</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.19 (0.08)*</td>
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<td>African-American initiated</td>
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<td>0.74 (0.07)***</td>
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<td>Civil disobedience</td>
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<td>0.59 (0.08)***</td>
<td>0.54 (0.09)***</td>
<td>0.55 (0.08)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decadea</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960s</td>
<td>0.85 (0.12)***</td>
<td>0.77 (0.12)***</td>
<td>0.76 (0.12)***</td>
<td>0.76 (0.12)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970s</td>
<td>-0.23 (0.13)</td>
<td>-0.23 (0.13)</td>
<td>-0.26 (0.13)*</td>
<td>-0.26 (0.13)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980s</td>
<td>-0.25 (0.14)</td>
<td>-0.25 (0.14)</td>
<td>-0.25 (0.14)</td>
<td>-0.25 (0.14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Targeta</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>0.99 (0.10)***</td>
<td>1.00 (0.10)***</td>
<td>1.03 (0.11)***</td>
<td>1.04 (0.11)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private business</td>
<td>0.61 (0.12)***</td>
<td>0.61 (0.12)***</td>
<td>0.62 (0.12)***</td>
<td>0.63 (0.12)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0.43 (0.12)***</td>
<td>0.44 (0.12)***</td>
<td>0.68 (0.13)***</td>
<td>0.69 (0.13)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size × counterdemonstrators</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-0.04 (0.05)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size × violence</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.36 (0.04)***</td>
<td>0.35 (0.04)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size × property damage</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.24 (0.05)***</td>
<td>0.24 (0.05)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size × aggressive activities</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-0.02 (0.04)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size × radical goals</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.02 (0.04)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-5.80 (0.18)***</td>
<td>-5.79 (0.18)***</td>
<td>-4.99 (0.22)***</td>
<td>-4.94 (0.19)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>7799.10</td>
<td>7567.13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pseudo $R^2$</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*aCompared to events in the 1990s and events targeting schools/universities, respectively.

*p < 0.05; **p < 0.01; ***p < 0.001.
appear to be largely tied to event size. We plot, again using predicted probabilities, these relationships in Figure 2.

As events get larger, the presence of the counterdemonstrators, violence and property damage become stronger predictors of arrests. In events that lack these characteristics, on the other hand, the probability of arrest gets smaller as events get larger.\footnote{\textsuperscript{7}}

### Police use of force

Our results thus far suggest that both tactical and group diversity are important predictors of police use of arrests, and that event size is largely tied to aggressive protestor actions. We now examine if these same relationships are evident in the police decision to use force or violence during their encounters with protestors. We follow the same model progression in predicting the likelihood of police force as we did for the use of arrests, and the results in Table 2 show that our pattern of results is in most respects similar. Aggressive protestor action is highly predictive of police use of force or violence, as is intentional law violation (via civil disobedience) and events initiated by African-American groups.

![Figure 1. Tactical variety, group diversity and the probability of arrests.](image)

![Figure 2. The probability of arrest based on interactions between event size and event characteristics.](image)
The results for the elements of event complexity, added in model 2, are also similar to those for arrest decisions. The exception here is the measure capturing identified social groups, which shows basically no association with the police use of force. Diversity of tactical repertoire, however, remains a significant predictor of police action. This relationship is plotted in Figure 3, and we see that the predicted probability of police use of force is about 0.15 greater for events with four tactics than events with only a single tactic. The dashed line in Figure 3 demonstrates the non-significant effect of identified groups. Again, counterdemonstrators increase the likelihood of this type of police intervention, increasing the odds of police force or violence by over 90% (exp^{0.65}=1.92). The number of SMOs present at an event has no effect on the odds of police intervention via force or violence.

Looking at the impact of event size across models 1 and 2 does show some divergence from the arrest results. While our findings suggest that larger events include arrests because of their group and tactical composition, event size remains a robust predictor of police force after accounting for other elements of event complexity. Once again, however, the impact of event size is largely tied to aggressive protestors actions (especially protestor violence and property damage) that largely require a police response. These interactions, displayed in models 3 and 4, are plotted in Figure 4.

The dashed line in Figure 4 represents the predicted probability of police force at increasingly larger events that do not include violence or property damage. The flat line shows that police do not decide to intervene with force or violence based on the number of protestors present if there is no aggressive protestor action. However, the other two lines suggest that these visual cues of disorder trigger a police response, and the likelihood of a forceful response increases as these types of events get larger.

In review, we find considerable support for many of our initial expectations. There is a strong and consistent effect of tactical diversity on the likelihood that police will both make arrests and use forceful action against protestors, in support of hypothesis 1. Evidence of group effects was less consistent. Group diversity is a modest predictor of police arrest decisions, but not use of force. Counterdemonstrator presence is strongly tied to both types of police action, although its relationship with arrest decisions is largely tied to event size (see Figure 2). The number of SMOs at an event is not predictive of police intervention. Our hypotheses

![Figure 3. Tactical variety, group diversity and the probability of police use of force.](image-url)
regarding event size were also largely supported. We expected that size would be predictive of police force, but not arrests, and this was largely the case. We also found that police reactions to large events are tied to protestor actions that might necessitate a direct response, such as protestor violence and property damage. There is an especially strong interaction between size and protestor violence. Indeed, of those large events (in the top quartile of event sizes) that include protestor violence, approximately 60% experience arrests, and a similar percentage experience police force. Arrests and police force was uncommon at large, non-violent, protest events. Police made arrests at only 11% of these events and used force at only 6%.

Discussion

Traditional accounts of protest policing, reflected in the systemic threat perspective, largely cast aggressive police response as actions motivated towards protecting elite interests. The recent trend of an increasing institutionalisation of protest, however, questions this purported role of the police, and public order policing perspectives suggest that police response reflects challenges to situational control. Unfortunately, many of the protest features that distinguish between these approaches cannot be neatly placed within either perspective. We argue that certain event characteristics present police with more complicated scenarios, and that this complexity can be expected to increase the likelihood of aggressive police intervention. Protest elements that lead to complex interactions more clearly represent threats to social order, rather than more diffuse threats to elite interests. Our analyses here make a strong case for the importance of event complexity by demonstrating direct associations with policing behaviours, as well as significant interactions of event size with aggressive protestor actions.

A diverse tactical repertoire is a strong predictor of both police use of arrests and force, over and above many established predictors of police response. Furthermore, variation in tactical diversity largely accounts for the relationship between event size and the police use of arrests. That is, when we account for protestor tactical repertoire the main effect of event size is reduced to non-significance. This strong finding suggests that tactical variation is an especially relevant dimension of protest

![Figure 4. The probability of police force based on interactions between event size and event characteristics.](image-url)
activity in an era of increasing institutionalisation of collective behaviour. Many of the
events coded as including more than a single tactic may have been originally planned
to follow a single tactical script, such as a march, but then evolved into something
more complex, such as a spontaneous traffic blockade. These unexpected transitions
may spur the police to intervene in efforts to avoid putting people or property at
increasing risk. Consequently, events displaying several tactics can represent a breech
in a pre-determined agreement between police and protestors. Protest events
increasingly proceed according to these scripts based on prior communication
between protestors and police forces (McPhail et al. 1998, Waddington 1998). But
when events evolve in unexpected ways, as when protestors deploy previously
unannounced tactics, the police may be inclined to act in order to regain both a
greater degree of predictability as well as to overcome their loss of control.

Our expectations regarding the impact of group composition of an event on
police behaviour received less support. Drawing on the research demonstrating that
police typically perceive events to include diverse groups (Waddington 1991, Stott
2004), we argued that events with more distinct groups suggest the presence of a
group of ‘troublemakers’. We found only partial support for this expectation, with
more identifiable groups increasing the likelihood of the police use of arrests but not
force or violence. Additionally, the number of movement organisations was unrelated
to police response. These weaker findings may reflect imprecise measurement,
however, because our data do not allow us to determine how different groups
behaved within a protest event. This information would more closely align our
analyses with established research examining police perceptions of public gatherings.
We also found, consistent with prior research (Meyer and Staggenborg 1996, Earl
and Soule 2006) that the presence of counterdemonstrators increases the likelihood
of police action. However, unlike our other measures of complexity, counter-
demonstrator involvement does not fit as cleanly under a complexity framework.
That said, more recent research has cast counterdemonstrator presence as a
structural element of an event, leading to doubt about the assumption that their
presence is typically tightly coupled with disruptive and violent protestor action (Earl
and Soule 2006).

The final component of our analyses cast event size as a situational threat to
public order, and we explored a number of interactions between event size and
protestor behaviours. Our results suggest that large events themselves do not elicit an
aggressive police response, but rather only large events that involve other threatening
protestor behaviours such as violence and property damage. These findings may
reflect a greater training emphasis on crowd control among American police forces.
Many agencies (especially those that involve Strategic Weapons and Tactics [SWAT]
teams) now undergo substantial training to more effectively act in coordination at
large protest events, which should allow for large and non-violent events to proceed
without issue. We also found evidence that the relationship between event size and
the use of arrests is largely mediated by an event’s tactical repertoire. That is, large
events involve arrests in part because of the diversity of tactics involved.

In placing these results in a broader context, we urge readers to keep in mind that
public protest events often involve significant ongoing and intermittent interactions
between civilians and police which cannot be sequenced given the nature of newspaper
reports (McCarthy et al. 2007, Martin et al. 2009). Thus, our results should be
understood in terms of the co-variation of aggressive police action and protest characteristics, rather than assuming a clear causal ordering. That said, our results suggest that police response to protest is more a reflection of public order management than it is to systemic threats to elite interests. Ultimately, our analyses suggest that events which include multiple dimensions of complexity set the stage for more complicated and less predictable interactions between the protestors and the police.

Acknowledgements
The authors would like to thank Lee Ann Banaszak and Michael Massoglia for contributing to a conversation that led to this project. They also thank Patrick S. Rafail, Forrest Briscoe, Richard Simon, Philippe Blanchard and Mark Anner for their comments on an earlier draft of this paper. This research was supported by grants from the National Science Foundation (SBR #9709339, SBR #9874000).

Notes
1. There is a sizeable literature detailing distinct dimensions or ‘styles’ of public order policing, including but not restricted to the escalated force and negotiated management packages. As our interest here is in various situational aspects of events that make police intervention more or less likely to occur, we do not incorporate many of the style dimensions here. Interested readers should consult the reviews of della Porta and Fillieule (2004) and della Porta and Diani (1999).

2. This strategy does result in some loss of significance, largely due to reductions in statistical power. For example, with a 40% reduction in the number of intense events, group diversity no longer predicts the use of arrests. With this exception, all other relationships of interest are unchanged by this sensitivity test, which is available upon request.

3. An additional distinction could be made between the broad protest tactics used here (marches, rallies), and more detailed accounts of protest activities embedded in these tactics (such as yelling or sign holding). Indeed, the specific actions embedded in protest events are important predictors of police response, but we follow work on tactical repertoires within broader social movements (Tilly 1979, Eckstein 1980, Davenport 1995) to frame our conceptualisation of tactical complexity.

4. The size categories were as follows: (1) small, few (1–9); (2) group, committee (10–49); (3) large, gathering (50–99); (4) hundreds, mass, mob (100–999); (5) thousands (1000–9999) and (6) tens of thousands (10,000 or more participants). To minimise the loss of variation in event size as the result of missing data, we assign a random size within the specified range to all events missing reported size information.

5. This variable was coded 1 if the event included support for: comparable pay, Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), welfare, freedom of speech, affirmative action, minority political power, Black pride, gay rights, Native American rights or farm worker rights. It was also coded 1 if the event included opposition to: pay discrimination, the Vietnam War, the US Government, the ROTC, police brutality against minorities or the underrepresentation of minorities.

6. As checks of robustness, we also estimated models for each dependent variable that accounted for a range of tactical forms (such as march, rally and picket) to determine if the effect of tactical diversity was driven by tactical form. We also interacted tactical complexity with civil disobedience, to determine if the relationship was restricted to those tactically complex events that included law violation. In neither case, however, was the main effect of tactical repertoire changed in any meaningful way.

7. In analyses not shown, we also estimated interactions between our other components of complexity and event size. However, these interactions failed to produce consistent evidence of moderation using conventional levels of statistical significance. They are available upon request.
References


