

ANTICIPATING BACKFIRE:
THE EFFECT OF INSTITUTIONS ON REPRESSION
OF NONVIOLENT DISSENT

by

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ABSTRACT

The state repression literature has paid disproportionate attention to explaining and predicting repression in response to violent dissent while overlooking the role of nonviolent dissent in the repression-dissent process. I present a theory of repression that considers how the tactics and participants involved in nonviolent dissent uniquely threaten political power and affect leaders' decision-making differently than violent dissent. Violent dissidents rely on physical coercion and must possess the willingness and ability to engage in violence; this requirement tends to result in homogeneous dissident groups that are not representative of the larger population. Nonviolent dissidents, on the other hand, use non-physically coercive tactics and are often more representative of the general public than violent dissidents. These peaceful tactics and diverse participants increase the chance that the public will disagree with the use of repression and sanction leaders. Strategic leaders recognize that repression of nonviolent dissent may backfire in this way, but they cannot easily gauge the likelihood that audiences will learn about or be angered by the use of repression against nonviolent dissidents.

I suggest that certain domestic institutions provide leaders with information on the likelihood of backfire that serves as a constraint on repressive behavior. Specifically, I predict that leaders in those states with high levels of press freedom and a constitutionally protected right of petition expect that repression of nonviolent dissent is more likely to backfire and will be less likely to repress as a result. A free press threatens to disseminate information on the state's use

of force against peaceful citizens, and the potential media attention increases the likelihood that citizens learn about the abuse and sanction leaders. Where the right of petition is constitutionally protected, leaders have an additional expectation that repressing nonviolent dissent will upset domestic audiences and that these angry citizens will mobilize to sanction repressive leaders. I test these predictions using the Nonviolent and Violent Campaigns and Outcomes (NAVCO) v2.0 dataset and use an illustrative case of repression in Mexico to test the plausibility of the theory.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to Jacqueline Morgan, for her encouragement, loving support, and friendship throughout my journey.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

During the "Dirty Wars" in Argentina in the 1970s, mothers of missing political opponents used nonviolent marches, vigils, and symbolic action to demand information from the military dictatorship on the fates of their children. *Las Madres de la Plaza de Mayo*—the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo—began with 14 middle-aged women who met while seeking information about their missing children from the Argentine government, which was in the midst of a campaign to rid the country of anyone believed to pose a threat to the regime. The Argentine government had been in a "state of siege" against subversive elements since 1974 when then-president María Estela Martínez de Perón (Isabel) declared her government's intentions to eliminate guerrilla movements and other radical groups that opposed the regime's political and economic policies (Navarro 2001, 242).

Faced with rising inflation, government corruption, and increasing guerrilla activity, Isabel Perón was removed from power by a military coup headed by General Jorge Rafael Videla in 1976. General Videla's government intensified efforts to root out any opposition to the military government and began a process of stripping away the power of government institutions that could potentially challenge the junta's actions or provide recourse for affected citizens. The junta banned political activity and outlawed certain political parties, disbanded legislatures at

all levels of government, dismissed Supreme Court judges and elected officials, censored media outlets, arrested politicians and union leaders, and began extending its reach into public universities and labor unions.

The military government also extended the scope of its "war against subversion" to include not just armed guerrilla groups, but anyone who was suspected of willingly or unwillingly aiding terrorists, which the junta defined as anyone "who spreads ideas that are contrary to Western and Christian civilization" (Navarro 2001, 244). Since the junta had rendered most political and civil institutions ineffectual, citizens had little means of contesting charges brought against them or their loved ones. While many suspected subversives were formally arrested and detained indefinitely, many others were "disappeared" with little or no information as to their whereabouts or fates.

Navarro (2001, 248) writes that the junta was so closed and impenetrable that even politically influential persons could not easily find out information on their disappeared or detained loved ones or intercede on their behalf. She writes that when the daughter of a former air force minister was abducted, the Brigadier Major met with General Videla and was assured that the military did not commission her disappearance. It was later revealed, however, that the Brigadier Major's daughter was imprisoned by the navy and her body was later dumped at sea. This anecdote provides a sense of just how little ordinary citizens could do to intercede on behalf of detained or disappeared loved ones—not even a distinguished military figure with direct access to General Videla could successfully intervene on behalf of his daughter.

It was during this time of indiscriminate repression and government impunity that the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo began demanding information on the fates of their disappeared or detained children. When the mothers were able to access government offices to inquire about

their children, officials suggested that their missing sons had simply run away with women and that their daughters were probably working as prostitutes somewhere. The mothers knew this information was false and intended to cover up the truth—that their children had been taken by the military junta. Realizing that they would not receive help from the government, the mothers began meeting in homes and developing strategies for how to get information on their children from what appeared to be an impenetrable regime (Ackerman and DuVall 2000).

Initially, the mothers met quietly in the Plaza de Mayo, talking with anyone who was interested in their stories. Over time, and with more mothers joining their cause, they became bolder and more conspicuous. They openly blamed their children's disappearances on the military and invited others to join them in their fight for information. Their activities included piling their missing children's belongings together in the Plaza to generate sympathy, carrying nails to symbolize their maternal connection to the Virgin Mary, wearing head scarves made out of their children's clothes, secretly distributing literature on buses and trains with information on where they would be meeting, and using media to publicize their cause whenever accessible (Ackerman and DuVall 2000).

Early on, government authorities would detain or threaten the mothers for defying state rules against public gatherings. As more mothers joined the group, and as their activities drew more local attention, authorities increased their use of force to silence the women. On one occasion, authorities attacked the women while they were meeting in a church, and several of the women in the group were taken away and not seen again. Over the course of a few days, 14 of the mothers were kidnapped and many others were threatened with death. Despite continued threats, arrests, beatings, and disappearances of their members, the mothers kept up their nonviolent activities.

A few mothers traveled abroad to speak to human rights organizations and raise awareness about the extent of the disappearances, and Ackerman and DuVall (2000, 277) write that this international attention helped protect them: "the famous, both they and the junta understood, are not easily disappeared." This suggests that the military junta cared at least about what the international community thought of its actions and constrained itself from disappearing those mothers who the world might be watching. Since international observers knew that these mothers simply wanted information on their children, it would be hard for the military junta to justify detaining or disappearing them on suspicion of being enemies of the state. Indeed, the junta appears to have wanted its "war against subversion" to be perceived as legitimate and justified, as the following quote from an Argentine official to Amnesty International in 1977 suggests:

Systematic subversion and terrorism have cost the lives of many police and military and have compromised the security of the Argentine people....If anybody violates human rights in Argentina, murdering, torturing and bombing, it is undoubtedly the terrorists. These people use violence for its own sake or to create chaos and destruction. We understand that the state has a right to defend itself, using whatever force is necessary (Navarro 2001, 243).

The government official speaking against allegations of human rights abuse appealed to authorities' duty and right to defend the state and the citizens within its jurisdiction. But in light of this defense, the state response to the mothers is puzzling—these women did not pose a violent threat to the government, yet authorities violently repressed them (or those mothers who did not have the protection of an international audience). During this time, the government faced challenges from guerrilla groups, paramilitary groups, and supporters of former military leaders, so why were authorities so concerned about a group of unarmed mothers?

The answer lies in the way that the mothers' nonviolent dissent threatened the military

regime. The junta cared about justifying actions during the "war against subversion" as necessary to defend Argentina and lead the state back to prosperity and security (Navarro 2001, 243). Through their nonviolent methods, the mothers challenged the legitimacy of state actions and called the military government's right to rule into question. Fearing that the mothers' activities would cause observers to question the regime's actions and withdraw support, the military leaders attempted to end the mothers' activities through repression.

Studies consistently find that dissident violence produces state violence (Davenport 2007*a*), but as the case of the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo demonstrates, behavior does not have to be violent to threaten power or produce repression. The state repression literature has largely overlooked the threat posed by nonviolent dissent, and most studies either implicitly or explicitly assume that dissidents are willing to use violence. I address this gap in the literature and argue that in order to understand why authorities repress citizens who are not violent, such as the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, scholars must develop theories of repression and dissent that consider how nonviolent dissent uniquely threatens political power.

1.1 Repression and Nonviolent Dissent

In this dissertation, I develop a theory of repression and dissent that accounts for differences between violent and nonviolent dissent. Violent and nonviolent dissent each involve unique tactics and participants, and these tactics and participants shape the consequences that leaders may potentially face for repressing each type of dissent. The potential consequences of repression, in turn, affect the way leaders choose to respond when confronted with violent and nonviolent dissent.

Violent dissidents use physical coercion to pursue a variety of goals, including change to

existing policies, leadership, or territorial arrangements within a state. Violent dissent imposes direct physical and economic costs on the state by damaging resources that the state relies on to function. Violent dissent also imposes less tangible costs on the leadership by weakening political legitimacy, or the public's acceptance of the leadership's right to rule. Citizens expect authorities to defend against security threats and maintain public order, and leaders who fail to do so risk losing public confidence and political support (Moore 1978). When the leadership is unable or unwilling to maintain order and security within its own borders, citizens are likely to question the leadership's right to rule and ability to serve the public interest.

Both the tangible and intangible costs imposed on the state by violent dissent threaten leaders' political power. Physical and economic resource depletion means that leaders cannot provide citizens and supporters with the level of public or private goods required to remain in power (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2003). When violent dissent raises doubts about the leadership's ability to serve the public interest, leaders risk losing both key sources of political support and the wider population's consent to be governed. Without the backing of political supporters and the cooperation of the public, leaders can only maintain power with force, which is economically costly and logistically inefficient (Moore 1978, Gurr 1988).

Leaders confronted with *nonviolent* dissent face a different set of potential costs than those leaders facing violent groups. Nonviolent dissidents engage in peaceful methods of political contention that strategically and explicitly eschew violence (Sharp 1973, Ackerman and Kreugler 1994). As a result, nonviolent dissent does not damage state resources in the same way as violent dissent.¹ Instead, nonviolent dissidents pursue their goals (which may be similar or

¹As will be discussed later, nonviolent dissent may damage the state's economic resources through nonviolent tactics such as boycotts and strikes.

identical to those pursued by violent dissidents) by engaging in tactics designed to undermine leaders' political legitimacy without the use or threat of violence (Schock 2003). The preceding case of the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo provides a relevant example of how dissidents can use nonviolent tactics to question leaders' right to rule and undermine legitimacy without violence.

Leaders confronted with either violent or nonviolent dissent wish to end political challenges and preserve their power (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2003). When dissidents are violent, authorities predictably respond with repression to end damage to state resources and defend the leadership's position as the legitimate governing authority (Davenport 2007*a*). Repressing violent challenges may be costly in terms of physical and economic resources, but the benefits of ending the violent threat and maintaining territorial sovereignty most often outweigh these resource costs. When faced with violent dissent, then, leaders may incur substantial costs to political legitimacy if they fail to respond to the challenge forcefully enough to end it. In the event that they are criticized for repressing violent dissidents, leaders can appeal to their duty to provide security and maintain public order within their jurisdiction.

Leaders confronted with nonviolent dissent, on the other hand, face a unique problem when determining how to end nonviolent challenges. If leaders allow dissent to continue, they risk incurring costs to political power as dissidents engage in nonviolent actions designed to undermine their political legitimacy. When compared to violent dissent, repression would be a less physically and economically costly way of ending dissent since the opposition is unarmed and therefore less able to damage state resources. But whereas violent dissent may necessitate a repressive response from leaders in order to preserve legitimacy, repressing nonviolent dissent may lead to even greater costs to political legitimacy. When leaders repress nonviolent dissent, they risk provoking public outrage and losing political support over what citizens are likely to

perceive as a misuse of power and breach of leaders' obligations to maintain peace and order. Violent groups breach a societal obligation to contribute to peace and order, and citizens are likely to perceive a violent state response as justified and necessary to restore order. When dissidents are peaceful, on the other hand, the state's use of force appears unjustified in light of each actor's obligation to contribute to a peaceful and orderly society (Moore 1978, 26).

In addition to using different tactics to pursue their goals, violent and nonviolent dissidents also represent different segments of society. Since violent dissent requires physical endurance and training, membership is relegated to those individuals who are willing and able to engage in combat. This segment of society is likely to be comprised mainly of young males whose lives are such that they decide taking up arms is the best option to better their condition (Nordås and Davenport 2013, Mesquida and Wiener 1999). In many cases, these groups will be perceived by other members of society as radical or extreme outsiders who should be dealt with forcefully by the state. Conversely, nonviolent dissidents are more representative of the general public than violent groups and, as a result, may evoke more widespread sympathy for their plight in the wake of repression (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011).

Given the unique tactics and participants involved in nonviolent dissent, leaders contemplating repression must consider the possibility that domestic audiences will be angered by the use of force and may withdraw their support or cooperation. However, they cannot easily gauge the extent of public outrage and withdrawal of support or cooperation, also referred to as *backfire*, following repression of nonviolent dissent. This uncertainty over potential consequences of repression influences whether or not leaders choose to repress nonviolent dissent. But if leaders allow dissent to continue, they also risk a loss of political power if dissidents convince audiences to withdraw support or cooperation. How do leaders know which costs to political

power will be greater?

I suggest that certain domestic institutions provide information that allows leaders to better estimate the likely consequences and resulting costs to power of repressing nonviolent dissent. Specifically, I predict that leaders in those states with high levels of press freedom will be less likely to repress nonviolent dissent, as a free press threatens to disseminate information that causes repression to backfire. The potential media attention increases the likelihood that leaders face consequences for repressing nonviolent dissent since the public is likely to disagree with and be angered by the use of repression against peaceful, representative citizens. In this way, a free press signals to leaders that repression is likely to be publicized and be politically harmful, and leaders can use this information when deciding whether or not to repress nonviolent dissent.

Additionally, I predict that where the right of petition is constitutionally protected, leaders will anticipate greater negative consequences if repression is publicized. A constitutionally protected right of petition represents a social consensus that citizens have the freedom to entreat government leaders for a redress of grievances, and domestic audiences are likely to react to a violation of this right by withdrawing support for political leaders (Weingast 1997). In this way, leaders in those states with constitutionally protected rights of petition will be better able to estimate the potential consequences of repressing nonviolent dissent. When coupled with the threat of having abuse publicized by a free press, the right of petition should make leaders even more concerned about the potential loss of political support following repression and, subsequently, less likely to repress nonviolent dissent.

1.2 Plan of Study

In this dissertation, I develop a theory of repression and nonviolent dissent and examine how certain domestic institutions influence leaders' use of repression against peaceful dissidents. In the next chapter, I discuss how repression is conceptualized in the literature and how scholars have explained its application. Early studies explain repression as a by-product of state features such as regime type or population size that are likely to produce this type of behavior (Davenport 2007a, 3-4). These explanations rely more on association than causation and do not fully explain why leaders would use repression in the first place.

Later studies emphasize the use of repression as part of a conflict process; when leaders face a challenge to power, repression is one policy option for ending the challenge. This body of work includes studies that model the dissent and repression process (Moore 2000, Lichbach 1987, Poe et al. 2000), as well as empirical investigations that consider how institutions influence decision-making in conflict situations (Poe and Tate 1994, Davenport and Armstrong 2004, Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2005). I focus on a missing piece of the puzzle within the dissent and repression literature—many studies either implicitly or explicitly assume dissidents are willing to use violence, and I argue that this assumption limits our ability to predict and explain how leaders make decisions when faced with dissent.

In the third chapter, I present a theory of repression and dissent that addresses this gap in the literature and considers how nonviolent tactics and participants affect leaders' decision-making differently than violent tactics and participants. Specifically, I discuss how the tactics and participants involved in nonviolent dissent uniquely threaten political power and increase the potential consequences of repression. I suggest that domestic institutions—namely press

freedom and the right of petition—increase the likelihood that repression of nonviolent dissent backfires, and I predict that leaders will be more likely to limit repression of nonviolent dissent when these institutions are present for fear that repression will backfire.

In the fourth chapter, I present the research design used to test my predictions, including a discussion of the concepts of interest, how these concepts are measured, the estimation techniques used to test my predictions, and the results of the analyses. In addition to my original predictions regarding leader behavior in response to violent and nonviolent dissent, I make additional predictions in this chapter concerning the effect of press freedom and the right of petition on the likelihood of backfire following repression of violent and nonviolent dissent. I test these predictions and discuss the results of the statistical analyses in the latter part of the fourth chapter.

In the fifth chapter, I trace the steps in my theory using the recent case of repression in Iguala, Mexico in which 43 nonviolent students were attacked, abducted, and killed at the command of the town's mayor and his wife. I discuss how the political and social environment in Mexico leading up to the event likely influenced the decision to repress the students and caused leaders to underestimate the likelihood that repression would backfire. Finally, in the sixth chapter, I conclude the dissertation by summarizing my findings and contributions to the state repression literature, discussing limitations of the study, and offering ideas for future research.

Chapter 2

Explaining and Predicting Repression

2.1 Introduction

Scholars have devoted considerable attention over the past three decades to explaining and predicting the use of state coercion against civilians, and an extensive network of human rights institutions has developed to monitor and discourage state actors from abusing their coercive power. These scholastic and policy efforts are warranted—in the twentieth century alone, state actors have been responsible for the murder of millions of men, women, and children. Rummel (1994, 13) estimates that between 1900 and 1988, close to 170 million non-combatants were killed by government actors; including war deaths, this estimate is closer to 203 million.

In addition to directly or indirectly killing civilians, state actors also coercively control individuals using methods that are not necessarily lethal but involve the threat or use of force nonetheless—examples include torture, kidnapping, imprisonment, or restrictions on movement. State actors may apply one method of coercion differently across time or space. For example, mass killings may be carried out through gas chambers, starvation, overwork, or exile to extreme climates; torture may involve techniques as primitive as removing body parts to sophisticated, non-scarring techniques pioneered by Western democracies (Rejali 2007); and restrictions on movement may involve curfews, bans on crowds or assemblies, or restrictions

on exit from a territory.

Just as coercive methods and their applications differ, so too do the political objectives motivating the use of coercive force. The Iranian government punishes women for wearing fingernail polish in public or committing adultery, citing religious piety as the rationale; the Nazis exterminated Jews with the purpose of creating a pure German race; and Mao caused the deaths of millions of Chinese citizens from starvation in an effort to pursue a Communist ideal. These examples are diverse, but the shared purpose behind each rationale is an attempt to legitimize and preserve political power. Iran's clerics need a religious foundation to justify their rule, Hitler needed a common enemy to rise through Germany's political system, and Mao needed to promote the Communist utopia in order to justify his coercive and destructive policies.

Leaders' legitimacy may be rooted in different political ideals and objectives which motivate the use of coercive force, but assuming that political leaders behave in ways that benefit them politically, the underlying goal behind the use of force is preservation of political power (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2003). States hold a monopoly on the legitimate use of physical force (Weber 2009), meaning that only those individuals sanctioned by the state and working to fulfill state objectives, implement state policies, or protect state interests may threaten or apply coercive force on behalf of the state. Coercive force, or the threat and/or application of violence, has allowed political leaders to effectively establish, govern, and defend large territories and populations that comprise the modern state system (Gurr 1988). Citizens agree to be governed by state rules and policies—and consent to the state's monopoly on the legitimate use of force—in exchange for certain state provisions such as public order and national security. Citizen cooperation lowers the cost of governing, as less force is required to ensure that citizens abide by state rules and policies (Moore 1978, Gurr 1988).

While coercive force has allowed state authorities to establish, govern, and defend national territories and populations within those jurisdictions, it has also allowed authorities to use violence against internal challenges to political, economic, or social orders favored by leaders and those groups that keep leaders in power. These internal challenges may be violent or nonviolent, organized or spontaneous, large or small.¹ Aside from these particular characteristics, internal challenges involve non-state actors in conflict with state leaders over some policy, issue, or good. These non-state actors work outside of official state channels such as elections to influence political outcomes; specifically, non-state actors hope their collective, coordinated actions will shift leaders' preferences closer to their own and lead to a political outcome which they favor.

Leaders, on the other hand, want to end dissent that threatens a favorable status quo and may negatively impact their political power. Repression is one option available to leaders when faced with internal dissent, but the efficiency of this policy tool varies depending on the political environment. Assuming leaders are rational actors who weigh the costs and benefits of different policy options, leaders faced with dissent will select repression as their best response if they evaluate the costs (benefits) of repression to be lower (higher) than the costs (benefits) of other policy options. In other words, leaders will look for the least costly (most efficient) way to end dissent and preserve political power given the political environment.

Despite a proliferation of research into the relationship between repression and dissent, surprisingly few studies within this body of literature consider how *dissent type* affects the costs of repression and, subsequently, leaders' strategic decision-making in response to dissent. In this

¹I use the terms internal, political, or domestic *challenges* and *dissent* interchangeably.

chapter, I discuss how theories of repression have developed over the past few decades to explain and predict repressive behavior, paying particular attention to how theories of repression explain leader decision-making in the context of institutional constraints and strategic interactions. Before discussing efforts to explain and predict repression, however, I first discuss how repression is conceptualized in the literature and implications for data collection.

2.2 Defining Repression

Repression refers to the use of coercion against citizens by state authorities that restricts freedom or inflicts physical harm in an effort to control behavior and influence political outcomes (Davenport 2007*a*, 35). Modern states are characterized by a monopoly on the use of force (Weber 2009), and state authorities routinely use coercive measures to control citizen behavior; for example, citizens are often threatened with imprisonment for failure to pay taxes or obey traffic laws. State authorities rely on these forms of coercion to solve collective action problems (ex: national defense) and ensure compliance with rules designed to maintain public order and security (ex: speed limits). Individual citizens consent to be governed by these rules in exchange for the benefits they accrue from having other citizens also abide by these rules—if everyone pays taxes, the military can better protect the country; if everyone obeys speed limits, highways are safer.

The use of coercion for collective purposes like national defense and public safety is largely viewed as legitimate since state actors and citizens have mutually agreed to this arrangement, oftentimes through written constitutions (Weingast 1997). Moore (1978) describes this arrangement as a mutual obligation between rulers and subjects: rulers are expected to ensure basic security and the maintenance of peace and order, while subjects are expected to abide by rules

that contribute to peace and order. Both rulers and subjects will, however, test the limits of this arrangement, in effect attempting to "renegotiate" these mutual expectations and obligations when it is personally or politically advantageous (Moore 1978, 23).

Leaders may test the limits of acceptable uses of force when it benefits their hold on power, and citizens are likely to perceive excessive state force as illegitimate since it violates leaders' obligations to ensure a peaceful and orderly society. In this way, repression differs from legitimate uses of state coercion in that it is largely used to inhibit citizens' capabilities or will (Davenport 2007*a*, 47) for purposes that do not benefit society as a whole. It is the use or threat of physical coercion beyond what is necessary to fulfill the state's obligations to maintain peace and order. In contrast to legitimate uses of state force that benefit society at large, repression is used to ensure that citizens do not engage in behavior that conflicts with the goals and interests of political authorities.

Authorities may use any combination of repressive techniques to influence citizen behavior. These techniques may be overtly or covertly carried out by state authorities or outsourced by the state to other groups (Davenport 2007*a*), but they all rely on the threat or use of coercive force by agents acting on behalf of the state. For example, police officers may break up a legal, peaceful protest without the actual use of force simply by threatening protestors with arrest—the officers coerce the protestors into dispersing by abusing the power granted to them by the state to physically restrict citizens in the service of public safety. If the protestors resist, actual force may be necessary to produce the outcome the officers want.

Conceptually, then, repression is defined as the threat or use of physical coercion by state authorities. Following Goertz (2006, 30-32), the presence of repression (physical coercion used or threatened) represents the "positive pole" of the conceptual dichotomy, and the absence of

repression (no physical coercion used or threatened) represents the "negative pole." From this basic conceptual level, repression can be broken down into two secondary level concepts—negative sanctions and physical integrity rights violations—that differentiate between repression that violates certain freedoms with the threat or use of force and repression that applies that force in a physically or psychologically harmful way. Davenport (2007*a*, 2) provides a simple distinction between these categories: due process transgressions (negative sanctions) are violations of "First Amendment-type rights," while physical integrity rights are concerned with individual survival and security.

Negative sanctions refer to violations of civil and political liberties such as restrictions on association, movement, or speech for which offenders are fined, detained, or otherwise intimidated into altering behavior. Violations of civil and political liberties are often identified using domestic legal institutions that protect certain behaviors; for example, if a national constitution protects citizens' right to assemble peacefully, then arresting a group of peaceful demonstrators would constitute a civil liberties violation according to domestic law. International law also provides guidelines for civil and political behavior that should be respected—the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) notes that certain liberties should be universally protected, including freedom of religion, association, expression, and assembly.

Physical integrity rights violations, on the other hand, refer to the application of coercive force by state actors that inflicts severe physical or psychological harm on an individual. Examples of these violations include torture (inhumane or degrading physical abuse), extrajudicial killings (government-sanctioned killing without due process), disappearances (disappearance of victims that appears politically motivated), and political imprisonment (imprisonment for beliefs, speech, affiliation, or other non-violent political reasons) (Cingranelli and Richards

2010, 410). Early studies refer to these violations as acts of state terrorism (see, for example, Poe and Tate (1994)), while more recent studies use the terms *physical* or *personal* integrity rights violations.

This distinction between negative sanctions and physical integrity rights violations is important for theoretical and empirical reasons, but the categories are not entirely conceptually distinct. Civil and political rights serve to protect personal integrity by defining the limits of state action, so the use of physical force against these rights is both a violation of a person's physical integrity and a violation of civil or political rights (Hill 2014, 9). These categories overlap in operational definitions of negative sanctions and physical integrity rights as well. For example, the Cingranelli-Richards (CIRI) dataset includes a measure of civil-political rights violations (political imprisonment for beliefs, speech, or affiliation) as an indicator of respect for physical integrity rights (Cingranelli, Richards and Clay 2014).

Hill (2014) points out that this conceptual and operational overlap largely results from how repression as a behavior is defined in theory and identified for empirical purposes. He notes that many state repression studies rely on "extensional" definitions of physical integrity rights, which identify actions or cases that qualify as physical integrity rights to define the concept, rather than "intensional" definitions, which consider attributes such as legality, appropriateness, or severity when conceptualizing behavior that violates physical integrity rights.² The two most common datasets used in empirical analyses of repression—the CIRI and Political Terror Scale (PTS) datasets—rely on operational definitions of physical integrity rights violations to compile data (i.e., identifying instances of torture, disappearances, extrajudicial killing,

²See Hill (2014) for a thorough discussion of the challenges of developing an intensional definition of physical integrity rights.

and political imprisonment). However, as noted above, political imprisonment is also a civil-political liberties violation. What distinguishing feature also classifies political imprisonment as a physical integrity rights violation?

An intensional definition would conceptually clarify the difference between negative sanctions involving detention and physical integrity rights involving detention. For example, the CIRI dataset uses the reason for imprisonment to identify detention that represents a violation of physical integrity rights (imprisonment for beliefs, speech, affiliation), but this criteria does not evaluate violations based on physical or psychological harm. An intensional definition would consider attributes such as duration of imprisonment, which could significantly impact a person's physical or psychological well-being, or due process procedures, which could provide legal recourse for adverse treatment or illegitimate imprisonment.

As will be discussed in a later section, this conceptual and operational overlap has produced misleading findings in empirical research on repression, particularly regarding the impact of democratic institutions on respect for physical integrity rights (Hill and Jones 2014). Additionally, the lack of attention to conceptualizing physical integrity rights abuse (rather than relying on operational definitions) has led scholars to overlook investigation of other uses of state violence, such as use of the death penalty, which is legal in many domestic contexts but prohibited by international law (Hill 2014, 18). If physical integrity rights violations were identified based on a severity criterion (for example, punishments involving or resulting in death), then current cases of corporal punishment would be classified as physical integrity rights violations despite their domestic legality.

For purposes of theory development in this project, I consider negative sanctions and physical integrity rights to be conceptually distinct based on the severity criterion proposed by Hill

(2014). Negative sanctions involve the threat or use of coercive force, but not to the extent that it causes severe physical or psychological harm. Physical integrity rights abuse involves the threat or use of force that inflicts severe physical or psychological harm. This distinction is generally consistent with the standard operational definition of physical integrity rights abuse with the exception of political imprisonment. I consider political imprisonment to be a violation of physical integrity rights when it results in severe physical or psychological harm, which I expect would result in cases of long durations of imprisonment or imprisonment that involves extremely difficult physical or psychological conditions.

I make this distinction only for purposes of conceptual clarity since I do not collect data on repression in this project. However, the measure of repression used in the empirical analysis in chapter 4 reflects a more intensional definition of repression based on the degree of repression used in response to a dissident campaign, or "the extent to which the government uses the coercive apparatus of the state... to quell opposition" (Chenoweth and Lewis 2013, 13). The coding procedures used to classify the degree of repression rely to some extent on the motivation behind certain repressive behaviors, such as a "physical action exhibiting intent to kill".

Conceptual clarity is important for answering theoretical questions about leader motivation. For example, why do some leaders perceive severe physical force as an efficient policy option for controlling behavior? Given the resource costs involved in carrying out severe physical force, when is this type of response beneficial? The empirical distinction between negative sanctions and physical integrity rights violations is also important for theory development—for example, Davenport (1995) finds that violent conflict does not increase authorities' use of negative sanctions and suggests this is because authorities will resort to more severe forms of repression (i.e., physical integrity rights violations) to deal with violent opposition.

The distinction between different degrees of repression is important for identifying patterns that predict and explain its use. Negative sanctions and physical integrity rights violations may be used in response to different stimuli or to influence behavior under different institutional contexts. With an increase in available data on repression across time and countries, scholars have been better able to identify empirical regularities in the use of repression. In the next section, I discuss the evolution of the state repression literature and discuss how these studies have contributed to our understanding of why leaders repress.

2.3 Explaining Repression

Scholars have devoted considerable attention to understanding the conditions under which authorities repress citizens. Early repression studies focus attention on structural explanations, viewing repression as the product of certain attributes unique to political or economic systems (Davenport 2007*a*, 3-4). For example, autocratic states were thought to be repressive because leaders were unable to hold on to power through other means. Structural theories that focus on repression in autocracies fail to account for the repressive behavior of democratic states, however, assuming that leaders in open regimes do not need to resort to repression to stay in office.

Later studies model repression as not endemic to particular structures but as a form of political conflict in which leaders resort to repression when it is politically beneficial (Davenport 2007*a*, 4). These studies view structural factors as important for explaining the onset of political conflict and leaders' decision-making in response to conflict. Democratic states, for example, may experience less political conflict (and therefore have less need of repression) because these systems are better able to channel citizen demands and resolve political conflict (Gartner and

Regan 1996). When political conflict does occur, democratic institutions like elections may deter leaders from repressing for fear of being voted out of office or challenged by other state actors (Henderson 1991, Poe and Tate 1994, Davenport 2007*b*).

As scholars began to view repression as a policy choice made by rational actors rather than an outcome determined by political or economic structures, the literature began to shift toward analyses of factors that influence leaders' incentives to repress. Specifically, scholars have focused on the ways in which *political institutions* shape the costs and benefits of repressive behavior and subsequently affect leaders' decisions to repress.

2.3.1 Political Institutions

Political institutions are rules and standards of behavior that shape political interactions. These rules and standards of behavior may be written, as in a constitution, or they may be recognized and accepted practices without formal codification, such as Britain's unwritten constitution or the practice of limiting U.S. presidents to two terms before 1951. Through establishing rules and standards of behavior, political institutions provide incentives for actors to behave in line with a shared interest or desired outcome. Actors who do not behave according to the rules or standards of behavior set by an institution may lose benefits or be sanctioned in some way.

For example, governments set up taxing authorities to collect payment for public goods such as clean air or national defense; those citizens who choose not to contribute—but will inevitably benefit from these public goods—risk fines or imprisonment. States enter into preferential trade agreements to make both states better off through lower tariffs or quotas; members who fail to comply with these agreements may lose the benefits of membership. Legislative bodies set up procedures for passing laws; each time a new law is up for debate, members understand

what is required to reach a decision and are expected to follow the commonly accepted procedures. In all of these examples, political institutions influence actors' behavior, whether it be for the purpose of resolving collective action problems, encouraging cooperation, or streamlining collective decision-making.

State repression scholars are particularly interested in how political institutions influence leaders' repressive behavior. One of the most studied institutions thought to influence the decision to repress is democracy. Democratic institutions are set up to hold leaders accountable for their behavior through citizens and other government actors, and leaders risk losing power through democratic mechanisms if citizens or other state actors disagree with repression. This system of accountability is thought to increase the costs to leaders of repressing, thereby making them less likely to do so.

Over the past few decades, scholars have explored the nature of the relationship between democracy and repression in depth. Early studies predict a negative, linear relationship in which movement up the democracy scale reduces the use of repression (Henderson 1991, Poe and Tate 1994, Davenport 1995). In this view, increases in levels of democracy represent more opportunities to sanction repressive leaders, who then restrain themselves from repressing in order to avoid sanctions and stay in power. Davenport and Armstrong (2004) find support for a negative, linear relationship between repression and democracy, but only above a certain threshold. Below this point, increases in democracy do not appear to reduce the use of repression.

Other studies find the relationship between democracy and repression to be nonlinear and more complex than previous work suggests. The "More Murder in the Middle" theory predicts

an inverted-U functional form, where repression is lower in full autocracies and full democracies but is higher in mixed regimes (Fein 1995, Regan and Henderson 2002). According to this theory, leaders in mixed regimes face political instability and uncertainty that results in more repressive behavior. These regimes allow some political contestation and accountability, but political institutions are often too new or weak to provide leaders with a sense of control over political outcomes. As a result, leaders are more likely to resort to force in order to maintain control over the population and secure political power.

The concept of democracy can be measured using a number of different state characteristics that capture the extent to which citizens are involved in the political process. Recent studies have examined how these different measures of democracy independently influence the use of repression. Bueno de Mesquita et al. (2005) unpack multidimensional democracy scores to evaluate what specific aspects of democracy matter for reducing repression, and they find that multi-party political participation has the biggest impact on respect for human rights. However, while democratic institutions seem to limit repression by holding leaders accountable through party competition, this accountability mechanism only works at the highest levels of democratic institutionalization.

Davenport (2007*b*) disaggregates two mechanisms—*Voice* and *Veto*—through which democratic institutions are expected to constrain repressive behavior. Democratic leaders are expected to adhere to democratic rules and standards of behavior, and deviation from these rules and norms may threaten political power if citizens vote leaders out of office or other political actors remove power from leaders. The *Voice* mechanism works when "political leaders fear being removed from office by citizens for engaging in activities that are deemed antithetical to

the popular interest" (Davenport 2007b, 51). The *Veto* mechanism, in contrast, constrains repressive behavior through the possible costs imposed by other political actors who are capable of overseeing and censoring the leader and thereby limiting the leader's use of repression.

The constraining effect of the *Veto* mechanism assumes, however, that other political actors with the ability to censor leaders are opposed to repression and will act to stop it. These actors may have an interest in preserving the status quo, especially if they are accountable to an electorate that supports repressive policies. Even without making assumptions about policy preferences, too many veto players may not be effective at changing repressive policy from an institutional perspective (Tsebelis 2002, Conrad and Moore 2010). Conrad and Moore (2010) find evidence that too many veto players in government makes it more difficult to change the status quo in favor of procedures that dissuade the use of torture. While these findings challenge the view of veto players as effective safeguards against rights violations, the authors provide evidence that other domestic features, such as constitutional and legal provisions, may incentivize leaders to eliminate torture.

A number of other recent studies have explored the impact of *domestic legal institutions* such as constitutional provisions and courts on the use of repression. Studies have found that constitutional provisions (which may protect rights such as freedom of expression) and courts (which enforce these provisions) reduce some forms of rights violations (Davenport 1996, Cross 1999, Keith 2002). Constitutions represent a common agreement among citizens and leaders concerning the limits and appropriate uses of state power (Weingast 1997). These agreements commit leaders to certain standards of behavior; if they breach a constitutional agreement by abusing power, citizens can use constitutional provisions as a guide to coordinate actions

and sanction leaders (Elkins, Ginsburg and Melton 2009, Ordeshook 1992, Ginsburg, Lansberg-Rodriguez and Versteeg 2012). In this way, constitutional provisions may provide an incentive for leaders to refrain from using repression. However, constitutional provisions appear to limit civil liberties violations better than physical integrity rights violations. Due process provisions reduce physical integrity rights violations, but the effect is conditional on the presence of an independent judiciary (Keith 2012).

Like constitutional provisions, the impact of an independent judiciary on physical integrity rights violations is also complex. While some evidence shows that judicial independence may reduce these violations, the results are mixed and do not suggest a strong relationship between independent judiciaries and protection against repression (Davenport 1996, Keith 2002). Empirically, the role of judicial independence in protecting rights is clearer when analyses include measures of *de jure* (formal) and *de facto* (actual) independence. *De jure* independence refers to formal commitments or written declarations that may or may not be implemented; *de facto* independence, on the other hand, refers to the actual exercise of independence by courts. Formal commitments to judicial independence alone do not appear to limit physical integrity rights violations, but *de facto* independence appears to reduce violations of these rights (Keith 2012, Powell and Staton 2009, Mitchell, Ring and Spellman 2013, Hill and Jones 2014).

Interestingly, Keith (2012) finds that the impact of *de facto* judicial independence on abuse of physical integrity rights outweighs that of democratization, a finding that suggests judicial independence may be more important to the protection of physical integrity rights than democratic institutions. This finding is not entirely surprising from a theoretical perspective: democratic institutions are designed to express the will of the majority, while courts are charged with considering the cause of the minority. Tilly (2007, 140) writes that the fundamental standard of

democracy is "the extent to which the state behaves in conformity to the expressed demands of its citizens," and "democratization therefore consists of an increase in conformity between state behavior and citizens' expressed demands." This description highlights why democratic institutions may not be effective safeguards against repression: if citizens are ambivalent toward repressive behavior, then leaders may not face any political costs for rights violations. If citizens support the use of repression against minority groups, then leaders may even benefit from the use of repression in terms of increased political support. Courts, on the other hand, are expected to act impartially and uphold constitutional provisions, if they exist, that protect the rights of individuals and minority groups.

As scholars have started to incorporate legal institutions such as constitutions and courts into models of repression, the predictive power of democratic institutions has come into question. In a recent study examining the various empirical findings in the state repression literature, Hill and Jones (2014) identify a problem with the most commonly used measure of democracy, the Polity IV index. Studies that use this index find that the "competitiveness of participation" component is consistently associated with lower levels of repression, especially political imprisonment. However, the Polity score includes whether or not regimes "repress oppositional competition," which means that repression of competition is being used to predict repression. As Hill and Jones (2014) note, the consistent effect of democracy on repression is not surprising given this measurement overlap.

While democracy may not predict repression as previously expected, Hill and Jones (2014) find strong support for the ability of *de facto* judicial independence to predict repression, particularly torture and political imprisonment. In fact, they note that judicial independence predicts

repression better than common indicators like civil war. The theoretical role of judicial independence is not as clear, however. Even if courts operate independently of political influences, leaders may not consider legal sanctions as particularly worrisome or costly. Leaders may evaluate that the benefits of using repression outweigh the costs and ignore possible legal sanctions, or they may believe that they can effectively justify their repressive actions in court if violations are uncovered. Additionally, courts may be unable to sanction abuse that they cannot prove, such as "plausibly deniable" (non-scarring) torture techniques (Rejali 2007) or disappearances that are difficult to confirm.

In addition to domestic legal institutions, scholars have explored the impact of *international legal institutions* on repressive behavior. These institutions may include regional human rights courts, international legal agreements, or international law and provisions concerned with protecting human rights. The literature in this area is growing, but general theoretical expectations are mixed. Leaders are expected to behave in ways that benefit political power (Buono de Mesquita et al. 2003), so it is unclear why they would agree to concede some of their decision-making power to international bodies. It is possible that leaders make agreements to limit human rights violations in order to secure some benefits (for example, foreign aid or preferential trade deals) but do not plan to bind themselves to these agreements. At the same time, compliance with international legal institutions may provide benefits (for example, international agenda-setting power) which strengthen a leader's hold on power at home. In this case, leaders may be expected to comply with international institutions to avoid losing these benefits.

Recent empirical evidence suggests that the impact of international legal institutions is conditional on domestic factors that influence leaders' decisions to respect human rights (Conrad and Ritter 2013, Hill and Jones 2014, Haglund 2014, Jo and Simmons 2014). Supranational

courts such as the European Court of Human Rights are effective when domestic actors (namely executives) have incentives to comply with unfavorable court decisions; these incentives include potential domestic costs that leaders anticipate incurring if they fail to comply with court decisions (Haglund 2014). Similarly, the impact of other international human rights institutions on leader behavior also appears to depend on domestic-level factors such as the presence of grassroots networks of human rights organizations that can threaten leaders' political power (Jo and Simmons 2014, Risse and Roppe 1999, Keck and Sikkink 1998).

Despite a growing body of research, the role of international institutions on repression is still unclear, and empirical evidence is mixed. Domestic institutions better explain variation in repression, but recent research has challenged some of the core findings in this literature (Hill and Jones 2014). One area of general consensus among state repression scholars, however, is that leaders repress when faced with threats to their political power (Davenport 2007*a*).

2.3.2 Threats

Poe and Tate (1994) provide the first large-N test of the role of internal and external threats on states' violations of physical integrity rights. The authors find that involvement in civil or international wars is positively and significantly associated with physical integrity rights abuse, which is consistent with earlier work suggesting repression is used to manage internal political challenges (Hibbs 1973, Tilly 1978). In this view, leaders are rational actors who are primarily concerned with maintaining political power (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2003), and repression is one policy tool that leaders have at their disposal when this power is challenged.

Indeed, one of the most consistent findings in the state repression literature is that authorities repress when faced with behavior that threatens political power (Davenport 2007*a*).

What constitutes a behavioral threat varies by time and space and may depend on leaders' beliefs about their own relative strength (Poe et al. 2000). For example, leaders in Communist China are more likely to perceive speech critical of government policies as threatening to their power than leaders in Western democracies with free speech protections; at the same time, these democratic leaders may perceive large-scale demonstrations against government policy as more threatening to their power during war time than in times of peace.

Behavioral threats also vary according to specific attributes—they may be violent or nonviolent, legal or illegal, spontaneous or coordinated, small or large.³ Repression is consistently used in response to dissent (Davenport 2007*a*), but its causal impact on dissent is less clear. Some scholars theorize that repression decreases dissent by disarming, demobilizing, or demoralizing opponents through force or the threat of force (Hibbs 1973). Other theories predict that repression increases dissent by creating or inflaming grievances and mobilizing individuals against the state (Tilly 1978, Gurr 1970). Other studies suggest that repression's impact on dissent varies by time (Rasler 1996) or depends on a sequence of strategic interactions between government and opposition actors (Lichbach 1987, Moore 1998).

Decision-theoretic models of the repression and dissent dynamic consider how leaders and dissidents make strategic decisions in conflict situations (Lichbach 1987, Moore 1998, Shellman 2006, Ritter 2014). The underlying assumption of these models is that leaders and dissidents are rational actors who anticipate each others' likely behavior using available information. As a result, dissident groups will select the most efficient (least costly) method of pressing their demands (Pierskalla 2010), and leaders will select the most efficient (least costly) response to

³As noted earlier, I use the terms internal, political or domestic *challenges* and *dissent* interchangeably to refer to behavior that threatens political power.

political challenges that threaten power (Moore 2000).

Scholars have devoted significant attention to identifying factors that influence the costs associated with repression. One important factor in leaders' cost and benefit analysis is the severity of the threat posed by a dissident group. Scholars have conceptualized and measured the concept of *threat* differently in the state repression literature; some studies evaluate threat based on the group's demands (Gartner and Regan 1996, Regan and Henderson 2002), while others assess threat based on the group's tactics or characteristics (Davenport 1995, Poe et al. 2000, Carey 2010, Nordås and Davenport 2013). Both a group's demands and tactics influence the relative benefits (costs) that leaders gain (incur) from using repression. For example, if a dissident group makes extreme demands such as secession or regime change, then leaders may realize a greater benefit in ending the challenge with repression relative to the costs. Likewise, if dissident activities damage state resources like infrastructure or personnel, then repression may be the most efficient response.

Indeed, authorities consistently repress when faced with violent dissent that physically damages state resources, and this relationship holds across regime characteristics (Davenport 2007a, Conrad and Moore 2010, Davenport, Moore and Armstrong 2007). This finding is not surprising since violent dissent represents a threat to leaders' territorial sovereignty and obligations. Leaders want to stay in power, and this involves maintaining sovereign control over a territorial jurisdiction. At the same time, leaders have an obligation to citizens within their jurisdiction to provide security and order, and failure to meet this basic obligation may result in a loss of political support (Moore 1978). In this way, violent dissent threatens leaders on two fronts: by directly challenging power through territorial sovereignty and indirectly by making it difficult for leaders to fulfill basic functions that citizens expect.

Repression models incorporate dissent as a critical variable, but most models either implicitly or explicitly assume that dissidents are willing to use violence (Moore 2000, Pierskalla 2010, Lichbach 1987). This assumption affects how scholars develop and test theories of repression. If threat severity is conceptualized based only on level of violence, then nonviolent political challenges should be considered non-threatening and, subsequently, irrelevant to political leaders. Partly as a result of this conceptualization, statistical models disproportionately rely on violent forms of conflict in aggregate measures of dissent; where nonviolent measures are included separately, the impact on repression is either unclear or lost due to the strong predictive power of violent dissent (see, for example, Carey (2010, 177)).

This lack of theoretical attention to nonviolent dissent results in an incomplete picture of the repression and dissent process. Nonviolent movements have successfully ousted leaders, changed entrenched policies, and toppled regimes—consider the success of India’s independence movement, the Civil Rights Movement in the United States, and the Polish struggle to break away from the Soviet Union. These cases demonstrate that nonviolent dissent is clearly able to influence political power. Why, then, do models of repression and dissent tend to assume violent dissent poses a greater threat to leaders? What’s more, authorities oftentimes repress nonviolent dissidents, as the example of the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo in chapter 1 demonstrates. Assuming leaders are rational and select the most effective policy in response to a political challenge, nonviolent dissent must be of some concern to leaders if they choose to repress rather than ignore the challenge or offer concessions. What factors influence leaders’ decision-making when faced with nonviolent dissent?

Franklin (2009) provides a theoretical framework for understanding how leaders respond to

different forms of dissent that considers the costs of each policy response. He argues that dissidents' demands and tactics shape the costs and benefits of tolerating dissent, offering concessions, or repressing dissidents. Using data on dissent in Latin America, he unpacks both violent and nonviolent forms of dissent and concludes that while leaders are more likely to repress violent dissent, some forms of nonviolent dissent are more likely to be repressed than others. This variation in repression of nonviolent dissent is interesting but has not been well-addressed in the state repression literature. Franklin (2009) provides empirical support for his argument that dissident demands and tactics shape the costs and benefits of leaders' policy choices, but more research is needed to understand factors exogenous to the conflict that affect decision-making in response to different types of dissent.

I argue that scholars must develop theories of repression that distinguish between violent and nonviolent forms of dissent. Violent and nonviolent dissent each involve distinctive tactics and participants that shape the costs to leaders' political power in different ways. Violent dissent is consistently met with repression (Davenport 2007*a*), but this relationship is driven by factors unique to violent dissent that threaten political power. As a result, scholars cannot use the same theoretical model to explain why authorities choose to repress dissent that is not violent. In order to predict repression of nonviolent dissent, it is necessary to consider the unique ways in which nonviolent dissent threatens political power and to derive theoretical expectations consistent with this process.

2.4 Conclusion

Despite a surge in state repression studies over the past three decades, scholars still do not fully understand why leaders repress their citizens or how repression can be prevented. State characteristics that may predict the onset of conflict, such as population size or economic growth, do not explain why authorities choose to repress dissent rather than ignore it or offer concessions. Domestic institutions help explain the onset of conflict, as well as leaders' decision-making in response to conflict, but there is still much debate about how well different institutions explain repressive behavior.

A common point of agreement in the state repression literature is that authorities repress in response to dissent (Davenport 2007*a*). Despite a growth in this body of work, the state repression literature has paid disproportionate attention to the impact of *violent* challenges on the repression and dissent process. Authorities consistently repress violent dissent, and this conclusion is hardly surprising given leaders' need to protect territorial sovereignty and citizens' safety in order to stay in power. Repression of nonviolent dissent, however, is less consistent and more puzzling. If dissidents do not take up arms, damage property and resources, or threaten violence, why do leaders sometimes select repression as the best policy response to dissent? In the next chapter, I present a theory of repression and nonviolent dissent that attempts to address this question. Specifically, I consider how the unique characteristics of nonviolent dissent affect leaders' decision-making differently than violent dissent and how domestic institutions likely affect this process.

Chapter 3

Repression, Dissent, and the Likelihood of Backfire

3.1 Introduction

Political authorities respond to behavioral threats with repression, but the state repression literature has focused disproportionately on explaining repression in response to violent challenges. Authorities consistently repress violent dissent (Davenport 2007*a*), and the relationship between nonviolent dissent and repression is less straightforward (Carey 2010). However, authorities often repress dissent even when dissidents do not threaten violence, damage property, or take up arms against the state. Why do leaders repress dissent when participants are not violent? What explains why authorities repress nonviolent dissent in some cases but not in others?

I argue that scholars should account for the differences between violent and nonviolent dissent when developing theories of repression. Violent and nonviolent dissent involve distinct tactics and participants that shape the costs to political power in different ways and, as a result, influence leaders' decision-making differently. Violent dissent increases the use of repression (Davenport 2007*a*, Carey 2010, Poe and Tate 1994), but scholars cannot rely on the same theoretical relationship to explain why authorities choose to repress dissent that is not violent. In order to predict repression of nonviolent dissent, it is necessary to account for the ways in which nonviolent dissent uniquely threatens political power and to develop expectations consistent

with this relationship.

Violent dissidents pursue their goals by physically damaging resources that the state relies on to function, while nonviolent dissidents employ tactics designed to weaken political power without the use or threat of violence. Violent dissent requires physical endurance and training, and membership is relegated to those individuals who are willing and able to engage in combat (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011). This segment of society is likely to be comprised mainly of young males whose lives are such that they decide taking up arms is the best option to improve their condition (Nordås and Davenport 2013, Mesquida and Wiener 1999). In many cases, these groups will be perceived by other members of society as radical or extreme outsiders who should be dealt with forcefully by the state. Nonviolent dissent does not require physical training or a commitment to use violence and, as a result, nonviolent groups tend to be more diverse and representative of the general public than violent groups (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011).

Leaders confronted with violent or nonviolent dissent wish to end the challenge and preserve power. Authorities repress violent dissent in order to end damage to state resources and defend the leadership's position as the legitimate governing authority (Davenport 2007a, 7). When leaders repress nonviolent dissent, however, they risk provoking public outrage and losing political support over what citizens may perceive as a misuse of power and breach of leaders' obligations to maintain peace and order. Violent groups breach a societal obligation to contribute to a peaceful society, and citizens are likely to perceive a violent state response as justified and necessary to restore order. When dissidents are nonviolent, on the other hand, the state's use of force appears unjustified in light of each actor's obligation to contribute to a peaceful and orderly society (Moore 1978, 26).

Leaders must consider the possibility that citizens will learn about and be angered by the

use of force against nonviolent dissidents and may withdraw support for the leadership as a result. However, leaders cannot easily gauge the probability of public outrage and withdrawal of political support, also referred to as *backfire*, following repression of nonviolent dissent.¹ This uncertainty over the likelihood of backfire affects whether or not leaders choose to repress nonviolent dissent. I suggest that certain domestic institutions provide information that allows leaders to better estimate the likelihood of backfire. Specifically, I predict that leaders in those states with high levels of press freedom will be less likely to repress nonviolent dissent, as a free press threatens to disseminate information on leaders' use of force against peaceful citizens. The potential media attention increases the likelihood that citizens learn about and are angered by repression, and leaders can use this information to assess the costs and benefits of repressing nonviolent dissent.

Additionally, I predict that where the right of petition is constitutionally protected, leaders expect that repressing nonviolent dissent will upset domestic audiences and that these angry citizens will mobilize to sanction repressive leaders. A constitutionally protected right of petition represents a social consensus that citizens have the freedom to entreat government for a redress of grievances (Weingast 1997), and it also provides a focal point for citizens to coordinate efforts to sanction leaders (Carey 2000, Elkins, Ginsburg and Melton 2009). When coupled with the threat of having abuse publicized by a free press, the right of petition should make leaders even more concerned about the potential loss of political support following repression.

Before turning to a detailed discussion of my theory and predictions, however, I first discuss the

¹I use the term *backfire* as both a verb and a noun to describe an action and outcome, respectively. For example, repression may backfire (an action) on leaders when the public learns about and is angered by repression of nonviolent dissent. Likewise, repression may result in backfire (an outcome) when citizens express anger and withdraw political support. The term *backlash* is used in other studies to describe the same action or outcome. Sharp (1973, 657) refers to the process whereby repression of nonviolent dissent backfires on authorities as *political jiu-jitsu*. I use the term *backfire* instead of *political jiu-jitsu* or *backlash* for simplicity.

basic model of repression and dissent and then highlight the key differences between violent and nonviolent dissent that underpin the theory.

3.2 Why Repress Dissent?

The process of dissent and repression is complex and interactive, and an extensive body of work investigates the causal relationships underlying the process (Moore 1995, Shellman 2006, Pier-skalla 2010, Ritter 2014). One common point of agreement in the literature is that dissent often prompts the use of repression, especially when dissent is violent (Davenport 2007*a*, Carey 2010, Moore 2000). The reverse relationship—repression’s causal impact on dissent—is less clear, although empirical evidence suggests that repression may increase dissident mobilization in some cases and decrease it in others (Moore 1998, Poe et al. 2000, Regan and Henderson 2002).

3.2.1 Dissidents and State Actors

Dissent occurs when an opposition group mobilizes to make demands on government actors regarding an issue on which the dissidents and leaders are in conflict. This contentious issue may be a particular policy, set of policies, policy reversal or reform, distribution of power, resource allocation, or other good (Ritter 2014, 144). Dissident groups, as defined here, are those domestic groups that make demands outside of normal political channels like elections or lobbying. Instead, group members engage in various unconventional political activities that may be or may not be violent or illegal. Dissident activities involve varying numbers of participants who are motivated to contribute for different reasons. Whatever their individual motivations, I assume that dissident group members are rational and share a single preference ordering that conflicts with the preferences of state actors (Lichbach 1987).

I assume state actors are primarily concerned with maintaining political power (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2003), and leaders wish to continue political arrangements that preserve this power. Leaders' political power is largely based on the claim to serve as the legitimate authority within a given territory. Part of this claim to legitimacy may be based on the regime's ideology, like Vladimir Lenin's role in creating a vanguard party to usher in communism, or the supposedly "divine" or "mystical" attributes of a single individual, as was the case for "Papa Doc" Duvalier in Haiti. In other cases, leaders' claims to rule may be founded in more rational-legal forms such as an electoral mandate (Weber 1978).

Legitimate leaders are those who can pursue policies, enforce decisions, and govern without interference. In these regimes, citizens accept the leader's right to rule when the leader is selected based on rules or practices that citizens also accept. Citizens cooperate with the leader's rules and policies when the leader fulfills basic obligations such as providing order and security or other valuable public or private goods (Moore 1978, Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2003). This public cooperation lowers the cost of governing, as less coercive force is necessary to maintain political and social control (Gurr 1988). Political legitimacy, then, can be defined as the right to rule based on accepted practices and the fulfillment of certain obligations. These practices and obligations vary across states and societies, but leaders care about legitimacy because it helps them maintain political power. Given this relationship between legitimacy and power, dissident groups can threaten leaders' tenure in office by attacking political legitimacy.

Consider an illustrative example in which an ethnic group is denied certain civil and political rights within a democratic regime. This group rallies outside the national parliament building to protest the government's existing policies and demands equality with other ethnic

groups. Government leaders, however, prefer to maintain the status quo of ethnic discrimination, as they accrue certain political and pecuniary benefits from the current policy. Since the regime makes claims to be democratic, the disenfranchised group highlights the incongruous relationship between ethnic discrimination and democratic norms. By contacting media outlets and distributing fliers to passers-by, these protestors inform citizens about the disparate treatment they receive from the government and hope to convince citizens that this treatment transgresses an obligation the government has to respect the civil and political rights of its citizens.

While exposing this contradiction does not unseat the government in and of itself, the group's protests discredit the government's claim to represent democratic principles in the eyes of the wider citizenry. Ultimately, enough citizens mobilize to support a more inclusive government, and the original challenge to political legitimacy becomes a direct challenge to political power. This example is overly simplified, but it illustrates how challenges to political legitimacy can threaten political power. It also highlights the role of an important third actor in domestic conflicts: the public.

3.2.2 The Public

Dynamic models of dissent and repression focus on the strategic interactions between dissidents and state actors and how these interactions jointly affect conflict outcomes (Moore 2000, Shellman 2006, Pierskalla 2010, Ritter 2014). These two-actor models offer a parsimonious view of an otherwise complex web of interactions, but they fail to account for other strategic interactions that affect both dissidents' and leaders' decision-making in conflict situations. A growing number of studies address this missing link and include the public as an important third actor

affecting conflict outcomes (Ginkel and Smith 1999, Zhukov 2013, Arena and Hardt 2014).

The public is comprised of citizens within a state's territorial jurisdiction who are subject to the regime's rules and policies. I assume that the public is primarily concerned with personal security (Moore 1978, Zhukov 2013) but also expects the state to provide other public goods in return for political support and cooperation with the leader's rules and policies (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2003). The public is a domestic audience that updates its beliefs about the leadership based on available information. I assume that the public prefers leaders who pursue and execute good policies that benefit the public over leaders who enact policies that benefit only a select few. Following from this, I also assume that citizens observe leaders' actions and draw conclusions about the leader's type (good versus bad policymaker and executive) based on these observations (Fang 2008).

Dissidents and leaders care about the public's beliefs and preferences because these domestic audiences can influence conflict outcomes by lending or withdrawing support (Arena and Hardt 2014, Ginkel and Smith 1999, Zhukov 2013). Dissident groups want domestic audiences to withdraw support for leaders and support their cause. Depending on the group's tactics, dissidents may want the public's support through any number of means, including participating in a massive demonstration, backing a rival candidate, or taking up arms against the state. At the same time, leaders want to preserve or increase levels of support among those domestic audiences whose political backing is needed to remain in power, whether it be the general public or a small circle of regime elite (Fearon 1994, Weeks 2008). Leaders want to avoid being sanctioned by domestic audiences for unpopular behavior and losing domestic support they rely on to maintain office. As a result, they consider the beliefs and preferences of those audiences whose support they need when deciding how to respond to dissent.

Leaders can choose to ignore, accommodate, or repress political challenges, but each decision involves distinct benefits and drawbacks that leaders must consider before selecting their best response to dissent. Ideally, leaders wish to select the course of action that minimizes costs while maximizing benefits. By ignoring dissent, leaders do not expend resources to end the challenge, but they also risk incurring resource and/or legitimacy costs as a result of the dissidents' activities. For example, if leaders fail to stop a violent dissident group, the group's activities may cause widespread damage to state facilities, infrastructure, and personnel. Not only does a failure to act result in economic costs to the state, but citizens are likely to withdraw support for leaders who are unwilling to end a public security threat.

On the other hand, leaders who accommodate dissidents' demands may succeed in ending the challenge, but domestic audiences may perceive them as weak for offering concessions (Ginkel and Smith 1999). If leaders' concessions to dissident groups have a negative impact on citizens' security or well-being, then leaders risk losing political legitimacy if citizens deem them as unfit to rule and withdraw support. What's more, accommodating leaders open themselves up to demands from other groups (or additional demands from the current challenger group) after showing that they will negotiate with the opposition. Concessions may also be perceived by other challenger groups as a sign of weakness or vulnerability (Walter 2009).

Finally, assuming the state is militarily superior to the dissident group, repression offers a swift end to the political challenge, at least at one point in time. However, repression requires physical and economic resources, and it may lead to unintended consequences for state actors if repression backfires. Backfire reflects a shift in preferences among domestic audiences who observe the conflict between leaders and dissidents and react to repression by taking action that negatively impacts leaders' power, producing unintended and undesirable results (Sharp

1973). In the context of repressive behavior, backfire refers to a two-stage process: repressive action evokes public outrage when domestic audiences perceive the action as unjust (Hess and Martin 2006, Martin 2007), and these audiences subsequently withdraw support for repressive leaders. Backfire may involve the public directly supporting the dissidents and helping to mobilize another spell of dissent; it may also involve the public engaging in less overt action designed to undermine repressive leaders, such as work slow-downs or boycotts that harm economic productivity and reflect badly on the leadership's ability to govern.

Backfire may occur in response to repression of violent or nonviolent dissent, but I suggest that the threat of backfire has a unique impact on leaders' response to nonviolent dissent. If domestic audiences learn about repression of nonviolent dissent, I expect that these audiences will disagree with it because of the tactics and participants involved and will sanction repressive leaders as a result. However, leaders do not know how much information about the use of repression will be communicated to domestic audiences; it may be that repression goes largely unnoticed or that a bigger event eclipses news of repression. If information about state abuse is communicated, leaders do not know who will see it or how it will be received. Leaders considering the use of repression against nonviolent dissent must consider the possibility of backfire and weigh its potential costs against the benefits of ending dissent.

In the next section, I discuss how violent and nonviolent dissent differ in terms of tactics and participants and how these differences affect the likelihood that repression will backfire on leaders. I then turn to a discussion of how the potential for backfire influences leaders' decision-making in response to dissent and how domestic institutions provide information that can help leaders estimate the likelihood of backfire.

3.3 Characteristics of Violent and Nonviolent Dissent

3.3.1 Tactics

State repression scholars are particularly interested in explaining factors that influence how leaders respond to dissent. A growing body of literature points to the role of violence as a key determinant of repressive responses (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2005, Davenport 2007*a*, Conrad and Moore 2010, Carey 2010). Violent dissent takes a variety of forms, from well-organized armies and militias to spontaneous riots and protests. Violence can be used strategically, as in the case of terrorist groups that use violence to instill fear among citizens. In these cases, violent dissidents realize their weakness relative to state security forces and look for tactics that will have the greatest impact despite their disadvantaged position (Kydd and Walter 2006). In other cases, violence may be a spontaneous, emotional reaction to a sudden event, such as the Los Angeles riots following the acquittal of officers implicated in the Rodney King beating.

Violent dissent challenges political power using tactics aimed at inflicting physical and economic damage on the state. Physical and economic resource depletion means that leaders cannot provide citizens and supporters with the level of public or private goods required to remain in power (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2003). In this way, violent dissidents attempt to coerce state actors into making full or partial concessions to the opposition group rather than incur the physical and economic costs imposed by the dissidents. Violent dissidents also use physical and economic damage to convince citizens that the government is too weak to counter the opposition or protect the population. Citizens expect authorities to defend against violent threats as part of their duty to serve the public interest (Moore 1978), and leaders have an incentive to respond quickly and swiftly to end violent challenges in order to fulfill this basic duty. As a result

of the violent nature of the opposition, citizens are likely to perceive a violent state response as justified and necessary to serve the public interest.

Nonviolent dissent involves civilians challenging the government through "irregular political tactics, working outside the defined and accepted channels for political participation defined by the state" (Chenoweth and Cunningham 2013, 271). Nonviolent dissidents engage in non-physically coercive actions designed to weaken support for political leaders by questioning the leadership's right or ability to rule. McAllister (1999, 21-23) writes that Sharp (1973) identifies 198 specific types of nonviolent methods that can be grouped into three tactical categories: *protest and persuasion*, methods intended to identify and publicize a wrong, such as demonstrating or picketing; *nonviolent noncooperation*, methods used to withdraw participation in some activity linked to the contentious issue, such as strikes or boycotts; and *nonviolent intervention*, methods designed to confront or obstruct a wrong, such as civil disobedience or sit-ins. These various tactics are often linked together to form larger nonviolent "campaigns," which Chenoweth and Lewis (2013, 416) define as "a series of observable, continuous, purposeful mass tactics or events in pursuit of a political objective." For example, the Civil Rights Movement in the United States consisted of numerous nonviolent events such as sit-ins and marches that were linked together to form the wider civil rights campaign.

The term *nonviolent dissent* is often used interchangeably with other related terms such as *nonviolent resistance*, *conflict*, *contention*, *action*, or *struggle*. While the foregoing terms can be interchanged, Schock (2003, 705) points out that a lack of violence does not automatically classify something as a form of nonviolent action. Specifically, nonviolent dissent is organized, overt in its intentions, and involves some level of risk to participants. What's more, nonviolent

action should not be confused with *passive resistance*, which suggests that dissidents are inactive, submissive, or conflict-avoidant. In actuality, nonviolent dissidents are actively engaged in risky activity to realize a shared goal. Unlike violent dissidents, however, nonviolent dissidents do not use or threaten physical force to achieve their objectives. And unlike passive resistance or Gandhi's *satyagraha*, nonviolent dissent is not "principled nonviolence" that rejects violence on moral grounds (although nonviolent dissidents may have individual moral beliefs against the use of violence) (Ackerman and Kreugler 1994, Schock 2003). Instead, nonviolent action is a tactical choice that perceives nonviolence as a better strategy than violence to realize policy change (Ackerman and Kreugler 1994, 4).

By calling a leader's right or ability to govern into question through nonviolent methods, dissidents threaten political power and use this threat to coerce state actors into meeting their demands (Ackerman and Kreugler 1994, Schock 2003). Schock (2003, 706) identifies four ways in which nonviolent action can be used to affect political outcomes in a dissident group's favor: *conversion*, when leaders adopt the group's position and alter policies accordingly; *accommodation*, when leaders' opinions have not changed but they make policy concessions; *nonviolent coercion*, when leaders are forced to change policies due to a loss of political or economic support; and *disintegration*, when the government or regime itself crumbles due to widespread nonviolent action. *Conversion* is likely the most difficult for nonviolent groups to achieve, as it involves an internal, personal shift in opinion or belief. Strategic politicians may proclaim a change of heart when it is politically expedient, but this process would be more akin to *nonviolent coercion* than to change resulting from personal conviction. Aside from this point, though, nonviolent dissidents may attempt to realize change through one or more of these four processes.

3.3.2 Participants

Violent dissidents engage in physically demanding activity, and this limits the pool of willing and capable participants (Chenoweth and Stephan 2010, 2011). Dissidents must be willing to use violence and capable of enduring tough physical conditions, and this subset of the population is likely to include mainly young, disenfranchised males who see violent dissent as the best option to better their condition (Nordås and Davenport 2013, Mesquida and Wiener 1999). This homogeneity is a disadvantage if the general public views the group as social outcasts or extremists—not only is the group less likely to receive support from the public, but citizens may support or demand a forceful state response to violent dissent.

Dissidents' use of nonviolent tactics allows for more diverse membership in nonviolent movements by lowering physical, moral, and ideological barriers to participation (Schock 2003, Chenoweth and Stephan 2010, 2011). Because dissidents do not have to train for combat, engage in violent or physically demanding activity, or necessarily give up jobs or quality of life, participation is open to a broader segment of the population (senior citizens, mothers, or clergy, for example). This participant diversity increases the chance that domestic audiences will sanction leaders who counter nonviolent dissent with repression (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011). Average citizens may be inclined to support repression of opposition groups when they are perceived as dangerous, radical elements of society. When an opposition group includes people from various sectors of the population, however, it is harder for authorities to negatively label opposition members as extremists or fringe groups. More diverse participants represent different segments of society and increase the chance that audiences will identify with the social movement, or at least not reject its aims as unimportant altogether (Chenoweth and Stephan

2011). If others outside the group feel sympathy for the plight of those similar to themselves—working class laborers or students, for example—then they may be more willing to withdraw their support for leaders who repress the dissidents.

Participant diversity also increases the chance that regime personnel will refuse to comply with orders to repress dissidents. Elite noncompliance or defection may result when authorities sympathize with members of the dissident group. For example, there is a clear distinction between the choice to repress an armed guerrilla group and the decision to repress a group of unarmed mothers or Burmese monks. The former choice is often seen as within the legitimate functioning of a modern state when facing armed resistance in order to maintain peace and security (Tilly 2003, Davenport 2007*b*), while the latter is likely to be perceived as an excessive use of force that exceeds limits deemed acceptable by society at large (Moore 1978).

Members of the regime's personnel may sympathize with peaceful or vulnerable citizens, and in some cases, regime personnel may know members of the dissident group personally. In these cases, leaders may be unsure if their agents on the ground will be willing to follow orders. If regime personnel adopt preferences that differ from those of leaders, the resulting principal-agent problem is likely to be costly for leaders (Conrad and Moore 2010, DeMeritt 2015). Defection or noncompliance means that leaders may be unable to carry out repressive policies that end dissent. Perhaps more concerning to leaders, agent defection or noncompliance reflects poorly on the leadership's ability to govern, signaling to observers that divisions exist with the regime's personnel and that subordinates are questioning leaders' authority.

For example, Chinese soldiers resisted orders to repress peaceful protestors in Tiananmen

Square in 1989 because many had family and friends among the demonstrators or were approached by students who appealed to the soldiers' role as protectors of the people. The soldiers' refusal to comply with orders led top officials to bring in troops from neighboring areas who were less likely to know or sympathize with the protestors (Nepstad 2011, 35-36). The soldiers' noncompliance was costly for the Chinese authorities, not simply because they had to marshal additional troops, but because the soldiers' defection signaled waning support for the Communist Party's authority—if the state's own security forces are not respecting or complying with official rules, why should ordinary citizens?

The Tiananmen Square case demonstrates how diverse participation can extend a dissident group's "network" to potentially include regime elite. By utilizing connections with state security forces and appealing to soldiers individually, the students were able to delay military action and raise bigger questions about the regime's true level of support. In this way, the diverse body of participants enabled a shift in the balance of power away from Chinese authorities and toward student activists by encouraging noncompliance and subsequently highlighting reduced support for the Communist Party among its security forces.

While the student protests in Tiananmen Square were ultimately unsuccessful at reforming China's political system, nonviolent movements are in general more successful at achieving group objectives than violent ones (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011). State repression scholars, at least, have largely overlooked the greater "threat" (in terms of goal attainment) posed by nonviolent dissent. This imbalance in the literature may be due to several factors. Political challenges involving violence are more newsworthy than nonviolent events and may be overrepresented in data drawn from news agencies, thereby limiting the data available to researchers or biasing empirical studies of behavioral challenges. Additionally, scholars may perceive nonviolence as

a moral commitment and disregard the strategic choice to use nonviolent methods. Relatedly, nonviolence is often perceived as ineffective, slow to produce change, or insignificant to political authorities (Schock 2003, Chenoweth and Stephan 2011). But as the next section suggests, nonviolent dissent may be very significant to even the most powerful leaders.

3.3.3 Do Authorities Prefer Violence?

Nonviolent dissent is used strategically to distance leaders from bases of support and weaken leaders' hold on power (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011). Dissidents work toward this goal by attempting to shift support away from political leaders without threatening or resorting to physical violence (Ackerman and Kreugler 1994, 3-4). Intuitively, one would assume that authorities favor these nonviolent challenges over violent ones since the latter involves damage to state resources. However, some scholars suggest that authorities actually *prefer* violent challenges to nonviolent forms because they are usually better prepared to handle violent confrontations (Sharp 1973). British military accounts of Nazi interrogations provide a telling example in support of this argument. Liddell Hart (1967, 205) writes about his interviews with captured Nazi officers:

[T]hey were experts in violence, and had been trained to deal with opponents who used that method. But other forms of resistance baffled them—and all the more in proportion as the methods were subtle and concealed. It was a relief to them when resistance became violent, and when non-violent forms were mixed with guerrilla action, thus making it easier to combine drastic suppressive action against both at the same time.

It is unclear from this account exactly why the Nazi officers preferred violent to nonviolent action—given the ongoing genocide, it is hard to imagine that these officers were sympathetic to unarmed citizens. It is more likely that the officers were concerned with the inefficiency produced by nonviolent resistance and how this inefficiency reflected on their service to the Reich.

The Germans did not have the manpower to rely solely on force to maintain control, especially in the occupied territories. The regime relied on some level of public acquiescence to maintain their rule, and nonviolent resistance—especially in subtle forms—could be difficult, if not impossible, to control. This subtle, albeit risky, noncompliance frustrated German authorities' efforts to control the population in the occupied territories. For example, resisters engaged in work slow-downs could claim that they were merely clumsy or inept, and authorities could not rely on force to change this type of subversive behavior (Liddell Hart 1967). If German officials chose to repress suspected dissidents in this situation, then they risked even greater inefficiency by reducing the number of workers available to produce goods for the Reich.

This example highlights how nonviolent dissent can undermine power in even the most brutal regimes, and it also illustrates that authorities may prefer violent to nonviolent dissent—violent dissent offers a clear plan of response, while nonviolent dissent creates more uncertainty about the most effective way to counter dissent. Nazi Germany is an extreme case, but if authorities in such a vicious regime could be "baffled" by nonviolent dissent, it is worth asking if other leaders may not also be in doubt about the best way to handle nonviolent opposition.

In some cases, authorities may try to instigate violence among nonviolent groups by infiltrating movements with *agents provocateurs* or portraying groups as potentially harmful to the public by spreading false information about the movements' goals or demands (for example, authorities may claim that members are involved in terrorist activity or are agents of another state). *Agents provocateurs* may be used to provoke violence or carry out violence that is ultimately blamed on nonviolent dissidents. This countermeasure suggests that authorities benefit from some violent dissident activity, as the presence of violence provides an easy solution

(reciprocal violence) to the problem facing political authorities. An Alabama police investigator supposedly used this provocation technique against nonviolent black protestors when he swerved his car into a crowd during civil rights demonstrations in Birmingham in 1963, provoking the protestors who began throwing rocks and other items at police (Sharp 1973). This dissident violence then provided the excuse Birmingham authorities needed to justify forceful action—the crowd of demonstrators was unruly, and police were restoring law and order by arresting and detaining protestors.

These examples suggest that authorities may prefer violence because it is easier to know how to effectively respond to violent tactics and participants. Authorities can more easily estimate the costs and benefits of repressing (or not repressing) violent dissent, but it is more difficult to determine if repressing nonviolent dissent will be the most effective option given the peaceful tactics and diverse participants involved. In the next section, I discuss how nonviolent tactics and participants create uncertainty for leaders and when they are likely to use repression to counter nonviolent challenges.

3.4 Nonviolent Dissent and the Threat of Backfire

Nonviolent dissent threatens political power differently than violent dissent because of the tactics and participants involved. The ability to generate public support (and influence a shift of support away from leaders) increases the chance that nonviolent dissidents will be able to pressure leaders into meeting demands. As a result, leaders may perceive repression as the best response to nonviolent dissidents, who could possibly gain support and bargaining leverage in the future. If countered with repression, however, nonviolent tactics and participants are more likely than violent ones to generate perceptions that some injustice has occurred, especially

if observers share a common expectation regarding appropriate uses and limits of state force (Lakey 1968, Moore 1978, Weingast 1997, McDermott 1998). If citizens respond to a perceived injustice by collectively sanctioning the leader, repression may produce an outcome worse than if the leader had done nothing (Martin 2007); in other words, repression may backfire.

The possibility that repression backfires is a real danger for leaders, but they may be unsure how likely it is that repression will produce unintended and undesirable consequences. This uncertainty is problematic, as leaders cannot select their best response to nonviolent dissent. Leaders will look for the least costly response to deal with dissent, whether violent or nonviolent. Part of this cost-benefit analysis involves anticipating the future consequences of each response and weighing those potential costs against other options (Sullivan 2014). Repression is costly for the state in physical and economic terms—repression requires personnel and resources, and violent dissidents pose a physical threat to people and property. Repressing any form of dissent requires resource costs that leaders are most likely able to estimate beforehand and weigh against the benefits of repressing the opposition. For example, authorities can estimate the economic costs of arresting dissidents by calculating how many security officials are needed per number of individuals, how much overtime pay will likely be incurred, or how many resources will be required to operate a detention facility.

While leaders can approximate some potential costs of repression, other potential costs are not as easy to predict; I argue that leaders can better estimate the potential consequences of repressing violent than nonviolent dissent. The ability to anticipate the potential consequences of repression affects leaders' responses to dissent and can help explain why leaders repress opposition groups. For example, violent opposition offers leaders a relatively clear plan of response:

use force to end the violent challenge, maintain order, and protect internal sovereignty. Authorities can estimate potential costs to personnel, equipment, or infrastructure based on what they know about the dissident group's size and strength. Unless the response is grossly disproportionate to the violent challenge, few observers question authorities' use of force in response to violent opposition, as this use of coercion is largely seen as within the legitimate functioning of the state (Moore 1978, Weber 2009). In this way, leaders faced with violent opposition generally have a clear idea of their best response to the opposition.

Leaders are more uncertain, however, over the best response to nonviolent dissent. They do not know whether domestic audiences will learn about and respond to the use of force against nonviolent dissidents. Leaders understand the threat posed by nonviolence—modern history provides numerous examples of peaceful movements that have successfully weakened leaders' power, and astute leaders learn from the mistakes of predecessors. But leaders also know that repressing nonviolent groups can be costly for their political survival if repression backfires and produces unintended and undesirable results.

Leaders would ideally know in advance if repression will backfire, as this would allow them to more accurately weigh the costs and benefits of repressing nonviolent dissent. However, it is difficult to predict if repression will have this effect. Leaders do not know how much information about the repressive response will be communicated to audiences; it may be that repression goes largely unnoticed by people outside the dissident group or that a bigger event eclipses reports of the abuse. If information about state abuse is communicated, leaders do not know who will see or pay attention to the information or how the information will be received.

It is this uncertainty over the likelihood of backfire and possible consequences that may cause leaders to select a suboptimal response to dissent. For example, suppose a leader decides

that his best option is to incarcerate and beat nonviolent protestors who threaten to expose him for bribery and misuse of funds if he does not come clean and return taxpayer money. His supporters find out about his repressive action and decide to end campaign contributions, speak out against his policies, and support a rival candidate. This leader ultimately loses his job, and nonviolent dissidents sustain physical and economic costs (legal fees, hospital fees, lost work, etc.). Both parties to this conflict—the leader and dissidents—end up worse off than if the leader had decided to concede to the protestors' demands. In general, if leaders can anticipate the likelihood that repression will backfire and be costly to political power, they may be more willing to negotiate with dissidents and achieve an outcome that leaves both parties better off than if repression is used (Walter 2009, Ritter 2014).

Leaders may not be able to know for certain what the outcome of repression will look like, but they can estimate the probability that repression will backfire. For this to occur, information on state abuse must be communicated to audiences through channels that the government cannot easily manipulate or intimidate (Schock 2005). While information on state abuse can be spread by word-of-mouth or from one activist group to another, this information can be transmitted to greater numbers of people through print, broadcast, or electronic media. When these outlets are not under state control, they can credibly threaten to reveal government malfeasance to a wider segment of the population and thereby increase the likelihood that audiences will withdraw support or otherwise negatively sanction leaders for their actions.

The rise of independent media outlets in Mexico during the 1990s vividly illustrates this process. Lawson (2002) credits the rise of independent media outlets in Mexico with the erosion of the authoritarian political system. New independent media outlets, in competition with

one another for market share, began exposing government scandals that "undermined the legitimacy of the old regime among the mass public" (Lawson 2002, 151). Many of the issues covered, such as drug-trafficking or electoral fraud, had been ignored by previous media outlets. The media atmosphere in the 1990s caused political elite to reconsider the ramifications of their actions. For example, Lawson (2002) recounts one scandal uncovered by *Reforma* newspaper in 1994 in which the new Secretary of Education, Fausto Alzati, was reported to have falsely listed a doctorate from Harvard University on his resume. When the "Falzati" affair was exposed in the media, Lawson (2002, 154) writes that the *Reforma* newspaper began receiving numerous letters from other high-level state officials concerning "typos" on their own resumes.

The media increased the potential costs to Mexican officials for inappropriate behavior. Prior to the rise of competitive, independent media, officials had been less concerned with their behavior being made public. Once media outlets began competing to break the next biggest scandal, officials had to adjust their actions in case the media learned of and exposed corrupt behavior. I argue that the media plays a similar role in signaling the potential costs of repressive behavior. Before leaders decide whether or not to repress nonviolent dissent, they will try to estimate the likely costs of doing so. Leaders in regimes with free and independent media know that there is a strong likelihood that repressive behavior will be reported, and they use this information when determining the likely costs and benefits of repression. Since the public is more likely to disagree with the repression of nonviolent dissent because of the tactics and participants involved, leaders can estimate that they are more likely to be sanctioned by the public and lose political support if repression is publicized. A free press credibly threatens to disseminate information on state abuse to the public, and the possibility of incurring sanctions from an angry public deters leaders' use of repression.

Hypothesis 1. *High levels of press freedom decrease the likelihood that authorities repress non-violent dissent.*

Hess and Martin (2006, 250-251) note that communication is a critical element of backfire, but communication alone is not sufficient for backfire to occur—audiences receiving information must also perceive an action as unjust. The relationship between press freedom and the decision to repress relies on leaders' beliefs that observers will perceive repression as unjust and will withdraw valuable political support as a result. I argue that domestic audiences will be less likely to perceive the repression of *violent* dissent as unjust since violent dissent poses a threat to domestic security, and citizens expect authorities to end these threats to peace and order (Moore 1978). Leaders anticipate this difference in perception and will be less likely to constrain their use of force against violent opposition even where levels of press freedom are high.

Hypothesis 2. *High levels of press freedom have no effect on the likelihood that authorities repress violent dissent.*

Domestic audiences are likely to perceive repression against peaceful opposition as unjust, as nonviolent tactics do not threaten peace and order like violent tactics. What's more, nonviolent participants are more representative of the public than violent dissidents, and domestic audiences are more likely to sympathize with the group's plight, even if they do not share the same preferences as dissidents in regard to a policy issue. But will these audiences care enough about an injustice to withdraw support for leaders?

I argue that domestic audiences will be likely to withdraw support from leaders who repress

nonviolent dissent because these audiences fear being subjected to similar treatment in the future. Even if an ordinary citizen does not identify with a group's goals, he or she may support the dissidents' activities, especially if that citizen has been promised the freedom to engage in similar action. Certain constitutional protections allow citizens to press their government for change, and these protections represent a consensus among society regarding the limits of state behavior (Weingast 1997). When authorities repress nonviolent dissent in violation of constitutional provisions, previously uninterested or uninvolved audiences may withdraw support for leaders, perceiving repression as an illegitimate use of power that exceeds the proper limits of the state's authority over citizens.

Specifically, the right of petition serves as a formal, public promise to citizens that seeking a change to the status quo is acceptable and protected behavior (Davenport 1996, Cross 1999, Keith, Tate and Poe 2009). Constitutions allow societies to coordinate expectations on the proper role and limits of government, and constitutional provisions represent a "consensus over the rules" among citizens who may disagree on other substantive issues (Weingast 1997, 257). Where the right of petition is codified in a national constitution, leaders recognize that this provision represents a widely shared value that citizens will defend by withdrawing support for those who violate it.

Constitutional provisions also serve as reference points for citizens to more easily draw the conclusion that state actors have violated mutually agreed upon limits of authority and coordinate a response to sanction the violators (Weingast 1997, Carey 2000, Elkins, Ginsburg and Melton 2014). As a result, renegeing on constitutional commitments to protect the right of petition is likely to be unpopular and carry political consequences, namely the withdrawal of public support (Weingast 1997). Leaders anticipate that violating constitutional protections will cost

them politically if supporters learn about the violation—potentially more so than if this right was not explicitly promised—and they use this knowledge when calculating the costs and benefits of repressing nonviolent dissent.

Even in states where this right to disagree with government is not formally guaranteed, citizens may still believe it is a right which they should possess, and I do not expect that the lack of a constitutional provision promising this right makes the repression of peaceful dissent less egregious in the eyes of domestic audiences. Citizens' obedience to authorities is predicated on leaders' willingness and ability to provide a peaceful, secure society; but as Moore (1978, 26) notes, the "misuse of the rulers' instruments of violence against their own subjects is an extreme violation of the obligation to keep the peace."

With this in mind, I expect that citizens will sanction those leaders who misuse power, even when the right of petition is not explicitly guaranteed. However, I predict that leaders will be more constrained from repressing nonviolent dissent when the right of petition is constitutionally protected, as this signals to leaders that citizens have something collectively at stake. In other words, citizens may be more willing and able to coordinate a collective response to an abuse of state power if they witness the violation of a constitutional guarantee. I predict, then, that a free press is sufficient to constrain leaders' use of repression against nonviolent dissent, but a right of petition has an additional constraining effect on leaders' use of repression.

Hypothesis 3. *A constitutionally protected right of petition increases the negative relationship between high levels of press freedom and repression of nonviolent dissent.*

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter presents a theory of repression and dissent that accounts for differences between violent and nonviolent forms of political conflict. Violent dissidents pursue their goals by physically damaging resources that the state relies on to function, while nonviolent dissidents employ tactics designed to weaken political power without the use or threat of violence. Violent dissident groups are often homogeneous and comprised of young, disenfranchised males who are willing and able to engage in violence (Nordås and Davenport 2013, Mesquida and Wiener 1999). Nonviolent groups, on the other hand, are often more diverse and representative of the general public than violent groups, increasing the chance that the public will support the dissidents' activities, if not their goals, and sanction leaders who respond with repression (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011).

Leaders confronted with violent or nonviolent dissent wish to end the challenge and preserve power, but leaders cannot easily gauge the likelihood of backfire following repression of nonviolent dissent. This uncertainty over the likelihood of backfire affects whether or not leaders choose to repress nonviolent dissent. I predict that leaders in those states with high levels of press freedom and a constitutionally protected right of petition will be less likely to repress nonviolent dissent. A free press threatens to disseminate information on the use of force against peaceful citizens, and the potential media attention increases the likelihood that citizens learn about the abuse and sanction repressive leaders. I expect that leaders use this information on the ability of the press to publicize repression as a way to estimate potential costs and benefits of repressive action. Where the right of petition is constitutionally protected, leaders have an additional expectation that repressing nonviolent dissent will upset domestic audiences and

that these angry citizens will mobilize to sanction them, and I expect that this information will further deter leaders from repressing nonviolent dissent. In the next chapter, I discuss the research design used to test these predictions.

Chapter 4

Violent versus Nonviolent Dissent: Testing the Models

4.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I posited a theory of repression and dissent that considers how violent and nonviolent dissent differ and how these differences affect the decision to repress dissent. Leaders considering the use of repression against nonviolent dissent must weigh the possibility that domestic audiences will learn of repression, disagree with it because of the peaceful tactics and diverse participants involved, and sanction repressive leaders. Leaders may be constrained from using repression against nonviolent dissidents if they fear that repression will backfire in this way.

In order for the threat of backfire to stop leaders from using repression, they must believe that repressive activity will be communicated to domestic audiences and that these audiences will perceive the action as unjust and withdraw political support (Hess and Martin 2006). I predict that in states with high levels of press freedom, leaders will be less likely to repress nonviolent dissent given the greater likelihood that state abuse will be communicated to domestic audiences. I predict that press freedom will have no effect on the use of repression against *violent* dissent, however, since audiences are more likely to perceive leaders' use of force in response to violence as justified or necessary to maintain security and order.

When leaders know domestic audiences value the ability to peacefully appeal to political authorities for change, they can anticipate a negative reaction and withdrawal of support in response to repression against this shared value. Leaders want to preserve domestic political support and will estimate the likely costs to political support when deciding whether or not to repress nonviolent dissent. To reiterate, what is important here is leaders' *beliefs* about likely costs to political power resulting from repression. These beliefs about possible consequences affect decision-making and can constrain leaders' use of repression. When leaders know that domestic publics value the ability to peacefully seek redress of grievances and can coordinate a response when this value is violated, they can better estimate the likelihood of a negative and costly reaction to repression.

While I predict that press freedom is sufficient to threaten backfire and deter leaders' use of repression, I argue that this effect is heightened when citizens have been explicitly promised the right to engage in nonviolent dissent. A constitutionally protected right of petition represents a commonly shared value that citizens and leaders (at least theoretically) agree should be respected (Weingast 1997). Citizens who wish to protect this value expect that others will also be willing to enforce this constitutional protection and sanction violators. Leaders, anticipating that a violation of the constitution will result in a coordinated, negative response, are thereby dissuaded from violating the constitutional agreement (Elkins, Ginsburg and Melton 2009). In this way, a constitutional provision that protects the right of petition signals to authorities that domestic audiences value the right to seek redress of grievances and will react negatively and concertedly to violations of this right. I argue that constitutionally protected rights of petition provide leaders with more information on the potential consequences of repression and further reduce the likelihood that leaders repress dissent. In the following sections, I discuss the

measures and estimators used to test these predictions.

4.2 Operationalization

The unit of observation in the analysis is the campaign-year. To identify violent and nonviolent campaigns, I use the Nonviolent and Violent Campaigns and Outcomes (NAVCO) Data Project Version 2.0, which contains yearly information on 250 nonviolent and violent campaigns from 1945 to 2006. The NAVCO v2.0 dataset identifies a campaign as "a series of observable, continuous, purposive mass tactics or events in pursuit of a political objective" (Chenoweth and Lewis 2013, 416). This definition excludes spontaneous, isolated events such as riots or covert forms of resistance that are not observable. Given available data for my independent variables, I use data on campaigns from 1981 to 2006 (see table A.1 in appendix A and table B.1 in appendix B for a list of nonviolent and violent campaigns, respectively).

In order to be included in the dataset, a campaign must be mature and must seek a "maximalist" goal at one point in time. Mature campaigns are considered those that involve at least 1,000 participants engaged in events that are linked together over time. Maximalist goals are those objectives that seek major changes to state institutions or practices, such as regime turnover, anti-occupation, or self-determination goals (Chenoweth and Lewis 2013, 419). Some campaigns begin with reformist goals, such as seeking changes to labor laws or environmental practices, and evolve to pursue maximalist goals. However, only those that at one time sought major changes to the existing political structure are included in the NAVCO v2.0 dataset (see figure 4.1). The large majority of campaigns are those that seek regime change—over 300 of the violent campaign-year observations involve regime change goals, and over 100 of the nonviolent campaign-year observations include this stated objective. Institutional reform and policy

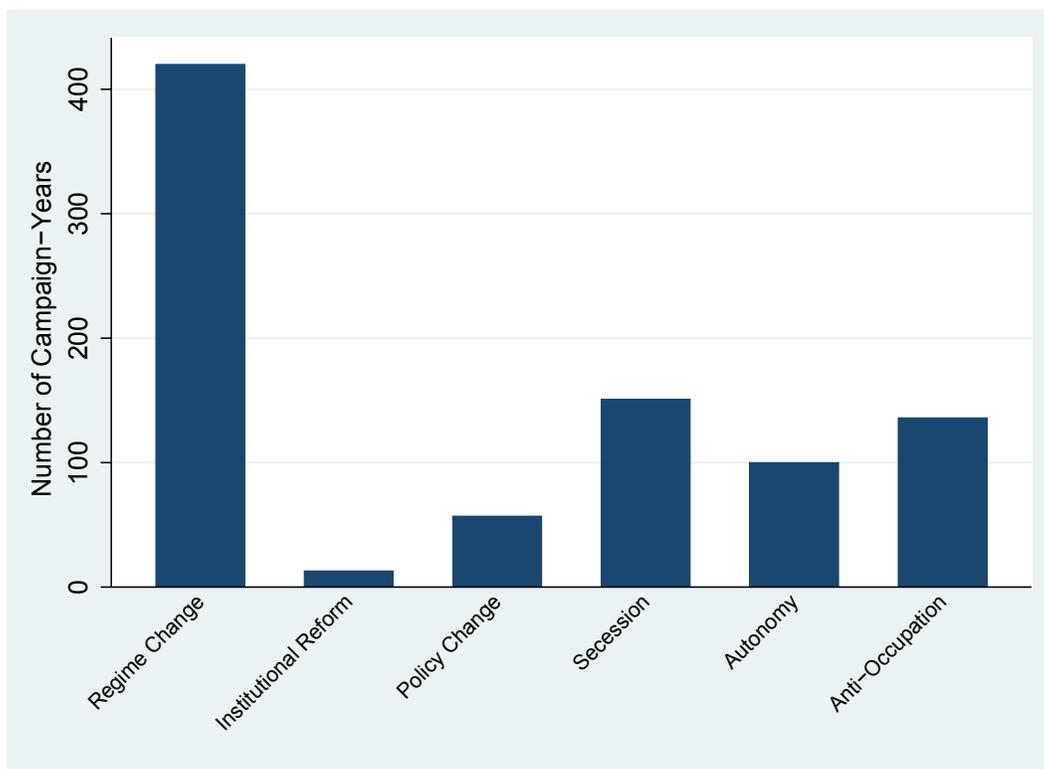


Figure 4.1: Distribution of Campaign Goals in NAVCO v2.0 (1981–2006)

change are the least frequently stated objectives for both violent and nonviolent campaigns, as these relatively smaller objectives are only coded in the dataset if a maximalist campaign at one time pursued these goals (see figure 4.2).

These two inclusion criteria—that campaigns be mature and seek maximalist goals—are required so that researchers can make valid comparisons between violent and nonviolent campaigns that are relatively similar in size and objectives. Data on isolated nonviolent events are difficult to collect, largely because of underreporting relative to violent events. Mature, maximalist campaigns, which are generally larger and better organized than isolated events, are more salient and therefore more likely to be reported. As a result, researchers can gather more complete information on campaigns as compared to single events. The NAVCO v2.0 dataset provides a carefully compiled set of nonviolent campaigns that have been reviewed by experts

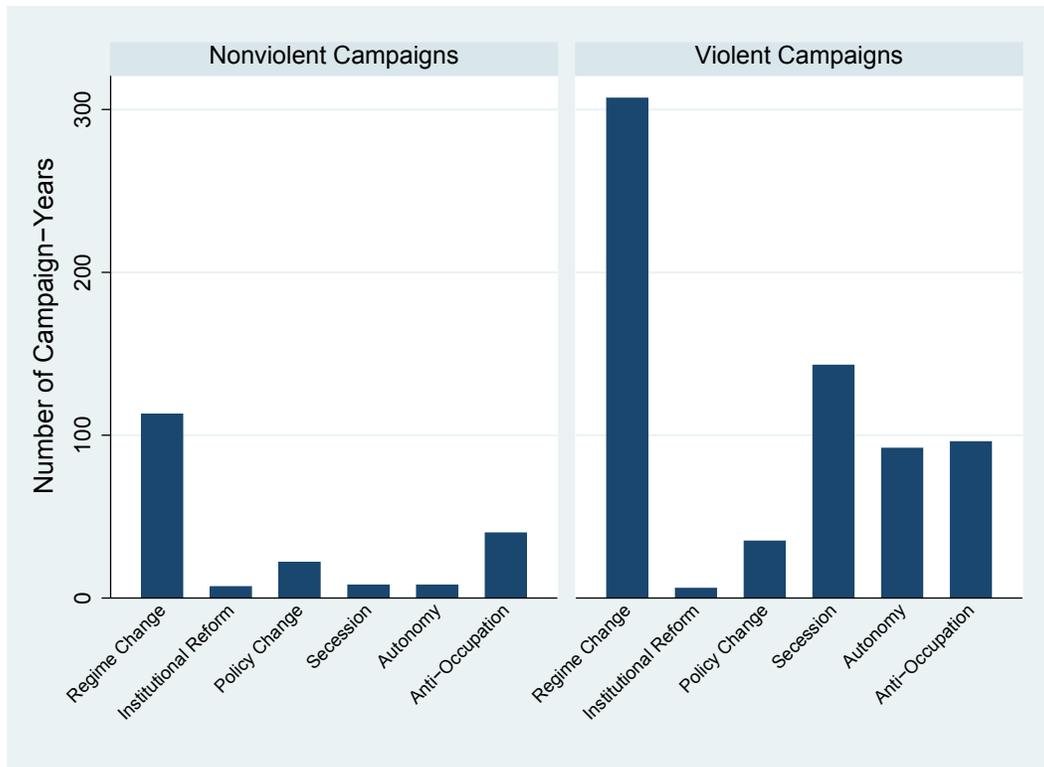


Figure 4.2: Distribution of Campaign Goals in NAVCO v2.0 by Dissent Type (1981–2006)

on nonviolent conflict to mitigate underreporting of failed campaigns. If a nonviolent campaign was started but immediately repressed, I still want to include this attempted campaign and subsequent repression in the analysis. However, short-lived campaigns may be left out of databases that draw primarily from newspaper accounts, as these sources tend to focus on more salient, violent events (Chenoweth and Lewis 2013, 420).

The process of differentiating between violent and nonviolent campaign types can be difficult if a campaign involves both violent and nonviolent tactics during the length of the campaign. The coding rules specify that a campaign is categorized as violent or nonviolent based on the primary method of resistance used by participants during the campaign-year. Violent methods of resistance involve "the use of force to physically harm or threaten to harm the opponent," while nonviolent methods do not "directly threaten or harm the physical well-being

of the opponent" (Chenoweth and Lewis 2013, 418-419).

It is possible that over the course of a campaign, dissident tactics may change from primarily violent to primarily nonviolent (or vice versa). Because the unit of analysis is the campaign-year rather than the campaign as a whole, the dataset includes a measure of the primary resistance method used in a given campaign-year. Of the 1,726 campaign-year observations in the NAVCO v2.0 dataset from 1945 to 2006, approximately 80% are primarily violent and 20% are primarily nonviolent. Most campaigns do not change primary forms of resistance from year to year: there are 41 observations that change from nonviolent tactics to violent tactics and only 21 observations that change from violent to nonviolent tactics. For the time frame under consideration (1981–2006), there are 884 campaign-year observations, of which approximately 77% are primarily violent and 23% are primarily nonviolent. Of those 884 observations, 11 change from nonviolent to violent tactics and 12 change from violent to nonviolent tactics.

4.2.1 Dependent Variable

Repression

Repression refers to political authorities' use of coercion against government opponents to influence political outcomes (Davenport 2007*a*). As discussed in chapter 2, repression may involve the use of negative sanctions that remove or restrict certain freedoms, or it may involve more physically or psychologically harmful tactics that violate physical integrity rights. Examples of negative sanctions include curfews, bans on assembly or association, and censorship. The most common forms of physical integrity rights violations include torture, political imprisonment, disappearances and kidnappings, and extrajudicial killings.

Repression can be difficult to measure, especially if authorities use covert methods such

as non-scarring torture or disappearances that cannot be traced back to state officials (Rejali 2007). Amnesty International and the U.S. State Department provide yearly, state-level data on human rights practices, including respect for physical integrity rights, civil and political liberties, and certain social, economic, and cultural rights. The Cingranelli-Richards (CIRI) Human Rights Dataset and Political Terror Scale (PTS) are two commonly used datasets that report annual measures of respect for physical integrity rights based on Amnesty International and State Department information.

Rather than use aggregate yearly measures of human rights practices, I use a measure of state repression included in the NAVCO v2.0 dataset indicating if repression was used in response to nonviolent or violent campaigns. This measure allows for more precise association between campaigns and the use of repression than composite indicators measured at the state-year level of analysis. The NAVCO v2.0 *Repression* variable "measures the most repressive episode or activity perpetrated by the state in response to campaign activity" and captures "the extent to which the government uses the coercive apparatus of the state...to quell opposition" (Chenoweth and Lewis 2013, 13).

This variable indicates authorities' response to dissent on a four-point scale, where 0= no repression, 1= mild repression, 2= moderate repression, and 3= extreme repression. Observations receiving a value of 0 (no repression) include cases where the government took either no action or took action that indicated an "intention to cooperate or negotiate with the opponent." Observations receiving a value of 1 (mild repression) involve cases where the state either used verbal threats or economic penalties short of physical coercion to continue or increase the conflict and cases where the state did not attempt to ease tensions and maintained the status quo. Observations receiving a value of 2 (moderate repression) are those cases where the state took

"physical or violent action aimed at coercing opponents," including harassment and imprisonment. Observations with the last value of 3 (extreme repression) include the worst cases of repressive action "exhibiting intent to kill and violently silence opponents" (Chenoweth and Lewis 2013, 13).

Repression data is available for 868 of the 884 violent and nonviolent campaign-year observations. Table 4.1 shows how often each level of repression is used in the dataset for all forms of repression. Tables 4.2 and 4.3 show how often each level of dissent is used against nonviolent and violent dissent, respectively. As all three tables indicate, extreme repression is a common response to both nonviolent and violent dissent. It is possible that authorities also engaged in less extreme forms of repression in these campaign-years (perhaps more frequently than extreme forms of repression), but the dataset records the most repressive episode identified in each year. Tables 4.1 through 4.4 reflect campaign-year observations between 1981 and 2006.

Table 4.1: Frequency of Repression: All Dissent

Level of Repression	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative
None (=0)	54	6.22	6.22
Mild (=1)	21	2.42	8.64
Moderate (=2)	79	9.10	17.74
Extreme (=3)	714	82.26	100.00
Total	868	100.00	

Table 4.2: Frequency of Repression: Nonviolent Dissent

Level of Repression	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative
None (=0)	45	23.20	23.20
Mild (=1)	11	5.67	28.87
Moderate (=2)	36	18.56	47.42
Extreme (=3)	102	52.58	100.00
Total	194	100.00	

Table 4.3: Frequency of Repression: Violent Dissent

Level of Repression	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative
None (=0)	9	1.34	1.34
Mild (=1)	10	1.48	2.82
Moderate (=2)	43	6.38	9.20
Extreme (=3)	612	90.80	100.00
Total	674	100.00	

Table 4.4: Frequency of Repression (Collapsed)

Level of Repression	Nonviolent Dissent	Violent Dissent
None or mild (=0)	56	19
Moderate or extreme (=1)	138	655
Total	194	674

I am interested in examining the use of violent forms of repression against dissent, so I collapse these categories into a binary measure where 0 indicates no repression or "mild" forms such as curfews, fines, or verbal threats and 1 indicates "moderate" to "extreme" forms of repression, including physical or violent action, harassment or imprisonment, and torture. Table 4.4 shows the frequency breakdown of this binary indicator by nonviolent and violent dissent, which will be used as the dependent variable measure in the analyses below.

4.2.2 Main Explanatory Variables

Press Freedom

The extent to which the press is able to operate free of government manipulation is measured using data from the Cingranelli-Richards (CIRI) Human Rights Dataset, which contains data at the state-year level of analysis for 202 countries from 1981 to 2011 (Cingranelli, Richards and

Clay 2014). The primary source used to compile the dataset is the U.S. State Department Country Reports on Human Rights Practices. The CIRI *Freedom of Speech* variable reflects the extent to which the media can operate without government censorship, or state-imposed restrictions limiting expression of views contrary to those of the existing government. The variable is measured using a three-point scale, where 0= complete government censorship, 1= partial government censorship, and 2= no government censorship (Cingranelli and Richards 2014).¹ The press freedom measure also captures government control of information through state ownership of the media. However, privately owned media does not necessarily mean that all content is unbiased, and publicly owned media does not guarantee that governments will censor opposing viewpoints (Whitten-Woodring 2009). The CIRI coding rules help avoid treating states with some publicly owned media as necessarily suppressive—the state must own all of any one media source (such as all television stations) before government censorship of the press is coded as "complete" (Cingranelli and Richards 2014, 27).

Since the press freedom measure captures the extent to which the government can control and manipulate information through media channels, it provides an accurate measure through which to test the theory presented in chapter 3. In order for repression to backfire, information on repression must be communicated to citizens through channels that the government cannot easily control or manipulate (Schock 2005); otherwise, government actors can either censor the information completely or present it in such a way that audiences believe repression is justified. The press freedom indicator measures the extent to which it is possible for government actors to censor or control information that is communicated to domestic audiences, thereby affecting leaders' beliefs about the likelihood that audiences will learn about state abuse.

¹For clarity, I refer to this measure as "press freedom" or "press" in the following tables and discussion.

Right of Petition

Citizens' right to petition the government is measured using data from the Characteristics of National Constitutions Dataset, Version 2.0 (Elkins, Ginsburg and Melton 2014). The current version of the dataset contains information on written constitutions from 1789 to 2013 for a total of 8,141 country-years. I use information from this dataset for state-years between 1981 and 2006 that are included in the NAVCO v2.0 dataset. The *Right of Petition* binary variable indicates if a national constitution contains a provision for a right of petition, which captures whether or not a national constitution allows for "the right to submit individual or group level grievances to government," including complaints in response to violations of the law by state authorities (Elkins, Ginsburg and Melton 2014, 117).

The right of petition variable provides a measure of whether or not citizens possess the right (at least formally) to expressly disagree with government and/or seek a redress of grievances. If a state constitution contains a provision protecting this right, this indicates that both leaders and citizens acknowledge that petitioning the government is acceptable behavior that should be respected. This codification signals to leaders that citizens will be upset if this right is violated since it has been explicitly promised in a formal constitution; as a result, leaders are expected to refrain from violating this right to avoid angering citizens and incurring sanctions. Additionally, this protection signals to individuals that other citizens also deem this value as important and wish to protect it. This recognition of a collective interest helps citizens to coordinate a response if leaders violate constitutionally protected rights (Weingast 1997).

4.2.3 Control Variables

In addition to the main explanatory variables, I include combinations of five control variables in the models used to test hypotheses 1 through 3 that may influence the relationship between the dependent variable and main explanatory variables (Achen 2002). Each of these control variables—*Judicial Independence*, *Past Repression*, *Radical Flank*, *Gross Domestic Product (GDP)*, *Population*, and *Democracy*—is discussed below.

Judicial Independence

A number of recent studies provide empirical evidence that an independent judiciary constrains leaders by threatening costly sanctions for repressive behavior (Powell and Staton 2009, Keith 2012, Mitchell, Ring and Spellman 2013, Hill and Jones 2014). If leaders believe that domestic courts are powerful enough—and judges willing enough—to bring them to trial and potentially remove them from office for repressing citizens, then they will weigh the potential of losing their job against the benefits of repressing nonviolent dissidents. When government officials can threaten to remove judges for unfavorable rulings or challenge the court's decision, then leaders will be less likely to constrain repressive behavior out of concern that the court can sanction them. What's more, if judges are corrupt or can be counted on to rule in the government's favor, then leaders are also less likely to fear the court's sanctions and constrain repressive behavior.

Judicial independence is a complex concept that can be broadly separated into *de jure* and *de facto* categories. *De jure* judicial independence refers to the formal (often codified) rules and procedures that characterize the judiciary, such as rules governing judges' selection and removal, the judiciary's relationship to other branches of government, and provisions ensuring

certain legal protections for citizens. These rules and protections are often delineated in constitutions, but codification does not guarantee compliance. *De facto* judicial independence refers to whether or not the judiciary actually functions without interference from or control by other branches of government.

I include a measure of judicial independence from the CIRI dataset, which measures the degree to which a country's judicial branch is free from the control of other institutions, such as the executive or military. The CIRI *Independent Judiciary* variable is measured using a three-point scale, where 0= "not independent," 1= "partially independent," and 2= "generally independent."² This variable is coded using data provided in the U.S. State Department Country Reports on Human Rights Practices and reflects the level of formal independence and independence in practice for a given country-year (Cingranelli and Richards 2014, 86).

Past Repression

When deciding how to handle dissent, leaders wish to minimize costs while maximizing benefits. If repression has proven a cost-effective option in the past, then leaders are more likely to consider repression as a reliable option when faced with dissent in the present. Over time, repression may become institutionalized, as states develop more sophisticated methods of coercion and political elite adapt to its use as a policy tool (Gurr 1988, Poe, Tate and Keith 1999). Conversely, the use of repression becomes less likely the longer authorities go without using it (Carey 2010).

I include a one-year lag of the dependent variable to account for the influence of past policy decisions on repression in the present time period. This variable equals 1 if repression was used

²I refer to this measure as "judicial independence" in the following tables and discussion.

by state authorities against any campaign in the previous year and 0 otherwise. The lagged dependent variable also helps alleviate problems of serial correlation across observations in panel data (Poe and Tate 1994, Beck and Katz 1996, Carey 2010). Some scholars question the inclusion of a lagged dependent variable, noting that it may interfere with the interpretation of other independent variables (Achen 2000). This interference may result when slow-changing independent variables used to estimate the likelihood of the dependent variable in time t are also used to estimate the dependent variable at time $t-1$. When the lagged measure is included on the right-hand side of the equation, it may absorb the explanatory power of the other variables. I consider this possibility and run models with and without the lagged dependent variable in the next sections.

Radical Flank

The NAVCO v2.0 dataset includes a binary variable indicating if a nonviolent campaign has a radical or extremist element within the larger movement that promotes or engages in violent tactics. I include this measure in the models for hypotheses 1 and 3 to account for the possibility that a radical flank may provide authorities with an excuse for repressing non-radical members. If an extremist group affiliates itself with the larger nonviolent campaign, authorities may believe that domestic audiences will be unsympathetic to nonviolent participants who pursue the same goals as extremists. As a result, authorities may be less concerned that repression will backfire, or they may believe that they can successfully weather domestic sanctions by claiming that the radical members posed a wider public safety concern.

GDP and Population

I include annual measures of (the natural logs of) GDP per capita and total population size from Gibler and Miller (2014) to account for socioeconomic and demographic factors, respectively,

that may influence the use of repression. Both GDP per capita and population size have been found to have a negative and significant impact on the use of repression and are considered to be common control variables in most models of repression. GDP per capita may affect the use of repression by influencing whether or not state actors need to repress to maintain control or have the material capabilities to carry out repression. Similarly, GDP per capita may influence the use of repression by influencing citizens' incentives to join dissident movements that increase the likelihood of repression (Fearon and Laitin 2003).

Population size may also potentially influence repression through similar means as GDP per capita. A large population may make repression more likely if authorities feel that they are unable to maintain control over large numbers of people through other methods. As a result, repression may be perceived as the most effective tool for managing large populations, especially if authorities are able to induce compliance through fear of repression. Additionally, large populations provide more potential dissident recruits and may make the onset of conflict more likely, creating more opportunities for repression (Fearon and Laitin 2003).

Democracy

I include a measure of democracy to account for the effect of regime type on the decision to repress. Leaders in those countries with democratic institutions are thought to be less likely to repress for fear that angry constituents will vote them out of office for doing so. Additionally, democratic institutions provide more opportunities for other political actors to constrain leaders from repressing citizens. Democracy has been shown to reduce the use of repression in a number of studies (Poe and Tate 1994, Davenport and Armstrong 2004, Davenport 2007*b*, Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2005). However, the concept of democracy is defined and measured in various ways (Munck and Verkuilen 2002), and measurement choice can affect empirical

findings (Elkins 2000). To account for these measurement differences, the Unified Democracy Scores (UDS) combines multiple indices of democracy and accounts for measurement error, thereby providing a more comprehensive and accurate indicator of a concept that is otherwise difficult to measure (Pemstein, Meserve and Melton 2010). I use the UDS measure of a state's mean democracy score included in state capacity data from Gibler and Miller (2014).

Measures of democracy have become standard in repression models, but I recognize that certain measures of democracy may overlap conceptually with measures of repression, as Hill and Jones (2014) point out. Since my measure of repression captures physical coercion used against specific campaigns (and not aggregate state-level measures), I am less concerned that the measure of democracy will overlap with the measure of repression. However, I select the UDS measure of democracy over the Polity IV measure to avoid the problems noted in Hill and Jones (2014). I also run models with and without the democracy measure in the following sections.

Table 4.5: Summary Statistics: Nonviolent Dissent

Variable	Mean	SD	N
Repression	0.71	0.45	194
Press freedom	0.95	0.62	194
Right of petition	0.52	0.50	108
Judicial independence	0.95	0.71	194
Past repression	0.80	0.40	156
Radical flank	0.45	0.50	192
GDP (ln)	8.20	0.96	194
Population (ln)	10.33	1.52	194
Democracy	-0.17	0.70	194

Table 4.6: Summary Statistics: Violent Dissent

Variable	Mean	SD	N
Repression	0.97	0.17	674
Press freedom	0.80	0.66	674
Right of petition	0.49	0.50	375
Judicial independence	0.96	0.77	674
Past repression	0.96	0.19	627
Radical flank	0.00	0.04	674
GDP (ln)	7.84	1.02	662
Population (ln)	10.26	1.35	662
Democracy	-0.16	0.81	662

Table 4.7: Summary Statistics: All Dissent

Variable	Mean	SD	N
Repression	0.91	0.28	868
Press freedom	0.83	0.66	868
Right of petition	0.49	0.50	483
Judicial independence	0.96	0.76	868
Past repression	0.93	0.26	783
Radical flank	0.10	0.30	866
GDP (ln)	7.92	1.02	856
Population (ln)	10.28	1.39	856
Democracy	-0.16	0.79	856

4.2.4 Estimation

I use a logit estimator to test hypotheses 1 through 3. Logistic regression is appropriate when the outcome variable is dichotomous and the relationship between the dependent and independent variables is not linear. The dependent variable, repression, takes on the value of 1 if the event occurs and 0 if it does not occur; since the 0 and 1 values are arbitrary values used to signify the "success" or "failure" of an event, I am not interested in estimating the exact value of the dependent variable. Instead, I am interested in estimating the likelihood that repression occurs following violent and nonviolent dissent given different values of my independent variables. Instead of estimating linear relationships between a dependent variable and covariates,

logit models estimate linear relationships between the independent variables and the probability that an event occurs (or in this case, the probability that repression is equal to 1).

Since the NAVCO v2.0 dataset contains observations from campaigns that span multiple years, I cannot assume that the probability of repression in each observation is independent of other observations. For example, if Mexico experiences a violent campaign with repression that spans three years, the "success" of a repressive event in the third year may be connected to or influenced by the same factors that led to the "success" of repressive events in the first and second years. As a result, my error terms are likely to be correlated across these observations. To correct for this, I use robust standard errors clustered at the country level to control for state-specific features that may influence the probability of repression.

I select to cluster according to country rather than individual campaigns for two reasons. First, because of the selection of cases in the dataset, all campaigns are "mature" and "maximalist" and are therefore unlikely to vary much in terms of size or objectives. Secondly, while decisions to repress may be based on campaign features such as the inclusion of certain ethnic or religious groups, I expect that the decision to repress is more likely to vary according to country level features. Specifically, I predict that press freedom and rights of petition will influence the decision to repress, and these state-level factors in turn influence authorities' responses to specific campaigns.³

To test hypothesis 1, which predicts that high levels of press freedom decrease the repression of nonviolent dissent, I restrict the sample to include only those campaign-years in which

³As a robustness check, I re-run all models using robust standard errors clustered by campaign. The results do not change significantly for any of the models.

nonviolent dissent was the primary form of resistance. I include controls for judicial independence, past repression, presence of a radical flank, GDP, population, and democracy. The model for hypothesis 1 is specified as follows:

$$Pr(Repress)_t = \beta_1(Press)_t + \beta_2(Judicial)_t + \beta_3(Repress)_{t-1} + \beta_4(Radical)_t + \beta_5(GDP)_t + \beta_6(Pop)_t + \beta_7(Democ)_t + \varepsilon \quad (4.1)$$

In order to test hypothesis 2, which predicts that press freedom has no effect on the repression of *violent* dissent, I restrict the sample to include only those campaign-years in which violent dissent was the primary form of resistance. Since the primary method of resistance in the sample is violent, I exclude the radical flank control variable. The model for hypothesis 2 is specified as follows:

$$Pr(Repress)_t = \beta_1(Press)_t + \beta_2(Judicial)_t + \beta_3(Repress)_{t-1} + \beta_4(GDP)_t + \beta_5(Pop)_t + \beta_6(Democ)_t + \varepsilon \quad (4.2)$$

Finally, hypothesis 3 uses the same sample of campaign-years used to test hypothesis 1 (those in which nonviolent dissent was the primary form of resistance). I predict that the right of petition will increase the negative relationship between press freedom and repression, as leaders in states with both institutional features will have more reason to expect that domestic audiences will learn about and be angered by repression of nonviolent dissent. The model includes an interaction term to analyze the effect of a constitutionally protected right of petition on the relationship between press freedom and repression. The model for hypothesis 3 includes

all constitutive terms of the interaction (Brambor, Clark and Golder 2006), as well as all control variables, and is specified as follows:

$$Pr(Repress)_t = \beta_1(Press)_t + \beta_2(Petition)_t + \beta_3(Petition)_t * (Press)_t + \beta_4(Judicial)_t + \beta_5(Repress)_{t-1} + \beta_6(Radical)_t + \beta_7(GDP)_t + \beta_8(Pop)_t + \beta_9(Democ)_t + \varepsilon \quad (4.3)$$

4.3 Results and Discussion

Table 4.8 reports the results from tests of hypotheses 1 through 3. Model 1 estimates the likelihood that authorities repress nonviolent dissent at different levels of press freedom. The baseline category for press freedom in the model is complete censorship, or no press freedom. As table 4.8 shows, moving from no press freedom to moderate or high levels of press freedom has a negative impact on the likelihood that nonviolent dissent is repressed, but this impact is not statistically significant. All the other variables in model 1 are in the expected direction, but only the past repression and radical flank measures reach statistical significance. Substantively, however, it appears that increasing the level of press freedom may affect the probability of repression in an interesting way. As figure 4.3 shows, moving from no press freedom to moderate levels of press freedom reduces the likelihood that authorities repress nonviolent dissent by 2%. Moving from no press freedom to high levels of press freedom reduces the probability of repression by 10%, although the confidence range is larger.

Hypothesis 2 predicts that press freedom will have no affect on the likelihood that authorities repress violent dissent, but model 2 in table 4.8 shows that moving from no press freedom to high levels of press freedom has a negative and statistically significant ($p < .01$) impact on the

Table 4.8: Effect of Institutions on Repression

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
	H1 (Nonviolent)	H2 (Violent)	H3 (Nonviolent)
Press freedom (moderate)	-0.17 (0.73)	-0.72 (0.74)	-0.01 (0.83)
Press freedom (high)	-0.79 (0.89)	-2.08* (0.84)	— —
Right of petition	— —	— —	0.53 (1.43)
Petition*press (moderate)	— —	— —	-0.85 (1.45)
Petition*press (high)	— —	— —	-1.58 (2.32)
Judicial independence	-0.08 (0.46)	0.91* (0.41)	-0.39 (0.59)
Past repression	3.16*** (0.44)	2.91*** (0.79)	— —
Radical flank	1.06* (0.52)	— —	0.39 (0.65)
GDP (ln)	-0.11 (0.32)	0.08 (0.36)	0.18 (0.44)
Population (ln)	0.08 (0.20)	0.16 (0.18)	0.18 (0.23)
Democracy	-0.79 (0.53)	-0.16 (0.33)	-0.69 (0.65)
<i>N</i>	155	616	108

p= .001 '***' .01 '**' .05 '*'

Robust standard errors clustered by country in parentheses

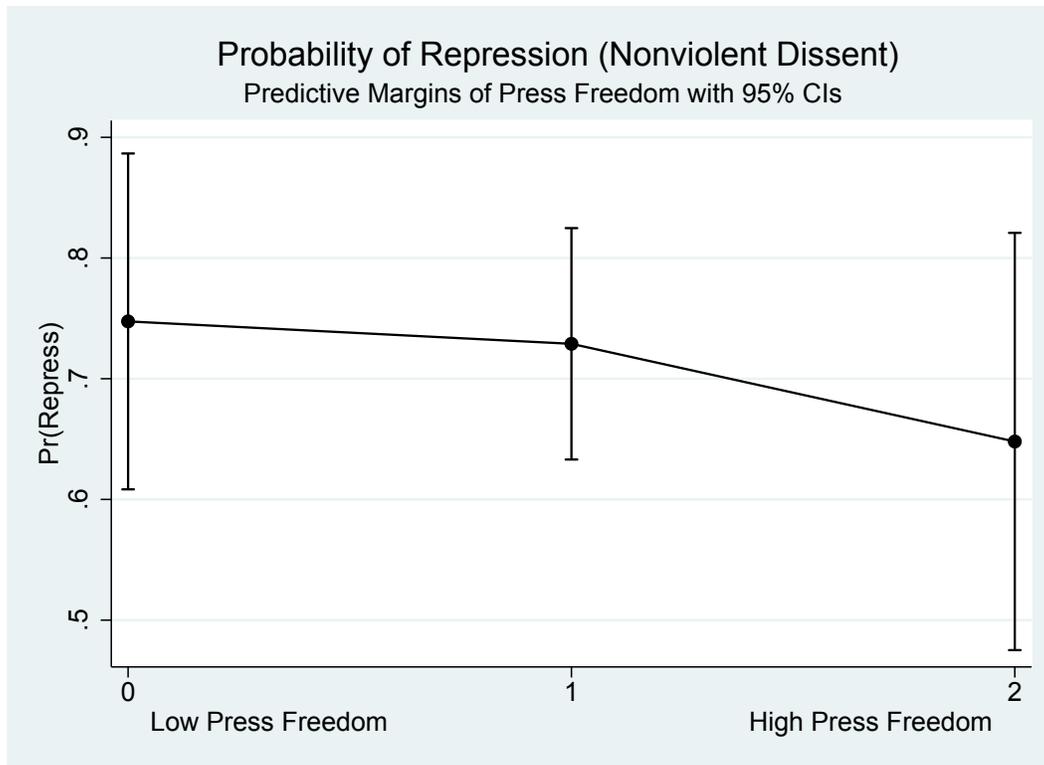


Figure 4.3: Marginal Effects for Model 1

probability of repression. However, the substantive impact of press freedom on the probability of repression is smaller than for cases of nonviolent dissent (see figure 4.4). Moving from no press freedom to moderate levels of press freedom reduces the probability that authorities repress violent dissent by 1%, and moving from no press freedom to high press freedom reduces the probability of repression by 7%.

Surprisingly, the judicial independence measure is positive and significant ($p < .05$) in model 2, suggesting that higher levels of judicial independence may *increase* the probability of repression against violent dissent. Theories of repression suggest that independent judiciaries constrain leaders from using repression by threatening to impose sanctions for repressive behavior. The positive impact of judicial independence on the likelihood of repression may result from the selection of cases in the dataset; all the observations used in the estimation involve violent

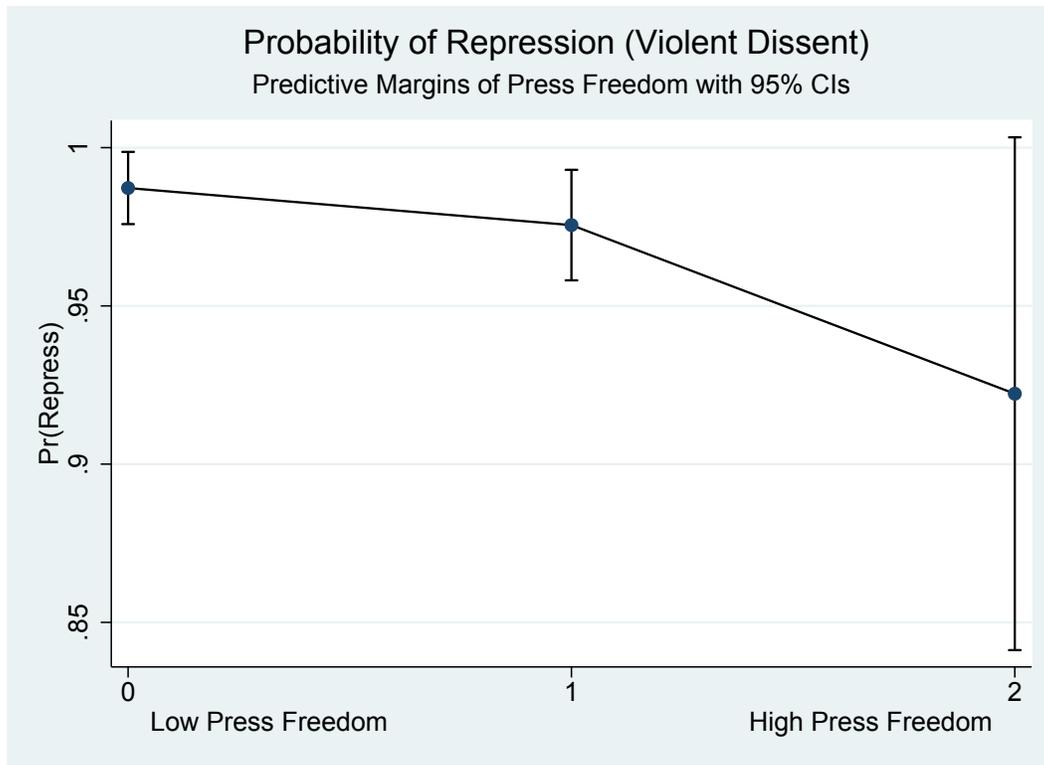


Figure 4.4: Marginal Effects for Model 2

dissent, and it is likely that *within* these cases of dissent, judicial independence increases the likelihood of repression but is generally associated with no dissent.

To test this possibility, I use data from Gibler and Miller (2014) to estimate a model of repression that includes all state-years between 1981 and 2006. To measure repression, I use a measure of respect for physical integrity rights from the CIRI dataset to create a binary indicator if a state violated physical integrity rights in a given year. The dependent variable *PIR* equals 1 if the state engaged in physical integrity rights abuse in that year and 0 otherwise. I match the NAVCO v2.0 violent and nonviolent campaigns data with state-year observations for a total of 4,775 observations with information on personal integrity rights abuse from the CIRI dataset (203 cases involve nonviolent dissent, 681 cases involve violent dissent, and 3,891 cases involve no dissent). Using this sample, I estimate the following model to assess the impact of judicial

independence and other variables of interest on repression outside of the dissent-only sample:

$$Pr(PIR)_t = \beta_1(NVDissent)_t + \beta_2(VDissent)_{t-1} + \beta_3(Press)_t + \beta_4(Judicial)_t + \beta_5(GDP)_t + \beta_6(Pop)_t + \varepsilon \quad (4.4)$$

I exclude the democracy measure from this model, as it is highly correlated (0.70) with the press freedom variable in the sample. The results are shown in table 4.9. The judicial independence measure decreases the likelihood of repression and is statistically significant ($p < .000$), which suggests that the positive and significant effect of judicial independence on repression in model 2 (table 4.8) is the function of the sample of cases that involve only violent dissent. The results also indicate that press freedom has a negative and significant impact on repression ($p < .000$), and this effect holds even with the inclusion of violent and nonviolent dissent in the model. As expected, violent dissent increases the likelihood of repression and is significant at the $p < .05$ level. Nonviolent dissent does not have a statistically significant impact on the likelihood of repression, although the coefficient is in the expected direction.

The use of repression in one time may increase the likelihood that leaders use repressive methods in the future (Gurr 1988). The use of panel data that measures repression across state-years may lead to autocorrelation in the error terms if measures of the dependent variable are associated with prior measures (Poe and Tate 1994, Beck and Katz 1996, Carey 2010). To test for the possibility that past repression is influencing the dependent variable, I re-run the model in table 4.9 with a restricted sample that only includes those state-years where repression was not used in the previous year. The restricted sample includes 665 observations. The results, shown in table 4.9, are consistent with those in the model that includes observations where repression

Table 4.9: Effect of Institutions on Repression (All State-Years, 1981–2006)

Variable	Full Sample	Restricted Sample (No Past Repression)
Nonviolent dissent	0.78 (0.73)	-1.42 (1.00)
Violent dissent	2.28* (1.01)	1.27* (0.64)
Press freedom	-0.66*** (0.17)	-0.85*** (0.21)
Judicial independence	-1.02*** (0.23)	-0.38 (0.30)
GDP (ln)	-0.71*** (0.13)	-0.42*** (0.12)
Population (ln)	0.33*** (0.06)	0.21** (0.07)
<i>N</i>	4068	665

p= .001 '***' .01 '**' .05 '*'

Robust standard errors clustered by country in parentheses

was used in the previous year, except that the judicial independence measure loses significance. It is possible that judicial institutions are slower to limit repression (or impose costs that deter repression) than other institutions like a free press.

Returning to the original models, hypothesis 3 predicts that the right of petition will affect the relationship between press freedom and repression. In order to test this prediction, model 3 (table 4.8) includes an interaction term (*Petition*Press*) to estimate the impact of the right of petition on repression at different levels of press freedom. As table 4.8 shows, the interaction term is not statistically significant at any level of press freedom, although the coefficients are in the expected direction.

4.4 Additional Models

It is possible that certain control variables in the original models are affecting my estimations without adding much explanatory power. Because both press freedom and the right of petition

are expected to predict repression in the present time, these slow-changing measures would also likely predict repression in the previous year. Additionally, including a lagged value of the dependent variable (which I do in the original models to correct for autocorrelation) may bias the coefficients of the other independent variables (Achen 2000). Given this possibility, I run the three original models without the past repression variable. I also exclude three other control variables—GDP, population, and democracy—which are potentially correlated with press freedom and right of petition and may be distorting the impact of these key independent variables on repression.⁴

Table 4.10: Effect of Institutions on Repression (Without Controls)

Variable	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
	H1 (Nonviolent)	H2 (Violent)	H3 (Nonviolent)
Press freedom (moderate)	-0.23 (0.54)	-1.28 (0.72)	0.07 (.85)
Press freedom (high)	-1.31 (0.83)	-2.79*** (0.79)	— —
Right of petition	— —	— —	0.91 (1.40)
Petition*press (moderate)	— —	— —	-0.93 (1.31)
Petition*press (high)	— —	— —	-1.62 (2.38)
Judicial independence	-0.56 (0.42)	0.89 (0.52)	-0.56 (0.57)
Radical flank	0.57 (0.51)	— —	0.57 (0.66)
<i>N</i>	192	674	108

p= .001 '***' .01 '**' .05 '*'

Robust standard errors clustered by country in parentheses

The results for models 4 through 6 in table 4.10 are similar to the results for models 1 through 3 that include all control variables. Removing the control variables does not greatly affect the

⁴See appendix C for a correlation matrix of all independent variables.

interpretation of the original results. In model 4, the results are unchanged from the fully specified version in model 1. However, when the judicial independence control variable is removed (not shown), the highest level of press freedom becomes significant at $p < .05$. In other words, in a more parsimonious model with only the radical flank measure included as a control, moving from low levels to high levels of press freedom has a negative and statistically significant impact on repression of nonviolent dissent.

In model 5, judicial independence loses significance when the other control variables are removed. Additionally, removing the control variables increases the statistical significance of high levels of press freedom on repression of violent dissent ($p < .000$). These results are similar to the estimates in model 4 when judicial independence is taken out of the model. The coefficient for press freedom changes direction in model 6 compared to the fully specified version in model 3—while in model 3, the coefficient is insignificant but in the expected negative direction, the coefficient is positive and insignificant in model 6. The interaction terms and right of petition constituent term in model 6 do not change in direction or significance from model 3.

Hypotheses 1 through 3 predict how institutions affect incentives to repress violent and nonviolent dissent and impact leaders' behavior in anticipation of backfire. The NAVCO v2.0 dataset also includes a variable that measures whether or not repression of a campaign backfired, or if "prominent individuals or organizations within the country not directly associated with the campaign publically [sic] express disapproval of repressive state tactics" (Chenoweth and Lewis 2013, 14). This measure takes a value of 1 if repression resulted in condemnation (repression backfired) and 0 if not. While I am interested in predicting the likelihood that authorities repress dissent, the measure of backfire included in the NAVCO v2.0 dataset allows

me to estimate the effect of press freedom and the right of petition on the likelihood that repression, once used, produces a negative public reaction. Specifically, I estimate the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 4. *High levels of press freedom increase the likelihood that repression of nonviolent dissent backfires.*

Hypothesis 5. *High levels of press freedom have no effect on the likelihood that repression of violent dissent backfires.*

Hypothesis 6. *The right of petition increases the likelihood that repression of nonviolent dissent backfires.*

Hypothesis 7. *The right of petition has no effect on the likelihood that repression of violent dissent backfires.*

I do not predict an interactive effect like the one predicted in hypothesis 3, but I test for the possibility that the right of petition could affect the relationship between press freedom and the likelihood of backfire. However, the models including an interaction term did not produce meaningful results and are not included.

Table 4.11 presents the results of tests for hypotheses 4 through 7. Hypothesis 4, which expects press freedom to increase the likelihood of backfire, is not confirmed. It does not appear that the level of press freedom in a country experiencing nonviolent dissent influences the chance that domestic actors will "condemn" government actors following repression. Interestingly, the control variable for the presence of a radical flank within a nonviolent campaign is positive and significant at the $p < .05$ level. This result could be a function of higher levels

Table 4.11: Effect of Press Freedom and Petition on Likelihood of Backfire

Variable	Model 7	Model 8	Model 9	Model 10
	H4 (Nonviolent)	H5 (Violent)	H6 (Nonviolent)	H7 (Violent)
Press freedom (moderate)	-0.34 (0.71)	0.48 (0.44)	0.17 (0.73)	0.51 (0.39)
Press freedom (high)	-0.23 (1.21)	-0.44 (0.55)	-0.03 (1.62)	-0.46 (0.69)
Right of petition	— —	— —	1.85* (0.83)	-0.68 (.61)
Judicial independence	-0.26 (0.64)	0.82** (0.32)	-0.37 (0.46)	1.02** (0.38)
Radical flank	1.19* (0.53)	— —	1.83** (0.73)	— —
<i>N</i>	130	506	79	281

p = .001 '****' .01 '**' .05 '*'

Robust standard errors clustered by country in parentheses

of media attention focusing on radical tactics that are deemed more salient and newsworthy, thereby drawing more domestic attention to the radical group and prompting condemnation for repression against a largely peaceful campaign.

Hypothesis 5 is confirmed—unlike the impact of high levels of press freedom on repression of violent dissent (see model 2 in table 4.8), high levels of press freedom do not appear to increase the likelihood that repression used against violent campaigns will backfire. This finding is consistent with the theory presented in chapter 3; the public is unlikely to perceive repression of violent dissent as unjust and are therefore unlikely to be angered by the use of repression by government actors. Interestingly, though, press freedom seems to decrease the likelihood that authorities repress violent dissent (see model 2 in table 4.8).

Also interesting in model 8 that tests hypothesis 5 is the positive and significant impact of judicial independence on the likelihood of backfire. The results suggest that judicial independence increases the likelihood of backfire when repression is used following violent dissent, but

the same effect does not hold in cases where repression is used following nonviolent dissent (see model 7). It is possible that this positive and significant finding is a function of the sample of cases included in the NAVCO v2.0 dataset, similar to the positive and significant effect of judicial independence in model 2 (table 4.8).

In model 2, judicial independence appears to increase the likelihood that authorities repress violent dissent, but tests in table 4.9 suggest that this positive impact is likely the result of case selection. When all state-years between 1981 and 2006 are included in the estimation (not just those experiencing violent dissent), judicial independence has a negative and statistically significant ($p < .001$) impact on the likelihood of repression. Since there appears to be something unique to the violent dissent cases that leads to a positive association between judicial independence and repression, it is plausible that the judicial independence measure would also be positively associated with the measure of backfire that follows repression.

Hypotheses 6 and 7, respectively, predict that the right of petition increases the likelihood of backfire following repression of nonviolent dissent but does not have this same effect following repression of violent dissent. Both hypotheses are confirmed. As the results from model 9 show, the right of petition has a positive and statistically significant ($p < .05$) impact on the likelihood that repression of nonviolent dissent backfires. This finding is surprising since the right of petition measure has no significant or substantive impact on the decision to repress. However, the finding is consistent with the theory presented in chapter 3—this constitutional protection represents a consensus of values and helps citizens coordinate responses to government violations of this right (Weingast 1997).

From the tests presented here, it appears that the right of petition influences the behavior of domestic actors when leaders repress nonviolent dissent but does not influence whether or not

leaders repress nonviolent dissent in the first place. Results for the judicial independence and radical flank measures in model 9 are the same as in model 7—judicial independence is negative and insignificant, and the presence of a radical wing is positive and significant. Consistent with expectations, the effect of a right of petition does not hold in cases where repression was used against violent dissent (see model 10). Judicial independence remains positive and significant as in model 8, but this effect is likely the result of the sample of states experiencing violent dissent in a given year.

4.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I test predictions made in chapter 3 about leaders' decision-making in response to violent and nonviolent dissent when press freedom is high and the right of petition is constitutionally protected. Statistical tests of hypotheses 1 through 3 are presented in table 4.8. Model 1 suggests that press freedom does not impact the use of repression against nonviolent dissent at a statistically significant level, but increasing press freedom may have a substantive impact on the use of repression. Interestingly, neither judicial independence nor democracy appears to decrease the likelihood of repression of nonviolent dissent in this sample of cases. Results from model 2 indicate that moving from no press freedom to high levels of press freedom decreases the likelihood of repression in response to violent dissent, contrary to expectations. The results of model 3 do not support the prediction that a constitutionally protected right of petition influences the relationship between press freedom and repression of nonviolent dissent. The interaction term is insignificant, and the right of petition measure itself does not have a significant impact on the likelihood of repression.

The judicial independence measure is positive and statistically significant in model 2, indicating that in this sample of cases, higher levels of judicial independence lead to a greater likelihood of repression following violent dissent. I expect that this finding, which contradicts the expected influence of judicial institutions on repression, is the result of the sample of cases experiencing violent dissent. To test this possibility, I estimate the impact of judicial independence on physical integrity rights violations for all state-year observations between 1981 and 2006. As expected, judicial independence has a negative and statistically significant ($p < .001$) impact on integrity rights abuse when all state-years are included in the analysis. This finding suggests that in general, judicial independence reduces the likelihood of repression, but this measure has a unique positive impact within the sample of violent dissent cases in the NAVCO v2.0 dataset.

It is worth pointing out that press freedom has a negative and statistically significant ($p < .001$) impact on physical integrity rights abuse in the model that includes all state-year observations (see table 4.9). This effect holds when observations with repression in the previous year are removed, even while the judicial independence measure loses significance. While the results of model 1 do not provide support for the role of press freedom as a safeguard against repression of nonviolent dissent, it appears that press freedom may effectively constrain repressive behavior outside of the sample of nonviolent cases considered in models 1 and 3.

I re-run the analyses of hypotheses 1 through 3 without the standard control variables to account for problems of collinearity and conceptual overlap (see models 4 through 6 in table 4.10). I keep the judicial independence measure in all the models to see if excluding the other control variables has any influence on this measure, which has produced mixed results in the other models. I also keep the radical flank measure in models 4 and 6 since the presence of

a radical element within a larger nonviolent campaign is likely to influence leaders' decision-making.

One notable difference between models 4 through 6 in table 4.10 and models 1 through 3 in table 4.8 is the significant impact of high levels of press freedom on repression of violent dissent (compare models 2 and 5); the coefficient for high press freedom becomes significant at the $p < .001$ level in model 5. This change is not surprising given the removal of four control variables that were likely absorbing some of the predictive power of the press freedom measure. The radical flank and judicial independence measures lose significance in models 4 and 5, respectively, but otherwise the results for models 4 through 6 remain similar to the results for models 1 through 3.

In addition to testing hypotheses 1 through 3, I make four additional predictions concerning the role of institutions in the occurrence of backfire following repression. Using a measure of backfire in the NAVCO v2.0 dataset, I find that while press freedom does not appear to affect the occurrence of backfire following repression of either nonviolent (model 7) or violent (model 8) dissent, a constitutionally protected right of petition has a positive and statistically significant ($p < .05$) impact on the likelihood of backfire following repression of nonviolent dissent (model 9). The right of petition does not appear to influence the likelihood of backfire following repression of violent dissent (model 10), as predicted.

The analyses presented in this chapter only provide partial support for the theory presented in chapter 3. Press freedom impacts repression differently for violent and nonviolent dissent but not in the way expected—press freedom only appears to reduce the likelihood of repression following violent dissent. While a constitutionally protected right of petition does not appear

to influence the decision to repress in response to either violent or nonviolent dissent, this provision seems to increase the likelihood that repression of nonviolent dissent backfires. While the quantitative analysis presented in this chapter does not provide much support for my predictions regarding leader decision-making in response to nonviolent dissent, chapter 5 traces the theory presented in chapter 3 using an illustrative case to examine the plausability of the theory.

Chapter 5

Repression in Iguala, Mexico

5.1 Introduction

On September 26, 2014, student protestors from the Ayotzinapa teacher's college were attacked by local police while traveling through the southern Mexican city of Iguala in the state of Guerrero. Police and unidentified gunmen killed six people, injured 25, and arrested 43 students. One student's mutilated body was found later, but the other 42 activists have not been seen since the night of the attack and are presumed dead. A federal investigation into the disappearances revealed that the mayor of Iguala, Jose Luis Abarca, and his wife, Maria de los Angeles Pineda Villa, authorized the attack and kidnappings to prevent the students' alleged plans to disrupt political events honoring Pineda, who was launching her political campaign for mayor. The investigation revealed that Abarca and Pineda, dubbed by the media as the "Imperial Couple" for their extensive political power in the region, had ordered local police to have the students attacked, arrested, and turned over to members of the Guerreros Unidos (United Warriors) drug cartel. The investigation revealed that numerous police officers and public officials were complicit in the attack and that army personnel at a nearby base may have known about the attack and done nothing to intercede.

News of the attack and authorities' complicity in the events that unfolded on September 26

sparked large-scale protests throughout Mexico and garnered international attention. The attack was a watershed moment for frustrated citizens, an act of violence many Mexicans call "the drop that made the cup run over" (Goldman 2014*b*). Thousands of people mobilized in Mexico to express outrage over the political corruption and violence plaguing the country and political authorities' inability or unwillingness to address it. While many demonstrations remained peaceful, others turned violent as angry protestors clashed with riot police. The domestic and international outrage following news of the attack prompted the arrest of numerous Iguala police and city officials with connections to the Guerreros Unidos cartel, including the Imperial Couple, who spent most of October on the run from federal authorities. Across Mexico, citizens called for the country's president and other top officials to resign, claiming that political leaders had not done enough to control corruption and violence.

The tragedy that unfolded in Iguala, Mexico demonstrates three important components of the theory presented in chapter 3 and tested in chapter 4. First, this case illustrates how violent and nonviolent dissent threaten political power differently. Violent dissent involves physically coercive tactics that damage state resources and undermine the ability of government actors to provide public security. Nonviolent dissent, on the other hand, does not rely on physical coercion and in this way does not threaten public security. Instead, nonviolent tactics are designed to weaken support for political leaders by questioning the leadership's right or ability to rule. Abarca and Pineda's decision to repress nonviolent dissidents demonstrates that nonviolent dissent threatens political power, albeit in a different way than violent dissent.

Secondly, this case highlights why the differences between violent and nonviolent dissent matter to leaders when evaluating the potential costs and benefits of repression. The students

who were attacked and disappeared did not pose a threat to public security, and they represented many poor, idealistic young people across Mexico. The public responded differently to the plight of these nonviolent, representative students than in cases where the victims of state repression in Mexico were connected to violent drug gangs or guerrilla groups. The actions of authorities involved in the Iguala massacre, as well as the actions of police during subsequent protests, suggest that authorities are concerned about the public's reaction to perceived injustice, and they consider the likelihood that repression will backfire before deciding to repress.

Lastly, this case highlights how the level of press freedom in a country affects leaders' evaluation of the likelihood of backfire and, subsequently, the decision to repress. According to a report by the non-governmental organization Article19 (2015), the level of press freedom in Mexico has been on the decline since President Enrique Peña Nieto took office in 2012. The climate of censorship appears to have led the Imperial Couple to believe that either their actions would not become public or they would not be held accountable if word of the attack spread. In what follows, I discuss each of these components in more detail and use the events surrounding the Iguala massacre to illustrate the processes that underlie the theory presented in chapter 3.

5.2 Nonviolent Dissent and Political Power in Iguala

In chapter 3, I present a theory of repression and dissent that considers how nonviolent dissent threatens political power differently than violent dissent because of the unique tactics and participants involved. Violent dissidents use physical coercion to influence political outcomes, and authorities predictably repress this form of dissent to end damage to state resources and defend the current leadership's position as the legitimate governing authority (Davenport 2007*a*). Nonviolent tactics, on the other hand, are designed to weaken support for political leaders by

questioning the leadership's right or ability to rule without the use or threat of physical coercion (Ackerman and Kreugler 1994, Schock 2003).

Violent dissidents must be willing and able to engage in physically demanding and destructive activity. These physical and mental requirements tend to create homogeneous dissident groups that are unrepresentative of the general public. Individuals who are both willing and able to participate in violent activities are typically young, disenfranchised males whose lives are such that they see violent dissent as the best way to better their situation (Nordås and Davenport 2013, Mesquida and Wiener 1999). Conversely, nonviolent dissent does not require a commitment to violence or a certain level of physical endurance, and the absence of these physical, moral, or ideological barriers allows for a more diverse group of participants (Schock 2003, Chenoweth and Stephan 2011).

The state repression literature has focused largely on explaining and predicting the decision to repress violent dissent, either implicitly or explicitly assuming that nonviolent dissent does not meaningfully threaten political power. However, the Imperial Couple's actions in Iguala on September 26 suggest that authorities care about nonviolent dissent and its impact on political power. Abarca and Pineda ordered the attack on students traveling near Iguala because they believed the students were on their way to town to disrupt Pineda's political rally, not because they believed the students posed a threat to public security. By all accounts, local residents knew that the students did not use violent tactics as part of their social activism, so Abarca and Pineda had no reason to believe that the students were violent. Instead, the couple appears to have been motivated by the desire to silence critics and intimidate students at the teacher's college, who have a long history of publicly confronting politicians in the state of Guerrero.

Students at the Ayotzinapa Normal School, often called *normalistas*, train to be teachers

in poor, rural areas of Mexico, and those attacked in Iguala were working to escape their poor backgrounds and communities—circumstances shared by many people across Mexico. After the Mexican Revolution in the 1920s, the government began funding rural teacher's colleges to improve literacy rates in the state's poorest areas. The teacher's colleges are known for the students' Marxist philosophical training and radical activism. However, only 14 of the 36 established schools remain in operation, a reflection of Mexico's transition to a neoliberal economic model that values privatization of many aspects of the education system.

Students at the remaining 14 colleges receive free tuition, housing, and meals in return for maintenance duties on campus, but the conditions are less than ideal. According to Gibler (2015), the government allots about \$3.70 per day per student for meals, and as many as eight students may be housed in one windowless dorm room without furniture. Despite the difficult living conditions, attending one of the colleges is a way to escape a life of peasant farming for the majority of students. In addition to pursuing a profession, the students are able to advocate for social reform that improves the lives of families, neighbors, and Mexico's indigenous, rural poor (Goldman 2014*a*). As a result of the students' radical ideology and activism, they are often at odds with local, state, and federal officials. In addition to confrontations due to the students' various acts of dissent, police and military personnel from a nearby army base reportedly go to the Ayotzinapa campus specifically to intimidate and harass students, who they describe as "vandals" and "delinquents" (Goldman 2015).

Many of the students who were attacked in Iguala on September 26 were participating in their first "activity fight" as new students at the school in Ayotzinapa, an all-male campus of approximately 600 students with a long tradition of activism in Guerrero. Part of this tradition includes nonviolently commandeering local buses for transportation to activity fights, where

students protest for a variety of social welfare and education reforms, or to rural schools where teachers-in-training can observe classrooms as part of their curriculum. The tradition of commandeering buses is so entrenched locally that bus drivers defer to the students, who often compensate the drivers at a later time (del Pozo 2014). Students at Ayotzinapa and other area normal schools are often labeled by local media as criminals or vandals because of activity fight tactics like commandeering buses, which students defend as necessary since the government does not provide adequate transportation or funding for essential training or school activities.

On September 26, upperclassmen at Ayotzinapa normal school organized an "activity" where first-year students would commandeer buses from Huitzuco, a town approximately 70 miles from the school. The buses would be used to transport students to Mexico City on October 2 for memorial events remembering the 1968 massacre of student activists by soldiers in Mexico City's Tlatelolco Plaza. Once in Huitzuco, students negotiated with a bus driver to take them back to the school after dropping off his passengers in Iguala. News reports differ, but Gibler (2015) writes that once in Iguala, the students commandeered additional buses and were then pursued and attacked by local police. Survivors recount police shooting at students as they fled and of injured students being harassed and turned out of medical clinics by soldiers from the nearby 27th Infantry Battalion army base (Lakhani 2015). In total, six people were killed (three students and three people caught in the fighting), 20 people were injured, and 43 students were arrested and eventually disappeared by the local police.

This attack unfolded at the same time that thousands of people were gathered in the city's center for political events organized by Abarca and Pineda, including a colonel from the 27th

Infantry Battalion (Goldman 2014a). Pineda allegedly instructed local police to attack the students in order to "teach them a lesson" for planning to interrupt the events, which were organized to honor her community service and announce her mayoral run. The police were instructed to turn the students over to members of the Guerreros Unidos drug cartel, who reportedly mutilated and burned the students' bodies. According to survivors' accounts, the students were not planning protests during Pineda's rally and were only passing through town aboard the commandeered buses (Gibler 2015).

The attack on September 26 was not the first time Abarca and Pineda had encountered opposition from the *normalistas* and their political supporters, which is likely why Pineda believed the students were in Iguala to interrupt her rally. Abarca allegedly assisted in the kidnapping and murder of seven political opponents connected with the *normalistas* who verbally attacked him during a public forum in May 2013. A victim who escaped the abduction told investigators that before personally executing him, Abarca said to the group's leader, "Seeing as you have given me so much grief, I am going to give myself the pleasure of killing you" (Alexander 2014).

The events that unfolded in Iguala on the night of September 26 demonstrate that nonviolent dissent threatens political power, albeit with different tactics and participants than violent dissent. Leaders recognize this potential threat to power and take steps to prevent it. Abarca and Pineda's decision to preemptively repress the student activists suggests that they worried about what the students' protests would do to their political power. Given the history of the *normalistas'* activism in the area, it doesn't appear that the couple feared any possible violent activity, so they most likely feared the protestors' message. The couple wanted to prevent public criticism during their political rally and avoid having attention brought to issues that might call their right to rule into question.

In the next section, I elaborate on why leaders care about the different ways in which violent and nonviolent dissent threaten political power. Leaders have different options for dealing with dissent, repression being one of these options. Leaders consider the costs and benefits of each option before deciding how to respond to dissent, and a rational-actor approach assumes leaders will select the most efficient (least costly) course of action. Some costs are easy to estimate, such as the number of police officers or weapons required to end dissent. Other costs are harder to anticipate, such as unforeseen political costs that arise if the public is unhappy with leaders' methods of handling dissent.

Leaders' options for handling violent and nonviolent dissent involve different costs, as the public is likely to perceive repression of nonviolent dissent as unjust because of the tactics and participants involved. Leaders care about public perception—the public provides political legitimacy through compliance and/or support, and domestic audiences can threaten leaders' tenure in office by refusing to comply with rules and policies and/or by withdrawing other political support. As a result, leaders will consider the public's likely reaction to repression of dissent, particularly when dissidents are peaceful and representative of the public.

5.3 The Public as a Third Actor

In this section, I discuss why the differences between violent and nonviolent dissent matter to leaders when evaluating the potential costs and benefits of repression. Specifically, I focus on the role of the public as an important actor in the dissent and repression process (Arena and Hardt 2014, Ginkel and Smith 1999, Zhukov 2013) and highlight how the Mexican public shaped the costs of repression for the Imperial Couple and numerous other government officials. The

public refers to domestic audiences who support and/or comply with a leader's rules and policies in exchange for a mix of certain public and private goods. While members of the public may benefit from different combinations of public and private goods, I assume that the general public prefers leaders who pursue and implement good policies that benefit the public over policies that benefit only a select few (Fang 2008). I expect that leaders recognize this policy preference and will attempt to cultivate a public image that reflects a commitment to good public policies over select private ones. I assume that the public is most concerned with personal security (Zhukov 2013) and will expect leaders to prioritize the provision of public security above other public and private goods.

Even in non-democratic settings, leaders need a certain amount of citizen compliance in order to govern effectively. In chapter 3, I provide the example of how the Nazi regime needed the compliance of citizens in the occupied territories in order to produce goods for the Reich. Citizens in the occupied territories did not view the Germans as legitimate authorities, and the Nazis could only rely on fear and force to govern, which negatively impacted economic output when citizens engaged in work-slowdowns. Political legitimacy, on the other hand, lowers the cost of governing, as authorities do not have to work as hard to enforce rules and policies when citizens perceive leaders as having the right to rule.

The events on September 26 may have transpired in an effort to protect the Imperial Couple's political legitimacy and prevent dissent that could challenge it. Abarca and Pineda's carefully crafted public image indicates that the couple recognized they could not maintain power through fear and intimidation alone and needed to legitimize their power through public support. The Imperial Couple's concern over public image illustrates the role of the public as an important actor in the dissent and repression process, even in corrupt political environments

where authorities exert control through fear and intimidation.

5.3.1 The Imperial Couple's Public Image

The Imperial Couple rose to power in Iguala when Abarca was elected mayor in 2012. Before this time, the couple sold sombreros and jewelry and steadily acquired property and businesses in the state of Guerrero. Eventually, the couple would own 17 different properties in the area, including a \$23 million shopping center which the couple built on land donated in part by the Mexican army. Abarca's quick rise to political office was due in large part to Pineda's family connections to the Guerreros Unidos drug cartel, which controls the area around Iguala. Pineda's brother was a leader of the Guerreros Unidos gang before his arrest in late 2014, and her parents and brothers had close ties to other regional drug cartels as well (Gibler 2015).

Once in political office, the couple went to great lengths to cultivate a positive public image, especially as Pineda prepared to run her own campaign for mayor. She emphasized her social programs benefiting children, seniors, and those citizens with special needs through public celebrations in her honor, billboards and posters with her image, and photos and quotes on social media sites demonstrating her civic engagement. These are typical campaign strategies, but at the same time that she was building her political profile, Pineda was personally directing the criminal activities of the Guerreros Unidos drug cartel (Alexander 2014).

Interviews with Iguala residents suggest that many people in the town feared Pineda and the impunity that her cartel connections provided (Stone 2014). Iguala is located along a hotly contested drug-trafficking route in a state which has a murder rate three times that of the national average, so her family ties to the Guerreros Unidos cartel alone would allow her to control political outcomes in Iguala. It is interesting, then, that she expended so much effort toward

promoting her image as a public servant in the hopes of winning the mayoral race. Her self-promotion and carefully crafted public image suggests that she wanted to legitimize her power and influence through an election, not through fear alone. By holding an elected office, Pineda would be able to claim a legitimate right to exercise power based on public consent. She could then use her cartel connections to ensure a hold on power by silencing critics and opponents who would challenge her. This concern over her public image is likely one of the reasons why the thought of hecklers and protestors at her event on September 26 angered Pineda to the point of ordering the disappearances. But the couple's public image suffered much more because of their order to attack the students. In the following section, I describe how the couple's actions backfired and why this public reaction is unique to nonviolent dissent.

5.3.2 Public Reaction to Repression in Iguala

Nonviolent dissent involves unique tactics and participants that threaten political power differently than violent dissent. The events surrounding the attack in Iguala demonstrate why these different tactics and participants matter to leaders when evaluating possible costs and benefits of repression. The general public was angered by the brutal treatment of student activists who posed no violent threat and were representative of many idealistic young students. If the students planned to use violent tactics (say they were found with bomb-making materials or a weapons cache), local officials could justify the attack as an attempt to protect citizens from the radical activists. But the protestors were young students with no apparent plans for violence, and they were unarmed when attacked by Iguala police.

While observers may believe the former use of violence to be within the authority of the state, the latter is a violation of agreed-upon limits of state force (Weingast 1997). Leaders and

citizens have a mutual obligation to contribute to a secure and peaceful society—leaders invest time and resources into developing institutions that ensure the safety and well-being of citizens within their jurisdiction, and citizens consent to abide by these institutions and to refrain from behavior which may threaten public security (Moore 1978). One of the reasons why citizens are likely to disagree with repression of nonviolent dissidents is because these individuals are not violating their part of this mutual obligation (i.e., they are not threatening public security through the use of violence).

The disappeared students also represented young adults from poor, indigenous families who were working to pursue a life other than peasant farming, while at the same time advocating to improve conditions for their families and neighbors (Goldman 2014*a*). It is likely that many Mexican citizens viewed Pineda's actions as extreme and unjustified, even those citizens who didn't share the students' political views or necessarily agree with their activity fight tactics. This attack was troubling for ordinary citizens—if these students could be so arbitrarily killed by state officials, could the same thing not happen to any Mexican citizen who publicly disagrees with the government?

A sense of injustice over the attack and ongoing frustration with political corruption and violence motivated ordinary citizens to mobilize against the current regime. Numerous protests took place in the months following the disappearances, with angry citizens demanding information on the students' whereabouts and calling for more federal involvement with the case. Subsequently, a federal investigation revealed that the 42 missing students were turned over to members of the Guerreros Unidos drug cartel, who murdered them and burned their bodies. This information sparked larger and more intense protests, especially when the extent of local officials' complicity in the attack and relationship with the cartel were revealed. Once the extent

of local officials' involvement in the attack was revealed, citizens began shifting their attention and anger toward federal authorities' inability or unwillingness to confront systemic corruption and security issues across Mexico.

Authorities in Iguala violated their obligation to promote public security not only by repressing nonviolent citizens, but also by being involved in drug cartel activities that destabilize the security situation in Mexico for all citizens. Provision of public security in Mexico has been one of recent leaders' biggest failures, and this context of insecurity helps explain why so many citizens mobilized after the Iguala attack to protest the government. Abarca and Pineda's brazen act of violence, the complicity of so many public officials in the attack, and the state and federal leaders' reluctance to act only confirmed citizens' perception of the government as incompetent and unwilling to address public security issues.

Probably most disconcerting for citizens was the revelation that the attack took place close to an army base, but soldiers failed to respond to the sound of gunfire (despite the fact that a colonel from the army base was attending Pineda and Abarca's political rally in close proximity to the attack). When soldiers did respond, reports suggest that soldiers harassed wounded students instead of trying to help them. Local human rights activists, Ayotzinapa students, and local residents reportedly notified state officials about the attack, but it still took hours for officials to respond, secure the scene, and assist the wounded (Goldman 2014*a,b*).

Although the protests throughout Mexico erupted in response to an act of violence by local officials in Iguala, protestors directed their criticism and frustration at all levels of government. What was a local problem quickly spiralled into a crisis for President Nieto's administration—citizens demanded that the federal government take responsibility for failure to control endemic corruption and violence at the state and local levels. Attorney General Murillo Karam

tried to distance the federal government from what took place in Iguala. The official strategy was to portray the attack as localized violence orchestrated by the Guerreros Unidos drug cartel, but the official narrative did little to convince the public that what happened in Iguala was anything other than a state crime. In Mexico City, thousands of people marched near the presidential palace in late November demanding that President Nieto resign. At the height of these protests, Nieto traveled to China for an economic summit and incurred even more public outrage and criticism for his seeming lack of concern over events at home. For Mexican citizens, the president's trip abroad during the protests signified his administration's lack of concern over the corruption and violence plaguing the country.

Demonstrations throughout Mexico were led by family and friends of the missing students, who were joined by diverse crowds of angry citizens numbering into the tens of thousands in some cases. According to one report, people from all walks of life took part in the protests—retirees, housewives, academics, workers, students, and professionals were all represented. While mainly peaceful, some demonstrations turned violent, prompting clashes with riot police. In Mexico City, about 20 protestors set fire to the doors of the presidential palace; in Acapulco, protestors caused flight cancellations when they clashed with police outside the airport; in Chilpancingo, protestors set fire to the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) headquarters and clashed with riot police.

According to one report, pictures of civilian youth riding in army vehicles circulated on social media the day before the mass demonstration in Mexico City where protestors set fire to the presidential palace doors. These photos led protestors to believe that Mexican authorities were planning to send in *agents provocateurs* to incite violence and discredit the protests. Fearing

that authorities planned to incite violence as an excuse to use force against protestors, participants witnessing the clashes with police outside the presidential palace appealed for calm and began chants of "no violence" (Tuckman 2014).

Another report from the same night of protests recounts an incident outside the Attorney General's office during which hooded and masked individuals threw rocks at the glass walls of the office building. According to several protestors nearby, one of the masked individuals reportedly said, "It was the State," implying that the masked individuals had been sent by the government. Reporting first-hand on the incident, Goldman (2014*a*) writes that several women turned to him and lamented that the television news would now focus primarily on the *encauchados*, or "hooded ones," rather than the majority of peaceful protestors. Other witnesses reported seeing one of the masked individuals disappearing into a line of police officers who appeared to be hiding him (Goldman 2014*a*).

Mexican authorities' alleged use of *agents provocateurs* supports the theory presented in chapter 3—violent and nonviolent dissent involve different tactics and participants, and authorities take these differences into account when considering the best response to dissent. Authorities anticipated that using force against the largely nonviolent and diverse crowd of protestors in Mexico City would likely backfire on the already embattled government, especially since media attention was focused so heavily on the protests. Conversely, authorities did not appear deterred from using force against protestors who engaged in violent, destructive activity despite the heavy media presence, and they may have attempted to provoke or stage more violent incidents.

The Iguala massacre and subsequent protests throughout Mexico highlight the complex relationship between repression and dissent: Abarca and Pineda ordered the attack on student

activists in expectation of dissent, and news of the attack sparked widespread protests. What's more, this case illustrates how repression of nonviolent dissent is more likely to backfire on leaders than repression of violent dissent (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011). The public is likely to disagree with the use of repression against nonviolent, representative dissidents and sanction repressive leaders. Authorities consider this possibility when deciding how to respond to dissent, as the alleged use of *agents provocateurs* during the Mexico City protests demonstrates.

But if authorities worry that repression will backfire, why did Abarca and Pineda orchestrate the attack in Iguala? Certainly the Imperial Couple did not imagine events would unfold the way they did. The couple had attempted to foster a positive public image to secure power, and it seems unlikely that they would have risked everything to supposedly "teach a lesson" to a group of left-wing students. The couple's actions up to the night of September 26 suggest that they are strategic, forward-thinking actors, so it is reasonable to assume that they considered the possibility that their actions could backfire and harm their public image and political future. Why did the couple estimate that the benefits of having the students attacked and killed would outweigh the costs of their actions? In the next section, I discuss possible explanations for why the Imperial Couple miscalculated the likelihood that their repressive actions would backfire.

5.4 Anticipating Backfire in Mexico

Leaders considering the use of repression against nonviolent dissent must weigh the possibility that domestic audiences will learn about repression, disagree with its use against peaceful and representative dissidents, and sanction repressive leaders. Leaders may be deterred from using repression against nonviolent dissidents if they fear repression will backfire. However, in order

for the threat of backfire to constrain leaders in this way, they must believe that repressive activity will be communicated to domestic audiences and that these audiences will perceive the action as unjust and sanction leaders (Hess and Martin 2006).

The theory presented in chapter 3 argues that authorities cannot always estimate the likelihood that repression will backfire. The disappearance and murder of students in Iguala provides a relevant example of a miscalculation that cost many Mexican authorities their political careers and freedom. The consequences for Pineda alone clearly outweigh any observable benefits of ordering the attack on the student activists—she and her husband were on the run from federal authorities during October 2014 before being captured in Mexico City in early November 2014. Pineda has since been charged with organized crime connections, while Abarca has been charged with links to organized crime, kidnapping, and murder in the Iguala case and others.

Abarca and Pineda had gotten away with similar brutality in the past, and this likely caused them to underestimate the chances that their actions in Iguala would backfire. If the couple had accurately predicted the political and legal consequences following the attack, they certainly would have done things differently. They were most likely aware that the general public would be outraged by their actions if they learned of the attack—the students were nonviolent and could have been anyone's sons, brothers, or husbands. Additionally, Mexico's constitution includes the right of petition, and this constitutional protection represents a shared societal value that citizens wish to defend (Weingast 1997). Given this shared value that the right of petition should be safeguarded, it is reasonable to assume Abarca and Pineda knew that domestic audiences would not view peaceful student protests as criminal activity worthy of such severe punishment. This suggests that the couple believed the attack would go unreported or would be reported in a way that justified their actions.

In chapter 3, I argue that a free press deters the use of repression against nonviolent dissent, as leaders have more reason to believe that the public will learn about repression, disagree with it, and sanction leaders. In states with low levels of press freedom, authorities will be more likely to repress nonviolent dissent since they anticipate that the public will be less likely to learn about repression. The media climate in Mexico during the Imperial Couple's time in office and their actions in Iguala support this prediction. In the following sections, I discuss the state of press freedom in Mexico and how the level of press freedom likely influenced the couple's decision-making on the night of September 26.

5.4.1 Press Freedom in Mexico

Abarca took office as mayor of Iguala in 2012, the same year that President Enrique Peña Nieto came to power. Shortly after taking office, Nieto began a number of reforms targeted at restoring Mexico's internal security. Since 2000, internal security issues were coordinated between the Ministry of Public Security and the Interior Ministry, but early in his tenure, Nieto eliminated the Ministry of Public Security and concentrated all power within the Interior Ministry. He also appointed his close ally Miguel Ángel Osorio Chong as secretary (Ringoen 2013).

President Nieto billed the concentration of power as a more efficient way to coordinate public security operations. However, it appears to have also been intended as a way to monitor and control official information shared with media outlets, particularly information regarding violence across Mexico that could reflect poorly on his administration. In January 2013, the Federal Public Administration Law took effect, which gave the Interior Ministry the power to ensure that print, radio, television, and film media do not "disturb public order." According to critics, the law serves mainly to protect Nieto's image and does little to enhance public security in Mexico.

As a result of Nieto's reforms, media coverage of violent events in Mexico fell by 50% between December 2012 and August 2013 (Ringo 2013).

Specifically, President Nieto's administration requested that the media stop reporting front-page stories of homicides in an attempt to calm the fears of both the general public and foreign investors (Negroponte 2014). As the reduction in reporting on violent stories suggests, media outlets complied with this request. This compliance is unsurprising given that many of Mexico's largest media outlets receive funding and perks from the government ("Radio Silenced" 2015). Televisa, one of only two national broadcast channels in Mexico, helped bring the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) back to power in 2012 under Nieto and has a long relationship with the party. The PRI dominated Mexican government for 71 years before losing office in 2000, and its political legacy includes business monopolies that helped preserve the PRI's influence and institutional practices that limited political opposition.

Televisa has been one of the PRI's beneficiaries, with the company controlling 70% of the television broadcast market in 2012. This market share allowed Televisa to play a large role in bringing the party back to power in 2012—the station devoted broad coverage to Nieto's candidacy, showcased favorable aspects of his campaign and personal life, and avoided content that could potentially harm his candidacy. For example, the station aired his 2010 wedding to a Televisa soap opera actress but declined to cover a presidential debate. TV Azteca, the other major broadcasting network, also agreed not to televise a presidential debate and has been accused of colluding with Televisa to restrict entry into the broadcasting market (Flannery 2012).

Once in office, Nieto used his party's influence on the media to control information on violence that could reflect poorly on his administration. This influence has resulted in news reports based primarily on official statements from police, prosecutors, or other public officials

that rarely include statements from eyewitnesses or victims that could contradict official accounts (Negroponte 2014). By limiting official reports and potentially contradictory information, Mexican officials are able to cite questionable statistics regarding the level of violence in Mexico. For example, Ringoen (2013) writes that the Interior Ministry cited a 14% reduction in organized crime murders in the first quarter of Nieto's term compared to the previous year, but the Ministry would not release information on how officials arrived at this number. Nieto's institutional changes have allowed government officials to manipulate public information in a way that suits government interests, and the changes have further reduced the ability of the press to challenge official government reports.

Drug cartels also influence the Mexican press, using fear to silence media outlets and independent journalists from unfavorable reporting that could conflict with their interests. In early 2014, the Familia Michoacana drug cartel started exerting pressure on Mexico City's news outlets to censor reports on cartel activity. In Ciudad Juarez, cartel pressure became so bad that the city's biggest newspaper took out a front-page editorial asking the rival cartels to clarify what information was acceptable to report (Zabludovsky 2014). And in Tamaulipas, a border town near McAllen, Texas, cartel members tracked down a web-based activist who went by the name "Felina" by publicizing her anonymous Twitter handle. She was known in the area for sending out real-time updates on cartel activity in Tamaulipas as she received them from anonymous contributors. Cartel members distributed fliers in the area with her Twitter handle and screen names, offering a \$48,000 reward for information on her identity. When they located her, they used her account to post before-and-after pictures of her execution (Diehn 2014).

Even though the cartels exert a powerful influence on journalists throughout Mexico, a recent report by Article19 (2015) finds that public officials and people with links to the state were

the primary sources of intimidation and assaults on journalists in 2014. According to the report, the annual number of attacks on journalists under former President Felipe Calderon's government averaged 182, compared to an average of 328 under Nieto's administration. This increase in journalist attacks creates a potential problem for longitudinal analyses of Mexico that use data on press freedom and repression—do attacks on journalists contribute to measures of decreasing press freedom and increasing repression at the same time, leading to a spurious relationship between press freedom and repression? For example, if a journalist reports on a state official's ties to a cartel and is subsequently killed, does this death get recorded in data on press freedom and also in data on the number of extrajudicial killings?

While state and cartel violence in Mexico may simultaneously influence measures of press freedom and repression, this potentially spurious relationship is not problematic for the current analysis. I am interested in identifying factors that contributed to Abarca and Pineda's decision to repress nonviolent students (not journalists), and I predict that the low level of press freedom in Mexico (on the decline since 2012) caused the couple to underestimate the likelihood that the public would learn about the attack. In the next section, I discuss how the media environment in Mexico likely affected Abarca and Pineda's decision-making when faced with possible dissent. Specifically, I argue that the couple believed their actions would go unreported by a pliant media or would be reported in a way that did not damage them politically or legally.

5.4.2 Miscalculating the Costs of Repression

This climate of self-censorship and intimidation likely led Abarca and Pineda to believe that either no media outlet or independent journalist would risk reporting on events in Iguala or, if they did, that the story would be cast in a light favorable to government officials. Since Nieto's

election in 2012, news reports have increasingly reflected official government accounts rather than eyewitness reports or independent investigations (Negroponte 2014), and the couple likely thought they would be protected by the media. The local media often labeled the *normalistas* as criminals or vandals because of the tradition of nonviolently commandeering buses for transportation, so Abarca and Pineda may have believed that if the media covered the attack, reports would continue to portray the students as public safety threats that necessitated a forceful response.

It appears the couple also underestimated the tenacity of the students' family and friends—these students came from poor backgrounds in rural Mexico, and it would be easy to assume that relatives and friends would either not learn of the attack or would not have the resources or knowledge to press the federal government for an investigation. In rural areas without cable or Internet access, Televisa or TV Azteca may be the only sources of news coverage readily available to citizens. The state of Guerrero has the second lowest literacy rate in Mexico at 16.7% (Rhoda and Burton 2011); this statistic suggests that many citizens in the state rely on non-print media for news coverage and would most likely be limited to broadcast networks, which reach 95% of households in Mexico (Flannery 2012). Abarca and Pineda may have believed that the only people with an interest in the students' whereabouts would be citizens with similar backgrounds from these rural markets, and Televisa and TV Azteca were both unlikely to broadcast news that would reflect unfavorably on Nieto's administration ("Radio Silenced" 2015, Flannery 2012).

Finally, Abarca and Pineda likely underestimated the consequences of repression because both had gotten away with similar acts before. Abarca successfully avoided prosecution in the May 2013 execution of political opponents, and Pineda oversaw the Guerreros Unidos' criminal

activities with impunity. They expected that traditional media outlets would overlook these stories and that independent journalists would be too intimidated by both local officials and cartel members to risk reporting the information. If the public did not know of their actions, they would most likely not be held accountable. The legislative and judicial institutions in place to monitor and sanction government corruption and abuse in Mexico do not appear to consistently deter or punish violators, so it is easy to see how the couple could feel unconstrained to do as they pleased without fear of the consequences.

Interestingly, the rule of law began to work once people learned about the attack and responded by questioning the legitimacy of the Mexican government. The Imperial Couple was arrested and charged with links to organized crime, the governor of Guerrero resigned, and numerous Iguala police were arrested (including the police chief), along with cartel members involved in the students' kidnapping and murder. In addition, President Nieto's administration is under intense scrutiny from the Mexican public, human rights organizations, and the international community.

5.5 Conclusion

The events that unfolded around the Iguala attack underscore why scholars should account for the differences between violent and nonviolent challenges in decision-theoretic models of repression and dissent. Leaders want to maintain political support and will estimate possible costs to their levels of support when deciding whether or not to repress. I argue that leaders will be deterred from using repression against nonviolent dissidents if they fear that repression will backfire. In order for leaders to constrain their actions, however, they must believe that repressive activity will be communicated to domestic audiences and that these audiences will

perceive the action as unjust and withdraw political support (Hess and Martin 2006).

Most leaders likely assume that domestic audiences will be upset by the repression of peaceful, representative people, but this may be especially so in states that explicitly protect the right to disagree with government. In states with constitutionally protected rights of petition, leaders know that citizens value the ability to petition government for redress of grievances, and they can anticipate a negative reaction and withdrawal of support in response to repression against this shared value (Weingast 1997).

What is less certain is if domestic audiences will learn about repression. If leaders do not believe that citizens will find out about repression, then they will evaluate repression as potentially less-costly in terms of political support. Consequently, it is more likely that leaders will repress nonviolent dissent. But if leaders believe citizens may find out about repression—and believe these audiences will perceive it as unjust—then they are less likely to repress for fear of the costs to political support. In other words, the greater the likelihood that citizens find out about repression, the more likely it is that repression will backfire, and the less likely it is that leaders will want to repress and risk a loss of political support.

If only a few people learn about repression of nonviolent dissent, leaders may not worry as much about the political consequences. However, if this information is widely disseminated, then leaders have more reason to fear potential costs to political power. When the press is free from government censorship and manipulation, there is a better chance that repressive activity will be broadly communicated to domestic audiences, who are likely to withdraw support from leaders for action they deem unjust. Given this, I expect that leaders in states with high levels of press freedom will be less likely to repress nonviolent dissent for fear that their actions will backfire.

The events in Iguala, Mexico provide a relevant case to trace the working parts of my theory. A common difficulty in dissent and repression studies, however, is identifying causation—does repression cause dissent or does dissent cause repression? This illustrative case helps clarify the sequence of events surrounding the dissent and repression process in Iguala, Mexico: leaders repressed in anticipation of dissent, and this instance of repression sparked numerous protests, some of which were met with further repression.

While this example only identifies causation in one case, and not a pattern of behavior across space or time, it supports the theory presented in chapter 3. Violent and nonviolent dissent differ in terms of tactics and participants, and this distinction is important for explaining and predicting repression. Abarca and Pineda's actions on September 26 support the claim that nonviolent dissent threatens political power, just not in the same way that violent dissent threatens power. The couple had plenty of evidence that the students were not intent on violence, so why did they feel the need to prevent a protest? It is likely that both Abarca and Pineda feared what the students' potential protest would do to their political legitimacy—they did not want any display of dissent and criticism to discredit their polished image as philanthropists and public servants in Iguala. Even though the couple bankrolled local officials with cartel money, they did not want this information stated publicly for fear that it would discredit and embarrass them. It seems as though the couple believed attacking and disappearing the students would prevent this from happening on September 26 and in the future.

This case also highlights how the distinction between violent and nonviolent dissent matters to the public, as well as how the public plays an important role in the repression and dissent process. Across Mexico, the public responded differently to repression of nonviolent students than to previous instances of state repression against violent guerrillas or cartel members.

These students did not have weapons and did not pose a threat to residents of Iguala. Instead, they represented young men from poor backgrounds trying to pursue a life other than peasant farming. Even Mexican citizens who did not share the students' Marxist philosophy likely perceived authorities' actions as unjustified and extreme. The national protests and outrage following the Iguala tragedy demonstrates that the public is willing to sanction leaders for perceived injustice. The resignations and arrests that followed the protests further highlight how nonviolent dissent threatens political power, with the public serving as a key actor in the process.

The behavior of authorities during the protests in Mexico City also supports the argument that leaders strategically think ahead about how the public is likely to respond to acts of aggression against peaceful people. Authorities knew that domestic and international media outlets were covering the protests in Mexico City, and reports suggest that many of the destructive protestors may have been sent in by the government to discredit the larger demonstration (Tuckman 2014). Authorities would not do this unless they feared that repressing nonviolent, non-destructive protestors would be counterproductive. With so much media presence, any aggression toward the diverse crowd of peaceful protestors would likely be documented and disseminated.

Finally, this case provides a closer examination of the process by which press freedom influences the likelihood of repression. The level of press freedom in a country, like most institutions, changes slowly over time; the rate of change makes it hard to assess how institutional effects systemically impact political behavior without data that spans many years. Media freedom in Mexico over the past few years provides a unique exception. Since taking office in 2012, President Nieto has implemented structural changes that decreased the *de facto* level

of press freedom in the country. The Mexican media has historically been dominated by government influence, but Nieto's reforms increased his administration's ability to manipulate and censor the content of news reports, specifically on instances of violence that could reflect poorly on the government.

Leaders like Abarca and Pineda are aware of these reporting practices and the ability of government officials to influence the content of public information. They can use this knowledge to evaluate their best response to dissent, specifically the likelihood that repression will be publicized and backfire on them. The Imperial Couple came to power in the same year that President Nieto took office, and while from a different political party, the couple appears to have benefited from his reforms. Not only did Nieto place more emphasis on economic reforms than public security (which undoubtedly pleased anyone involved in cartel business), but the couple could also count on less critical media coverage regarding violence of any type (Noriega and Cárdenas 2014). This atmosphere of self-censorship and government influence in the media likely caused Abarca and Pineda to believe that few people would learn the truth about what happened in Iguala.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

This dissertation presents a new theoretical approach for predicting and explaining leaders' use of repression. The theory presented in chapter 3 adds to collective efforts to address a simple question with a complex answer: why do governments repress citizens? This question is both theoretically interesting and normatively important. Government actors possess a monopoly on the legitimate use of violence to serve the interests of the state and its citizens (Weber 2009). However, in the twentieth century, government actions have directly or indirectly caused the deaths of millions of people (Rummel 1994). This use of power is antithetical to the interests of state actors, who benefit from a safe and secure population, and citizens, who consent to be governed by state actors in return for safety and security. From a rational actor perspective, what incentives do state actors have for using violence against citizens? What factors influence incentives to repress? From a normative perspective, how can state actors be prevented from abusing this monopoly of violence? How can citizens best be protected from repressive leaders?

The state repression literature has devoted considerable attention to addressing these questions. Rather than viewing repression as endemic to certain regimes, recent scholarship has explained repression as a policy choice that leaders make in response to or in expectation of

political dissent (Davenport 2007*a*). The dissent-repression nexus has been thoroughly investigated in the literature (Lichbach 1987, Moore 1998, 2000, Carey 2006), and most studies now assume that dissent and repression are interrelated (Ritter 2014). This framework makes theoretical sense—repression involves, at a minimum, resource costs, and rational leaders would not use their limited resources to repress citizens just for sport. To predict the use of repression, theories must account for its rational application in the first place. If leaders are primarily concerned with maintaining political power, it follows that they would be likely to repress in order to protect it.

Empirical findings are consistent with this theoretical expectation—leaders respond to behavioral threats with repression (Davenport 2007*a*). However, as I discuss in chapter 3, this literature disproportionately examines the impact of violent dissent on the dissent and repression process. Many theoretical models of repression and dissent either implicitly or explicitly assume dissidents are willing to use violence, and empirical models tend to favor measures of violent forms of dissent such as insurgencies, riots, or civil war. This reliance on violent measures of dissent may be the result of imbalanced reporting—many datasets collect information using news reports, which are likely to favor salient stories involving violence over nonviolent events.

Studies that disaggregate dissent into violent and nonviolent types, however, seem to assume that violent dissent is more threatening to regime survival than nonviolent dissent (Poe et al. 2000, Carey 2010). I argue that this assumption limits our ability to explain and predict many cases of repression—specifically, those cases where repression is used against nonviolent dissidents. The consistent finding that violent dissent produces repression is not that surprising given the purpose of the modern state: violent dissent threatens both the leader’s position

as the sovereign authority in a territory and his or her ability to fulfill an obligation to citizens to provide security and order. Given the ways in which violent dissent threatens power, it would be surprising if leaders did *not* repress violent dissent.

I argue that repression of nonviolent dissent is more theoretically interesting. Why do leaders repress nonviolent people? How do peaceful dissidents threaten power so that leaders select repression as their best policy response? Authorities repress nonviolent dissent, as the cases of repression in Argentina and Mexico demonstrate, but they do not appear to do so as consistently as violent dissent. What explains this variation? What incentives do leaders have to constrain their behavior? Do institutions provide incentives to constrain repressive behavior against nonviolent dissent in the same way as against violent dissent?

This project takes a first step toward addressing these questions. I argue that nonviolent dissent threatens political power differently than violent dissent, and these differences affect how leaders choose to respond to dissent. In order to explain and predict repression of nonviolent dissent, then, scholars should develop theories of repression that account for the different ways that violent and nonviolent dissent threaten power and affect decisions to repress. Specifically, violent and nonviolent dissent involves different tactics and participants that shape the costs of repression and affect leaders' incentives for constraining repressive behavior.

Violent dissent threatens political power through the use of physically coercive tactics that damage state resources and pose a danger to citizens' safety and well-being. Leaders have two reasons to quickly end the use of these tactics: first, violent tactics directly threaten political survival if dissidents are able to topple the government and replace the leader with someone else; secondly, violent tactics threaten to decrease citizen confidence in a leader's ability to keep them safe, and they may withdraw political support if they believe another leader can better

serve the public interest.

Unlike violent tactics, nonviolent tactics threaten political power through non-physically coercive methods. These methods are intended to weaken leaders' bases of political support without the threat or use of violence (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011). Specifically, nonviolent tactics are intended to call the leadership's right or ability to rule into question; by challenging a leader's political legitimacy, nonviolent dissidents hope to generate a withdrawal of support away from the leader and use this influence to press their demands.

The participants in violent and nonviolent dissent also differ. Violent dissidents must commit to physically demanding activity and must be willing to use violence against people and property. These criteria tend to attract young males who are dissatisfied with some status quo to the point that they will use violence to change it (Nordås and Davenport 2013, Mesquida and Wiener 1999). Government authorities can easily label these homogeneous groups as radical extremists or dangerous criminals, and this provides a ready justification for using repression to end dissent. If authorities face sanctions for using force, they can defend their actions as efforts to protect citizens from violent elements.

Nonviolent participants are more diverse, and the absence of violence provides an opportunity for people of all ages, backgrounds, and convictions to participate (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011). The recent protests in Mexico City provide an example of this representative crowd—after word spread that government authorities were responsible for the attack and murder of the 43 students in Iguala, citizens from all walks of life turned out to protest against Mexico's president and his administration's failure to address corruption and organized crime. Journalists report that housewives, senior citizens, youth, clergy, laborers, academics, lawyers, and business professionals were all represented in the demonstrations. This participant diversity makes

it harder for authorities to categorize dissidents as dangerous, radical elements that should be dealt with forcefully.

The different tactics and participants that characterize violent and nonviolent dissent affect the incentives leaders have for constraining repressive behavior. Violent tactics directly and indirectly threaten political power, and leaders can justify repression of violent dissent as necessary to maintain peace and order and defend citizens against dangerous elements. In fact, leaders who do not swiftly and forcefully end violent dissent may be perceived by citizens as unable or unwilling to protect the public, and this lack of confidence may result in loss of political support. This appears to be what happened to Mexico's president following the Iguala massacre—the attack and murder of the 43 students solidified the public's belief that federal authorities were either unable or unwilling to control corrupt politicians and confront drug cartels. While President Nieto did not authorize the attack in Iguala, the repressive actions of corrupt politicians backfired on him directly, as citizens placed responsibility on his administration for failing to address corruption and crime.

Leaders have different incentives for constraining repressive behavior when faced with nonviolent dissent. Nonviolent tactics do not threaten public safety, and participants tend to be representative of the larger population. These characteristics make it difficult for leaders to justify repression by appealing to an obligation to provide peace and security. These characteristics also increase the likelihood that domestic audiences will be upset by repressive behavior and withdraw support for leaders. Since nonviolent dissidents are not breaking an obligation to contribute to a peaceful, secure society, the public is unlikely to view repression as a legitimate use of force. In addition, because nonviolent dissent involves more representative participants, the public is more likely to sympathize with these individuals even if they do not agree with the

group's goals or share the same beliefs.

If leaders believe that domestic audiences will withdraw political support following repression of nonviolent dissent, they have an incentive to constrain their behavior and select a different policy response to dissent. I suggest that two institutions—press freedom and a right of petition—provide information that allows leaders to better estimate the likelihood that repression will backfire and affect their political support. In states where the press is free of government manipulation and censorship, the public is more likely to learn about the use of repression against nonviolent dissidents. Since dissidents are not violent and are representative of the population, leaders should expect that the public will disagree with repression and withdraw political support.

I suggest that leaders have an additional reason to be concerned about a loss of political support if repression is publicized in states where the right of petition is constitutionally protected. Constitutional protections represent agreed-upon limits of state behavior, and citizens expect leaders to abide by these guidelines. When leaders abuse these rights, constitutions help citizens coordinate a response to sanction leaders for inappropriate action. Leaders recognize that constitutional protections represent commonly shared values that citizens will defend if threatened, and I expect that leaders will refrain from repressing nonviolent dissent when these protections are codified (Weingast 1997).

6.1 Findings and Implications

I derive testable predictions from the theory summarized above and discussed in detail in chapter 3. I predict that leaders in those states with high levels of press freedom will be less likely to repress nonviolent dissent (hypothesis 1). A free press threatens to disseminate information on

abuse, and leaders anticipate that this information will anger the public and result in a loss of support. As a result, I expect that leaders should constrain repressive behavior in anticipation that repression will backfire. Conversely, I do not expect that a free press will have the same effect on leaders' use of repression in response to violent dissent, as leaders can more easily justify repression in these cases (hypothesis 2). Additionally, I predict that a constitutionally protected right of petition will increase the negative relationship between press freedom and repression of nonviolent dissent (hypothesis 3). I expect that citizens will be angry if they learn about repression of nonviolent dissent, regardless of whether or not this right is codified. However, I predict that this constitutional protection affects *leaders' beliefs* about the public's likely response and serves as an additional reason to constrain repressive behavior.

The statistical analyses of these first three predictions do not provide support for hypotheses 1 through 3. The level of press freedom has a negative impact on repression of nonviolent dissent, but this effect is not statistically significant in either models 1 or 3 (see table 4.8). Surprisingly, high levels of press freedom appear to reduce the likelihood of repression of violent dissent (significant at $p < .05$). Also interesting is the impact of judicial independence on repression of violent dissent—this measure is positive and statistically significant at $p < .05$. However, after investigating this finding in more detail using a larger sample of state-years (see table 4.9), it appears that this positive effect is potentially the result of features unique to states that experience violent dissent in the first place.

The additional analysis in table 4.9 also shows that press freedom reduces the likelihood that states violate physical integrity rights, even when measures of violent and nonviolent dissent are included in the model. This effect holds even when repression was not used in the previous

year. To summarize, press freedom appears to matter in a large sample of state-year observations that are not limited to dissent-only cases. Within the sample of violent dissent cases, high levels of press freedom appear to reduce the likelihood that authorities repress dissent. It seems intuitive that this would also be the case for nonviolent dissent, but this expectation is not borne out in the analysis. Chenoweth and Stephan (2011) find that nonviolent campaigns are more successful than violent ones at achieving stated objectives, so it is plausible that nonviolent dissent poses enough of a threat to political authorities that repression is deemed a cost-efficient response. This assumes, of course, that leaders recognize the greater potential for success of nonviolent campaigns.

It is possible, though, that leaders understand what state repression scholarship has not until recently begun to explore: nonviolent dissent is a powerful tool that utilizes the public's recognition of appropriate citizen-state relations to pursue political goals. The public is likely to sympathize with nonviolent, representative citizens and disagree with the use of repression against these groups. Nonviolent campaign leaders have recognized this tactical advantage, so it is possible that in some cases, leaders perceive the consequences of repression as less costly than the costs of allowing nonviolent dissent to continue. However, this conclusion cannot be drawn just from the analyses presented here. Further studies are needed to understand the relationship between domestic institutions and repression of nonviolent dissent.

I also conduct tests of four additional hypotheses derived from the theoretical expectations presented in chapter 3. I test the impact of both press freedom and the right of petition on the likelihood of backfire using a NAVCO v2.0 measure of whether repression resulted in condemnation of government by domestic audiences. While I do not find that the level of press freedom

in a country impacts the likelihood of backfire in response to repression of nonviolent (hypothesis 4) or violent (hypothesis 5) dissent, I find evidence that a constitutionally protected right of petition increases the likelihood that repression of nonviolent dissent backfires (hypothesis 6). I do not find this same effect in response to repression of violent dissent (hypothesis 7). The impact of the right of petition on the likelihood of backfire following repression of nonviolent dissent suggests that constitutional provisions are more than just "parchment barriers" that only protect citizen rights on paper (Keith, Tate and Poe 2009). It seems that domestic actors will work to protect constitutional provisions that have been violated by state actors, at least in terms of expressing disagreement over violations of constitutional protections.

A recent case concerning domestic surveillance and data collection in the United States provides an illustrative example consistent with the findings in model 9 (table 4.11). After information was leaked regarding the extent and application of the National Security Agency's (NSA) surveillance powers under Section 215 of the Patriot Act, American citizens began questioning the validity of these activities in light of the protections afforded to citizens under the Fourth Amendment of the Constitution, which assures "the right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures" (*U.S. Constitution*. Amend. IV 1791). If personal electronic or verbal communication is considered among these personal "effects," then the NSA's domestic surveillance and data collection program clearly violates this provision.

When the NSA's domestic surveillance and mass data collection, which includes telephone and email data of millions of Americans, was made public by Edward Snowden in 2013, angry citizens began calling for Congressional and judicial action to limit the agency's extensive powers or dismantle it altogether (Greenwald 2013, Ackerman and Siddiqui 2015). Supporters of

the NSA program maintain that the agency's powers are necessary to uncover and thwart international and domestic terrorist plots. However, critics denounce the agency's activities as unconstitutional violations of privacy against citizens who have done nothing to warrant such an invasion. In May 2015, the U.S. Second Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the text of Section 215 did not allow for the mass collection of telephone records and deemed the NSA's mass collection and surveillance of telephone data illegal as it pertained to the text of Section 215 (Steinhauer 2015).

As the Patriot Act neared expiration on June 1, 2015, and with little Congressional support for its renewal, the U.S. Senate passed legislation that would allow the NSA to continue surveillance and data collection when relevant to counterterrorism efforts (Chappell 2015). While a majority of U.S. Senators voted in favor of this legislation, a recent poll finds that concern over NSA surveillance is a bipartisan issue in the United States, and 84% of those citizens surveyed want the same protections provided for electronic records as for physical records. In other words, most Americans view email and phone communication as personal "effects" that should not be subject to unreasonable search and seizure (Ackerman and Siddiqui 2015).

In addition to providing an illustrative example of the relationship between violations of constitutional provisions and backfire, this case demonstrates that domestic actors are willing and able to coordinate a collective response to violations of constitutional provisions (Weingast 1997). The public reaction following the revelation of this constitutional violation has threatened to weaken support for Congressional and executive leaders in the United States who do not act to change the agency's behavior. Those leaders who support the continuation of surveillance policies that their constituents deem violations of the Fourth Amendment risk losing the political support necessary to remain in office.

6.2 Limitations

The empirical analyses in chapter 4 only partially support the theory presented in chapter 3, but the present study suffers from limitations that should be addressed in future research. The most challenging problem concerns selection bias in the data. Because my data only include cases where violent or nonviolent campaigns occurred, I have a nonrandom selection of cases that may bias my results. Specifically, it is possible that dissent is more or less likely to occur in certain states or contexts, but my dataset would not include those cases that did not experience violent or nonviolent campaigns. The impact of the explanatory variables on repression, then, may be the result of the sample of cases included in the dataset. One statistical technique that could be employed in future research to account for selection bias is propensity score matching. This technique estimates the probability that an observation (in this case, a state-year) receives a treatment (in this case, experiences dissent) given information on other independent variables in the model. This probability can then be used to assess if the outcome variable (repression) is influenced by factors that also influence selection into the sample.

Another limitation of this study is the assumption that the costs to power from backfire are worse than the costs to power from ignoring dissent or offering concessions. I do not account for factors that may affect a leader's level of risk acceptance. However, it is possible that leaders may evaluate that the risk of repression backfiring is more acceptable than negotiating with dissidents or letting dissent continue. For example, if a campaign appears likely to succeed and dissidents make unacceptable demands on the government, then leaders may view any costs from backfire as preferable to letting the campaign continue or offering concessions. The NAVCO v2.0 dataset used in the statistical analysis includes only those campaigns that at one

time pursued "maximalist" goals such as regime change or anti-occupation goals—demands that leaders are likely to find unacceptable. As a result, leaders may prefer to accept the risk that repression backfires rather than offer concessions or ignore a potentially successful campaign that would threaten political survival. Future analyses could include indicators of likely campaign success, such as the number of participants involved or the level of monetary and logistical support received from other states or organizations.

The NSA surveillance example, as well as the illustrative case of repression in Iguala, Mexico, suggests a potentially interesting relationship between backfire and the use of repression that should be explored in future research: it is possible that repression and any subsequent consequences from backfire in one time period influences leaders' decisions to repress in the future. In other words, it is likely that leaders learn from their past mistakes or the (recent) mistakes of their predecessors or contemporaries and alter their expectations and behavior as a result. For example, Mexican authorities are probably less likely to repress nonviolent dissidents after witnessing the Imperial Couple's downfall following the disappearance and murder of the 43 students. Similarly, American elected officials may be particularly careful about supporting legislation that could violate their constituents' privacy rights. Future analyses should consider how backfire in previous time periods impacts the decision to repress at a later time.

Additionally, future studies should consider the mechanisms through which domestic condemnation of government action (or public anger) is translated into concrete political loss and how these mechanisms influence repression of nonviolent dissent. In chapter 3, I conceptualize backfire as the application of sanctions or withdrawal of political support that harms political power, and I expect that leaders believe public anger will translate into political consequences. However, the measure of backfire used to test hypotheses 4 through 7 considers whether or not

repression resulted in condemnation by domestic audiences, and it does not necessarily measure the application of sanctions or a tangible loss of political support following repression. I find evidence that a constitutionally protected right of petition influences domestic condemnation following repression of nonviolent dissent, but what factors affect how or if this condemnation results in loss of political power?

Factors that influence the process of turning public anger into tangible political loss may influence leaders' beliefs about the likely consequences of repression. For example, Mexican citizens were able to translate public anger into political consequences by mobilizing enough people to demonstrate against the Imperial Couple's repressive action and the federal government's inattention to corruption and organized crime. The initial success of this collective action relied in some part on the ability and willingness of federal and judicial authorities to investigate, try, and punish complicit actors. The authorities had their own incentives for carrying out these actions (perhaps the intense public scrutiny compelled them to carry out their duties), but these initial political consequences would not have been realized without their compliance (the Imperial Couple would not have been indicted, pursued, and arrested). In other cases, it may be more difficult for citizen anger to translate into political consequences as quickly or effectively. As a result, leaders may know what citizens' expectations are likely to be regarding limits of state behavior, but they may not believe that angry citizens can do much harm to their political future.

Broadly speaking, future research should consider how other institutions may influence repression of violent and nonviolent dissent differently. In particular, scholars should explore the role of institutions that allow the public to learn about repression, mobilize collective responses, and weaken the bases of political support that repressive leaders rely on to stay in power. State

actors ultimately derive and hold on to political power through the consent or acquiescence of the governed. Scholars should focus efforts on uncovering those mechanisms through which domestic audiences can monitor and sanction unacceptable behavior and credibly threaten leaders' power through collective efforts.

6.3 Contributions to Future Research

This dissertation makes several significant contributions to future research in the state repression literature. The theory presented in chapter 3 unpacks dissent not only in terms of tactics and participants, but also in terms of the information that each form of dissent provides to state actors. Leaders encountering violent dissent have more information regarding the potential costs and benefits of repression than leaders who encounter nonviolent dissent. This distinction is particularly important for theories of repression and dissent—incomplete information or uncertainty in conflict situations may affect the ability of state and non-state actors to bargain, leading to suboptimal outcomes for one or both groups. As a result, future theories of repression and dissent should explicitly account for this information disparity and its implications for strategic behavior.

Relatedly, the theoretical focus on nonviolent conflict in this project allows for a bridging of literatures, specifically those bodies of work focused on nonviolent strategic action and social movements with the broader state repression literature. Scholars should incorporate insights from these literatures into rational-actor models of dissent and repression. As noted earlier, leaders may recognize the threat posed by nonviolent dissent and adjust their behavior based on expectations that dissidents will successfully achieve their goals. Our understanding of the dissent and repression process, then, would benefit from a better understanding of how certain

attributes of dissident groups—such as size or demographics—impact the likelihood of success and how leaders obtain this information and incorporate it into cost-benefit analyses of repression.

Additionally, rather than considering how institutions impose direct costs on leaders, this project examines how institutions provide cues to leaders about the likely consequences of repressive behavior. The theory presented here expects leaders to use the information provided by domestic institutions to evaluate the best response to nonviolent dissent. When these institutional cues suggest that repression is likely to backfire (i.e., the public is likely to learn about and be angered by repression of nonviolent dissent and impose costs on leaders for repressive behavior), I expect that leaders will avoid repression to prevent a loss of political power.

This theory diverges from other repression theories that consider how institutions sanction and constrain leader behavior. Rather than constraining repression through formal mechanisms that impose costs on leaders, institutions like media and constitutions constrain behavior when leaders expect that other actors will behave in a certain way that negatively impacts their political power. Strategic leaders will consider the likely reaction of the public to repression, and strategic dissidents are also likely to act in a manner that increases public sympathy and support for their cause. These considerations should not be overlooked in formal models or theories of repression and dissent—future scholarship should incorporate both leaders' and dissidents' expectations about the role of the public and backfire when thinking through future strategic moves in a conflict situation.

Finally, this study treats violent and nonviolent dissent as separate forms of political contention, not as different degrees of the same form of conflict (Brubaker and Laitin 1998, Lawrence 2010). Scholars should not assume violence is an inevitable outcome or the highest degree of

conflict. In many cases, violence is not an option for dissident groups, not because of a lack of resources or motivation, but because dissidents have made a strategic choice to avoid it (Schock 2003). Future research should analyze violence and nonviolence as strategic choices and theorize possible explanations for why violence or nonviolence is selected as a desirable tactic. Scholars should be careful not to write off nonviolence as ineffective pacifism that is inconsequential to political leaders; instead, future work should investigate the dynamics of strategic nonviolence, its implications for political power, and the unique role of nonviolent dissent in the repression and dissent process.

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Appendix A

Nonviolent Campaigns

Table A.1: NAVCO v2.0 Nonviolent Campaigns (1981–2006)

Campaign	Years	Target	Major Goal
Active Forces (Madagascar)	1991–1993	Didier Radsiraka	Regime change
Albania anti-Communist	1989–1991	Communist regime	Regime change
Anti-Arap Moi (Kenya)	1990–1991	Daniel Arap Moi	Regime change
Anti-Banda (Malawi)	1992–1993	Banda regime	Policy change
Anti-Burnham/Hoyte (Guyana)	1990–1991	Burnham/Hoyte regime	Regime change
Anti-Calderon (Mexico)	2006	Calderon regime	Regime change
Anti-Ceausescu (Romania)	1987–1988	Ceausescu regime	Regime change
Anti-Chiluba (Zambia)	2001	Chiluba regime	Policy change
Anti-Diouf (Senegal)	2000	Diouf government	Regime change
Anti-Duvalier (Haiti)	1985	Jean Claude Duvalier	Regime change
Anti-Fujimori (Peru)	2000	Fujimori government	Regime change
Anti-Gayoom (the Maldives)	2003–2006	Maumoon Abudul Gayoom	Regime change
Anti-Jaafar (Sudan)	1985	Jaafar Nimieri	Regime change
Anti-Noriega (Panama)	1987–1989	Noriega regime	Regime change
Anti-Pinochet (Chile)	1983–1989	Augusto Pinochet	Regime change
Anti-PRI	1987–2000	Mexican government	Regime change
Anti-Rawlings (Ghana)	2000	Rawlings government	Regime change
Anti-Suharto (Indonesia)	1997–1998	Suharto rule	Regime change
Anti-Thaksin (Thailand)	2005–2006	Thaksin regime	Regime change
Argentina coup plot	1987	Argentinian government	Institutional reform
Argentina pro-democracy	1981–1983	Military junta	Regime change
Bangladesh anti-Ershad	1987–1990	Ershad regime	Regime change
Belarus opposition	2006	Belarus regime	Regime change
Benin anti-Communist	1989–1990	Communist regime	Regime change
Bolivian anti-junta	1981–1982	Military juntas	Regime change

Campaign	Years	Target	Major Goal
Bougainville revolt	1998	Papuan regime	Secession
Bulgaria anti-Communist	1989	Communist regime	Regime change
Burma pro-democracy	1988–1990	Military junta	Regime change
Cedar Revolution (Lebanon)	2005	Syrian forces	Regime change
Chechen separatists	1997	Russian occupation	Secession
CPN-M (Maoist)/UPF	2006	Nepalese government	Policy change
Croatian institutional reform	1999–2000	Semi-presidential system	Policy change
Diretas Ja (Brazil)	1984–1985	Military rule	Regime change
Druze resistance	1982	Israeli occupation of Golan	Autonomy
Hungary pro-democracy	1989	Communist regime	Regime change
Irish Republican Army	1994–2006	British occupation	Anti-occupation
Islamic Salvation Front	1992	Algerian government	Regime change
Kifaya (Egypt)	2000–2005	Mubarak regime	Regime change
Kosovo Albanian Nationalist	1981	Yugoslav government	Autonomy
Kyrgyzstan pro-democracy	1990–1991	USSR	Regime change
Madagascar pro-democracy	2002–2003	Radsiraka regime	Regime change
Mali anti-military	1990–1992	Military rule	Regime change
Marxist rebels (URNG)	1996	Guatemalan government	Regime change
Mongolian anti-Communist	1989–1990	Communist regime	Policy change
Nepalese anti-government	2006	Nepalese government	Regime change
Niger anti-military	1991–1998	Military rule	Regime change
Ogoni	1990–1995	Nigerian government	Autonomy
Orange Revolution (Ukraine)	2001–2004	Kuchma regime	Regime change
Pakistan pro-democracy	1983	Zia al-Huq	Regime change
Palestinian Liberation	1987–1993	Israeli occupation	Anti-occupation
People Power (Philippines)	1983–1986	Ferdinand Marcos	Regime change
Public Against Violence	1989–1992	Communist govt (Slovakia)	Secession
Rose Revolution (Georgia)	2003	Shevardnadze regime	Regime change
Second People Power	2001	Estrada regime	Regime change
Slovenian independence	1990–1991	Yugoslav government	Secession
Solidarity (Poland)	1981–1989	Communist regime	Regime change
South Africa Second Defiance	1990–1994	Apartheid	Regime change
South Korea anti-military	1987	Military government	Regime change
Taiwan pro-democracy	1981–1985	Autocratic regime	Policy change
Tanzania pro-democracy	1992–1995	Mwinyi regime	Institutional reform
Thai pro-democracy	1992	Suchinda regime	Regime change

Campaign	Years	Target	Major Goal
The Stir (Nepal)	1990	Monarchy/Panchayat regime	Regime change
Tiananmen (China)	1989	Communist regime	Regime change
Tibetan uprising	1987–1989	Chinese occupation	Anti-occupation
Timorese resistance	1989–1999	Indonesian occupation	Anti-occupation
Tulip Revolution (Kyrgyzstan)	2005	Akayev regime	Regime change
Uruguay anti-military	1984–1985	Military rule	Regime change
Velvet Revolution	1989–1990	Communist regime (Czech.)	Regime change
West Papua anti-occupation	2000–2006	Indonesian occupation	Anti-occupation
Western Sahara freedom	1982–1983	Moroccan occupation	Anti-occupation
Zambia anti-single party	1990–1991	One-party rule	Regime change

Source: Chenoweth, Erica and Orion A. Lewis. 2013. "Unpacking Nonviolent Campaigns: Introducing the NAVCO 2.0 Dataset." *Journal of Peace Research* 50(3): 415-23.

Appendix B
Violent Campaigns

Table B.1: NAVCO v2.0 Violent Campaigns (1981–2006)

Campaign	Years	Target	Major Goal
Anti-Burnham/Hoyte (Guyana)	1992	Burnham/Hoyte regime	Regime change
Anti-Ceausescu rebels (Romania)	1989	Ceausescu regime	Regime change
Anti-Doe rebels (Liberia)	1989	Doe regime	Regime change
Anti-Pinochet (Chile)	1984	Augusto Pinochet	Regime change
Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh	1992–1994	Azeri occupation	Secession
Bougainville revolt	1988–1997	Papuan regime	Institutional reform
CAR multiple factions	1995–1997	Central African Republic	Regime change
Chad rebels	1994–1998	Chadian regime	Regime change
Chechen separatists	1994–2006	Russian occupation	Secession
Contras (Nicaragua)	1981–1990	Sandinista regime	Regime change
CPN-M (Maoist)/UPF	1996–2005	Nepalese government	Regime change
Croats	1991–1992	Serb government	Secession
Denis Sassou Nguesso (Congo)	1997–1999	Lissouba regime	Regime change
Dniestr	1992	Moldovan regime	Secession
Eritrean-led rebels	1981–1990	Ethiopian government	Secession
ETA	1981–2006	Spanish occupation	Autonomy
Frolinat	1984–1990	Chadian government	Regime change
GAM (Aceh)	1981–2005	Indonesian occupation	Secession
Gamsakhurdia & Abkhazia	1992–1993	Georgian occupation	Secession
Hizballah	1982–2000	Israel in Lebanon	Anti-occupation
Irish Republican Army	1981–1998	British occupation	Anti-occupation
Iranian Mujahideen	1981–1982	Khomenei regime	Regime change
Iraqi insurgency	2003–2006	Iraqi government	Anti-occupation
Islamic Salvation Front	1993–2006	Algerian government	Regime change
JEM/SLA (Darfur)	2003–2006	Janjaweed militia	Policy change

Campaign	Years	Target	Major Goal
Kachin rebels	1981–1994	Burmese government	Autonomy
Karens	1981–2006	Burmese government	Secession
Kashmiri Muslim separatists	1988–2006	Indian occupation	Secession
KDP Kurds	1996	Iraqi government	Autonomy
KDPI	1981–1996	Iranian regime	Autonomy
Kurdish rebellion	1991–1997	Turkish government	Secession
Kurdish secession (Iraq)	1985–1993	Saddam Hussein	Autonomy
Lord's Resistance Army	1986–2006	Museveni govt (Uganda)	Regime change
LTTE	1981–2006	Sri Lankan occupation	Secession
LURD (Liberia)	2003	Taylor regime	Regime change
Marxist rebels (URNG)	1981–1995	Guatemalan government	Regime change
Mizo revolt	1981–1986	Indian occupation	Secession
Mohajir	1994–1995	Pakistani government	Policy change
Muslim Brotherhood	1981–1982	Syrian regime	Regime change
National Patriotic Forces	1996	Liberian government	Regime change
National Resistance Army	1981–1984	Okello regime (Uganda)	Regime change
National Resistance Army	1986	Okello regime (Uganda)	Regime change
New People's Army	1981–2006	Filipino government	Policy change
Muslim fundamentalists	1981–1984	Nigerian government	Secession
Palestinian Liberation	1981–2006	Israeli occupation	Anti-occupation
Patriotic Front (Rwanda)	1994	Hutu regime/genocide	Regime change
PF-ZAPU guerrillas	1982–1987	Mugabe regime (Rhodesia)	Regime change
PMIC (Ivory Coast)	2002–2005	Incumbent regime	Regime change
UTO (Tajikistan)	1992–1997	Rakhmanov regime	Policy change
Renamo	1981–1992	Mozambique government	Regime change
FARC/ELN	1981–2006	Colombian government	Regime change
RUF (Sierra Leone)	1991–1996	Republican government	Regime change
Sacred Union (Zaire)	1991	Mobutu regime	Regime change
Salvadoran civil conflict	1981–1991	El Salvador government	Regime change
Second Hutu rebellion	1988	Tutsi influence (Burundi)	Regime change
Second Khmer Rouge	1988–1997	Cambodian government	Regime change
Shining Path	1981–1995	Peruvian government	Regime change
Shanti Bahini	1981–1997	Bangladesh government	Autonomy
Shiite rebellion (Iraq)	1991	Hussein regime	Regime change
Sikh insurgency	1984–1994	Indian government	Secession
Somali rebels (Ogaden)	1981–1983	Ethiopia in Ogaden	Secession

Campaign	Years	Target	Major Goal
Somalia clan factions/SNM	1982–1990	Siad Barre regime	Regime change
South Africa Second Defiance	1984–1989	Apartheid	Regime change
SPLA-Garang faction	1983–2005	Sudanese government	Regime change
SWAPO	1981–1988	South African occupation	Anti-occupation
Taliban resistance	2001–2006	Afghan government	Regime change
Taliban/anti-government forces	1996	Afghan government	Regime change
Tauregs	1989–1994	Mali regime	Autonomy
Thai Communist rebels	1981	Thai government	Regime change
Third Hutu rebellion	1996–2002	Tutsi government (Burundi)	Regime change
Tigrean People's Liberation Front	1981–1990	Ethiopian government	Regime change
Timorese resistance	1988	Indonesian occupation	Anti-occupation
Tupac Amaru (MRTA)	1996–1997	Peruvian government	Institutional reform
Tutsi rebels	1990–1994	Hutu regime (Rwanda)	Regime change
Tutsi supremacists	1991–1992	Buyoya regime (Burundi)	Regime change
UNITA	1981–2002	Angolan government	Regime change
West Papua anti-occupation	1981–1999	Indonesian occupation	Anti-occupation
Western Sahara freedom	1981–1991	Moroccan occupation	Anti-occupation

Source: Chenoweth, Erica and Orion A. Lewis. 2013. "Unpacking Nonviolent Campaigns: Introducing the NAVCO 2.0 Dataset." *Journal of Peace Research* 50(3): 415-23.

Appendix C

Correlation Matrix

Table C.1: Correlation Matrix (Independent Variables)

Variable	Press	Petition	Judicial	Repress	Radical	GDP	Pop	Dem
Press freedom	1.00							
Right of petition	0.23	1.00						
Judicial independence	0.42	0.12	1.00					
Past repression	-0.09	-0.03	-0.01	1.00				
Radical flank	0.06	-0.06	-0.04	-0.08	1.00			
GDP (ln)	0.39	0.29	0.35	0.02	0.12	1.00		
Population (ln)	-0.01	0.02	-0.07	0.06	0.14	0.25	1.00	
Democracy	0.62	0.24	0.58	-0.06	-0.02	0.52	0.07	1.00